

Castlewood School Governing Body

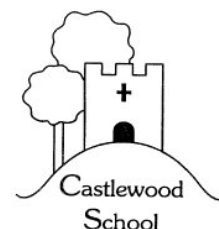
Chair: Mr. David Storer

Vice Chair: Mrs. Mary Page

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December, 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

As Christmas approaches and we reach the end of a very busy Autumn term at Castlewood, we would like to update you on some of the things that the Governing Body have been involved with.

Governing Board Focus

We started the Autumn term with the priority of recruiting a new Headteacher for Castlewood. This is a key decision for any governing body, and one which requires a robust and rigorous process before appointment. We are delighted to have appointed Mrs A-B as Headteacher and have continued to see the school develop, even over this short period.

Other key activities have continued over the term, including the approval of the 3-year school budget. As highlighted previously, school funding is very tight, and we work closely with the School Leadership Team to oversee the budget and monitor both the short and long-term finances of the school.

Our timetable of visits to school continues, where members of the Governing Body meet with subject leaders, to discuss progress and development with the different curriculum focus areas. These have included visits to understand how both Art and Design & Technology continue to evolve, how a focus on P.E is being implemented at Castlewood, and the development of the Science curriculum.

Other visits have included those to review how the school ensures the health and safety of all the Castlewood community, safeguarding monitoring to review and ensure the policies and processes used are effective and being used, and additional finance visits.

We were also able to have an insightful overview of Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) provision at Castlewood from Mrs Beange, our SENDCo. This provided a view into this most critical area of provision for Castlewood, and how we foster an inclusive environment for all.

School Events and Achievements

The term has been packed with activities and events, including school visits, visitors, sporting fixtures, cooking, and book fairs. The list goes on! The school focus on attendance is vital to ensure every pupil attends school for every session across the year, unless of course they are not well.

It was wonderful to have such fantastic weather for the Blackberry Fair, and a huge thanks to all the SOCS team, who continue to ensure that this is the biggest date in the diary! We are excited to see the development of our outdoor areas with the vital funds that have been raised.

Over the two open days for prospective parents, it was fantastic to see the Year 6 tour guides providing a real glimpse into life at Castlewood. We had so many wonderful comments from every single group. We have also heard how the new Reception class have settled into school life and will no doubt be ready for some downtime over the holidays!

Christmas at Castlewood is always a special time, and the joy and laughter of the performance of Bethlehem B&B was a great spectacle. It was also lovely to attend the turning on of the lights for our Christmas Tree of Remembrance. Many thanks to Westons Farm Shop, SOCS and everyone else who made it possible.

And, of course, a huge thank you to all the staff at Castlewood. Over this term, and during the disruption and uncertainty of appointing a new Headteacher, they have all continued to go above and beyond for our children. We would also like to thank all the volunteers who give their time and support to the school.

Governing Body Changes

We are delighted that **Helen Marshall** has joined the Governing Body as Castlewood's Staff Governor. Many thanks to her for stepping into this position.

We are also pleased to announce that we had two applicants for the two Parent Governor vacancies. **Lucinda Exwood** and **Mark Tunnell** are the newest additions to the team and, we look forward to welcoming them at our next meeting in the new year. As we did not have more than two applicants, no election was required on this occasion.

Following Mrs Barnard's well-deserved retirement, we are happy to have appointed **Jacqui Richards** as our new Clerk, moving from her previous position as Parent Governor.

We wish you all a peaceful Christmas and hope you can enjoy time with family, friends and loved ones.

Best wishes

David Storer
Chair of Governors
(LA Governor)

Mary Page
Vice Chair
(Co-Opted Governor)

Kirsty Anstee-Brown
(Headteacher)

Helen Marshall
(Staff Governor)

Martin Forsyth
(Parent Governor)

Claudine Allen
(Co-Opted Governor)

Danni Tresadern
(Co-Opted Governor)

Roger Wells
(Co-Opted Governor)

Paul Firkins
(Co-Opted Governor)

Tom White
(Co-Opted Governor)

Lucinda Exwood
(Parent Governor)

Mark Tunnell
(Parent Governor)