

Governor Newsletter

July 2016

End of Term Farewell

We are now at the end of another busy and exciting term at Uplands. It is time once again to say goodbye to our year 6 pupils, their families and also a number of staff. We hope all our children leave with happy memories of their time at Uplands and, despite all the hard work and SAT tests, have had fun in their last few weeks at school.

Sadly, Mr Craddock and Miss Rahim will not be rejoining us in September. We are very grateful for the contribution they have made at Uplands and wish them well. We would particularly like to wish Miss Rahim a safe and exciting time in her forthcoming travels.

A new member of teaching staff joins us next term, Miss FE Gilbert. (Not to be confused with Miss Gilbert who returned from maternity leave earlier this year.) Later next term, Mr Grytchol will join the school as caretaker when Mr Price retires in the Autumn and earlier this month Mrs Mallin joined the office team to replace Mrs Roberts.

Thank you to all the staff, children, families and friends of the school who have supported Uplands Junior School this year.

Government Proposals for Academies

No doubt you will all be aware of the media coverage over recent months regarding the government's proposal to require all schools to become academies by 2022 (either having achieved this by 2020 or actively working towards it) which was subsequently withdrawn following significant media coverage and debate. The government then identified circumstances it was considering that would require schools to convert to academies in future. I understand how this may be causing concern and uncertainty for parents.

I can assure you that as a Board of Governors we are keeping the situation under review and awaiting, as are other schools, the government's detailed proposals to be published so we can consider them and provide feedback through any consultation process that is put in place. I can also assure you that to date the Board of Governors has not considered any proposals to pursue academy status and that our focus remains on providing the best possible education for all pupils in the school.

Our focus as a Board of Governors is rightly on how we maintain and further enhance the high standards of teaching and learning and the whole school life experience for your child in their time at Uplands. We work closely with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership team to set the school's priorities, to monitor performance and to ensure that all resources available to us are put to best effect for the benefit of your child. We continue to work collaboratively with a number of local schools and the Local Authority to share best practice and to strive for excellence in all aspects of school life.

As and when the government's proposals are developed over the coming months we will keep you informed of our thinking and provide opportunities for feedback if and when any proposals to change our school's status need to be considered.

David Hughes, Chair of Governors

Listening to our Parents and Pupils

We want our children to be happy, feel safe and learn; to be the best they can be at Uplands Junior School. The parent and pupil questionnaires are one of the means that we can assess whether we are meeting the school's aims and find out what is important to you as parents.

Governors were pleased this year to see a positive response to the changes carried out in school over the past year particularly those that were raised as issues in last year's survey.

Safeguarding

Since becoming Headteacher at Uplands Mrs Webster-Smith has introduced a number of measures to safeguard our children. This year changes have focused on site security, safety, drop off and dismissal arrangements. We understand that for a few parents the changes in gate opening and closing times and the restricted car park access has taken time to get used to. However, the parent questionnaire responses have been overwhelmingly positive about these new arrangements. Not only are children safer on site and when leaving school but greater staff presence at dismissal time has given parents more opportunity to talk to staff. This has been well received. We hope we continue to have your support.

Progress and Information to Parents

Some parents last year highlighted the level of progress and the information about their child's progress as a concern. Since then a number of changes have been made including the format and content of school reports and parent evenings. You now have the opportunity to meet with your child's Maths and English set teachers to discuss progress in these specific subjects in both the Autumn and Spring Parent Evenings. This has been well received by parents. The Celebration Day in the Summer term is an opportunity for your child to show their work to you and a chance for you to greet the new class teacher for the next academic year if you wish. We will continue to support plans that enable the school to provide you with more information on your child's progress and guidance on the support you can offer at home.

School Trips

One of the other areas highlighted in 2014-15 was the lack of off site visits for the children. This year all year groups have made visits outside of school. They have been wide ranging and have included trips to the fire station, Grand Theatre, Enginuity, Statford-upon-Avon and many more. In addition to these off site visits Uplands organises numerous visitor workshops in school all of which help to enhance the curriculum and make learning fun.

Healthy Lifestyles

The main issue raised by parents in the recent questionnaire was in relation to Healthy Lifestyles and School Dinners. In the June Newsletter Mrs Webster-Smith gave details of the various initiatives and actions the school has taken in response to these concerns. The School Council and Mrs Webster-Smith have met with the WCC Catering team to discuss ideas for the school lunch menu. One of a number of changes resulting from your comments and the children's will be the introduction of a salad bar at lunch time from September. As governors we will continue to monitor the promotion and teaching of Healthy Lifestyles at Uplands and look at the impact of these changes.

The questionnaires enable us to formally gather the views of parents and pupils at particular points in the year. However, the staff and governors at Uplands welcome your comments and feedback at any time and you are welcome to make an appointment with the class teacher to discuss your child's progress or school report throughout the year.

Parent View

A link to Ofsted's parent questionnaire 'Parent View' can be found on 'Parent' section of the school's website.

www.uplandsjuniorschool.org.uk

Year 6 SAT Results 2016

Congratulations

Last week we were pleased to receive some very positive SAT results for our current Year 6 pupils. These test results are not comparable with previous SAT results that were under an entirely different system of assessment. This is also the first year that the SAT tests have covered the new curriculum, a curriculum that the current year 6 pupils have only studied since it was introduced in year 5. Congratulations to all the Year 6 on their achievements. The previous system of levels used across the country has been replaced with a new standard. Pupils are now assessed as having 'met expected standard' or 'not met expected standard'. Working to a new curriculum and to an unknown standard has meant it has been a challenging year for all involved.

Our thanks go to all the staff and all the year 6 pupils who with the support of parents have worked tremendously hard this year.

	National 2016 % 'met expected standard'	Uplands 2016 % 'met expected standard'
Combined Reading, Writing & Maths	53%	64%
Reading	66%	81%
Writing	74%	84%
SPAG(Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)	72%	89%
Maths	70%	79%

Above are the results of Uplands Year 6 and the National results. The combined results are the percentage of children who have 'met expected standard' in all three subjects - maths, reading and writing. In addition to these results we also have the teacher assessments that have already been given to parents in the school reports and shared with the relevant secondary schools. As governors, we will continue to analyse all the test results for all year groups and identify opportunities to further improve our children's progress and attainment. We are currently working with the Senior Leadership Team to identify school priorities for the next academic year and these results and the Teacher Assessments help to determine our school strategy.

Highlights of the Year

Uplands prides itself on the variety of events and activities which it offers in order to provide an exciting learning environment. These are just a few of the highlights from the year.

Year 3

- * Grand theatre visit
- * Greek day
- * Visit from Zoolab
- * Festival of Sport
- * 3 class assemblies for parents

Year 4

- * Bangra day
- * Grand Theatre visit
- * Enginuity trip
- * Stratford Shakespeare experience
- * Santa's on Strike year group production

Year 5

- * Safeside trip
- * Cardingmill valley trip
- * Ian Billings Author workshops
- * Diwali presentation at Bantock house
- * 3 class assemblies for parents
- * Festival of Sport
- * Polyphone workshop

Year 6

- * Liverpool Beatles experience
- * Cleobury
- * Summer production
- * Leavers Assembly

Some whole school Events

- * M&M Theatre Productions for lower school - Treasure Island and for upper school - Little Princess
- * Grand Theatre Peter Pan Design Technology Competition - Design a ship
- * Visiting author assembly- Ian Billings
- * Christmas and Summer Fairs
- * PJ& Popcorn evening
- * Science week leading to Big Bang trip for the winners
- * Musical celebration concerts x2
- * 4 PTA Disco
- * Christmas parties for every year group
- * Themed lunch days
- * Sports week
- * Carnival Arts week
- * Anti Bullying week
- * Safer Internet day
- * Bikeability (years 5/6)
- * Poetry reading competition - all years
- * Young Voices (yr5/6)

Sporting Events

In addition we have seen fabulous results for the school's sporting teams throughout the year. All the sporting training sessions and events (football, netball, swimming, Tag rugby, cross country, athletics, hockey and more) are enthusiastically attended. Well done to all the children.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

We are very fortunate at Uplands to be able to offer a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs for the children to attend. Unfortunately, some of the clubs have a limited number of places. As well as sporting activities other clubs include Gardening, Film, Computer Programming and more.

Thank you to the staff and parents who organise, support and help with these clubs and events.

Thank you to the PTA

We are extremely lucky at Uplands to have a dedicated number of parents who run the PTA. Each year they successfully raise funds for the benefit of the children.

This year they have purchased one of the two gazebos on the playground. The children are now using these at playtime, the After School Club and as an outside workspace. In addition they have also partly funded the refurbishment of the school library that is now the school's 'Reading Hub.' Thank you to the PTA and all the pupils, parents, friends and families who have generously supported the PTA events. Thank you

ATTENDANCE

Our pupil attendance target has been met

97% pupil attendance for September 2015 to 15th July 2016

Well Done

Uplands School Governors

- Mr Dave Hughes (Chair)
- Mrs Debbie Anslow (Vice Chair)

Parent Governors

- Ms Joanne Harvey
- Mrs Sam Hicks
- Mr Gurmuk Singh
- Dr Wen Wang

Co-opted Governors

- Mr Ramesh Kumar QPM
- Mrs Pat Perry
- Ms Rebecca Pick

Staff Governors

- Mrs Webster-Smith (Headteacher)
- Mrs Bull
- Miss Richards

Associate Governors

- Mrs Shakesheave
- Mrs Walker
- Miss Davis

You are welcome to contact governors through the school office

New Governor Appointments

Two new Governors joined our team this term. Ms **Rebecca Pick** and Mr **Ramesh Kumar**, QPM.

Ms Pick is a parent of a Westacre child and sits on Westacre's Board of Governors. As Westacre is our main feeder school we felt it would be useful to have a representative across both Board of Governors. This year Mrs Pick has been working with year 2 and 3 teachers to review the transition of children from Infants to Juniors. We are also looking at how we can help transition within Uplands and on to secondary school.

Mrs Kumar is a grandfather of children at Uplands and Westacre Infant School, a retired Police Officer and holder of the prestigious Queen's Police Medal. He continues to work voluntarily with the Police Service and local community groups. In addition to a general governor role we are making the most of his expertise on the Health & Safety and Safeguarding Committee.

Wishing you all a relaxing summer break