

Hello Whittington Parents!

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter from Whittington School Governors.

In this issue, there are reports from the Resources and the Teaching and Learning Committee, a brief update on the level of contributions received for school trips and a report by the head teacher on Improving the Curriculum.

Governors are continuing their termly classroom visits to their assigned class. These visits give governors the opportunity to follow the class on their educational journey through the school. The focus of the autumn visits was Pupil Voice in conjunction with observing behaviour, engagement and the way that ability groups work. Pupil voice is a discussion with a group of children asking them about their welfare at school, personal development, safeguarding, behaviour, teaching, learning and assessment.

The general outcome of the discussions with children were that:

- Typically, children were happy, content, they help each other and stated that they are well looked after.
- Children showed an awareness of how they are being helped to learn by talking about initiatives in school.
- Children are enthusiastic about ClassDojo points for achievement
- Children were aware of keeping safe, including internet safety.
- Favourite things about school included Maths, History, Writing, Art, sports, friendship and lunchtimes.
- Children were asked if they would recommend Whittington – the response was a resounding Yes!

Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Paul Newell

Chair of Governors



Core Functions of a Governing Body:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

To get in touch with the Governors:

Just a reminder that the email address for Governors is: governors@whittington.worcs.sch.uk

This is as well as the Clerk to the Governors at: JGreenwayWCEPS@aol.com

You can also get in touch with Governors via the main school 'phone number and we will then contact you

If you have any suggestions for future issues of this newsletter, or if there is some particular aspect you'd like to know about the work of the Governors, please contact the Clerk to the Governors

Your School Governors

Chairman – Paul Newell

Vice-Chairman – Ann Statham

Foundation Governors

Rev'd Andy Stand

David Chestney

Bob Saunders

Co-opted Governors

Paul Newell

Claire Thomas

Dan Bayliss

Kelly Leeming – Deputy Head teacher

Paul Maguire

Staff Governors

Gary Richards - Head teacher

Judith Harrison

Parent Governors

David Etheridge

Vacancy

Local Authority Governor

Ann Statham

Clerk to the Governors

Jane Greenway

Improving the Curriculum

The staff at Whittington are always looking for ways of improving what we offer our pupils. To this end, all the staff have been working hard to improve the whole of our curriculum.

We started this process by looking at each subject we teach and tried to define what makes each subject special. What are the skills a geographer needs; how does a musician learn to play an instrument and appreciate a range of music; what does it take to become a better sportsman or sportswoman?

Intent

We came up with ideas about the specific skills required for each subject. We called these skills our INTENT. Our intent forms the basis for all the teaching and learning that goes on in each subject. This means that in Science, children learn through enquiry. They will conduct experiments and work out why things happen. Enquiry was at the heart of our recent Science afternoon that parents and children from Key Stage 1 were invited to.

Digital Art Topic

In Art children learn through studying the work of great artists, with all classes studying two artists each year. We also study artistic techniques. This half term we have focused on digital art which resulted in a fantastic display of self-portraits which are currently on display (see below).



Cultural Capital

We also reviewed the additional activities we undertake in each subject. These activities include - children going on trips, working with visitors and participating in special activities in and out of school – we call these activities CULTURAL CAPITAL.

- Recent geography trips include the Year 5 River Walk and the Year 3 trip to British Camp on the Malverns to study how Iron Age man lived.
- To encourage pupils to read, years 1 & 2, and years 4 & 5 went to the BeeLine Literature Festival and listened to inspirational speakers.
- As well as these trips the children continue to participate in a range of sporting and musical events, as well as our developing link with the Meadow Court Care Home as part of being good citizens.

To find out more about our rich curriculum, have a look at our new website and click on the CURRICULUM tab.

Mr Richards
Headteacher



Resources Committee

The four new CCTV cameras are working well. They cover the whole of the playground and field and are proving very useful. The arrangements for pupils with Disabilities/Accessibility issues appear to be going well and the ramps seem to work effectively.

The signage on the school access road appears to be having the desired effect. However, there have been issues with some parents parking inappropriately in The Swan car park; the head teacher will liaise with The Swan and send out a reminder to parents regarding safe and considerate parking.

Closer links between school and home are being investigated using an app called ClassDojo, to improve communications with parents and possibly replace text messaging, with another package called ScholarPack.

The school website has been updated to make it more user friendly with better mobile phone accessibility and eventually link with ClassDojo for maximum benefit and impact.

We are currently running on a deficit budget and the school finances continue to be monitored closely on a month by month basis. However, with very tight control on our finances and the possibility of additional funding from a science research project that the school is involved with, together with our carry forward from the previous financial year, we hope to keep the budget deficit to manageable levels.

Bob Saunders

Chair – Resources Committee

Teaching and Learning Committee

Results from the summer SATs showed a very good set of data in KS2. Outcomes exceeded national data for all subjects and at all levels, other than for achieving a high standard in Reading and Writing where a number of pupils were just 1 mark away from the threshold to achieve this.

In KS1, results for achieving/exceeding expected standard in Reading/Writing/Maths were 54%, against 65% national data. 'Achieving a high standard' data were broadly in line with national levels, with these exceeded in Reading.

Whole school pupil numbers are down to 201, in line with other local schools who also have spaces. The census data has been submitted with 201 pupils, with the result that funding levels next year will be around £22,500 lower than if school was full with 210 pupils (each pupil equates to £2,500 in funding).

Teaching observations and book trawls have been undertaken this term. Outcomes were typically good, with areas for development advised to staff.

Safeguarding our pupils is of the utmost importance to the staff and Governors. The school has very good monitoring systems in place and the head teacher, deputy head teacher and the Safeguarding governor have undertaken Prevent training this term. All staff receive Safeguarding training within school, and updates are circulated to governors.

From September 2020 Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RSE) will become statutory in schools, with age appropriate content. Work on this curriculum area will begin in the spring term.

Ann Statham

Chair – Teaching and Learning Committee

School Trip and Event Contributions Update

At Whittington, we value the importance of educational visits. Learning outside the classroom is widely recognised as a valuable and effective means of extending pupil knowledge, enriching pupil understanding, and promoting personal and social development.

The school promotes and encourages the organisation of educational visits for all its pupils, and it is hoped that parents will also recognise the value and importance of these visits and give their full support.

As part of the ongoing monitoring of the school finances, contributions for trips and events are reviewed at governor meetings. The Resources Committee report has highlighted that the school is operating under a tight budget and so in the interests

of the school continuing to provide a variety of trips and experiences for children, Governors thought it would be useful to provide an update on the status of the cost of trips.

The shortfall that has been absorbed within the school finances so far for this financial year is £469.10. The school has also subsidised school trips - paying for things like coaches - to the tune of £2,700.

Governors will continue to monitor the percentage of trip costs absorbed within the budget and may have to review the number of trips organised if the trend for low numbers on some trips continue.

Thank you for your continued support.

Paul Newell