

Chairman's annual report

The Academic year 2016/17 has been a fresh start for Waterman Primary School. Following a difficult year characterised by instability, we started 2016 with a new Head of School, Mrs. Eileen Thorn, and a fresh desire to turn the fortunes of the school around. In addition, Mr. Lee Faris was moved from a successful year at Stambridge to become the Head of Federation for both schools and support the new Head of School and leadership team.

As I said in January, the academic progress and achievement of the pupils remained a concern, and so the Academy Trust invested in bringing in Directors of Learning into the school to improve the progress of the pupils, particularly those qualifying for the Pupil Premium grants. This investment, along with the tireless work of the class teachers led to rapid improvements in literacy and numeracy skills amongst all years. Although the KS2 results at the end of year remained poorer than we would have liked, the progress of the KS2 children was commendable and they closed many historic gaps in their learning, which has set them on the right path to continue their academic studies at secondary school. On a more positive note, the infant side of the school experienced greater success, with a pass rate of 58% in the reception year GLD testing (up from 20% the previous year) and the year 1 phonics testing pass rate was 57% which is amazing given that these children were the previous years' poor GLD pass rate and shows just how much progress they have made in only one year. The KS1 results were also greatly improved in every single area of testing.

The Hearts Values of Happiness, Esteem, Achievement, Respect, Trust/Truth and Service/Spirituality, which run throughout the Academy Trust as our core values have continued to be embedded. The behaviour triangle has also been expanded to include a 'silver' award for those children who are always well behaved and constantly exceed expectations. In addition, the children have also continued to enjoy African drumming lessons, weekly Forest School sessions provided by the extremely enthusiastic and well-prepared Mrs. Wiltshire, and enrichment days such as cinema visits, science days and trips out in the local community.

As a local governing body, we spent the 2016/17 academic year supporting the Head of School in her new role, as well as monitoring the impact of the new curriculum and taking on board the views of the children. As we move into the new academic year, the Governing Body will be changing to a Local Advisory Board, which streamlines some of our responsibilities and opens up involvement to a wider audience. We continue to appreciate that catching up the shortfall in standards will be a massive challenge for the next few school years, but we are confident that with Mrs. Thorn and her excellent support team, the progress and attainment of the children will continue to improve.

I look forward to seeing Waterman Primary School continue to improve in the next academic year. Well done everyone for all of your hard work this year.

Jo Bradbury, Chair of LGB 2016/17