

Chair of Governors End of Year Report

As is customary, we have prepared a summary of the year's milestones and achievements. In a 'two heads are better than one' manner, Julia and myself have compiled this between ourselves. The summary includes academic achievements, building and staffing updates and pastoral matters.

Academic:

The culture of the school is very open, with strong relationships of trust between the staff and the governors. While we are very proud of the amazing achievements within the school - especially with reading and writing - we are not complacent and recognise the need to focus on continuing to develop strategies to increase a greater challenge and thus level of understanding (particularly in mathematics) for those capable of working at greater depth.

It has been a very significant year, as, for the first time ever, we have retained year 6. The governors recognise the hard work and thought that went into making that final year very special for the pupils and the subsequent excellent results at Key Stage 2 reflected this. Special praise must go to Ms Drummond and Mrs Taylor, although it is acknowledged that the whole staff were instrumental in making this year so successful.

Building updates:

Work has finished on the outdoor classroom, and we now have a teacher who is fully 'Forest School' trained (Mrs Dinsdale). Many thanks to FOSA for funding the outdoor class, which will soon be in full use as more pupils are able to access the forest school programme.

The new year 6 classroom has performed well, with no 'bedding in' issues, and the classroom arrangement overall seems to be working efficiently.

Staffing update:

We are delighted to say that our permanent teaching staff are proving to be just that! There have been some changes; Diane Brotherston has left us after 23 years: we wish her all the very best for her retirement and look forward to welcoming her back as a volunteer in the non-too distant future. Tina Donovan, who worked alongside Diane for the last year, has now taken the helm and is proving to be a very capable business manager. Replacing Tina in the front office is Lisa, working alongside Valerie, who continues to keep the school running!

Hester and Dilys (teaching assistants), have sadly left us: both to take up teacher training.

Reuben left after 8 years to pursue an alternative career. We wish them all good luck for the future.

Vicky joined us in the summer term as a teaching assistant, and just before half term, we'll be welcoming Debbie-our new teaching assistant.

We said goodbye to three of our governors this year: Rachel, Lian and Ann. We are grateful for their commitment to the school for the last several years. In the summer term we were joined by two new governors: Howard and Paul, and a new parent governor Liz.

Pastoral matters:

In the summer term, Julian Rose, Helen Drummond and several of the governors were privileged to spend a morning in school undertaking 'conversations with children'. This involved asking a randomly selected group of children from each year what they felt their overall experience of school had been so far (high points, low points, memorable events). As I'm sure you could predict, some of the answers were unexpectedly humorous! All the children were incredibly positive about their school experiences, with

highlights including sports day, the goats, and maths problems. The residential trip to Dorset was also very much raved about.

Some of the classes retained the same teacher for two years: this proved to be very successful and so has been repeated with some other classes this year.

Our relationship with Wehoya School in Kenya continues strongly: Miss Woollard and Miss Drummond visited the school in February half term and had a tremendous experience (to say the least). On their return, plans were put in place for one of the Wehoya staff (Miss Brendah) to pay us a return visit. With government funding no longer available for school exchanges, all the pupils have been involved with raising money for her trip over. She is due to come in November and we look forward to her return visit. It is a very great privilege for us to have her here, and I'm sure that the children will benefit a great deal culturally from learning more about Wehoya from her. I'm also sure that Miss Brendah will learn a lot from us, although as those pupils that join us from other primary schools have noticed: 'things are done differently here!'

It is, indeed, a joy to be involved with West Chiltington Community School.

Finally, a huge thank you to FOSA, who continue to raise much needed further funds for the school. Thanks also to the sterling groups of volunteers who come in to help with reading, knitting and looking after Alfie and Basil. Remember, many hands make light work - please do help out if you have any free time. Offers of volunteering are never refused!

Julia and Julian 2018