



# GOVERNOR BULLETIN

ISSUE 7  
JULY 2020

<b>Governors</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Terms of Office</b>
Peter Parkin-Child	Chair	Parent	24/09/2019 - 23/09/2023
Deborah Finney	Vice-Chair Writing link governor	Foundation	01/05/2019 - 30/04/2023
Jessica McFarlane	Safeguarding, Anti - bullying & PREVENT link	Co-opted	25/09/2018 – 24/09/2022
Cilla Hollman	EYFS 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	Church link	Ex-officio foundation	01/10/2018 -
Michelle Massey	Pupil Premium & SEND link	Parent	30/01/2018 – 29/01/2022
Esther Bland	Headteacher	Staff	01/09/2018 -
Kellie Wilson	Deputy Headteacher	Co-opted	26/09/2017 – 25/09/2021
Rachel Rothwell		Staff	21/01/2020 – 20/01/2024
Jennifer Godwin	Reading link governor	Parent	15/11/2018 – 14/11/2022
Jonathan Lingham	Numeracy link governor	Parent	15/11/2018 – 14/11/2022
Victoria Freiss		Parent	11/11/2019 – 10/11/2023

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

So, that was the 2019/2020 academic year! It has certainly been one to remember! Whilst we have all had to adjust to the new 'normal', it has been great to hear of how we have pulled together to make the best of a challenging situation; be it from staff members having to deliver educational provision from home to providing care and support to our most vulnerable children; be it from some parents having to take on the role of teacher (often whilst also continuing to work) to those parents who are key workers and are keeping the country moving; or be it from our children who have had to adjust their lives in ways we would never have imagined. Above all, it shows what a special place Dukes is, and I am immensely proud to be involved with the school.

### ***Thank You (again)***

As mentioned in my last bulletin, I am sure you will join me in thanking the staff for all the great work they have done to ensure that our children remained connected to their education over this last term. As you may be aware, the school remained open to support the children of key workers (who themselves deserve our recognition and thanks); and we welcomed back our Year 6 children, who I know have appreciated the opportunity to say their goodbyes. For those not able to attend school, the staff have continued to provide learning activities that can be undertaken from home (more on this later). Thank you all on behalf of the Governing Body.

### ***So, what do Governors do?***

The Governing Body is made up of a mixture of volunteers - parents, staff, members of the community, church, and local authority representatives. We meet as a Full Governing Body (FGB) six times a year and these meetings usually take place after key school data become 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.

### ***Our Last Meeting***

Since lockdown began, and despite the general easing of restrictions, we have continued to hold virtual governors' meetings – with the final one taking place last Tuesday. The main focus of that meeting was to discuss the school's continuing response to the COVID-19 situation; be that the provisions put in place so far and those that need to be implemented for the return to school in September.

In terms of the provision to date, I hope that you feel (as I and the rest of the governors do) that the school struck the right balance in its approach. Work was available to those children/parents/carers who were in a position to make use of this, with the focus being about embedding knowledge and practising concepts/skills; however the messaging from the school was supportive of those children/parents/carers for whom undertaking such work was difficult. Ultimately, the main focus was to ensure that our children were supported, happy and healthy – and the staff have done a brilliant job in this regard.

It is also worth recognising how much work has been put in by school staff to organise and establish our Google Classrooms provision. With us being the first school in the area to achieve this, we have been in a position to be able to support and encourage other schools across our local cluster as they develop their learning platforms. This means that even if we experience local lockdowns or future school closures, other schools, as well as Dukes, are well placed to deliver ongoing educational provision.

With regards to the plans for September, the Governors were impressed with the amount of research and work that has been undertaken in the face of constantly changing advice; and this plan is now available on the school website for you to read. I would encourage you to familiarise yourselves with this to ensure we have as smooth a return to the next academic year as possible.

Finally, we were delighted to review the pupil numbers for next year as these showed the highest enrolment figures for quite some time! 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 – it really is the place to be!

### ***IT /Building Investments***

Following up from my last bulletin, I thought it would be worth highlighting all the improvements that have been made (or are in progress) over the last year to the school; and acknowledging how these will enhance both the learning and physical spaces that our pupils benefit from:

- the purchase and installation of new SmartScreens into all of the classrooms
- the replacement and improvement of our IT networking and cabling
- the construction of a canopy at the Lodge to enable outside learning
- the installation of a new accessible toilet and the refurbishment of the toilets near the library
- the extension of the school hall through the creation of a new PE store
- the refurbishment of the school library

So, that just leaves me to sign off until next year. I wish all of our incredible staff an enjoyable and well-deserved break, and hope the sun shines all summer-long so that we all get to make the most of the outdoors!

Stay safe.

Peter Parkin-Child  
Chair of Governors