



SHEERHATCH GOVERNOR NEWS

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we are approaching the end of the year, it's a time to reflect on the year. Every term has brought new challenges and we have had to adapt quickly to ever-changing restrictions, while balancing the needs of the pupils and to continue to provide excellent teaching. I am proud that through ensuring our risk assessment is continually reviewed and with everyone's diligence in following it (staff, pupils and families) we have not had to close any bubbles (at the time of writing, I really hope I have not jinxed that!!) The staff have worked tirelessly, as Governors we have a responsibility to review learning outcomes of our pupils and have been incredibly impressed with the progress being made following the lockdown last year.

We should also celebrate, that despite all the restrictions, we have been able to provide the children with some great experiences: The Year 6's had a trip to Willen Lake and a sleepover at school; the residential to Frontiers for Year 4, and of course Year 5 who missed out last year; there has been Bikeability, tree planting, video calls with authors and astronomers and activity days; we were so pleased to be able to invite parents to Sports Day, this is where being a small school with access to lots of space works to our advantage! Years 5 and 6 were very keen to have an audience for their production which was a rousing success, converting the MUGA into an outside theatre!

GOVERNANCE

We have continued to hold meetings via Zoom, a challenge for our newer governors in particular who have not met personally but we're hoping to arrange something once restrictions allow. I would like to thank all the Governing Board for the hard work and dedication, especially since the pandemic as pressures have increased, we are all volunteers that have day jobs, families and other commitments.

In between the scheduled meetings, there have continued to be focused virtual meetings by those lead governors on Safeguarding, Pupil Premium, and SEND. Paul and I were able to visit school to look at Health and Safety, although once the children have gone home! A focus for next year will be on buildings and maintenance.

We have continued to keep up with our learning by attending (virtual training) and our new Governors have had their Induction Training. A focus for this term has been around staff wellbeing, SEND and finance, submitting the budget and looking at how we can best utilise our (limited) funds, which isn't our favourite job! We made the decision to invest in some marketing for the school including a video to showcase us, we are excited to share with you soon. Please share with your friends and family.

Looking ahead to next year, we will be working on our School Development Plan in September, but we will of course be preparing ourselves for the long overdue Ofsted Inspection!

School Library

Joyce Tucker made a successful application to the Siobhan Dowd Trust receiving £300 worth of books and is working with Chicken & Frog Bookstore where the children are able to choose new titles for the school library.

OUTSIDE LEARNING AND LAND

Development of the land is progressing. With support from The Forest of Marston Vale Community Fund we planted 500 trees to create a copse. The children took an active (and muddy) role in the planting of trees which was a fantastic opportunity for them to be outside in the sunshine with their friends.

A huge thank you to Judith Howard, who has personally funded the new firepit. Judith was the Chair of Governors for Cople Lower School for many years and has always supported our school. Thanks also go to Graham Ebbs, Chris and George Gregory for all their support and work in designing and getting the pit in place. The Year 6's were able to use it on their sleepover. It far exceeded expectations and looks great in the space.

Hopefully you have all seen the posts from the Friends of Sheerhatch regarding our next project for an outside learning classroom.

GOVERNOR SPOTLIGHT

In the last addition we shared our two newest Governors, therefore this edition we thought we'd focus on our two longest serving Governors. We are proud that Joyce has been nominated to receive an award in recognition for her commitment as a school governor and presented by the Mayor at a virtual ceremony.

Joyce Tucker

I became a governor in 2014 because I wanted to participate more in the life of the school and to better learn about and understand the English school system. I never thought I would still remain a governor once my children left the school, yet here I am a year after my youngest child has gone still committed to supporting the school staff and pupils in vision, value and goals that make up Sheerhatch Primary. In my time as governor I have been a link governor for the Before & Afterschool Club (now care club), the PSHE curriculum, and now the SEND governor.



As SEND governor I visit the school and meet with pupils, I meet regularly with the SENDCo to get an overview and understanding of the provision we offer and question and challenge when/if necessary. Currently I chair the Resources committee which looks at the school's finances. Working with a small subcommittee of governors I help to look for grant and funding opportunities for the school, recently with a focus of bringing the land at the back of the school into use for the school and community.

There are many highs and lows to being a governor, and there are some very difficult decisions you are faced with making. Deciding to merge the school was a difficult decision, seeing and experiencing the way the pupils and staff worked together during the merger and beyond was a high point. The Ofsted decision was a low point, particularly due to the unfortunate timing, watching the staff rally after the report and the commitment and support of the students' parents and families of the school in light of that decision was humbling and a high point. Seeing the children plant trees and working to develop a space that will be of benefit to the school and community for decades is a high point.

My professional background is varied. I have worked in Hospitality, Travel and Manufacturing industries in technical and forward-facing roles. For the past 14 years I have worked in the public library sector, I am a chartered member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals and currently work as a Library Assistant at an independent school.

Mary Whitehead

I have had a long-standing and very pleasant association with the school since moving to Cople in 1978 when my daughter joined the Year 1 class. Subsequently, both my granddaughters attended Cople Lower school, as it was then. At that time there was a swimming pool on the site and I taught some of the pupils to swim and was a member of the Parents Association.



My current roles on the governing body are as a member of the curriculum committee and the governor for Pupil Premium.

Following a career in special education I continue to be involved in a voluntary capacity. I am also a member of Rotary international which gives so many opportunities for making connections around the world. I hope that I bring to the governing body links with community groups along with national and international opportunities for the benefit of pupils at Sheerhatch.

Rotary has clubs for young people and I was delighted that Sheerhatch (while Cople Lower School) chartered the first RotaKids Club in Bedford Borough in 2013. We've had a break this year but hope to be up and running again in September. RotaKids Clubs give young people in Years 3 to 6 the opportunity to develop positive citizenship along with personal development and interpersonal skills.

I was very honoured when I was asked to be a governor – I can't remember the year - and continue to feel very privileged to be associated with Sheerhatch. Being a governor can be a challenge and we have been through some challenging times, having to make difficult decisions, over the past few years but the commitment, determination and vision of the staff and support from everyone involved have been impressive. I am proud to be a governor of this thriving and successful school that offers so much more than a basic education to its pupils.

Your Governing Board

The role of the school governor is demanding but very rewarding and is a good way to give back to your local community. The governors are volunteers and give up their skills, experience and time for free in order to help and support our school.

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| Chair | Siobhan Godden | Co-opted Governor | <i>HT Performance management Sits on Resources Committee</i> |
| Vice Chair | Martina Foster | Parent Governor | <i>Creative Curriculum Lead Sits on Curriculum Committee</i> |
| | Helen Ryan | Head Teacher | |
| | Stacie Bourne | Staff Governor | <i>Link Governor for Governor Training Sits on Resources Committee</i> |
| | Joyce Tucker | Co-opted Governor | <i>Link Governor for SEN; HT Performance management Chair of Resources Committee</i> |
| | Joanne McDowell | Co-opted Governor | <i>Chair of Curriculum Committee Link Governor for Equality</i> |
| | Paul Emery | Co-opted Governor | <i>Link Governor for Health & Safety; Sits on Resources Committee</i> |
| | Anne Jones | Co-opted Governor | <i>Link Governor for EYFS; HT Performance management Sits on Curriculum Committee</i> |
| | Mary Whitehead | Co-opted Governor | <i>Link Governor Pupil Premium; Asst SEN Sits on Curriculum Committee</i> |
| | Chainie Worrall | Co-opted Governor | <i>Link Governor Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing. Sits on Resources Committee</i> |
| | Linda Behan | Co-opted Governor | <i>Sits on Resources Committee</i> |
| | Sarah Cropley | Parent Governor | |
| Clerk | Helen Endersby-Wood | | |



Siobhan Godden
Chair of Governors

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