



Seal
Church of England
Primary School

At Seal we feel we matter and are valued.
Together we achieve and succeed.

Seal Church of England Primary School

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Dear Parent/Carer

Hello – my name is Paul Thompson, and I have recently become Chair of Governors at Seal Primary School. I wanted to write to you on behalf of the governing body to give you a short update on what's been happening at the school from a governor perspective.

Ofsted

The governing body were delighted with the outcome of the Ofsted inspection. The inspector was highly complimentary about the school and confirmed that we are on a very promising trajectory. The inspector praised the school's creative and innovative curriculum, something, of which we are especially proud. ***'The curriculum you provide is a significant strength. Pupils are given a wide range of exciting learning opportunities that capture their imaginations and stimulate them'***.

A team of governors were interviewed as part of the inspection, which was a challenging few hours but I'm pleased to say the inspector stated that the governors know the school and challenge effectively.

The inspector highlighted two significant areas for development that are really affecting the school's ability to progress further. The first was around the gender gap in attainment, specifically as it relates to writing. This is a national trend and something we have been aware of at Seal for some time. The school has specific objectives in relation to this and the inspector acknowledged that the data was improving, showing that these initiatives are coming to fruition.

The second development area was in relation to attendance. Our attendance figures have been disappointing and limiting our ability to progress. This has been an issue at Seal for some time and the governing body, along with the school's senior leadership team, are spending a significant amount of time considering how we can improve in this area. For example, we cannot be considered for an "Outstanding" Ofsted rating unless attendance improves significantly.

Parents obviously also have a part to play in getting the children to school, and I will be writing to you in the new school year to stress the importance of attendance, and parental responsibilities in this area.

Overall, we should all be proud of the outcome of the Ofsted inspection. On behalf of the governing body, I would like to thank Mrs Mitchell, the staff of the school and most importantly the children for making the inspection such a success.

Governing Body update

Nicky Harvey has recently resigned from the governing body in advance of her ordination. I know Nicky is known to many parents and within the wider Seal community. We would like to wish her all the very best with her new career and thank her for her time, energy and commitment to school.

We currently have a number of governor vacancies and will be undertaking a skills audit to better understand where we have gaps in governor knowledge and experience before we look to fill these vacancies. We are looking for at least one new parent governor, if this is something that interests you please do get in touch with Mrs Mitchell who can provide more information.

School Development

We have embarked on the process of defining the school's objectives for the next academic year. This process began with a meeting in June where the school's senior leaders, staff and governors evaluate the school's effectiveness for the last academic year and determine the areas requiring focus for next year. The work at this meeting is developed into the School Improvement Plan ('SIP') which is used over the course of the year to track progress and determine where governors will focus their monitoring activities.

Governors regularly visit the school to monitor the SIP and the school's assessment of its effectiveness. Most recently, governors have been monitoring the lunchtime experience and have found that due to increased staff, structured activities and a quiet place to eat lunch for some pupils; lunchtime incidents have reduced by 65%.

Certain governors have specific areas of focus depending on their interests and experience. For more information about the governors and their backgrounds, please see the school website.

Next year the School Improvement Plan will continue to focus on attendance; we will also be developing character development. Mrs Mitchell and her team will give you more information on this at the start of the next academic year.

TES Nomination

I want to congratulate Mrs Mitchell and her team for their TES School Award's nomination for 'Creative School of the Year'. This is a highly respected national award programme and, regardless of the result, it is a fantastic achievement to even be nominated. Mrs Mitchell and staff enjoyed their star-studded evening at the Grosvenor Hotel in London, and although we were not an award winner we will keep trying!

Other updates

There has been interesting activities taking place at the school recently, I specifically want to mention the school's involvement in university research projects and our evolving partnership with Sevenoaks School. Both provide the school with opportunities to enhance our curriculum: - the research projects by understanding better how children learn and develop, and the Sevenoaks School partnership by providing valuable insight and access to equipment and facilities.

The Den Day, organised by Miss Fermor was a huge success and thoroughly enjoyed by all pupils. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the event personally, but Anne Le Bas did so on behalf of the Governing Body. The feedback she gave was great!

I want to close by saying what a great year we've had a Seal. The staff and children should be proud of what's been achieved. I wish everyone a restful (and hopefully sunny!) summer and look forward to the challenges that next year brings.

Paul Thompson

