



# Governor Newsletter

January 2016

Welcome to this term's newsletter written for parents and carers by members of the Governing Body at Birchanger Church of England Primary School.

## Our Governors

**Sue Haggerwood-  
Bullen-** Local  
Authority Governor -  
Chair

**Elizabeth Godwin-**  
Community  
Governor- Chair of  
Finance and  
Personnel

**Peter Davy-**  
Community  
Governor-Chair of  
Premises

**Pam Lee-**  
Foundation  
Governor

**Justine Doherty -**  
Parent Governor

**Iain Rankin-**Parent  
Governor

**Andy Kay-**Parent  
Governor – Vice  
Chair & Chair of  
Curriculum  
Committee

**Mrs Helen Coop -**  
Head Teacher

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## Ofsted Update – Improving Results - The Power of Growth Mindset

This year the children have been embracing the concept of Growth Mindset to improve the way they approach learning (developed by Professor Carol Dweck, Stanford University).

Using the Growth Mindset approach can really help children fulfil their potential. It teaches them to love challenges, not to be afraid to make mistakes and to enjoy effort and its rewards. Rather than simply praising success we praise persistence and positive attitudes to the frequent challenges encountered during the process of learning.

Please ask your children about it and encourage them to develop their own Growth Mindset.



## Brand New Website

A brand new school website has been launched <http://www.birchanger.essex.sch.uk/> and it contains a wealth of useful information about the school. Find out about term dates, inset days and school meals or check out school policies, Ofsted reports or school performance data.

## We Are Now Green!

National research indicates that a school is unlikely to succeed without an effective governing body.

Governors play a vital strategic role in holding school leaders to account through support, challenge and driving school improvement.

In order to reflect the critical role governor's play, Essex Education Services have now developed a RAG (red, amber, green) rating system for governance in order to support improvements in governing body effectiveness.

We are delighted to report that our Governing Body has been awarded a 'Green' rating. This means that, as a governing body, we have:

- Productive relationships with school leaders and the clerk based on trust, openness and transparency;
- Governors who focus on pupil progress and learning;
- An effective chair and clerk;
- A good knowledge of the school and its data, enabling them to hold leadership teams to account.

All governors are volunteers so it is rewarding to see that our work has been recognised with the highest grading possible. We will, of course, endeavour to meet the standards set and to work with the school as it continues to improve.

## School Premises – Thank You

One of the roles of the governing body is to oversee the management of the school premises and grounds. We are fortunate to have Peter Davy (Chair of the Premises Committee) whose knowledge and experience of architecture has proved invaluable in resolving the issue with the steps and drainage from the school to the gate which leads to the back of the village hall.

The steps have been undermined over a period of time by rainwater cascading from the playground. A section of the steps have now been replaced with the edges of all the steps being repaired. A hand rail has also been installed as a safety measure. The new drain now diverts water away from this area and helps stop further erosion.

Part of the funding for this essential project was provided by a group of friends that live in the village, who kindly arranged a Ceilidh in August raising £1,874. This is a good example of the close links that the school enjoys with the local community and their support is greatly appreciated.

### Teacher Focus – Miss West by Miss West



I have always enjoyed interacting with children and from an early age would enjoy spending time with family friend's children. For my secondary school work experience I returned to my own primary school and it was at that point I realised that the teaching profession was a career I wanted to pursue. I then returned to this school, as a volunteer, over the next couple of years to gain experience and to support my UCAS application to study Primary Education.

I attended Canterbury Christ Church University in Kent for three years, completing a range of placements and studying the theories behind effective teaching.

At the beginning of my studies, I enjoyed learning about and teaching older KS2 children, completing placements in Year 3/4 and Year 5. When my final placement was assigned, I was given a Year 1 class which provided me with a new challenge. At first I was unsure but I soon began to realise that I may have found my niche. Eventually I knew that this was my preferred choice of age group, enjoying teaching and learning with children of KS1 age.

Birchanger was the first school position I applied for and the first interview I attended. I was really thrilled when offered the job. That was over two years ago and I still enjoy the challenge that every new day brings. Even though times can be tough, I appreciate and thrive with the support of my colleagues. As a small team, we lean on each other and help each other wherever possible.

I relish seeing the progression and improvements that children can make in such small periods of time, but also over a whole academic year. When summer comes, I find myself bursting with pride about the achievements the children in my class have made, not only academically but as tiny little people, learning to be grown up. Developing relationships with each individual child is my favourite part of the job, helping them to achieve their potential in every aspect.

### Do We Have All The Skills We Need?

We are delighted that our newest Parent Governor, Justine Doherty, has completed her certificate in School Governance Studies. Each new governor is expected to attend a number of training courses to better understand of all aspects of school governance. These include; School Data, Finance, Personnel, Promoting Wellbeing, Curriculum, Safeguarding and SEND.



### Would You Like to Become a School Governor?

**Currently we are looking for people who can bring a range of skills to our team. If you would like the opportunity to support and contribute to the education of our children, please contact one of us to find out more.**

You can contact the school office to make an appointment with a member of the Senior Management Team [admin@birchanger.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@birchanger.essex.sch.uk) or email Sue (Chair of Governors) or any other governor on [Cogb.birchanger@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Cogb.birchanger@yahoo.co.uk)