



Hillcrest School

Governors News -Spring 2016

No 3

Welcome to the Governors news.

We wish to provide you with information on key issues affecting our school, our pupils our staff and the education that we provide. In order to provide better communication with all involved we are setting up a drop in once every half term, which will be held on the last Thursday of each half term 1-3pm. It will be open to anyone who wishes to talk to the Governors or even just meet us whilst having coffee and cake.

We have a celebration at 11:00 on the 24th March 2016 when we officially open the 6th Form Lodge. Come and join us to take part in this exciting event!

We have a number of new members of the Governing Body joining us:

- Mr Nick Belcher as Staff Governor
- Mr Mark Phillips as Associate Governor
- Mrs Tracey Hawkins as Associate Governor



We welcome them and hope they will enjoy the position.

The Governing Body are keen to continue to support the progress being made by the school to improve our Ofsted position and we have been fortunate enough to attend meetings with our School Improvement Partner Mrs Lynn Watson from Percy Hedley School. She has been a very important person in giving advice and guidance to get us into a positive position regarding our Ofsted assessment.

The Pupils have completed our school survey along with the staff survey. We are now collating the Parent/ Carer survey returns. Please return your forms to school as soon as you can. These surveys help provide us with insight into how well we are doing in school, so your opinion counts.

We are pleased to see that the new school day is proving to be a success with staff and pupils. It also seems to be having a positive effect on attendance and on attention/behaviour in class.

Please feel free to notify us if there are any issues you wish to be discussed.

Jacqui Hall

Chair of Governors, Hillcrest.

Termly Focus: Safeguarding:

As a governing body we are keen to develop our knowledge and skills in safeguarding procedures, practise and national issues. The key focus is to keep children safe in education and in the wider community. As governors we are keen to challenge the school in ensuring they can provide the very best in safeguarding procedures through policies, training and practice.

In Hillcrest we have paid particular attention to:

Anti-bullying

- We have been keen to understand the schools policy and procedures for dealing with bullying incidents- finding it thorough and having a positive effect minimising bullying incidents.
- The school is close to completing their portfolio for anti-bullying accreditation-this shows examples of great practise and successful training in school.
- Governors get regular reports on behaviour from Hillcrest which they can question and investigate further to make sure Hillcrest is a happy and safe place for the children and adults



PREVENT

- This is a national agenda to prevent and recognise pupils vulnerable to radicalization from racist, sexist, anti-social and religious pressure groups.
- The school has adopted the county policy and has trained every member of staff in recognising early signs and how to take effective actions. The governing body has also updated their training in this area.
- The school wants to develop this area further and has organised a specialist visitor to extend the training initially offered.
- Information for parents will be offered during the summer term.



E-safety

- Recognising that most children now have internet access at home and through mobile devices it is clear that online safety remains an issue at the forefront of keeping children safe.
- The staff and governors at Hillcrest have all had training through the NSPCC to understand what current Issues and trends are and how staff can support pupils and educate them better.
- The biggest trend nationally is social media and 'sexting'. Within school the pupils have had extensive e-safety education through their ICT lessons and internet safety day.
- The governors recognise that as parents you may want further support in understanding areas of e-safety and keeping your children safe online and we will work with the school in providing some face to face training. In the meantime the school has some excellent resources and information on their website.

www.hillcrest.northumberland.sch.uk

Vice Chair: Martin Wright

Introducing one of our Parent Governors, Joyce Reid:

Born and raised on the West coast of Scotland, leaving school at 15 with no formal qualifications. Attended a government YOP scheme where I trained and worked as a chef. Joined the Army in 1985 in the Driver trade, working under the UN, NATO and the British Army, serving in many countries such as Germany, Bosnia and Kosovo, visiting many more. Once all my ambitions in my chosen trade had been reached and surpassed I then fulfilled training and teaching role for the second half of my 24 year career. I achieved many things during my service, not least, becoming the first female All Arms Weapons and Drill Instructor. I left the Army in 2008 and worked until 2014 for a nationwide charity that provided alternative education opportunities for young people. I identified a gender divide in the programmes the charity delivered and created a more inclusive and differentiated offer. I fulfilled a long held ambition and studied at Northumbria University successfully gaining a recognised academic qualification, (DipHE). I also devised and delivered a highly successful full time programme and curriculum that helped to re-engaged young people who had been permanently excluded from school with little or no opportunity to achieve any academic qualifications. I left the charity in 2014 having achieved all that I had set out to do, serving my final 2 years with them as the North East Area Manager covering the vast area between Berwick and Redcar.



I believe every child and young person should be given the best teaching and learning support and environment in which they can grow, develop and achieve their potential. All the young people at Hillcrest deserve excellent teachers that inspire and encourage them to aim high and maximise their opportunities to enable them fulfil their potential. I, as a Parent/Carer Governor, intend to play my part in ensuring this happens and Hillcrest keeps driving forward to becoming a well-deserved outstanding school.

**Date of first Governors drop in with coffee and cake– 28th April
2016 1:00-3:00pm**

Email: admin@hillcrest.northumberland.sch.uk