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# Governor Newsletter

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## Winter 2017/18

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Welcome to the first Governor newsletter for this academic year, especially the new families that have joined our fantastic school. As governors, we support the school to ensure that it continues to provide the best education for all our children. We are always happy to hear your views and will be asking you to join us for another feedback session again later in the year.

We firmly believe in our school vision and aims and feel this will ensure the school will continue to provide an excellent grounding and range of experiences for the children of Iron Acton. The results from last year's SATs were above local and national average and our attendance was one of the best in the county so we have a lot to celebrate and thank the hard working staff for.

The Diocese of Bristol recently carried out an inspection of the school and we are very grateful to the parents and children who shared their contributions. We are pleased the inspector graded the school as 'good' with some excellent guidance as to how to improve further.

### Governor/Parent Feedback Session

Thank you to all the parents that attended the parent/governor feedback session. We have since been in discussion with the school regarding all the issues raised and can report the following:

**Homework** - Last year homework was predominantly based around termly projects which some parents enjoyed as it allowed for more child/parent involvement but some parents prefer more tangible tasks. Given this feedback and a review of our homework structure across the school, this year homework will include a combination of projects and Maths/English weekly homework. There will be a gradual increase in homework as the children move up the school to prepare them for secondary school.

**School Meals** - Our school meals are currently provided by a company called Integra. Further to all the feedback from parents and children, the school are in the process of a full review with Integra and we are committed to making the improvements necessary based on the feedback given.

**Social Media** - Following concerns raised by parents, the school Facebook page was temporarily suspended. Social media is an important way for the school to promote itself and interact with the wider community. Over the next few months, we will be reviewing the school's strategy and consulting with parents and staff to make sure all concerns are addressed.

**Communication** - Following feedback the school are now sending out newsletters as a PDF as well as a link to the school website. Some parents also expressed an interest in receiving an up to date calendar. Please note this is available on the website <http://www.ironactonprimaryschool.co.uk/events/>

## The Governing Body

**Head Teacher:** Mike Riches

**Clerk:** Helen Parry

**Chair of Governors & Parent Governor:**  
Ellie Blanch (English & Science link)

**Vice Chair:** Rob Taylor

**Parent Governor:** Ann Mora (Maths & PSHE link)

**Staff Governor:** Amy Lyall

**Foundation Governors:** Sandra Sparkes  
and Carol Snow-Budd

**Co-opted Governors:** Di Pardoe  
(assessment), Ben Clarke (Pupil Premium)  
& Adam Dinham (Safeguarding), Peter  
Foote (Health & Safety)

### After school clubs.

An extended service of childcare once the school day has finished is becoming a must for many parents. We, as governors, alongside Mr Riches are exploring possible options that will allow us to provide this from Sept 18.

We are pleased to see a variation in the clubs that school are providing in the form of drama, science, computing, pottery and cookery in addition to the sporting clubs that are available. As governors we are keen that the children gain as many experiences as possible, so if you have a particular skill or interest maybe you could consider running a club, if so we would love to hear from you. Some previously run parent clubs have been photography, art, conservation and gardening.

**Pupil Health & Wellbeing Survey** Last Year all children in years 4, 5 & 6 completed a rigorous on-line survey. The results have been analysed and we are pleased to report that Iron Acton compare well above average against other schools in South Glos. We performed particularly well on issues such as bullying, mental wellbeing, feeling safe at school and being fit and healthy. One particular area which was raised as a concern was school meals which is currently being addressed and the children are involved in the review with Integra.

**Purple Learners** I spent a morning with children from Years 2 to 6 talking with them about their learning. The children were articulate and happy to share their thinking and are now talking increasingly about making an effort and becoming more independent. They talked enthusiastically about how important it is to challenge yourself and they understand that struggling is all part of learning. It is so encouraging to know that Iron Acton children are becoming even better learners! (Di Pardoe)

**Our sustainable school** One of the most important aspects of our school for many of us is the community feel. We have in the past mentioned the increasing pressures that small schools are under to balance the books and so it is important that we maintain pupil numbers to allow us to continue to improve the provision for the children. We have had agreement from the local authority that Iron Acton will now be able offer 15 reception places from September (previously 12). This is a positive move which will allow us the flexibility we require whilst, between all of us involved in school, ensuring the community feel remains.

## Introducing our New Governors.....



Peter Foote. I became a governor last term when a position became available. I have a child at the school. As a parent and member of the community I have a strong interest in the running of my local school and the welfare of all children and through my job I have the skills to challenge and question which I hope will serve me well in the Governor role .

I have been given the role of Health and Safety (H&S) governor. This is obviously an important subject. My first training session filled me with much optimism when they said that a major component when looking at things from an H&S angle is to always include Reward. Take for example the new play equipment. Potentially some schools might not have installed it hiding behind the fears of H&S overlooking the vital ingredient that is Reward. How much fun would the children get out of it? How beneficial would it be playing outdoors? Do the benefits outweigh the risks? I think the previous Governors and Staff have delivered an excellent piece of equipment that enhances the school day for the children playing on it.

Unfortunately though dangers do lurk around every corner. So please do raise with either myself or any other official person connected to the school about anything that is maybe troubling you with regard to the potential safety of our children whilst at school. Now please excuse me whilst I look into the accident rate of 25 fathers wearing flip flops taking part in the dad's race on school sports day.



My name is Adam Dinham, I moved to the village in 2015 and joined the governors as the safeguarding link governor. I am qualified as a children and families social worker though now work as a research professor at Goldsmiths, University of London, where I study religion and belief in the contemporary world. I have recently been working on the future of RE in schools.

In my first term as governor, I took part in the annual safeguarding audit, reviewed and updated the child protection policy, and completed the 'governor template for reviewing the school's vision and Christian character' as part of the SIAMS inspection.