

*Reviewing past and ongoing achievements and planning for the future
JULY 2015*

Who are we?

Queens' Federation governors are elected by the Queens Edith and Emma parents, staff, the local authority, our community partners and the Governing Body itself.

What are we doing?

Our formal role is to provide a strategic view of where our schools are heading, and to hold them to account for the education they provide.

When do we do it?

Full Governing Body meetings are held twice a term. Sub-committees meet ahead of full meetings to focus particularly on: (1) School Improvement; (2) Resources; and (3) Management & Communications.

Parent governors are elected by parents of children at the two schools. We are not delegates and other parents cannot dictate how we should vote or what we should say in governing body meetings, but we are here to listen to and represent parents' views and to report back to parents from the governing body. *The Guv* is one way in which we seek to do that.



Comment boxes have been positioned in the Reception areas of both schools. Parents and carers are invited to post any comments (positive or negative) or suggestions they would like to bring to the governors' attention. These can be anonymous.



School development is an area to which we pay particular attention. This school year we have been focussing on the following: improving teaching and learning; developing inclusion; enriching the curriculum; improving behaviour; developing marking and feedback to pupils and offering them different levels of challenge; and strengthening school leadership. Expertise is being effectively shared across the two schools and classroom learning environments have been improved.

We have been impressed by the launch of new initiatives to encourage parents to get more engaged in supporting their children's learning, and to help children develop growth mindsets to develop self-belief and self-confidence.



Link governors. A new system of link governors has established strong relationships between individual governors and particular year groups at our schools. In practical terms this has involved a variety of activities over the school year, including observing lessons, talking to the teachers and the children, reading with individual children, and attending class assemblies, productions and open days.

All link governors have been admiring of the teachers and teaching assistants they have spent time with and have felt the benefit of the fresh perspective on their role as a school governor.



Preparation for Ofsted. From September 2015 there will be a new Ofsted framework. 'Good' schools like ours will be visited every three years. That visit will be for one day and the school will receive notice the day before. The inspectors will be particularly interested to look at children's books to review pupil progression and to meet as many members of the Governing Body as are available.



Pupil Premium is additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers. The Queens' Federation has an average of 3-4 Pupil Premium funded children in each class. We have been pleased to note how rigorously the class teachers monitor the progress of these children and ensure that they receive the additional support that is so valuable to them.

Budget challenges. As the new financial year begins, we report that once again, the Queens' Federation has managed to make ends meet, balancing the books for last year and in setting next year's budget. However, the underfunding of schools in Cambridgeshire continues and local schools, especially larger schools such as ours are hit hardest of all. Queen Edith and Queen Emma each receive approximately £300,000 less, per year, than the average budget for primary schools elsewhere in the country, while being expected to provide the same quality of education. We continue to tighten our belts...



Behaviour has been another area that has been closely looked at this year at the schools. Detailed behaviour reports and charts have been drawn up to help identify challenging or difficult behaviour in the older children (at Key Stage 2) at Queen Edith when it first starts to appear and to ensure a consistent cross-school approach to dealing with it. We have been pleased to note a significant improvement in behaviour among some children as the year has progressed.



Attendance at school has improved this year and is currently 96.0% at Queen Edith and 95.4% at Queen Emma.

Good attendance has a huge impact on children's progress and achievement and so on their life chances. We encourage parents to continue to help us promote good attendance by

- only keeping children off school for genuine illness
- not allowing days off for shopping or birthdays
- not taking holidays in term-time
- where possible, arranging medical and dental appointments after school and in the holidays
- establishing good routines in the morning to avoid a rush to get to school on time.

<http://queenemmaschool.org.uk/uploads/Policies/Attendance%20Policy%20March%202014.pdf>



Assessment of children's progress in schools is in a state of transition across the country. We are moving from the previous system of assessment by levels (described by Minister of State for Schools, Nick Gibb as 'vague and imprecise') to assessment without levels. The Queens' Federation, while seeking to develop a new approach, will continue with a balance of teacher assessment and testing to monitor and assess pupil progress. This year, at the Foundation Stage at Queen Emma and at Key Stages 1 and 2 at Queen Edith, our teacher assessments have been moderated. The moderators have been extremely positive about how well our teachers know the children, and the thoroughness and accuracy of their assessments.



In-house catering. Since September 2014 all pupils in Reception and KS1 have been entitled to a free school meal. As a result, uptake across both schools is currently at around 80%. The huge increase in lunch provision has not been without its challenges but we are pleased at the continued success of the in-house catering operation.



Goodbye, thanks and congratulations

Goodbye, good luck and thank you to

Governors: Abi Crampton and Jutta Brueck, who are stepping down.

Teachers: Mrs Bryant and Miss McCabe who have provided maternity cover at Queen Edith; Matthew Wood who is moving to teach abroad; and Rachael Bartrop who is moving to the new university school.

We offer our congratulations to:

Veronica Clifford, who is moving from Queen Emma to Queen Edith to become the KS1 Team Leader; Charlotte Wilkins who will become Middle Years Team Leader at Queen Emma; and Cathy Anns, who is joining Queen Edith to teach Reception and become the new Early Years & Foundation Stage Team Leader.