

## Annual Governors Review December 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

When I wrote to you in February little did we know the true impact of the pending difficulties that we knew we were all going to face this year.

Life for all of us has been difficult and we cannot under estimate the challenge for all of those who are working on the front lines in hospital, who have lost friends and family, who are experiencing the loss of their jobs and sources of income, whose businesses will need to close and last but not least for those working in schools. We are very fortunate within our strong and wider community to have the strength of those within it who step up and make it a more manageable situation. We would like to say a huge Thank you to all those unsung heroes who have supported in so many varying and often quiet ways.

However, with some challenges come opportunities and that has been strongly evidenced for you as parents, having the opportunity to spend more quality time with your children, understanding the expectations of their learning and being able to enjoy the beauty of our local environment together and focusing on what is truly important. Challenges, big or small, do bring opportunities and it is how we see and embrace those opportunities that hopefully enable us to manage and embrace change.

The Governing Board would like to thank you for supporting your children throughout this time and helping them to continue with their learning at home when necessary, for complying with the social distancing measures in place for yours and your children's safety, your support for the Head and staff at the school and for your patience with new directives initially coming at the eleventh hour from the Government and often without the required accompanying advice.

Thanks also goes to the Headteacher and staff for not closing the school on the last Friday of this term as suggested by the Government and for considering the difficulties that this would create for parents' and the last minute need to arrange child care and for their ongoing consideration of maintaining the normal expectations of your children's education in less than normal circumstances.

It has certainly been a roller coaster for every-one, and I would also like to thank the Head and the staff for supporting pupils and families and particularly with the management of the return to school in September and enabling it to be a calm and safe experience. We were also pleased that many of you were able to attend face to face parent interviews -with a Perspex screen in place- and that you were able to be given a clear picture of how your children had settled and were engaging with learning. Following a recent Local Authority visit during this term, it was exceptionally pleasing to hear from the visitors to the school their recognition of how amazing the children were, to hear how welcoming everyone had been and what a pure joy the children were. Attendance at present is exceptionally high, which is also really pleasing to hear.

We also continue to have a great deal of respect and praise for the continued commitment to children which has been so clearly demonstrated during the last 10 months by the headteacher, her dedicated staff and all those involved with Chapmanslade School.

As Governors, we have continued to have Governors' meetings throughout the first Lockdown and beyond as planned. We have considered Covid procedures and safety for pupils, reviewed and considered changes being made and to ensure the systems in place are working. We have met through virtual meetings and found that this has worked well. We have continued to carry out our core functions in

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
- Upholding the Christian Distinctiveness of the school

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And as Governors we have continued to carry out these functions through virtual meetings since March, by challenging actions and having oversight of the school finances and by considering pupil progress and the impact of changes within the curriculum and impact on pupils learning.

It has become very apparent during this time, that as Governors there has been a lack of opportunity in being able to make ourselves known to you as parents, by being present at meetings for new parents or being able to attend events such as church services or school events, and that many parents do not know that there is a Governing Body until they find they have a need to contact us. Our focus over the coming months is to ensure that you are aware of our role as set out above and that our presence is more visible.

During our first focused monitoring week for this academic year in November some Governors were tasked with making contact with the new parents to discuss how their children were settling in. This was welcomed by the parents and this contact process will be extended to other families in the school over future monitoring weeks. Good communication is important and even more so in these present circumstances.

We continue to recognise that the role of parents in their children's education has a big impact on their learning and are grateful for the time you give to supporting your child/children in helping them to achieve their goals. Your partnership in their education is greatly appreciated as is your support in helping the school to enable the children to be the very best version of themselves that they can be.

Our Governing Board was sorry to lose the expertise and skills of Adam Brill a Parent Governor, recently and we appreciate and thank him for all his support over almost four years as a Governor. Following the request to find a parent to fill this vacancy we were pleased to welcome Charlie Hanney to our last meeting and look forward to her working with us into the future.

The number of Governors on the Board including staff is at present 9.

These are:

Rev. Pauline Reid (Co- Vice Chair), Maggie Thackway, Mark Foster, and myself- Minnie House (Chair )—all appointed as Foundation Governors by the Diocesan.

Sally Evans (Co- Vice chair) co-opted, Tom Dore and Charlie Hanney, parent governors and Frances Chapman, Headteacher and Rob Cottrell, staff member.

Our Clerk is Sarah Andrews.

Being a Governor at Chapmanslade is an honour, it does require time and commitment and more personally for me, give a genuine joy and pride.

There are vacancies on the Governing Board including vacancies for an LA Governor and Foundation Governors.

If you or someone you know has time and commitment and is interested in becoming a Governor at the school please contact myself at [chair@chapmanslade.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:chair@chapmanslade.wilts.sch.uk) or via the school office at [admin@chapmanslade.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@chapmanslade.wilts.sch.uk) or the Clerk at [clerk@chapmanslade.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@chapmanslade.wilts.sch.uk) and we will be more than happy to make contact with you and talk you through the role and the processes you would need to follow to become a governor.

We wish you all a safe and within the present restrictions a family friendly Christmas and hopefully a promising New Year.

Kind regards.

Minnie House  
Chair of Governors.  
December 2020