

# Newport School

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26<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Update from the Governors to parents/ carers and pupils at Newport Primary School – November 2009**

In recent months a number of changes and developments have been made at your school to accelerate the improvements that are being undertaken. As a result, I wanted to write to you on behalf of the Governors to update and summarise where we are.

We were delighted at the end of last term to appoint Prue Barnes as the new Headteacher (Interim) for your school for the next two years. This will give the school real stability. We have seen Prue make great progress in a very short period of time and we know from your feedback as well as our own that this has been a strong appointment.

We have been working with the Head to develop the leadership structure of the school. A key development has been the appointment of two Deputy Headteachers, Lisa McIntyre, who started in September, and James Biddulph, who will join our school from January. You will have met Lisa over recent weeks and some of you may also have met James at the Black History Celebration Event on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

We have now also made an interim appointment to another important role – Assistant Headteacher for Early Years / Foundation Stage and Extended Services. Rebekah Matthews started in November and will take on leadership of the Children's Centre along with other responsibilities.

We would like to welcome Lisa, James and Rebekah to our school.

As Governors and parents, we are seeing real progress being made under the leadership of Prue Barnes and her team. We now have to see that this translates into results for your children.

Our priority, now that we have established the leadership team and completed an audit of safeguarding in the school is to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in the school. This was the key area for development identified in Ofsted's last report on the school.

We all believe that the school and its community has enormous potential and our aspirations are high. At the same we are very aware of the vast amount of work underway and the proximity of the next Ofsted inspection.

We expect that Ofsted will visit Newport again this term or early next term. To some extent, the timing of this visit will determine whether the new arrangements we have put in place will have had time to have a measurable impact.

The Governing Body meets every two weeks currently to ensure there is a real focus on the improvement work that is proceeding. Recently we have:

- made key senior appointments;
- contributed to and approved the School Development Plan;
- been trained in the new Ofsted framework;
- established a School Council of pupil representatives and met them to hear their views;
- conducted a survey of parents and pupils and reviewed the feedback;
- signed off the emergency planning arrangements for the school;
- conducted a full audit of safeguarding arrangements;
- reviewed the financial situation of the school;
- established a Children's Centre committee;
- requested and received regular reports on staffing;
- requested and received regular reports on teaching quality and pupil progress;
- agreed to reorganize some of the functions of the school office.

From next term, we will also be looking to establish a Shadow Governing Body, which will take over our role once the current governance arrangements are returned to normal.

We will write to give you more information about that when the time comes. In the meantime if anyone would like to get in touch with Governors, you can do this via the school office.

On behalf of the Governors, I would like to thank Prue Barnes and all the school staff for the enormous commitment they are showing to the children and community that our school serves.

I would also like to thank you as parents and carers for the great support and the positive way you work with us at the school for the best interests of the children.

Many of the Governors attended the recent Black History Celebration Event. It was a wonderful evening of celebration and there are an amazing number of talented pupils within our school.

We look forward to seeing you again at the school Festival of Lights events.

Best regards

Liam Donnison  
**Chair of the Interim Executive Board**