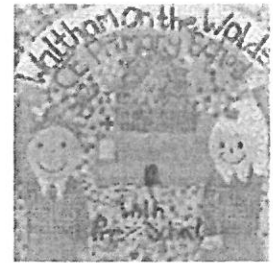


**Waltham on the Wolds Church of England Primary School and Pre-School  
Update from the Governing Body  
Summer 2016**

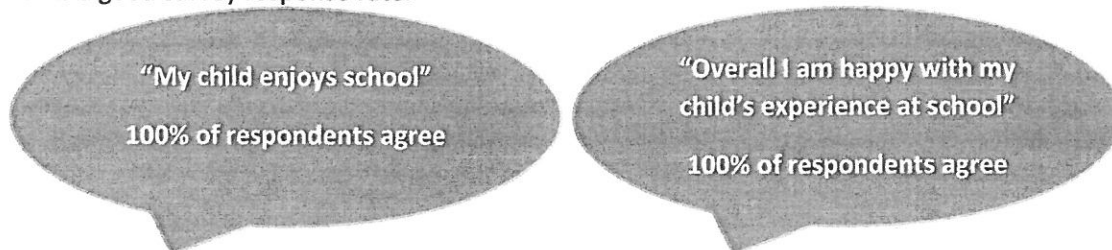


Dear Parents,

The end of another academic year is here, during which the Governors have been busy supporting many aspects of school life. Below is an update on some of the things we have been working on:

**Parent Survey**

Thank you to everyone who completed the recent Parent Questionnaires – we appreciate that so many of you took the time to feedback to us; this enables us to make sure we are considering your views in our work. Questionnaires were sent out to 55 families and 29 were completed, giving a response rate of 53%, which is a good survey response rate.



Your feedback has been analysed in detail and all of your comments gathered together and reviewed. The responses have provided a great deal of useful information on areas for further school improvement and are now feeding in to our planning – for example into the School Development Plan and the Governors' Action Plan which are currently being developed for the next academic year. There were also some matters that we hope we have already been able to address.

We were pleased to read that 100% of respondents:

- Were happy with their child's experience at school
- Agreed that their child enjoys school
- Felt that the school provides a supportive environment for their child.

Some of the other highlights are summarised below:

**Learning**

More than 95% felt the school makes learning fun and enjoyable and effectively promotes health and fitness, and more than 80% agreed that the school promotes Christian values. There were mixed responses about homework – whilst 70% said children received appropriate homework, we have noted comments about the frequency, timing and amount. We realise that homework is a subjective topic and experience tells us that it will always feature on the Parent Survey, with differing views. Mrs Hopkins and the team will be looking at this again to ensure consistency of approach as we move forward next year.

Responses to several questions suggested that you would like to understand more about your children's progress. This is something staff are aware of and wish to thank you for your patience whilst we introduce the expanded National Curriculum and deal with 'life without levels'. All staff have been working hard to implement the new 'Target Tracker' software introduced in September 2015 to all schools in the Diocese of Leicester Academy Trust (DLAT). Our staff have been at the forefront of working with the DLAT and colleagues in other schools on developing these systems, and we hope that they will be able to use this to communicate with you about progress in the near future.

You will have received the Annual School Report to parents last week and we hope that this will give you sufficient information about your child's development at school this year. As always, if you do have questions about your child's progress, please speak to their class teacher.

### **Involvement/Communication**

Termly overviews about what children will be learning were introduced at the beginning of this year and scores for information have improved since our last survey, with more than 90% of parents agreeing that the school informs me what the main areas of learning are for my child each term. Scores for information provided about children's progress were also high (more than 75%), and 97% of parents find parents evenings valuable. However scores for receiving the right information to help me support my child's learning at home and a strong home-school partnership were lower (still 65-70% agree or strongly agree), and there were some comments about parents' evening not being sufficient opportunity to communicate with the teachers. We discussed this in our recent Governors' meeting and recognised that different parents will prefer different methods of communication / interaction – so we will be trying some different approaches. A number of parent information evenings / workshops have already been held to give parents opportunities to find out how their child is taught – e.g. in EYFS, and maths. Your feedback and suggestions will help us continue to improve.

There is an 'open door policy' at school and you are welcome to catch staff, as many of you do, if you have a question; staff are visible on the playground every evening and some mornings and you are always welcome to make an appointment if needed.

Over the past few months, our Standards & Values Committee have been reviewing how we communicate with you about your child's progress in the School Report and this year's format has been adapted – Mrs Hopkins has already explained the changes in more detail. We would all value your feedback on it.

### **Staff and Governors**

We are pleased that 90% of parents agree that teaching is good at our school, and 97% agree that the school is led and managed effectively. Fewer respondents understood the role of the school Governors, and to help address this we have written a section for the new school website (see below), explaining who we are and what we do.

### **Comments**

Many of you supplied additional comments which were very useful. We have reviewed all comments, with a view to informing our priorities, but if there were things related to your child's specific needs you should discuss them directly with a member of staff. Mrs Hopkins may follow up with you directly on some comments where appropriate. Additional remarks made covered a range of topics from the school buildings, road safety, housing development etc – many things which the Governing Body are already actively addressing – see further updates below.

### **Pupil questionnaire**

All pupils also completed a questionnaire in school. Governors will be meeting with the Owl Ministers to review the key findings and discuss possible actions arising from the feedback. Pupils were overwhelmingly positive about their work and their answers displayed excellent attitudes to learning, eg understanding they can learn by making mistakes and 100% agreed that doing their best in school was important. They feel safe and that any minor problems are effectively dealt with. Many children wrote lovely comments about their friends, the staff and how they loved school, which were a joy to read.

Thank you to Joe Leveridge for all his work on collating and analyzing the data from the questionnaires.

### **Diocese of Leicester Academies Trust (DLAT) Review**

We will have our Annual School Review with the Board of the DLAT (who are ultimately responsible for the school) in early September. Last term we had an extremely positive 'inspection' visit from them – some of you met Carolyn Lewis, the Director of Education at the Diocesan Board of Education, and her colleague, a

former OFSTED inspector. Their feedback about the school was very positive as they were highly impressed with the teaching, learning, partnership work and leadership at our school. We are now working with the DLAT School Improvement Team to ensure that we focus on the few suggestions they made for improving further, e.g. further develop and extend the Early Years outdoor learning environment, ensure a smooth transition from pre-school, review approaches to marking in light of recent government legislation.

### **Mobile replacement**

As many of you know, we have been seeking to replace our mobile building for some time. The costs of this are obviously significant, so we have been pursuing funding opportunities and have made several grant applications to the Department for Education. We are currently awaiting the outcome of our latest bid and remain committed to upgrading this learning environment.

### **Road Safety**

Our Crossing Patrol has been vacant for some time and despite numerous advertisements we have not had any joy in fulfilling the vacancy. It continues to be advertised. Mrs Hopkins has been a conspicuous presence on the main road in her hi-vis, which has had some effect. We have also had visits from the Police. We continue to liaise with the Police, the LA and the Parish Council over the issue of the road and crossing and are making progress on potential solutions.

### **Housing Development**

As you will be aware, there is now significant housing development planned in Waltham and we know that we need to carefully consider the potential impact of this on our school. Following our Governing Body meeting we have issued a letter to you outlining our position – that we are keen to engage with all of the relevant stakeholders to ensure that we continue to be in the midst of any discussions relevant to our school. We will continue to liaise with the DLAT directors who have previously worked at the Local Authority in relation to planning, development and schools. Please be assured that we have good sources of advice close to hand and will keep this as a high priority over the coming year/s.

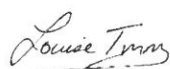
### **School website**

Nigel Smith, our ICT link Governor has been working closely with Mrs Hopkins and a website developer on upgrading our school website. This is something that we have been wanting to do for a while and are excited that it is now coming to fruition. As I'm sure you can imagine, this involves a lot of work, but we are on target for it to be launched for the start of the new academic year in September. Thank you to staff for preparing additional information to be included, children for drawing beautiful pictures and smiling in the photos, and to those parents who have also been helping us with this project.

Finally, thanks to everyone involved with our school this year who have helped the children achieve so much – to the staff for their continued commitment, our Governors for contributing their personal time, the outgoing FOWS Committee for their fundraising, parents who have helped support the school in many ways, and the children who have always tried to do their best.

As always, please free to contact one of us if you have any comments or questions about the work of the Governing Body.

We wish you all a happy and relaxing summer break,



Louise Imm  
Co-Chairs



Mike Alexander