



GOVERNOR BULLETIN

ISSUE 9 APRIL 2021

Governors	Roles	Type	Terms of Office
Peter Parkin-Child	Chair History link	Co-opted	24/09/2019 - 23/09/2023
Deborah Walker	Vice-Chair Literacy (writing) link	Foundation	01/05/2019 - 30/04/2023
Jessica McFarlane	Anti - bullying & PREVENT link	Co-opted	25/09/2018 – 24/09/2022
Cilla Hollman	EYFS, Geography link	Co-opted	09/07/2019 – 08/07/2023
Roger Wilkinson	Health & Safety link	Local Authority	25/09/2017 – 24/09/2021
Rev. David Mundy	RE, Pastoral link	Ex-officio foundation	01/10/2018 -
Michelle Massey	Pupil Premium, SEND link	Parent	30/01/2018 – 29/01/2022
Jonathan Lingham	Numeracy link	Parent	15/11/2018 – 14/11/2022
Victoria Freiss		Parent	11/11/2019 – 10/11/2023
Anita Birchall	Safeguarding link	Co-opted	22/10/2020 – 21/10/2024
Esther Bland	Headteacher	Staff	01/09/2018 -
Kellie Wilson	Deputy Headteacher	Co-opted	26/09/2017 – 25/09/2021
Claire Daniels	Teacher	Staff	01/12/2020 – 30/11/2024
Vacancy		Parent	

The aim of this Governor Bulletin is to give you some insight into what our role as a governor is within the school, as well as updating you on the issues we get involved with. But, most importantly, I want these bulletins to reinforce that we, as a Governing Body, are here to work with all those who have a vested interest in the success of Dukes – and so please feel free to stop and chat to us* when you see us around and about.

* observing social distancing rules, of course

It was not quite the start to 2021 that we were all hoping for but, as we have come to expect, the team at Dukes rose to the challenge! It was evident that all the hard work put in by the school to develop its remote learning provision paid dividends, as we were able to implement an effective timetable of learning activities from the offset. However, as good as our remote learning is, it can't replace the benefits of in-school teaching; and so, it has been great to welcome the children back for the last few weeks of term.

As always, the governors would like to extend their gratitude to all the staff at Dukes for the amazing work they have done during these challenging times; the teachers and TAs providing in-school provision to our vulnerable children and those of key workers, whilst also delivering interesting and engaging online sessions to those children learning from home; the office staff keeping the school running smoothly and organised; the midday supervisors and kitchen staff keeping our children fed and safe; our brilliant senior leadership team coordinating everything and ensuring the school meets all its legal and educational responsibilities. Thank you all!

So, what do Governors do?

The Governing Body is made up of a mixture of volunteers - members of the community, church and local authority, parents and staff. We meet as a Full Governing Body (FGB) six times a year and these meetings usually take place after key school data becomes available. Our aim is to work closely with the Headteacher to raise standards and make sure the school provides a good quality education. We do not manage the day to day running of the school - we help shape its focus and direction. We ensure accountability to parents, staff, and others for the school's overall performance, support the Head and staff, as well as offer constructive challenge.

Recent Meetings / Strategic Direction

Since lockdown began, and given the ever-changing restrictions, we have continued to hold virtual governors' meetings – with two having taken place since the beginning of term. As you would expect, the main focus of these meetings continues to be discussing the school's continuing response to the COVID-19 situation; be this from assessing our remote learning provision, through to understanding the plans for school re-opening.

COVID-19 continues to present challenges to the school and, as a Governing Body, we continue to work with the Senior Leadership team to ensure we have the right policies and processes in place to both minimise the risk and maximise the education of our children. In line with government guidance, all staff are now undertaking asymptomatic testing twice a week and parents can also get free tests delivered at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>. This action, alongside the control measures implemented by the school, seem to be having a positive impact on the spread of the virus; and it has been great to hear of no bubble closures this half-term.

We were visited by our School Improvement Partner, whose role is to provide support and guidance to the school, in order to ensure that we continue to meet our improvement focus and objectives. The meeting went well, and he was pleased with the school's progress to date. Whilst I outlined the key objectives in detail in my last bulletin, below is a reminder of what they are:

- To respond to the educational impact of COVID-19, closing gaps in learning and promoting positive outcomes in all areas. This includes the number of girls actively engaged in maths and thus achieving greater depth maths across the school; and the number of boys achieving greater depth in writing

- To respond to the social, emotional, and physical impact of COVID-19; promoting a healthy body, mind and soul of our pupils, staff, and families
- To fully Embed Our (2019) Curriculum
- To close the attainment gap for our most disadvantaged pupils, particularly increasing the number of Pupil Premium children achieving Greater Depth
- To develop reading in the school, particularly in relation to our phonics education and provision to ensure children develop the strongest foundations for their reading

In terms of closing gaps in learning, the school continues to build upon a series of baseline assessments in reading, writing and maths. Formative assessments are continuously carried out in lessons, and further summative assessments are being undertaken on a termly basis to ensure that pupils are on track for the end of this academic year.

Our pupil numbers continue to look healthy, which is great for the school not only as a reflection of our reputation in the local community but also in terms of funding. It is a testament to the hard work of the staff and the pupils that so many families are choosing to place their children at Dukes, and I am pleased to see that we continue to make improvements to the school in order to enhance both the learning and physical spaces that our pupils benefit from.

Buildings / Investments

We were disappointed to learn that a large amount of lead had been stripped and stolen off the roof in the Lower Key Stage 2 block and new PE store, during the recent lockdown period. Temporary repairs have been applied to the roof and a more permanent, lead-free replacement will now be arranged via our insurance policy. However, this highlights the need to ensure we all remain vigilant when it comes to school access and safety, and I thank parents and visitors for continuing to observe and adhere to the safety measures the school have put in place when on school premises.

On a happier note, you will likely be aware of the work that is being done to the school library, along with recent fundraising events to further expand our collection of books. It was great to hear that over £1,000 was raised from a sponsored reading event, and that we have spent nearly £4,000 in total on new books. We all look forward to seeing the pictures of the revamped library when it opens.

Our Wider Community

It was highlighted to governors that the school have felt the need to send out communications concerning a number of issues that have taken place outside of school. We would ask all parents/carers to respect the wider community in and around the school and ensure that children are acting as ambassadors to Dukes in terms of safety, behaviour and respect. Of particular concern were reports of some unsavoury characters using Manor Park as a base, with quite a lot of trouble amongst young adults/youths. We would reiterate the school's message to please ensure that any children are appropriately supervised in the park and any older children briefed on staying safe and behaving well.

Goodbye Mrs Newton

We were sad to say goodbye to one of our longest serving Teaching Assistants, **Mrs Newton**. She has been a familiar face in our Early Years team for the past 12 years and will be missed by parents and children alike. We wish her all the best as she takes some well-earned time out. Thank you, Mrs Newton, for all your hard work and dedication!!

Governor Vacancy

Finally, we have a parent governor post vacant at present. No special qualifications are needed, and the most important thing is to have a keen interest in the school and be prepared to play an active part in the governing body. We would, however, particularly welcome nominations from parents with the following skills – ability to interpret data and statistics, financial planning: budgeting, monitoring and compliance and/or educational policy.

If you are interested in joining the team and having some input into the strategic direction of the school, I would encourage you to apply. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please contact me or go via the school office, and I will be happy to talk through in more detail.

Happy Easter

For Christians, Easter symbolises the dawn of a new life and is the high point of the Christian calendar. At Dukes, we are celebrating in our bubbles but all looking forward to a point when we can come together as a whole school. If you would like to join a service at our local parish church or access online worship, then further details can be found at [Glossop Parish Church All Saints - Services \(btck.co.uk\)](http://btck.co.uk).

So, that just leaves me to wish you all very Happy Easter. I hope you all enjoy the break and get to munch on lots of Easter eggs. Stay safe.

Peter Parkin-Child
Chair of Governors