Mid- Year Report from the School Governors

We have been busy! Although we have reduced the number of meetings for Governors to improve work-life balance, a lot of work has been undertaken outside of meetings on behalf of the Governing Body.

Unfortunately, David Footman (Parent Governor) stepped down from The Governing Board. This means we have a vacancy for a Parent Governor so if you are interested, please contact Mrs Hooper. You will be given a warm welcome by all Governors!

The two main Committees have been busy focussing on monitoring educational standards and progress, balancing the budget, ensuring value for money and checking that the building and site are appropriate to meet the needs of the school. We have discussed the excellent standards achieved last July by the school and we are keen to see these results, and pupil progress, replicated this year! The Ofsted inspection in September 2019 required Governors to meet with the lead inspector to discuss the performance of the school. The inspector was very impressed with the number of Governors who attended and with our input at the meeting. We were delighted that the Ofsted outcome was maintained as ‘Good’. The new Ofsted framework has made their grading system for schools much more challenging than previously so we were very pleased that West Heath Primary School was rewarded with a good result. Congratulations to all staff and pupils!

Governors have continued to visit school; we attended Parents Evenings in October and February to speak to you about your views of the school. I was very pleased, along with my colleagues Councillor Debbie Clancy, Grace Wight and Barry Hunt, to meet so many of you and to hear your positive views. A Safeguarding Working Party of Governors, led by Sarah Robbins, has been formed and they continue to meet regularly to discuss and monitor safeguarding practice in school. SEN pupils have been visited, meetings with members of staff have taken place to seek their views. I attended The Greatest Snowman KS2 Christmas show – it was amazing! I also attended Year 1 Remembrance Day Assembly which was outstanding and I felt that the pupils developed a good understanding from this event. Sam Marshall represented the Governors when she attended the ‘flu vaccination session last term. The Pupil Premium Governor, Ella Colley, has scrutinised spending and standards for Pupil Premium pupils. Analysis of value for money has been undertaken and we have undertaken a bench-marking activity so we can compare how the pupils at West Heath achieve when compared with other like-for-like schools and the outcome was very positive. We have just appointed a Governor, Grace Wight, to be the Sport/PE Governor and there will be a report from her later in the year. Governors are monitoring pupil progress closely and have requested samples of pupils’ work to look at to support our understanding of reports from school. This has been an extremely helpful activity for us as we can see for ourselves the standards and progress being made. Committee Chairs – Tracey Lawton and Barry Hunt – have continued to report back to the full governing board from Committee Meetings. We have developed good systems for communication between all Governors so everything is shared and understood.

The School Development Plan is being closely monitored by school and Governors. Only a week ago we met with various Subject Leaders who presented an update on their respective aspects of school development. This was informative and enjoyable for Governors and we hope to make this an annual event.

Governors review their own performance through self-analysis meetings and we are about to complete this process in March 2020.

The Governors are now actively working towards achieving Governor Mark which is a national award. I will keep you updated on our progress! It is early days but, at this stage, we are positive.

The West Heath community is very fortunate to have this wonderful new school and I know, from school visits made over the last few months, how proud everyone is to be part of the school. The Head Boy and Head Girl took me on a tour of the school earlier this month and they were extremely proud of their school and all that it offers within the classroom and beyond.

The Governors are continuing to work hard to implement improvement strategies so we are consistently supporting and challenging school and improving our own performance as a Board. We continue to develop an ‘outward looking’ view of governance and to further developing collaborative activities with other schools and Governing Boards. We believe that sharing good practice is a positive way forward for professional development.

Please consider becoming a school Governor at West Heath. This is such an exciting time and we always welcome new ideas and new faces!

I hope the rest of the school year goes well for you and your children in every aspect.

Frances Millett.

Chair of Governors.

February 2020.