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Welcome to our second edition of our Governor newsletter. With Christmas fast approaching it is a fantastic end to the first term in our new School premises. It has been a very busy term welcoming lots of new pupils and teaching staff and also making the successful transition from our temporary site, for many other pupils.

We held our first annual Christmas Fayre last week for both GBA and GCA pupils and parents / carers, which was organised by the PTA. It was a fun packed afternoon and gave us a good opportunity to showcase the School facilities to the local community. This is a great example of the collaboration between both Schools as part of our Trust. We have our official School opening event planned for 26th January so there will be more details about this to follow.

We would like to wish our pupils, all members of staff and parents a very Happy Christmas. We look forward to welcoming you all to the start of a new and exciting year at the Bridge Academy in January 2018.

Future Plans



Since our last newsletter and the handover of the full site, we have been busy developing our team of Governors and have carried out a full Health and Safety audit of the School to ensure the Health and Safety of all pupils and staff. Our Executive Head Teacher, Rod Warsap and Head of School, Claire Wood, shared our School Development Plan at the last Governor meeting. This is a very important piece of work which sets out what the Schools priorities are and how we will ensure they are delivered and measured. The next step is that the Governors will include a number of their own priorities in the plan as well.

As more local houses are being built and sold we are focussing on ensuring that we are well equipped to deal with additional pupils and we expect a steady growth. It is very important to us that with this growth all new pupils feel welcomed and all existing pupils are minimally impacted. I am sure you can appreciate that it is not easy predicting how many families with Primary School aged pupils will be moving to the new estate so we are doing what we can to manage this effectively.

We are currently in discussion with various external organisations about renting some of our fantastic facilities to the local communities, when not in use by the pupils. This will generate additional income to invest in the School.

Health and Safety Improvements



By Steve Peacock, Health and Safety Governor

The school and myself have now completed the internal and external safety check of the new school. It was very pleasing to see that the quality of the workmanship and design has not generated a long list of safety points that needed to be addressed.

Many of the areas highlighted that do need attention will be rectified as part of the snagging and are to be expected with a new build project of this size. The other issues recorded during the safety visits will be prioritised and solutions put in place where required. I will be following up on the issues highlighted to ensure that solutions are implemented and will be carrying out further safety visits throughout the year with the school.

As a new parent on the Local Governing Body, one of the first things you have to do is to attend the aptly named 'New to Governance Induction' course. The course provides an overview into what being a Governor is all about but most importantly it informed me on what my responsibilities are. It also helped inform me on what Ofsted inspectors would require.

Did the course meet my needs? YES! As an induction it did but it was clear there is so much more to learn. I now understand the importance and purpose of School Governance and my areas of responsibility. These include:

- Providing confident, strategic leadership.
- Creating robust accountability.
- Providing an oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.
- Supporting the school leadership but also providing challenge, where needed.

My induction has provided the necessary high level information and a chance to network with the new Governors within Cambridgeshire Maintained Schools and Academies. All members had a common desire to understand the role, so that we could confidently contribute and drive our school towards excellence. We are fortunate that both our LGB and the Community Academy are really strong and committed to this cause. We want to create a joyful, safe learning environment, with an appropriate and challenging curriculum to prepare the children for their next step. I am looking forward to supporting our school at this challenging but very exciting time in our development.

Meet Nan Taplin

We would like to introduce Nan to our parents and children at the Bridge Academy. Nan explains about her role and how she became a Governor:

'I joined the Local Governing Body in February 2016 and my areas of speciality are Special Educational Needs and Safeguarding. I have had a lifelong interest in Education and have been in turn a pupil, mother, a teacher, a grandmother and a university administrator. As such, becoming a governor felt like a logical step. It gives me the opportunity to use the skills which I have learned- life skills, as well as professional ones- to give something back to the community and in particular nurture and protect the youngest members of our society, on whom the future will depend.

There is a lot to learn as a new governor and I have enjoyed the training opportunities, not just the formal training courses but also the time I have spent with more experienced governors, learning from them. I also enjoy my regular meetings with the Inclusion and Safeguarding Manager. Best of all are the visits I have made to the school, to see the teachers and children in action. If I was to offer any words of advice to anyone thinking of being a Governor, I would say don't be daunted by the responsibility. There are plenty of people to help and advise you. Just give it a go!'



Governor Vacancies

As our school continues to expand, we need to ensure that we are in a strong position to take forward all our exciting plans. We are therefore looking to expand our team of Governors.

If you know anyone who might be interested in joining our Local Governing Body, please ask them to contact **Paul Thornton, Chair of Governors** on the email address below.

We now have a full allocation of Parent Governors so we are looking for people who do not have children attending our School. In particular we are looking for anyone who has experience in Marketing or Communications.

How to contact us: We would love to hear from you on anything relating to our school or feedback on any of our activities. Please email us on: govchair@godmanchesterbridge.co.uk