



JUNE 2019

Governing Body Newsletter

Little Gaddesden C. of E. Primary School

School Celebrates Outstanding Governance Award!



nigla National Governance Association

2019 AWARD for Outstanding vision and strategy

Highly commended

We were delighted to be given a “Highly Commended Award” in the “Outstanding Vision and Strategy” category at the National Governance Association (NGA) Governance Awards, held at the House of Commons in May.

A group of ten governors and staff made the trip to Westminster to collect the Award, where Lord Agnew, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System addressed the audience.

Chair of Governors, Briony Sutcliffe, commented: "Our award celebrates all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes in a successful primary school. We were given the award as a recognition for our ability to set an inspiring vision for our school's future and turn this into a reality.

Really, this is an award for the whole school community; our governors, all the hard working and dedicated staff, supportive parents and friends - and, of course, our fantastic pupils. It was lovely to celebrate with so many people at the tea last week”.

Summarising the school’s achievements, the NGA wrote:

“ With an exemplary approach to strategic development, this board has achieved success in turning vision in to reality. Judges were impressed by the clear, methodological process to vision setting and strategy, led by an experienced governing board in partnership with the senior leaders.

In creating a shared vision, the board collected extensive feedback from parents, pupils and staff. The governing body has a strong understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the school which drive the annual priorities.

Judges recognise the ethos of mutual respect between the board and staff, underpinned by their shared vision. It is very clear that the vision for creative and independent learners is well embedded and implemented across the school, with teachers afforded professional development and autonomy to deliver significant enrichment for pupils.”

Welcome to our

Governing Body newsletter

School Governors form the largest volunteer force in the country, but it’s not always apparent what the role involves. The detail may vary from one school to another, depending on its type and size, but all schools have three core roles in common;

-Making sure the school’s vision is on the right track

-Overseeing the financial performance of the school

-Asking the Head searching questions about the school

You can read more about what this means in practice at Little Gaddesden School in this newsletter.

Governors’ Week 4th to 8th March 2019

An important part of being a governor is making regular visits to school to see it working on a day-to-day basis. This gives governors insight and understanding that are vital if they are to fulfil their strategic role and to be able to ask searching questions at meetings.

Governors held their first “Governors Week” earlier in March this year and focused on a wide variety of topics and events including:

- How newly qualified teachers are mentored within school
- Maths teaching in Class 2
- Review of pupils literacy work books in years 1-6
- Life in the playground at lunchtime
- The Shrove Tuesday Pancake race for pupils
- A review of safeguarding arrangements

Preparations are underway for the next Governors’ Week in mid-June.

Our School Development Plan in 2019

The vision for our school can be summarised as ‘curious thinkers, independent learners, confident individuals gaining excellent results’



Every year the Head and Governors meet to discuss the School Development Plan – a document that sets measurable and timely goals for the continued development of the school. It is the Governors’ responsibility to ensure that these goals are met, and that targets are challenging but achievable.

2018 -19 Priorities

Ensure pupils make excellent progress in reading and writing at Key Stage 2.

Improve Collective Worship in preparation for SIAMs Inspection.

Achieve the Artsmark Accreditation

Support & mentor newly qualified teachers

Summary of Progress

Progress is measured by the SATs results which have just been taken by Year 6. Full results will be available in October 2019. Pupils have been supported through individually tailored interventions.

The SIAMS Inspection, which took place in March, graded the impact of Collective Worship as ‘Good’, noting how “pupil collective worship ambassadors enjoy setting up and leading worship, selecting and saying prayers and reading from the Bible”

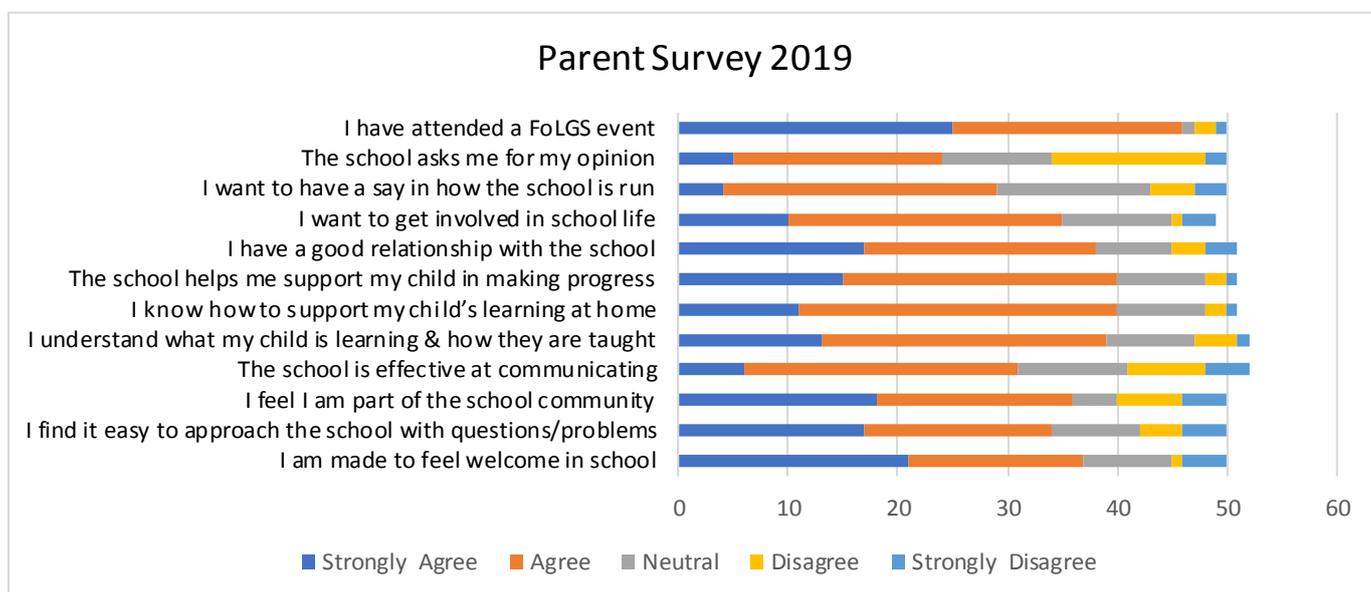
A huge range of activity has taken place this year which will be used to support the Artsmark application. This includes working with the National Theatre to produce the Christmas performance, the artwork exhibited at the National Gallery as part of the “Take One Picture” project, Arts Week, the appointment of Arts Ambassadors, and the Big Draw for classes 1 and 2.

The school has successfully supported 2 members of staff in becoming fully qualified teachers this year.

Feedback from the Parent Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed the Parent Survey in March. There was a really good response (over 50 replies) and many people added useful and constructive comments. Your opinions are very helpful. Governors have reviewed and discussed the results to see if any particular themes or patterns emerged and identify action as a result. A summary of the responses is provided below.

- ◆ The online payments system suggested by some parents is now up and running
- ◆ To further support learning, the school will signpost relevant websites and organise parent workshops again in the near future.
- ◆ A number of parents requested as much notice for trips, visits and events as possible. This was noted, although it will sometimes depend how early the school is made aware of opportunities.



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

The school was visited in March 2019 for its SIAMS inspection. New inspection criteria were released in April 2018 and the headteacher, staff and governors have all worked hard to ensure that the school meets the new criteria as well as responding to issues raised in the previous inspection report.

The inspector judged the school to be 'good' in all areas and made the following observations:

- ◆ The headteacher, vicar and governors have embraced the opportunity to revise the established vision to further develop the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- ◆ The school's Christian character, supported by the Christian values in the Golden Rules, is evident in the day to day life of the school, supporting good relationships and providing a setting in which all are flourishing.
- ◆ Collective worship, whilst being distinctively Christian, is inclusive of all, enabling those of different faiths and beliefs and those with no religious affiliation to participate meaningfully.
- ◆ Religious Education provides a varied curriculum which enables pupils to develop critical thinking, deepening their knowledge and understanding of the Bible.

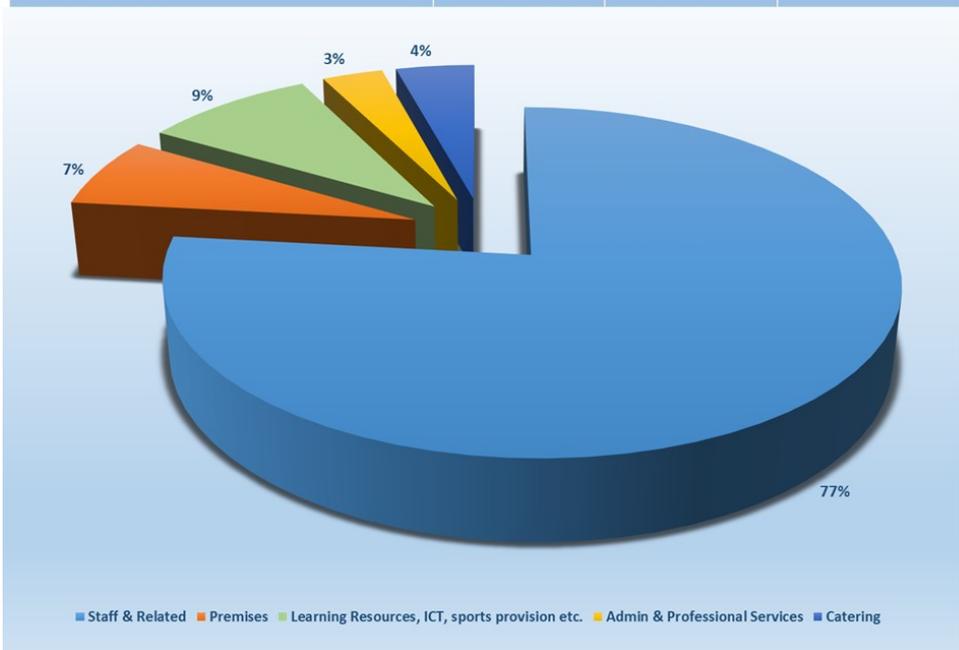
Overseeing school finances

Governors play a key role in ensuring that the school's financial position remains healthy, so that it can continue to provide an excellent education for its pupils and that our school's money is well spent. This involves agreeing a budget at the start of the year and monitoring it regularly to ensure it remains on track. The figures for the end of the last financial year are shown on the table and pie chart on the right.

Many of you will have read in the press about the tight financial position of schools up and down the country. This is also the case at Little Gaddesden school, but we are particularly fortunate to have the ongoing support of the Friends of Little Gaddesden School who do so much throughout the year to raise additional funds.

At the end of the Spring term in 2019 we completed an exercise to compare our school's expenditure with how other local schools spend their money. This is useful to help identify areas where we might be able to make additional savings.

2018-19 FINAL BUDGET POSITION			
Budget Area	Budget 2018-19	Actual Spend 2018-19	% of total expenditure
Staff & Related	£383,853	£411,420	77%
Premises	£43,673	£36,238	7%
Learning Resources, ICT, sports provision etc.	£56,650	£48,630	9%
<i>Comprising:</i>			
<i>Learning Resources</i>	£21,983	£14,594	3%
<i>ICT</i>	£19,925	£15,729	3%
<i>Professional Services (Curriculum)</i>	£14,742	£18,307	3%
Admin & Professional Services	£17,792	£17,357	3%
Catering	£22,680	£22,421	4%
Total Expenditure	£524,648	£536,066	100%
Revenue Income	£518,272	£531,668	
Revenue Balances	£55,626	£51,228	



Governor Vacancy

We currently have a vacancy for a Foundation Governor.

Foundation Governors have a specific responsibility for ensuring that the school's religious character as a Church of England School is preserved and developed.

Along with the rest of the Governing Body, their core role is to:

- Make sure the school's vision is on the right track

- Ask the Head searching questions about the school

Oversee the financial performance of the school

How much time is involved?

The Governing Body meets in full 6 times each year (once every half-term). Typically, meetings are held on a Tuesday evening from 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm.

In addition, each Governor is expected to visit the school each term in school hours and write a brief report (60 mins).

Linked Governors, with a particular responsibility for an area of the curriculum, also have one meeting per term with the subject leader and write a brief report (30 mins).

What skills are required?

You do not need to have experience in or understanding of education to be a Governor.

Training is provided and support is available. A wide range of skills can be useful including; finance, IT, HR, property management, special needs, health and safety, communications and creativity.

Most of all we need people with an interest in education, a willingness to learn and time to commit.

If you would like to learn more about the Governors and how you could play a part in shaping the development of our school, then please speak to Charis Geoghegan or contact our Chair, Briony Sutcliffe.

chair@little.gaddesden.herts.sch.uk



School Policies

Raising Concerns

The Department for Education has just issued new guidance to enable schools to deal with concerns and complaints. The Little Gaddesden policy has been updated in the light of the guidance and is now available on the school website.

If you have a concern, then please get in touch in the first instance, with the School Office (admin@littlegaddesden.herts.sch.uk or T 01442 842464) who can arrange for you to meet with your child's teacher.

Little Gaddesden School
Church Road
Little Gaddesden
Berkhamsted
Herts HP4 1NX

Phone: 01442 842464
Email: admin@littlegaddesden.herts.sch.uk
www.littlegaddesden.herts.sch.uk/

School Sport Premium

The school received £17,000 of central government funding this year, specifically to fund school sport initiatives. The funding has been used in a variety of ways, including:

- Engaging of all pupils in regular physical activity **The new early morning running club, which runs on two mornings a week, uses a new monitoring system so that pupils can record their progress.**
- Raising the profile of PE and sport across the school as a tool for whole-school improvement. **Activity this year has focussed on pupils developing resilience, teamwork, mindfulness and an understanding of how keeping fit and healthy involves the mind and body.**
- Increasing the confidence, knowledge and skills of all staff in teaching PE and sport. **A gymnastics coach has supported staff throughout the spring-term in curriculum lessons and with planning and assessments.**
- Providing broader experience of a range of sports and activities offered to all pupils. **The whole school will go to Phasels Wood this summer for outdoor activities. New sports this year have included archery, volleyball, Bollywood dance, girls football.**
- Increasing participation in competitive sport. **Pupils have been able to take part in a whole range of competitions through partnerships with local secondary schools and the Dacorum School Sports Network.**