



# Billingshurst Primary School Governors Newsletter Edition 16 – Spring 2017

## Chair's Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the governors newsletter.

Our main focus currently is the funding crisis that is taking place in our schools.

Please take the time to respond to the consultation document.

<http://tinyurl.com/BPS-Funding>

It is important and probably the only document that the government will take notice of. The questions aren't easy to understand so we hope the response sheet we have produced will help you reply to the consultation. You can personalise your feedback or simply copy the answers word for word. Whatever you decide to do is fine but **please respond by the 22<sup>nd</sup> March.**

Please pass the response sheet to partners, grandparents, carers, the more responses the better. **Every response will count to help make a difference.**

On a positive note, we are delighted that after years of campaigning, building works will finally start on the SCOLA block and there will be additional works on the roofs which will all start soon.

Our thanks as always to Miss Williamson and the staff for their dedication and commitment to our children.

Have a happy Easter!

**Bik-kay Talbot**, Chair of Governors

## News

### FUND.US

FUND.US is our very own campaign to raise awareness of the funding crisis that the school is facing. As your Governing Body we want to make you aware of the serious situation that the proposed funding figure will have on the school and the education of your children.

So, we have created FUND.US, as a simple way to help make sense of the situation! You will see us outside the school with leaflets and promoting the campaign on YouTube and through the local press and all we ask is that you read the short bullet points that make up the acronym FUND.US and most importantly, take action on the final letter. S – is for “sign” and we will be asking you to sign up to the petition to support our cause. We are ready to fight for more funding!

### Keepy-Uppy the good work scientists!

Science week is always an exciting time for the school and this year was no exception. The classrooms were buzzing with the sound of young inventors as they experimented, invented and investigated the theme of ‘change’, highlighting the scientific discoveries that have had a great impact on our lives. The Marble Keepy-Uppy machines that were designed by the pupils were mind-blowing and we bet you were as impressed by the inventions as we were. Thanks to Mrs Gregory and the BPSGA for helping with such a thought-provoking, stimulating week. We hope no-one lost their marbles in the process!

### Book Day? We prefer Book Week!

Celebrating World Book Day might be OK in other schools but we were thrilled to see it celebrated across a whole week at our school! As well as applauding the children's favourite books and characters with the dressing up day at the end of the week, there was the photo display in the libraries of children reading in all sorts of unusual and exciting locations. It was such a simple yet effective idea and wonderful snapshot of the simple pleasure the pupils get from their favourite books. Plus the shoebox-book-title challenge was like a little detective game that we know the children enjoyed and the book sale as always was a fun way to raise money and interest in reading.

If you would like to contact the Governors, you can do so via the school office, or you can find us on the BPS website:

<http://www.billingshurstprimary.org.uk>

Contact details can be found at: <http://www.billingshurstprimary.org.uk/About Us/Governors>

## **Committee updates**

We govern the school through three committees covering standards, finance & resources and curriculum and pupil support. Here's a brief update from each committee.

### **Standards Committee**

Governors continue to closely monitor the progress of pupils at BPS. The way in which Writing is assessed nationally, continues to concern us as a governing body due to the inconsistencies in how criteria is applied across schools. However, BPS is recognised in the local authority as a school that has a good understanding of assessment at KS1 and 2; this is supported by the wider responsibilities of members of staff such as Sarah Doran, who is a KS1 moderator.

Staff are continuing to ensure students are challenged and that expectations are high in order to support students' achievement. Interventions are in place to support those pupils who are not yet achieving their potential; these interventions are frequently classroom based in order to ensure that pupils do not miss out on other areas of the curriculum through withdrawal.

The school is creating strong foundations in the pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts through James Collinson's introduction of the Mastery approach in Years 1 and 5. The principles of this approach advocate consistent understanding of concepts before moving on to the next step. This means that, as evidenced in the Shanghai approach, progress can initially appear slow but as the pupils move through the key stage, their progress becomes increasingly rapid. The use of the Mastery approach in Maths at BPS is resulting in better understanding and pupils who are increasingly confident in their mathematical abilities.

### **Curriculum and Pupil Support Committee**

On a dreary Tuesday morning we had our first Curriculum & Pupil Support Committee meeting of the year and we were in for a real treat. We were delighted to meet a collection of pupils across the year groups who enlightened us about their Learning Skills Weeks in January. Two pupils from Year 4 explained that Learning Skills Week was based on the BBC's 10 Pieces, which aimed to inspire children through ten different pieces of classical music.

Each year group could choose a different piece of music and decide how best to respond to that music through dance, art, puppetry, technology or sound. The choice was up to them! It was inspiring to hear how the children were allowed complete control over

their learning that week, making decisions and having freedom on how to work. It was encouraging to hear how the teachers (who we know normally like to run a tight ship!), only guided their pupils through the week, which gave each pupil complete ownership of their learning.

Year 4 showed us a dance they had performed inspired by the music they chose as well as an incredible 'music board' which had been made from metal instruments including baking trays, griddles and cooking utensils - of course, all the governors wanted to have a try!

Year 2 showed us their sock puppets and drawings that were inspired from their piece of music before Year 6 pupils left us speechless when they showed us a computer game they had devised using Scratch software. We want it noted that when these children become the future inventors and engineers of the world, they must remember where it all started! The enthusiasm from the pupils was wonderful to acknowledge and we were encouraged that future such learning skills weeks will be as successful in giving every pupil the power to develop skills as individual learners.

The behaviour of pupils is something that continues to impress us as a committee and we studied the new system by which incidents are logged by teachers and staff. The behaviour at the school this term has again not been of concern to us and has been consistently good with only 20 incidents logged out of 630 pupils.

The respect that the children have for their learning and each other are two things we as a committee are happy to conclude.

### **Finance Committee**

While consultations continue in Westminster over the new National Funding Formula regarding school budgets, the Worth Less campaign continues its work to redress the imbalance in how school funding is allocated and we must all maintain our support in order to hopefully see some balance restored. Further to this, the governing body extend their thanks to Susie Clitheroe, the School Business Manager and her team for their continued careful management of the school budget in order to minimise the deficit; we have full confidence that Susie and all of the staff are getting best value from every £ that we have to spend to keep the school functioning.

We are getting ready for works on the SCOLA block (lower classrooms) that are planned to start in May

Half Term. There will be new doors and windows and a refurbishment of the roof which will give the classrooms a real lift. There are various other doors being replaced around the school at the same time.

Another exciting piece of news regarding our buildings is that as we reach the end of the financial year (31st March) West Sussex has some capital funds remaining and we will be getting the flat roofs on both of our halls refurbished. This is particularly welcome because the roofs were identified in the last premises survey as being one of the next urgent projects after the SCOLA block.

***We have been asking you, parents and carers, what you would like reported in our newsletter so I hope that you find these articles informative. If you have further suggestions of what you would like included please let us know via email:***

***[govs@billingshurstprimary.org.uk](mailto:govs@billingshurstprimary.org.uk)***

### **Governing Body Membership**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Staff:            | Miss Helen Williamson<br>Miss Lucy Andrews   |
| LA:               | Mr David Lowe  |
| Parent:           | Mrs Abi Smith<br>Mr Christopher Evans<br>Mr John Fraher<br>Mr Dave Hairs   |
| Co-opted:         | Mrs Rachel Chambers<br>Mr Ben Martin<br>Mrs Alex Newbert<br>Ms Alison Sutton<br>Mr Zane Sturt<br>Mrs Bik-kay Talbot<br>Mrs Jo Newton-Smith |
| Associate Member: | Miss Serena Nicholls   |