

## **Reflections on being a Governor**

My 'Reception' year as a Coppice Governor

In October 2012 I had the thought of volunteering to be a school governor. For myself this was in part because I was interested in how schools are run, and also with the self-interest that my children attend Coppice and will do so for the next five to six years. The part that I found intimidating is that you have to be voted for by parents, and this includes writing a submission to sell yourself as a suitable person to be a governor. I had little interest in selling myself or campaigning for election, however, somehow I was voted in, and then the learning started.

As with joining any organisation there is lots to take in. There are numerous committees that split up the work of the Governing Body and to start with you sample them all. There is lots of information on the curriculum, on school development, on performance measurement, and on the relationship with the local authority. I've also started in a year where we have been working to establish a Trust with other schools in the area. Lots of systems to understand, and lots of jargon to learn (not much free play or golden time).

Despite all of the above, being involved with a group of professionals who all have the best interests of our children at heart, makes being a school governor totally worthwhile. Yes there are lots of meetings, but there are also lots of chances to see the school in action. I've toured the school and listened in on lessons, I've watched the assemblies and I've been challenged on Maths questions by Year 6 (I lost). These occasions are when you get to see Coppice staff and pupils at their best. My 'Reception' year ended watching the very good leavers assembly back in July. I can't wait to start my Year 1.

Simon Bowen

## **How to contact us**

Via Sue Parkin, Clerk to the Governing Body

(who can be contacted via the school, Trinity Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 6TJ

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More information is available on the website [www.coppice.bham.sch.uk](http://www.coppice.bham.sch.uk)



## **Governor Newsletter - October 2013**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the second Governor newsletter where we will be sharing with you some information about the joining of the Four Oaks Learning Trust for Excellence and the priorities in the new School Development Plan.

### **Message from the Chair of Governors**

Last year was a very important year for Coppice as the decision was taken to form and become part of the Four Oaks Learning Trust for Excellence. This was the creation of a co-operative trust where the seven schools agreed to work together for the benefit of the children in those schools.

What this means in practice is that the seven schools will work together and support each other in raising standards across all the schools. A considerable amount of staff development has already taken place and this will be ongoing. As a group of schools we are able to organise and conduct training that is relevant to our needs with economy of scale benefits due to our number.

With the recent and ongoing changes in the educational landscape, the role and support offered by the Local Authority is changing and as a group of seven we are able to support each other through those changes. Recent examples involve admissions, staff appraisal, school to school support and changes to the new Curriculum due in September next year.

We chose the route of a Co-operative Trust because the governing bodies of all the schools wanted to ensure that each school retained its autonomy and individuality, whilst at the same time were linked to a group that was large enough and skilled enough to make a positive difference to the children. It was very important to the schools that they remained an active part of their local community.

As a Trust we have several partners that we work very closely with and are able to give us support in certain areas. To date we have received support in extending literacy beyond level 5, free history workshops and sport and music provision.

As time goes on I hope to be able to share more of the benefits that Coppice and your children are receiving.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Governing Body, who all give up their time voluntarily, for their efforts in helping to run the school so successfully.

**Tony Goddard**

## Who we are

The Governing body is made up of 15 members who are appointed from various different sources.

Tony Goddard	Chair of Governors—Co-opted
Karen Bloor	Vice Chair—Foundation Governor
Jill Shearer	Foundation Governor
Margaret Barnfield	Local Authority Governor—appointed by the Local Authority.
Gavin Palmer-Mills	Co-opted Governor
Kay Scouller	Co-opted Governor
Simon Bowen	Parent Governor—elected by parents.
Yvette Brook	Parent Governor.
Rachel Wolffsohn	Parent Governor.
Paul Jones	Parent Governor.
Vacancy	Parent Governor.
Vacancy	Staff Governor
Vacancy	Staff Governor.
Elaine Gale	Staff Governor.
Richard Green	Headteacher
Susan Parkin	Clerk to Governing Body

With the transferring to a Foundation school as part of the conversion to a Trust, the titles of some of the governors have changed.

It is important to note that all governors carry equal responsibility for the whole and are not representatives of the groups that might have elected them.

## School Development Plan 2013-14

We have seen considerable success with academic achievement over the past few years with attainment of children at the end of year 6 being the highest we have ever had and the progress that they have made being in the top 1% of all primary schools nationally.

Achievement is measured through attainment and progress. Attainment is the actual levels that the children achieve, whilst progress measures how much improvement they have made in their levels since the end of year 2. Achievement was judged as outstanding by Ofsted in December 2010 and has risen further since then.

At the start of each year the Governing Body agree the School Development Plan that builds on what we have done well and develops areas where we can move forward.

Our Development Plan this year has four main targets that link to the four Ofsted areas.

### Target 1 - Achievement of Pupils

This aims to ensure that all children not only attain high academic standards, but that they make excellent progress no matter what their starting point—this year we are focusing on specific identifiable groups within school to ensure that all groups achieve well. E.g boys, girls, special needs and those children who attract pupil premium money.

### Target 2 – Quality of Teaching

This aims to ensure that the Quality of Teaching is consistently good or better across the school and that children know their next steps in learning.

### Target 3 – Behaviour and Safety of Pupils

This aims to ensure that the ethos of the school is clearly felt by all that come into contact with Coppice. It relates to all behaviours of children and this year we are focusing on their attitude to learning and how they are motivated by the new curriculum that will be introduced from September 2014.

### Target 4 – Quality of Leadership and Management

This aims to ensure that Leadership and management at all levels demonstrate high and ambitious expectations for pupils and work together for improvement. This year we are focusing on a very specific training programme for all staff to enable them to ensure the achievement of all pupils.