



The Kenn & Kenton Federation



GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER

MAY 2014

There has been much to enjoy and write about following a busy spring term for children, staff and the governing body. The term began with the launch of 'Be the Best you can Be', all the children being captivated by the visit of Craig Figes and the many others who delivered memorable, inspiring stories to children during the term. The children certainly got the message that hard work, dedication and commitment can enable dreams to be achieved. Their learning will continue this term as they follow up their plans and aspirations.

The Kenton Easter production was enjoyed by children, staff and parents and we would like to thank everyone involved for an enormous amount of hard work in making it such a successful show.

Both schools parents associations have been extremely active in raising funds for our schools. For Kenn, the Spring Food and Fun Fayre was a great success, attracting people from surrounding villages too. The stall holders were all local and ranged from soups to blueberries, to fudge and salads! The children had a variety of things to do including pizza making, biscuit decorating, tattoos, hair braiding and face painting. The Spring Fayre, quiz night and Friday sales, when combined with last terms fundraising, enabled Kenn PTA to give school £2200 towards the new outdoor classroom. Kenton School Parents Association (KSPA) rounded off the term with a school disco which the children loved; a few parents were spotted dancing too! This term KSPA have given £2500 towards projects that include restocking of the library, creating a quiet area for the younger children, wet playtime equipment, coaches for KS2 swimming and lunchtime sport activities in the playing field. In addition they continue contribute £5 per child per year in order to subsidise school trips. We would like to acknowledge and thank both parents associations along with the parents/carers that support them, for their incredible hard work to raise the level of funds that they do, the amount of money is phenomenal given the size of our schools.

The School Data Dashboard figures are now available. This information provides a snapshot of the school performance at KS1 and KS2. The intention is that this data complements the Ofsted inspection and provides analysis of results over a three year period. However, for schools with cohorts as small as ours, where one child can represent between 7-20% of the year group, such data must be interpreted in context. Both Kenn and Kenton are extremely proud of their inclusive ethos and at times this will impact on the School Data Dashboard

During the spring term both Jan Caig and Warren Knight attended courses relating to their chair duties. Jan went on a Chairs Update and Warren attended the Finance for School Governors. Both courses focus on the development of skills needed to be a proactive member of the governing body, promoting a questioning and challenging approach to running the Federation. Jan heard the latest news from Devon's Director of Education and Learning as well as information on the Education

'Have Fun – Aim High'

Infrastructure Plan and the implications for our schools. Warren's session is suitable for governors wanting to have an overview of school finance and areas covered include education budget and formula funding, budget cycle and school budget structure, content and monitoring. After attending a course, governors complete a feedback form and report back at the next Full Governors Meeting (FGM). In addition to the specifics of the individual courses, attendance at these courses gives the opportunity to network with governors from other schools.

The main focus of the Spring term has been on monitoring. School governing bodies are created by law and their roles and responsibilities are set out in law. As such the governing body will help to set and keep under review through monitoring, the broad framework within which the Head teachers and staff run the school. Governors each have areas/subjects of responsibility and will visit school to evaluate development in this area whilst taking into account the key issues within the school improvement plan. During these visits we ask challenging questions to ascertain the schools effectiveness in helping children to progress and achieve the highest standards they can. Carol Smith, Barry Cripps, Nicola Amos and Julie Gibbs all carried out governor visits to school during the spring term. Carol visited Kenn and Kenton, her agenda being focused on SEN, meeting with Mrs Martin and Mrs Somerwill. Barry, in his role as Foundation Governor, visited Kenn to observe common worship. Nicola and Julie met with Mr Swait to assess the 'Narrowing the Gap' agenda, linked to the school improvement plan.

In addition to monitoring visits, we are keen to continue to develop community links. Nicola Amos is the governor with responsibility for these links and there is now so much to be gained from the shared interests of Kenn and Kenton Primary Schools and the Federation. One of the driving forces behind the decision to federate was to retain the individuality of each village school and its importance at the heart of the community. Our children stand to gain so much from being part of a small school – every child matters and they can make friends across their school and not just in their peer group. With this in mind we are seeking to form a community forum within each school to focus on building upon our strong sense of community and making the most of all the opportunities which arise from our village settings. At Kenton, such a forum has existed for some time comprising of parents from each year group who act as representatives and are able to raise any ideas or concerns which come their way in a confidential setting. The forum has now been widened to take in representatives from the village community including our local councillor. A new forum will be set up at Kenn during this term and representatives are being sought to join. If you feel you would like to contribute, please put your name forward to Mr Swait.

We approach the summer term with continuing motivation to further develop and progress both schools. We will continue to arrange monitoring visits with Linda Baker, Leigh Mansfield and Barry Cripps planning to visit math's coordinators. Nicola, Jane and Jan Caig are due to attend finance updates, Carol a course on SEN legislation, Julie a day on teachers pay and performance and Jan Caig an HR update. All in all we have a busy term ahead and look forward to feeding back to you in the next newsletter.

Enjoy the summer term!

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