



Ravenfield Primary Academy
LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
NEWSLETTER
For Parents and Carers

April 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

Since our last LGB newsletter, governors have met twice. Our meetings alternate between full meetings of the Local Governing Body and discussions at RAC (Raising Attainment and Curriculum) meetings. Unlike some schools where RAC meetings are attended by just a few governors, there is such interest in *everything* we discuss at Ravenfield, that *all* governors do their best to come along to all types of meetings and take part in training events to keep up to date with all manner of developments!

The Chair of governors very much enjoyed meeting many of you at the parent's evenings in March. Your comments, including on slips that some of you kindly completed, were discussed with both Mrs Hepworth and at a governor's meeting. One area that could be '*even better if . . .*' was provision of more equipment in the outdoor areas at breaks and lunchtime. We are all indebted to the Friends of Ravenfield Group who, you will have seen in the school newsletter, had recently provided funds to buy this very much needed equipment. Lots of you commented on the friendly atmosphere, improved communication on children's learning and pastoral matters in school. The improvements to the learning environment around school were also being noticed. Governors too are pleased to see the way in which these areas are developing. Governors make focussed visits from time to time during the working day to observe first hand the impact of the many developments that we are hearing about in our meetings. We also feedback on a range of activities in and outside the school day. This helps us all to gain a real insight into the daily working of our academy, but importantly then informs the primarily *strategic* decisions upon which governance must focus.

At all RAC meetings, governors receive the most up to date information on **children's attainment and progress**, although we *never* discuss individual children. Academy leaders welcome the very searching questions that governors ask about the impact of actions taken and the next steps planned to address any issues that emerge, following analysis and external reviews. Governors are always very focussed on knowing what the staff will be doing to accelerate progress where children are not yet on track to attain nationally expected standards. We are all mindful however, that for reasons which will always be discussed with you, some children may find it harder to reach the national standard, but at Ravenfield we also have many children with the capacity to far exceed that standard. If the anticipated changes to the Ofsted

inspection framework come into force after the current national consultation, in future RAC meetings will also be focussing on how the Curriculum is structured. It was encouraging to the LGB to know that Ravenfield staff will benefit from joint working across the whole trust in the development of a revised curriculum. More about this in future newsletters.

Charging and Remissions policy - from time to time, parents ask about or suggest different approaches to how educational visits are funded. Governors decided that it was timely to mention that the arrangements for funding visits, including how we are *only* allowed to ask for *voluntary* contributions, are governed by very strict regulations to which Ravenfield must adhere. In common with other Trusts, Maltby Learning Trust has a Charging and Remissions policy which meets the statutory requirements and is published on the MLT website and on our own academy website too. In line with the regulations mentioned, the academy ensures that the cost is calculated per child with no additional cost to subsidise any family who might not be able to contribute at that time. Any subsidy required is taken directly from the school budget. This is why we remain immensely grateful to all those parents who support us by making the voluntary contributions to ensure the visit can take place.

At one recent meeting we received several reports on the **academy's financial position** at this stage in the year, information about the likely budget available to us from September 2019 and the detailed process being undertaken to arrive at the final budget for 2019-20. Governors discussed reports in detail, and heard about the discussions taking place at academy and trust level to minimise the impact on provision in all the MLT schools of reduced funding levels, including following the introduction of a new national funding formula and some charges that are outside the control of the trust. Whilst the MLT is legally required to set a balanced budget overall, individual academies can and do benefit from some flexibility in allocating funds across trust schools according to specific needs at the time. The significant costs of the refurbishment of Y5 and Y6 area and upgrading our computer suite are examples of the benefit of being part of a trust, as our own funding could not have met the cost of these improvements. Given the national indicators of relative advantage and disadvantage in the communities that all schools serve, Ravenfield attracts very little additional funding. However, parents could really help us to make sure that we are getting absolutely every pound

to which the school is entitled by applying for free school meals benefit if there is *even* the slightest chance you may be entitled. This is still important even though currently all children up to Y2 receive universal free meals, as our pupil premium grant is dependent upon the number of children registered for FSM. Please don't hesitate to speak in confidence to a member of the office staff who will be able to guide you how to apply. *Thank you for supporting us in this way.*

Another issue that governors have discussed recently is our **Academy Website**. There are a number of pieces of information that are statutorily required to be published and after thorough checks, governors are confident our website meets these requirements. However, the website is much more than a place to post required information. A review of some key aspects of the website has been going on and a number of documents updated to reflect current practice. A plan is now also in place to gradually work through the site and ensure this becomes a place easily to access information that you or prospective parents may need to know and, importantly too, to celebrate everything that is happening at Ravenfield. Our survey and your recent comments would indicate that many of you agree with governors that whilst there is still some way go to with accelerating pupil progress, there *is much* to celebrate. Thank you to everyone who is making this happen.

*With best wishes from
Members of the Local Governing Body*

MEMBERS OF YOUR LOCAL GOVERNING BODY		
LGBs in all MLT Primary Academies are currently made up of 12 members, but this is under review which explains why vacancies are being held open.		
Elected Parent governors	Appointed Community/ Business governors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Brighton • Lynsey Hobson (Vice Chair) • Vacancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liz Buxton (Chair) • Steve Davis • Vacancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachael Marsh • Emma Peach • Vacancy
Elected Staff governors	Academy Principal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Brown • Vacancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Hepworth is automatically an LGB member 	

Ravenfield Primary Academy Moor Lane North, Ravenfield, Rotherham S65 4LZ
Telephone: 01709 542678 www.ravenfieldprimaryacademy.com

Maltby Learning Trust is an exempt charity regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. It is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company number 7033915). The Trust's registered office is Maltby Learning Trust c/o Maltby Academy, Braithwell Road, Maltby, Rotherham S66 8AB.