

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Volunteers,

Welcome to our first governor newsletter of the new school year. Welcome too, to all of our families, especially our new families. We look forward to working with you to ensure our schools are fantastic places for all of our children.

The full Governing Board met for the first time this academic year on 11 September 2023 and the minutes from our meetings of 05 June & 17 July will be available soon to view on the school websites. At this meeting we set up the board processes and arrangements for the year and started to plan our work.

Safeguarding

The Governing Board is committed to ensuring that all children feel safe, and stay safe, at school and we would like to thank you for supporting us with this, and with the measures the safeguarding leads have put in place. We heard about some of the teething problems with some of these measures, especially when parents are entering school for events. We know the school team will work to streamline these operational issues so that children stay safe and you all get in to our brilliant school events in good time. Thank you for your patience and cooperation. It is appreciated.

Our safeguarding policy is published on both school websites. This is due to be reviewed at our next meeting in early October but is always available for you to view. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for us to discuss at each meeting and, as a board, we have seen a greater focus on whole school awareness of all aspects of safeguarding from site security, to staff training to record keeping. We would like to pass on our thanks to our dedicated Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) at both schools and to thank all of the staff at both schools for their commitment to keeping our children safe from harm.

If you need any more information about safeguarding at the school, or you need to speak with someone about your child, please contact the class teacher in the first instance and they will be able to help.

Governance Structure & GDPR

During the meeting, governors discussed and confirmed the plans for the governance structure for the coming year and agreed the monitoring plans. The Board is following the circle model of governance where there are monthly meetings (9 across the year). In these, lead governors focus on their priority areas and share monitoring information with the board so evaluations can be made. This helps us identify our priority areas and the progress made towards improving these. More information can be found on the governor pages of the school websites.

At this meeting, the board elected Rachel Caseby & Natalie Henderson as Co-Chairs of Governors, and Beverley Fulton as Vice Chair, for this year.

We were able to approve the schools' Data Protection policy at the meeting and were pleased to hear about the review that is underway to improve the security and data protection across both schools. Thank you to the school staff for this important work.

Curriculum Updates

We discussed the current curriculum priorities at both schools. At John Hampden the curriculum is well developed and reviews are taking place across subjects on a regular basis. Our children display excellent understanding of grammar, however spelling has been raised as an area that requires support. We have also identified the need to focus on KS2 Maths this year so these will be part of our monitoring work. At Tetsworth, we were delighted to hear that the new members of staff had settled in well and we look forward to seeing the impact of the Cornerstones curriculum framework this term. Initial feedback has been very encouraging.

Parent & Pupil Voice

It is important to us that we hear from children and their families about how they feel about our schools. We will be conducting regular surveys to give you the opportunity to share your thoughts on topics such as the learning environment, safeguarding and school dinners, so do look out for these. If you would prefer to share any views or concerns via email though, please contact us on jhtgovernors@gmail.com.

With best wishes,

Natalie Henerson and Rachel Caseby
Co-Chairs