

# GOVERNOR NEWS

Dunton and Wrestlingworth Church of England (VC) Lower Schools

## Letter from the Chair

By Clare Neale, Chair of Governors

As we celebrate our first anniversary as a Federated Governing Body, I look back at a year of meetings, discussions, decisions, meetings and more discussions! We have worked extremely hard this year and have made incredible progress restructuring ourselves and introducing joint policies.

Both schools continue to have an OFSTED rating of "Outstanding" and the Governing Body works closely with Mrs Curry and her staff to ensure that standards remain excellent. I am confident that we will continue to provide a challenging and safe environment for our pupils.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for 2012.

### Changes within the Governing Body

*Since the summer term we have said goodbye to Amanda Allard and Sue Myler. Our thanks go to both Amanda and Sue for their valuable contributions to the Governing Body during their time with us.*

*Following the recent Parent Governor nominations, Penny Kirkpatrick joins us representing Wrestlingworth School. Penny has been a school governor in Cambridgeshire for 10 years and brings a wealth of experience from the education sector.*

*Jonathan Elwood joins us representing Dunton School. Jonathan brings considerable experience in the public sector as a Legal Advisor.*

*We can also announce that Cheryl Greenhalgh (previously parent governor) has become an Associate Governor of the Governing Body, working with the Marketing Committee.*

### The Role of a Governor

The role of the school governor is demanding but very rewarding and is a good way to give back to your local community. School governing bodies are responsible for working with the school to ensure that it delivers a good quality education. Together with the Headteacher, who is responsible for day-to-day management, they set the school's aims and policies.

Governors have three main roles:

- To provide strategic direction for the school
- To act as a critical friend to the Headteacher
- To ensure accountability

They also carry out a number of other important duties, which include:

- Determining how the school's budget is spent
- The appointing and dismissing of staff
- Hearing appeals and grievances
- Forming policy on the school's curriculum and collective worship
- Setting standards for pupils' behaviour and discipline
- Making sure school buildings are welcoming and safe
- Setting and monitoring the school's aims and policies

### School Development Plan

The aims and objectives of the schools are agreed by the governing body and Headteacher and these goals are written into a School Development Plan. The governing body is structured into smaller sub-committee groups and these governors continually review, monitor and evaluate progress against the agreed targets. The main sub-committees are *Finance, Personnel, Health, Safety and Premises, Curriculum and Marketing and Communications*

### In the Spotlight: Margaret Tisdale - Vice-Chair of Governors

*Margaret joined the governing body of Wrestlingworth School as a community governor in 2004. Currently she is Vice-Chair of the federated governing body. Margaret worked for over 30 years in research and management in the Pharmaceutical industry. She enjoys school visits to observe the work of the children and the school productions.*

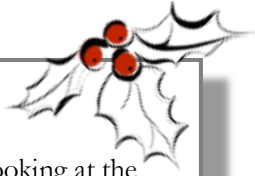
### How to Contact the Governors

We always welcome the opportunity to hear from parents. If there is something you wish to discuss with us, please send a letter into the School Office addressed to *Clare Neale, Governing Body*. We will collect letters and you will receive a personal reply. You can also email us, please send to: [cneale@duntonwworth.cbeds.co.uk](mailto:cneale@duntonwworth.cbeds.co.uk)

### Curriculum Committee Update

Recently the curriculum committee have been looking at the new RE syllabus which Central Bedfordshire have introduced into schools. We are constantly evaluating our progress and have a commitment to ensure that the curriculum is broad and creative and pupils achieve their potential.

*Clare Neale, Curriculum Chair*



## Marketing and Communications



*By Matt Skirving, Marketing and Communications Chair*

Over the past year the committee has worked hard in creating a uniform style and way of communicating for the Governing Body. We have developed templates for all policies and communications and established our own brand which we continue to develop as we move forward.

The year ahead looks very exciting with work already happening on redeveloping the school websites with an intention that the two sites become one. We have also started to redevelop the school prospectus which will go out to prospective parents and pupils when they show an interest in the schools. The new prospectus will be launched in 2012 ready for the September 2013 intake.

The Marketing Committee is very keen to gather information from parents and pupils so the Governing Body can ensure that our strategy for the future reflects both what our schools really need and require. Please look out for questionnaires in the near future which will help us plan, gauge and monitor our success.

## Finance Committee

*The Finance Committee works closely with the school secretary/bursars of both schools to plan and monitor the individual budgets for each school and ensure return deadlines are met. This year Central Beds Council decided schools should no longer be centrally funded through the LA banking arrangements. This meant that our schools had to become fully-funded by the 1st April, each setting up and managing their own bank account. This has involved a significant increase in Bursar duties for each school.*

*We are currently looking at the new audit procedures (The Schools Finance Value Standards) introduced from September 2011 which need to be adopted by the 31st March 2012. We are also exploring ways of obtaining further funding for future projects.*

*Margaret Tisdale, Finance Chair*

## Premises

### Health & Safety

The Premises Committee have had quite a few challenges this year. Dunton School required some major building work to eliminate the damp problem in the main school building. All the exterior and interior plaster had to be removed and replaced, along with the pipework and windows. The work was paid for by the Local Authority and has now been completed. We're now planning the second phase which includes adding a meeting room/office and library. Many thanks to Mrs Curry and all the staff at Dunton for ensuring everything was ready for the start of term.

For Wrestlingworth School we are looking at plans to create a staff/meeting room by refitting the kitchen area to provide more space. We're gathering quotes and hope to have more news on that soon.

*Paul Taylor, Premises, Health & Safety Chair*

## Our Faith

The schools have a very strong relationship with their Parish Churches and enjoy using them for special services and celebrations. Three of the four Foundation Governors are appointed by the Church Council and the Revd Lindsay Dew is an Ex Officio member.

Revd Dew leads Collective Worship each week in both schools and also pops in from time to time. Both churches welcome the opportunity to support the schools and are always kept informed as to events taking place. The history of both schools lay in the Christian faith and this informs and supports the teaching and learning today.

