

Emmbrook Infant School

Emmbrook Road, Wokingham, RG41 1JR

<http://www.emmbrook-infant-school.ik.org>

0118 9784259

Firstly, a very warm welcome back to school for the Spring term for the children and to all of our students, parents, carers, teachers and assistants - we wish you all a successful and healthy 2016. Your Board of Governors have been busy since our last update, not least with restructuring to comply with Government guidance, but with helping guide the school leadership team to deliver exemplary education for all of the children.

We aim to update you by newsletter twice a year, giving insight into the work that we have achieved and making ourselves accessible for your feedback and input.

You can always contact Ben Clarke, the Chair of Governors, by emailing admin@emmbrook-inf.wokingham.sch.uk or via the school office.

Reconstitution – optimising Governors support

It's not as painful as it sounds! The Government issued guidance for how Governing bodies should be made up, so that they could give the school the **right** level of support and challenge. Guidance included the numbers and ratios of Parent, Co-opt, Local Authority and Staff Governors which should be adopted plus ensures the Governing Body strives to offer a suite of skills which support the school. To be effective, the team needs a diverse and knowledgeable skillset drawn on professional competency. Skill gaps need to be eliminated and capabilities drawn out to maximise the impact of the Governors on helping to run the school.

Committees @work

All Governors sit on the Full Governing Board (FGB) and carry an equal vote. Much of the workload around standards, policies and school business is devolved to one of four committees:



Upcoming Events

January 20

Full Governing Board meets

March 23

Full Governing Board meets

May 18

Full Governing Board meets

What do Governors do?

The school's Governing Body has responsibility for raising school standards through their three core strategic functions of:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

School Governors form the largest volunteer force in the country.

Leadership

Resources

Achievement

Communication, Behaviour & Safeguarding

Typically, each Governor sits on two of the committees and would also have a number of special responsibilities for working with the school on either National Curriculum subjects (music, history, maths etc) or be the representative to ensure that we are meeting our responsibilities for the wellbeing and safeguarding of the children.

Committee updates

Leadership: Chaired by John Wood

Focused on monitoring and ensuring effective leadership and teaching standards and resource requirements across the school. Recently completed the Headteacher review with Wokingham Borough Council and the validation of school policies relating to leadership and management.

Resources: Chaired by Ben Clarke

This committee oversees the budget and finances of the school. We also look after site management, facilities and Health and Safety in and around the school. The Resources Committee carefully manage the budget for the school which also allows us to make regular maintenance and refurbishment to improve the environment our pupils learn in. Recent refurbishments have included soft pore areas outside, refurbishment of Foundation and refurbishment of the main entrance and school hall.

Achievement: Chaired by Lewis Gent

The focus of the Achievement committee is the monitoring, review and evaluation of attainment and progress throughout the school including teachers, children and governors. This also includes the methods of assessment and the tools to achieve this.

For this year there will be specific focus on the governors themselves and particularly their visits to the school and how this is recorded reflecting our interaction with all staff and pupils.



Shout out Clerk changes

With huge regret, we've lost our fabulous Clerk, Maxine Cronin. Maxine kept our meetings to time, our minutes accurate and ensured we followed correct procedure. No doubt, the Clerk job is a tough one, but it is also right at the heart of the action and plays an incredibly important role in the professionalism and effectiveness of the Board of Governors.

Step forward Barbara Hunter, who joins us as our new Clerk, with vast experience from a similar role at Jennett's Park Junior School. Welcome Barbara, we're thrilled to have you.

Governor departure

Governors serve a fixed term of four years, although they may both resign and offer to extend their service. We are sad to have lost the talents and unwavering commitment of Rebecca Steliaros.

Thank you Becky for the last four years. We've nothing but respect and gratitude for the depth of involvement and support that you have shown EIS and the Governing body.

We've been focused on:

- Ensuring all staff and Governors have undertaken the Prevent Channel training
- Assessing the impact of the new iPads on the children's learning
- Updating website content, governors newsletter and web pages, reviewing the parent & child surveys
- Reviewing policies including Child protection and safeguarding
- Supporting the Head and teaching staff to enable the children to understand and display good behaviours in school (eg: the school's core values tree and the Golden Rules Rainbow).

More School News

Enough of that dull committee stuff. Here's some great things that have happened in the school recently:

Gold Standard

In October we received a letter from Wokingham Borough Council outlining our performance categorisation for 2015-16. Based on Ofsted performance data and self-review evidence, Emmbrook Infant School has been designated as – Gold – which is a locally assessed outstanding or strong good. Well done to every member of staff and the children for this lovely endorsement of the progress being made.

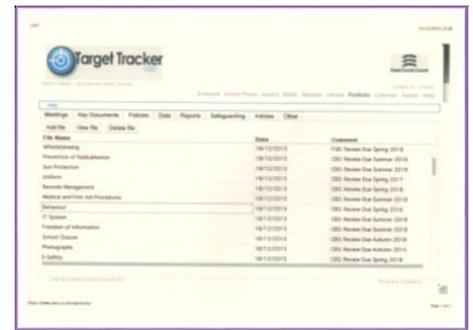
Defib News

On Monday 14th December the Berkshire Masonic Charity kindly donated 2 Defibrillators to Emmbrook Infant and Junior Schools. Training for staff took place on December 17th. This is fantastic news and once they are fully operational it completes a milestone in providing care for anyone on school premises needing attention. Let's hope that they are never needed. It is a wonderful gift from the Masons – thank you.

Investing

At the moment we have several projects on the go, some of which have been supported by the PTA. We have just purchased 3 new interactive screens for the classes in Swans, Green Cygnets and Woodpeckers. We are also aiming to replace the interactive white boards in Red Cygnets and Kingfishers in the next financial year.

Added to this, we are looking to develop the provision in the outdoor classroom in Foundation Stage to enhance the learning there. And finally we are looking at



Target Tracker

You'll know that we strive for the school to reach, and maintain an 'Outstanding' OFSTED status. As a Governing Body, we need to be fit for purpose, well organised, challenging yet supportive to the School Management Team.

It's not just the school who get OFSTED visits and questions, it's the Governors too. We have to prove that we are offering significant value to the school, without unnecessary bureaucracy and yet with processes and evidence of impactful challenge, leadership and support.

To help hone our skills, we have invested in a piece of software called Target Tracker Governance Self-Evaluation Tracker, or GSET. The program is designed to assist us in identifying areas in which improvements can be made, and tracking the implementation of those improvements.

ways to improve and smarten up the playground and the children have requested a large climbing frame! Lots of fund raising needed!

Health & Safety audit passed

The school has recently been audited by Wokingham Council's health & safety team. We are delighted to report that they were pleased with the school's approach to health & safety and risk assessments. A couple of minor observations were made to further improve our processes, these have been adopted as the school continues its commitment to ensuring a safe and healthy environment for our pupils, staff and visitors.

Assessment without levels

Attainment targets and levels were introduced with the national curriculum in 1988. When the new national curriculum was published in 2014, new forms of assessment were developed to align with its content and principles. From September 2015, national curriculum levels will no longer be used for statutory assessments. All children will now be judged against a set of age-related expectations developed by the Government, for all subjects.

The overriding principle of good assessment is that it should be clearly tied to its intended purpose. There are three main forms of assessment: in-school formative assessment, which is used by teachers to evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding on a day-to-day basis and to tailor teaching accordingly; in-school summative assessment (tests), which enables schools to evaluate how much a pupil has learned at the end of a teaching period; and nationally standardised summative assessment, which is used by the Government to hold schools to account.

At Emmbrook Infant and Junior Schools we have developed an assessment system that defines whether a child has met age-related expectation by using the terminology:

Emerging against the expectation

Expected against the expectation

Exceeding against the expectation

In addition children will still sit national curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 (year 2) and 2 (year 6) and this will be reported in the form of scaled scores.

Next Newsletter – expect to see it towards the end of the Summer term. Meanwhile, we hope that all of the children have settled into their new classes and that they are enjoying learning with our team of fantastic teachers and assistants.