



## Governors' Newsletter Summer 2015

Welcome to our newsletter which aims to keep parents up to date with some of the work done by your School Governors. School governance can sometimes appear to be rather a mysterious role, so we hope these updates will help to make it a little clearer. This edition will focus on the work happening in governance since our last Ofsted visit, as well as the work of the Resources Committee.

### A word from the Chair - Ofsted and the future.

The governors were delighted that at the full OFSTED inspection in January the school was recognised as a 'Good' School. This follows a huge effort from every member of staff at the school under the strong leadership of our Head Teacher Debbie Gould, the excellent senior leadership team, as well as a committed team of governors. It is great to see this success being reflected in the growing number of families choosing Duxford School for their children. Combined with general growth locally this has led to pressure on admissions. The Governors will be working hard to ensure that in the future we can meet the needs of all families within catchment wherever possible.



**Clare Delderfield**  
Chair of Governors

This is sadly my last year as a parent of a child at Duxford. When I reflect back over the last nine years I can see that the school has now become a more stimulating and vibrant place in which to learn. This will be further enhanced with the hall mural designed by the children, and the tile mosaic for the wall between the Key Stage 1 and Sunshine Room doors. This visual vibrancy combined with our creative curriculum gives the children a wonderfully rich experience. They cover fascinating topics, and a wide variety of special events take place throughout the year, such as science week, storytelling, winter sports day, as well as many school trips which the Friends of Duxford help to support through providing the funding for coaches. The variety of extra-curricular clubs now available to the children, from sports, to chess, Spanish and Mandarin to photography, cookery, sports, dance and music, all provide a wonderfully rich learning environment in which the children all have the opportunity to develop as confident independent learners. Whilst it is wonderful to have the school's good work recognised by Ofsted, the Governors and staff are still ambitious for the school to continue to improve further.

### The Governing Body

We have 13 Governor positions on the board. You can find our photographs on the website, and on the school noticeboard in the foyer which sets out our roles and special areas of interests. Governors are appointed from the following groups.

- The Headteacher - automatic member
- 4 x Parent Governors - elected by the parent body
- 2 x Staff Governors (1 teaching, 1 support staff) - elected by the staff
- 3 x Foundation Governors - our local Rector and 2 appointed by the PCC's of Duxford and Ickleton
- 2 x Community Governors - appointed by the Governing Body
- 1 x Local Authority Governor - appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council



## Aim High....Fly High! School Governors

By September all local authority schools have to reconstitute meaning that they have to re-appoint their governing body based under new rules of school governance. The new rules have been introduced to reflect the fact that the role of Governors had become more demanding over the years, and that it is important that each school has a good set of skilled Governors that also reflect the local community. Some of the existing categories of Governors have been changed and new categories will be available. The governing body have been considering the most effective new structure by carrying out a skills audit of our existing Governors and looking at what skills we will need in the future. This will be implemented in September.

We will update you of the changes to the governing body in the Autumn Term, and will let you know of any vacancies that become available. We will continue to operate two committees; Standards (responsible for the quality of teaching & learning and the curriculum), and Resources (responsible for finance, buildings, health and safety, and personnel matters).

### **Focus on the Standards Committee - A word from the Chair, Nicola Insley**

Nicola has been a Parent Governor for 2 years, and has a son in Year 2. She has previously been on the Duxford Playgroup committee and regularly volunteers at Friends of Duxford School (FODS) and school events. Outside of school Nicola works as a lecturer for the Open University teaching undergraduate law. She has many years of experience in legal professional practice and this has been a valuable resource for the school.



Governors are the school's "critical friend". We check that strategic plans are implemented, and evaluate their effectiveness in providing improvements for our children. This is done through Governor visits, analysis of academic and demographic data, and reports from staff. The outputs of these evaluation exercises are often reviewed via the Standards Committee. For example we have a Governor visit planned to look at the impact of new writing strategies implemented as a result of the new assertive mentoring scheme (a key objective for the school, identified by Ofsted). This follows a recent Governor visit to look at how well school is supporting children in spelling, with particular focus on those who have Special Educational Needs (SEN). One of the key objectives for the school is to enable SEN children to achieve their potential. These specific Governor visits sit alongside regular forensic reviews of the school's performance data that facilitate staff and Governors in identifying issues and celebrating progress.

This work is then fed into the full governing body. It is used to support the governing body and senior members of staff in setting key strategic and operational goals for the following academic year. The governing body and the standards committee then monitor the implementation of these plans over the course of the next academic year.

Information about the Curriculum and the school plan can be found on the school website.

[www.duxford.cambs.sch.uk](http://www.duxford.cambs.sch.uk)



## Aim High....Fly High! School Governors

### Focus on the Resources Committee - A word from the Chair, Frances Payne



Frances has been a Governor for 8 years and is a Foundation Governor, one of three appointed by the diocese. She is also Vice-Chair of Governors. Her background is in teaching, albeit in the Secondary sector. She is also much involved in the Governors' contribution to Safeguarding in the school and is experienced in interviewing when Governor input is required.

There are four areas of governance that fall within the remit of this Committee: finance, personnel, the school premises and Health and Safety. All Governors bring some area of expertise to the Governing Body: the Resources Committee is extremely fortunate to be able to draw on the contribution of experts in finance and law, as well as to be able to rely on the competence and acuity of the School Business Manager, Sarah Cahill. Thus the Resources Committee, in consultation with the Head, oversees the drawing up of the Annual Budget and at every committee meeting throughout the year, we discuss how the money is being spent, and most significantly, to what effect, in terms of benefiting the children. Sources of income vary from Local Authority Funding to Government grants; for example, the money earmarked for spending on sport. The Friends of Duxford School (FODS) also contributes magnificently, often providing money for specific things such as the development of IT resources. Spending this income effectively to enhance the children's learning is our prime concern.

It is also the responsibility of the Committee to oversee the safe recruitment and induction of Staff and to review on a regular basis, the school's policies relating to pay, performance management and the provision of equal opportunity, to give but a few examples. Thirdly, the Committee advises the Full Governing Body on how best to maintain and develop the school's premises and IT infrastructures so that together with the Head Teacher and all Staff, we can provide a good learning environment which will deliver the educational priorities set out by the Standards Committee. There is at least an annual inspection of the school, as the result of which a programme of necessary repairs and improvements is made. The Committee will also deal with contingencies as they arise and monitor all external provision such as gas, water and electricity. Finally, the Committee also deals with Health and Safety issues and makes sure that the School complies with Regulations. One of the Governors carries out a Health and Safety walk with the School Business Manager on a termly basis.

Contact details for the Chair of Governors can be found on the school website or contacted via the school office.

Please look out for Governors at a number of school occasions such as parent's evenings and meet the teacher evenings. We will often use these occasions to ask parents for their views regarding a wide range of school matters. We always welcome your questions, comments and feedback.



# Aim High....Fly High!

## School Governors

Headteacher: Debbie Gould




Clare Delderfield - Chair  
Parent Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards Resources
<b>Core Roles</b> Core Skills Team, Gifted & Talented Equality



Frances Payne - Vice Chair  
Foundation Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards Resources (Chair)
<b>Core Roles</b> Core Skills Team, Child Protection, Looked after children



Dan Brinsdon  
Teaching Staff Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards
<b>Core Roles</b> Early Years, Governor Visits, Music




Jane Downey  
Local Authority Governor

<b>Committees</b> Resources
<b>Core Roles</b> Finance, Pupil Premium & Sports Premium



Nicola Insley  
Parent Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards (Chair)
<b>Core Roles</b> Policies, Law



Gordon Lister  
Foundation Governor

<b>Committees</b> Resources
<b>Core Roles</b> Finance



Sophie Livesey  
Parent Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards
<b>Core Roles</b> Core Skills, Early Years, Sunshine Room



Rev'd Dr Jessica Martin  
Foundation Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards
<b>Core Roles</b> Literacy, Community, Staff Wellbeing



Vicky Rigby  
Non-teaching staff Governor

<b>Committees</b> Resources
<b>Core Roles</b> Governor Training, School Meals, Website



Victoria Roper  
Parent Governor

<b>Committees</b> Standards
<b>Core Roles</b> Special Education Needs and Disability



Judy Thomson  
Community Governor

<b>Committees</b> Resources
<b>Core Roles</b> Health & Safety

Do you know someone in the local community or business who would like to support our school? If so, please let us know!

**VACANCY**  
**Community Governor**

<b>Committees</b>
<b>Core Roles</b>



## Aim High.....Fly High!

### School Governors