



## ***Foxhills Federation Board of Governors***

### ***Letter to parents September 2022***

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Board of Governors I would like to welcome you and your children to our new Foxhills Federation. Commencing our federation, designed to provide our children with the best educational experiences and continuity of learning, is an exciting time for Foxhills. We are embracing the opportunities our federation provides with determination, to ensure every child benefits and our schools provide a rewarding place of work for our amazing staff. The governors' newsletter will be issued at the start of each term, with an update on how governors support Foxhills, along with other matters of interest.

#### **Leadership changes**

Last term we said goodbye to Mr. Shore and Mrs. Bristow, both now enjoying their retirements, and the novelty of being able to go on holiday in term time. We welcome Mrs. Howe as headteacher of both schools, and Mrs Kay as the new Deputy Headteacher in the Junior School. INSET on the first day of term provided an opportunity for the staff of both schools to work together on the vision and values for the federation and was enjoyed by all staff.

#### **Governors' actions during 2021/2022**

The process of federation took up much of the governors' time last year - our first meeting to discuss the possibility took place on November 1<sup>st</sup> and, after many hours of meetings and consultations, we finally became a federation on June 8<sup>th</sup>, thus joining the increasing number of governing bodies who have taken the decision to unite their infant and junior schools. Thank you for understanding and supporting this undertaking.

The new board of governors took office on June 8<sup>th</sup>, we thank the governors from both schools who retired at this time, and welcome new parent governors Nick Hatfield and Lucy Dixon, and co-opted governor Don Monk. The single Board of Governors is now responsible for both schools, and an early priority for us will be to increase our knowledge of the day to day running of the federation so we can support the two schools in achieving its aim for our children: 'Two schools, One vision.'

#### **Safeguarding in the Foxhills Federation**

Governors are responsible for ensuring safeguarding procedures in schools conform to the standards defined in the Department of Education document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSiE, 2022), and, as a priority, governors will undertake the appropriate safeguarding training provided by HCC Governor Services, which will be augmented by in house training, and the Home Office Prevent course, which focuses on radicalisation of children in educational settings. We are fortunate that two governors (in addition to our school staff) have extensive knowledge of safeguarding children through their own professions, and an outside view is always valuable. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we must always maintain the view that 'it could happen here'. The new Safeguarding Committee will be monitoring safeguarding practices and provision across both schools.

## **Governor training**

Later this term the whole board will attend a training session on 'Understanding the Primary Curriculum', delivered by an HCC school's adviser with responsibility for this age group. The majority of the GB have been governors of either the infant or junior school, and we feel it's important to extend our knowledge across the age range at the earliest opportunity.

## **The Schools' Budgets**

It is the governors' responsibility to ensure the schools comply with the Schools' Financial Values Standards, which have to be submitted to HCC annually. The schools have separate budgets, though campus wide costs are shared. Governors with financial expertise will be working with the schools' Financial Officers to monitor the budgets twice termly, as required by SFVS. The allocated budget is a function of the number of children on roll, plus additional funding to meet provision for Additional Educational Needs. The next year will be challenging, as we have to meet the cost of salary increases for staff, and rising energy costs, without (to date) any additional allocation from central government. Pennies will be counted carefully!

## **Bequest to the Junior School**

Gordon Fillis, who lived in Ashurst, was a governor at the Junior School for over 20 years. He attended weekly during that time to listen to children reading, and was highly respected by staff and governors alike. He supported school events by providing First Aid cover through his role in the St. John's Ambulance Association. Sadly, he died earlier this year, his funeral was attended by a number of ex Foxhills staff, and I was privileged to be asked to give a short address about his work as a governor. He loved Foxhills and it was his wish that a donation be made to the Junior School in his memory, ideally to plant a tree, or provide a bench in the school garden, and we will be honouring his wish shortly.

## **Governors' section of the schools' websites.**

Currently each school's website contains a Governors' section. Unsurprisingly the content of each is different. Over this term we will be working to amalgamate these to ensure that parents from both schools have access to the same information. The list of governors, and meeting attendance records are already on the websites, but please bear with us whilst we update both. The contact email address for the Chair of Governors for both schools is [Governors@foxhillsjuniorschool.co.uk](mailto:Governors@foxhillsjuniorschool.co.uk)

**Looking forward, the governors have great confidence in the Foxhills schools' team. They have been working hard to ensure a smooth start to the term for all our children, especially those who are new to the schools, and who may need some extra reassurance as they join the Foxhills family.**

**The governors wish all children and staff success in the new federation!**

With best wishes,

Ann Arscott

Chair of Governors for Foxhills Federation Board of Governors

