



July 2016

Dear Parents and Carers, Staff and Children,

As another school year finishes and the holidays draw closer, it is an appropriate time to update you all on what the governing body has been doing over the past academic year, as well as looking at the year ahead.

With Darren taking the reins as our new head teacher, the governing body's utmost priority has been to ensure he has had the best support and guidance possible in his first year leading our school. A strong and collaborative Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has proved invaluable in cooperating with him, and likewise all the school staff who have worked tirelessly during a very testing and demanding year. We have welcomed Anna and Sonia back, had to deal with an impending Ofsted inspection (yet to take place), and the government's threat of forcing all schools to become academies.

One of the biggest challenges however this academic year has been, unquestionably, implementing a new assessment system that would provide staff, children and parents with the best in-depth analysis of each individual student's progress. The decision to select Pupil Asset has been thoroughly researched and evaluated and the governing body are fully supportive of this choice. We are also very proud for Kew Riverside Primary School to be a leader in this field in providing a new assessment methodology that covers not only academic progress and attainment in granular detail, but also allows for behaviour and social skills to be recorded and monitored regularly and effectively. We have no doubt that the benefits will become apparent quickly and prove helpful to all.

Another challenge that has engaged the leadership team this year has been, indeed, around behavioural issues. The governors have worked closely with Darren and the SLT to monitor situations across different year groups, including attendance levels, and provide guidance and support to all parties where necessary. Whilst Kew Riverside Primary School remains at heart a nurturing and caring environment for all children to feel safe and happy, we also recognise that times change and thus a decisive move towards a zero tolerance behaviour policy required clarification. Following consultation with staff and governors, specialists and the local authority, and feedback from parents and children, the school's behaviour policy has been re-written and updated and will be in place from the start of the new academic year. I would urge all parents and carers to familiarise themselves with it, along with their children, when the new school year commences. It will be published on the website in September.

No doubt many of you will have noticed that school budgets are under continuous strain. The motto of 'doing more with less' has never been truer, and it is a credit to the school's business manager, Louise Quin, that we are able to run an efficient school and retain the very best teachers for the children. The Finance and Resources (F&R) Committee has worked closely with Louise to ensure that budgets are realistic and spending kept in check. The move to new caterers, whilst still providing a few teething problems, has been successful and is proving to be far better value for

money, as has the change of IT providers. The small £5 charge for each child for stationary at the beginning of the school year that Darren has proposed to commence from September, is supported by the governors who agree it will not only teach children about responsibility and ownership but also help contribute towards some of the overheads that are no longer covered in school budgets. We believe the benefits are far reaching and go beyond the small monetary contribution. We owe a huge thanks to Louise, Katie Rodney-Smith (chair of F&R), Graham Webber and Jamie Holloway for their time, effort and engagement as key members of this committee.

As mentioned above, implementing a replacement for the now defunct assessment levels has been challenging, if not frustrating. With the government and Department of Education providing little, if any, guidance as to what was expected, Darren, the SLT and the Curriculum and Achievement (C&A) Committee have worked in partnership to ensure that the option Kew Riverside Primary School has adopted was both fit for purpose as well as being 'best of breed'. Darren and the teachers have put in an enormous amount of time, effort and dedication to ensure this will deliver results that benefit teachers, parents and children alike. It has been an exhaustive and exhausting process, but the presentation given by Darren to all parents on June 15th gave a thorough insight regarding the journey, the decisions, the benefits and the results we aim to achieve. All information, including the presentation, is now available on the website to review. A huge thank you to Darren and the SLT, as well as C&A governors who have monitored, queried, critiqued and evaluated the entire process. We all look forward to receiving feedback from the next academic year!

The Engagement and Communications (E&C) Committee was established in the 2014/15 academic year with the aim of ensuring a clear channel of communication between the school, parents, staff and children. As of September 2016, the half-termly meetings will include, by invitation, the chair/vice-chair of the PTA as well as at least one class rep (in rotation) to maximise the opportunities for improving engagement and providing a valuable forum for discussion about matters relevant to the school. This is a committee that is growing in value and importance with regard to communication between all parties and the school's role in the community. Meeting dates and times for all the governing body committees next year are now published on the school website.

The governors appreciate how the PTA contributes time and energy to the school and has organised some incredible events this year, raising substantial funds for the benefit of pupils. As such, I would strongly encourage all parents and carers to take a more active role in the PTA or as a class rep and recognise the benefit their participation will bring to the school overall, to staff and parents, and especially to the children.

A huge thank you to all the parents and carers who took the time to respond to this year's questionnaire. We had a total of 108 responses and have begun to analyse feedback and schedule plans to address issues, many of which are already underway and in the process of being implemented, as highlighted above. A summary will be circulated separately and more details will follow in September.

We have had a trio of new co-opted governors joined us this year: Keren Menashe, Stephen Hyams and Pam Mangat. Do please take some time to read their bios on the website as they add enormous value to the skills of the governing body. Sarah Waight (Year 2 teacher) has joined the governing body as an associate member, and Julie Smith has been re-elected as staff governor.

Sadly one of our governors, Robin Birn, has had to step down due to ill health. He was a great asset, especially to the E&C Committee and we thank him for his time with Kew Riverside.

Also stepping down this year as her governor's four-year term ends is Katie Ljungdahl. Katie has been a formidable member of the governing body, chairing the inaugural E&C Committee as well as the C&A Committee. She has provided valuable support and guidance to the SLT during her time as governor and will be greatly missed. We are delighted that she will continue to remain involved with the school to help see the new library through to completion and launch.

The next school year will undoubtedly see additional trials as Pupil Asset comes into force, budget challenges continue, and further government decisions are made (or not) regarding academy status. And, of course, an Ofsted inspection is still on the cards! As your governing body, we continue to strive in our roles as critical friends, guides and mentors to Darren and the SLT, and remain open as always to receive input from parents and carers as well as answer any queries you might have. Thank you all for your support.

Wishing you all a very safe and relaxing summer holiday.

With best wishes,



Sabina Mangosi
Chair of the Governing Body