



Ravenfield Primary Academy

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY NEWSLETTER for Parents and Carers

October 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

At the start of another school year, members of your Local Governing Body (LGB) have been considering ways in which the group operates and how the LGB communicates directly with you as parents and carers of our learners at Ravenfield. This newsletter, which you will now receive from time to time, is designed to strengthen communication and to give you a little more information about how governance is developing at Ravenfield. Over time we hope that no parents will ever have to ask - '*Just what do governors do?*', but as we are sure you will understand, it won't be possible to cover *all* this in the first newsletter! We will endeavour to keep you up to date with the kinds of things we have been discussing in meetings, seek your support for the school's initiatives and celebrate what is going well. We will also be honest with you where aspects of the school need to improve. We will need your support though, as not all learning happens during the school day! In this first newsletter, some general information about governance at Ravenfield . . .

Why do schools need governors? - governance of all publicly funded organisations is important to ensure the highest standards of service. In schools, governors focus on ensuring the school is providing high quality education leading to the best possible outcomes for learners. Governors are a *corporate* body who need to know their school well, but have a *strategic leadership* rather than an *operational management* role in the life of a school. To inform this work, the LGB does need to know your views though, which we will be asking for later this month through a questionnaire which will be analysed by the Chair of the LGB.

What are the responsibilities of governors? – the DfE (Government Department for Education) set out the core 'functions' of governance which we are required to address:

- *Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;*
- *Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;*
- *Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.*

These functions apply to all types of schools. The quality of governance which is primarily undertaken by volunteers, is judged alongside *all* other aspects of the school's provision during Ofsted inspections. This is a very responsible task which all governors take extremely seriously.

Why are we called a *local governing body*? - as many will be aware, there is good reason for this. Much of the governance responsibility for all its academies has been delegated by Maltby Learning Trust to governors at a local level. However, as part of a multi-academy trust, it is not permitted to delegate the *ultimate accountability* for governance to any group as this *must* be retained at the level of the Trust board. This is why we need to work closely with the Trust in our shared oversight of Ravenfield Primary Academy.

Who sets our meeting agendas?

All meeting agendas include items set for *all* trust schools. This is important to maintain a consistent focus for LGBs across the trust as a whole. In addition, the LGB discusses matters related specifically to Ravenfield and its community.

New faces at Ravenfield – this term, we have welcomed Mrs Lisa Hepworth as Associate Principal, to lead the academy's next steps on its improvement journey. Governors and the Trust recognise that whilst there is lots to build upon, there are some areas of the work of the school that need particular attention in coming months. Especially, there will be a rigorous focus on improving the attainment and achievements of all our children irrespective of their individual needs. Mrs Hepworth has already demonstrated her commitment to support the staff to consider ways in which teaching can be still further improved to ensure that all children make good progress in their learning. There will be lots more developments over the coming months.

This term, Liz Buxton, an experienced chair of governors, and a national leader of governance, has joined us too. Liz's first task as our new chair was, on behalf of the governors and the school, to thank Jenny Jaques who stepped up to become chair 4 years ago and has worked tirelessly in this role. Jenny has shown immense commitment to Ravenfield over many years and Liz is particularly grateful for her help to ensure a smooth transition in leadership of the LGB. Liz has already said how pleased she is to be working with governors and a Trust that she can see are committed to ensuring Ravenfield continues

to improve. Governors all agree that our learners deserve nothing less than the best educational experience at our academy which may, of course, sometimes mean challenging the way things have been done in the past.

In our *next* newsletter we will share with you some of the agenda items we have been discussing in meetings so far this term.

Before that, **a huge thank you to you all!** Governors are sure you will agree that children cannot make as much progress if they are not attending school regularly. The LGB was delighted therefore to be informed that attendance by our children at Ravenfield was the second highest in Rotherham last year! This is a *real* achievement and hope that we can rely upon a similar level of support from you in this school year 2018-19.

With best wishes from

Members of the Local Governing Body

MEMBERS OF YOUR LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

Local Governing Bodies in all Maltby Learning Trust Primary Academies are made up of 12 members as follows:

<p>Elected Parent governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Brighton • Sarah Dudhill • Lynsey Hobson (Vice Chair) 	<p>Appointed Community/ Business governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liz Buxton (Chair) • Steve Davis • Matthew Fieldsend • Jenny Jaques • Rachael Marsh • Emma Peach
<p>Elected Staff governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Brown • Vacancy 	<p>Academy Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Hepworth is automatically an LGB member

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