

GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER

SUMMER TERM
2023

The Branch



The academic year 2022/2023 saw the school back to pre-covid functioning with school activities, class visits, residential for yr5 and yr6 and after school clubs. All of which add to the Orchard experience for our children. As Governors we too have enjoyed all our meetings as a group and no longer over Zoom. We have also had the opportunity to visit in school time and to enjoy the daily workings of Orchard again.

We are pleased to have welcomed two new Governors: Mrs. Leslie Sinfield and Mr. Kevin May. Mr. Barry Markham has also agreed to complete another 4 years with us. This means we have a full and very committed governing body with a good variety of skills, all of which benefits the school.

As a board we are responsible, in conjunction with the senior management team of the school, for setting the aims and objectives for how the school will develop and improve. We agree policies, monitor the curriculum, and agree targets to help the school achieve these objectives. Through our visits and by questioning and supporting management and staff we aim make sure the school is functioning as we believe it should.

We are fortunate to have a very open and transparent relationship with all staff and we aim to be known by the children too. One of the highlights is Governor week where we have the opportunity to drop into classes, talk to children at break and lunch and in class to discuss their work and feelings about Orchard. We have found the children to be confident, polite, proud of their school and their work. They speak openly about what they like/dislike and enjoy. They are able to explain things they are not so keen on and above all they have said they feel safe in school and that there is an adult they could talk to if they needed too. This all creates a positive learning environment and makes Orchard Junior School what it is.

This academic year has seen Miss. C. Goldup settle into the role of deputy and Miss. J. Tracey as SENDCO. They both feel fully integrated having had a good year and are looking forward to building on this next year. We have also welcomed 2 new teachers, Miss. Kerr and Mrs. Smith. In addition to this we have been fortunate to also welcome Mrs. Briant, Miss. Browning and Miss. Croton to our LSA team. Our site team has also welcomed Shelly, Hannah, Sandra and Karen who all work extremely hard keeping the school clean and safe for the children.

We are sorry to see Mrs. J. Beton leave (after more years than she would care to mention) having stepped back from teaching all the school music to this year's role with Hampshire Music and year 4. She will be greatly missed, and we thank her for all her musical contributions from teaching, leading the choir and visits to Wembley. We wish her all the best for the future.

Another leaver is Mr. T. Battersby who, after 3 years with Orchard, has decided to teach closer to his home. We also wish him all the best. We also wish the best of luck to Mrs. Kirwan as she leaves us to train to become a secondary school Maths teacher. Finally, Mrs. Blockwell, who has been working in the school library and office, is also leaving at the end of the year. We wish them all well and hope that they carry with them many fond memories of their time at Orchard Junior School.

This year saw 2 new additions to the wider school family when Mrs. Townsend welcomed her baby daughter in February and Mrs. Morgan welcomed her son in May. They will be returning to the teaching team later in the next academic year.

On a sadder note, Mrs. Hazel Gowers passed away in May. For those of you who didn't know her she started as a helping granny, she heard children read, accompanied us on many school visits, kept the art area up together and guided many children in year 4 with making Christmas cakes, as well as being a Governor for several years. She was one of those quiet cogs in the Orchard wheel we can't do without.

We would like to mention this year's year 6 who have come to the end of their Orchard experience, we hope that you leave with fond memories and that you aim high and work hard to achieve all that you can.

Finally, as a Governing body we are very proud of all the children at Orchard and thank all the staff who deliver a rich and varied curriculum. Also, all non-teaching staff who keep the school going, cleaners, dinner ladies, admin staff. We would like to thank you all for your support with your children, we wish you a great summer break and look forward to the new academic year in September.