



CPD Federation Newsletter

GOVERNORS IN SCHOOL DAY

Governors visited both schools back in March to see the practice of the schools and get to meet as many stakeholders as possible. Thank you to the parents for attending each meeting. At our Board meeting later that evening we had discussions about the comments you made and what we can do to address some of those points. I am pleased to note that there were also many positive comments being made by the parents in appreciation of what staff and the school have been doing for them as families and their children. There was also the informal opportunity for Dersingham staff to meet Governors over breakfast. Governors appreciated your honesty in conversations and have the opportunity to put some faces to names.



Governors were really pleased with the work going on at each school and could clearly see the improvements from this time last year. Governors are volunteers and they are not necessarily experts in education but they were able to note improvements in the environment, the focus on learning, good behaviours and generally impressed with the determination of us all to make a difference to children's lives. This came through the Governor Link conversations had with a number of you as well.

The majority of Governors have full-time jobs and therefore whilst they cannot be in the schools as regularly as they want, they do fulfil their statutory roles and always want the best for all children. They will challenge the Executive Team but it is a joint effort and they acknowledge that we are all working together; pushing ourselves to think out of the box to try new ideas and staff do put the children first. Staff will know, and I am sure parents will too, working in schools is not an 8:30 to 3:30 job. Governors have heard how so many of you work well beyond those hours in times of need as well as to just help make things better. It does not go unnoticed.

Associated with Governance, the Parent and Staff Councils have been established and seem to be working effectively to date. They will take a few more terms to fully become established but it has been a great start. A gentle reminder that whilst 'issues' may be discussed within a formal structure it is not a place to just raise issues. These should be done through other routes. The main purpose is to help shape policies and school processes and each agenda will be focused on these areas. I will also take the opportunity to point out that actions taken will not always be seen immediately but we aim to ensure that there is some communication around 'You Said, We Did' so you know at what stage we might be in making any changes to school policy or processes. We can all be a cog in the improving system—whether a big cog or small cog!

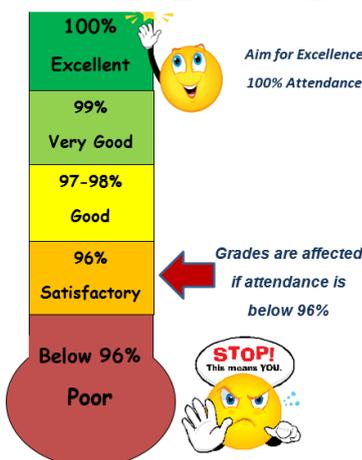


IMPROVING ATTENDANCE

In the last newsletter I highlighted that each school has been working very hard to improve attendance over the last 12 months and we appointed an Education Welfare Officer (Nav Gill) at the start of the year to help us tackle absence, especially persistent absence.

I am really pleased to see that both schools continue to improve their attendance; with Central Park just above the national average at this point in the year and Dersingham hovering around the national average. Thank you for your help in this but remember whilst we aim for 96% attendance to match the national this really is still only a satisfactory level. We should be aiming for 100% - attendance matters for your child's learning. Please continue to ensure any leave or appointments are outside school dates.

ATTENDANCE



TESTING TIMES—YEAR 2 and YEAR 6 SATs



Next half term the children in Year 6 and Year 2 will be sitting their SATs. Can I take this opportunity to advise you to support and encourage your children during this time but not to put them under pressure, ensure they have a good night's sleep by going to bed at a sensible time and ensure they get a good, hearty breakfast. You can also support the children by assisting them with timetables and sitting with them and reading each evening.

Ramadan will fall during this SATs period and some of the older pupils may fully observe this by fasting. Whilst we respect your decision as a parent for your child to fast, it might make a difference if for those few days you recognise that the later nights, getting up early in the morning and not eating could affect the performance of your child during these tests.

Year 6 SATs will be held 13-16 May whilst Year 2 SATs will probably be held during the final two weeks of the half term 13-24 May .

SCHOOL DATES



A reminder, the Easter holidays begin **Monday 8th April until Monday 22nd April**. Children return to school on **Tuesday 23 April 2019**. There is also a second Bank Holiday next half-term on **Monday 6th May** when school will be closed. The dates for the rest of this year and the next academic year are on each school's website. Please use these to plan any holidays.

WELL-BEING AWARD FOR SCHOOLS



You should be aware that Rachel Egbulonu, and the team she worked with at Central Park, helped us gain an award for tackling Mental Health and Wellbeing, with our practice in this area described as exemplary. Congratulations to everyone involved. We want to build on this and start to embed some of the practice across the Federation.

SOCIAL ISSUES

It can not have escaped anyone that there are a number of issues happening in society as a whole that are worrying—whether that is knife crime on the streets, drug issues, the dangers of the internet, homelessness, poverty, etc.—and schools are being asked to address more and more of these themselves. We are very aware we have a part to play in helping address some of these issues but we can not do it alone. Our staff do go the extra mile in supporting children and families, ensuring that they report things when they have to, offer or signpost to advice and guidance or just be a listening ear when it is needed.

Many of these social issues are included in Acts that mean schools have duties they have to perform and failure to do so could cause problems for schools but more importantly could leave a child in danger or at risk of harm. In the last newsletter I raised the point that schools will do what they have to do when they have concerns about safety. Whilst I have seen many staff dealing with some disturbing issues some of them may have been easier to deal with earlier. In recent weeks, Dersingham have been very proactive in engaging parents on a new level, trying to help sort out problems before they have developed and grown into something less manageable. Having this open dialogue about problems or worries is essential. No-one is going to pass judgement on personal circumstances and I have seen the level of care and attention given to children and parents. This is unquestionable and shows how much staff want to help. Central Park also do this; having a wider team to help deal with things through the pastoral teams and perhaps having had longer to establish relationships with families over many years has resulted in many situations not escalating and being resolved.



ENJOY THE EASTER BREAK

Wishing everyone an enjoyable Easter break next week. For those of you working I hope you might get some time off to enjoy some of the break with your children. Some staff are giving up some of their time to support your children in achieving the best they can in SATs. A massive thank you to those staff doing so. A reminder parents, you can do your bit with the basics of mental arithmetic, times-tables, reading and spelling at home. Working in partnership is so important.

Darren Williams, Executive Headteacher