

Junior School

Infant School

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High Down Schools

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High Down Schools

Down Road
Portishead
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Executive Headteacher

Mrs A Cowan

18th December 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been another busy two terms at High Down and as governors we've enjoyed hearing and seeing the many opportunities the children have been part of. This has been from sporting events to musical performances, parliament week to another visit from Sophie the dinosaur. As governors we do believe that these broadened opportunities are valuable to the whole child's journey through education.

We have had two governor board meetings this year so far. Here is a summary of those meetings.

25th September LGB- chaired by Nolan Hibberd

- Mrs Cowan presented a headteachers report which included: pupil numbers, attendance, staffing and pupil data.
- Governors were presented with the school RAAP (Raising Attainment Progress Plan) and approved this document. The RAPP areas discussed were; the Anti-bullying ambassadors and how this initiative would have a positive impact on the children, the broad and balanced curriculum as well as the continued development of Maths and English.
- A Three-Year Strategic Plan 2019-2022 was shared, which looks beyond the single year RAPP but also includes buildings and finance. Governors were involved in the development of this but the meeting gave all governors the opportunity to discuss any specific areas.
- The Safeguarding Audit Action Plan was shared and actions are monitored by the Safeguarding working group who meet three times a year.
- The Business Manager reported the positive comments from parents about the Holiday club and its structure and flexibility.

14th November LGB chaired by Gail Meacock

- The Headteachers report to governors which included;
 - * an update on the progress made of the schools RAPP (Raising Attainment Progress Plan)
 - * Impact the Sports Premium has had on sporting opportunities for our children
 - * 2019/2020 term 1 pupil attendance rate
 - * The school being nominated for an award at the Young Carers' Celebration.
- A core part of the meeting was looking at ASP 2018/2019 (Analyse School Performance) and IDSR 2019 (Inspection Data Summary Reports) for both schools as well as in school analysis for EYFS and phonics data. Some highlighted points are:
 - * Year 1 Phonics results are 6% higher than national.
 - * At Key Stage 1 (Year 2), expected standard in maths and writing places our school in the highest 20% of schools and in reading we are 8% higher than national for children meeting expected standard.
 - * In Key Stage 2 (Year 6), the number of pupils reaching the expected level is above national average for all subjects.
 - * We are aware Ks2 progress scores are below average. This was reviewed and discussed as this is based on children's prior KS1 attainment. Due to High Down KS1 attainment being high, it makes it difficult to show high progress as the data is comparing our infant/junior data against primary data. The government has highlighted their awareness that this is an issue and this is noted in the IDSR:
"We know from national data that pupils at junior schools, on average, have higher attainment scores at the end of key stage 2 than pupils at all other primary schools. However, on average they also have lower progress scores, which may be for a variety of reasons".
- 2019/2020 Budget Monitoring reports were reviewed and discussed as well as the three-year forecasts.

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Since High Down has been part of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership trust, governors have benefitted from the trust training opportunities and as a school governing body, we have been noted as having a good presence in the training sessions. The training sessions our governors have attended over the last two terms include:

- Safeguarding for Governors
- Financial Reporting for Governors
- New OFSTED Framework
- Addressing Teacher Workload

At High Down we have a monitoring schedule which is linked to the schools Raising and Attainment Progress Plan. Monitoring can include shadowing of the senior leaders whilst they are doing their learning walks around the school or may involve a meeting with a member of staff.

Below is a summary of what monitoring the governors have been involved with since September:

- Review on how Sports Premium budget was spent for 2018/2019
- School website compliance check.
- Safeguarding
- Pupil Premium
- Review of Broad and Balanced Curriculum
- Budgets
- Deep Dive into 'Mastery Maths' across all year groups
- Health and Safety walk-around and committee meeting

Currently we have two governor vacancies we are hoping to fill and have recently advertised through social media. When we completed a governor skills analysis, it highlighted that budgetary/finance and HR skills were limited, therefore we are specifically looking for governors with these skills sets. We have four potential governors interested and hope through the recruitment process to appoint two to join our governing body early next year.

Schools continue to have financial pressures and one way we encourage you to help is through continued support to the PSA and Friends. They work hard and are continuously thinking of ways to raise funds for our schools. They are open to any help that you can offer from regular involvement in events to one off help. The funds raised are vital in providing for the children at High Down, therefore we encourage you to continue to support future events.

Links to useful information

Below are some useful sources of information about the school governing body, details about the operating policies of the school and how to understand your child's curriculum in more detail.

School policies	http://highdownschools.co.uk/our-school/policies/
LSP policies	http://www.lsp.org.uk/index.php/policies/
Governors Info	http://highdownschools.co.uk/staff-governors/governors/

Yearly curriculum summaries (click on year for more details):

Infants	http://highdownschools.co.uk/infants/curriculum/
Juniors	http://highdownschools.co.uk/juniors/curriculum-information/

Parents also have an opportunity to give feedback on the school via the Parent View site (operated by Ofsted):

Parent View	https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk
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The views of parents are important, so if you have any questions, concerns or a view point to share then we can be contacted by email chair.governor@highdownschools.org

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On behalf of the governing body, we would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and we look forward to continued success for High Down Schools in the new year.

Yours sincerely

Gail Meacock and Nolan Hibberd
Co-Chairs of Governors

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