



# Wheatfields Infants' and Nursery School

## Headteacher: Mrs J Whitehurst MA NPQH

### Governor Newsletter : December 2015

#### Message from James Rodea

I was asked to join the governing body in October of this year; it has been a steep learning curve! There are a few things that I have seen as a Governor that I did not know as a parent.

All parents will know that the school was awarded an **'Outstanding'** rating by Ofsted last year, a fantastic achievement. What I had not appreciated was the years of work and effort that had been put into achieving this goal. I have been amazed at the amount of focus and planning that goes into running the school; nothing is left to chance. **The ultimate result being that our children receive the highest possible standard of education.**

I recently read Sir Alex Ferguson's book 'Leading', in which Sir Alex talks about planning for the next football season on the very night that Manchester United won the treble (apologies to readers who are not football fans). Plans and discussions are already taking place on how our school can retain its rating; personally I look forward to the challenge. Staying with Sir Alex, he recognises that while he is the leader, as Mrs Whitehurst is, results are achieved with team effort, which is exactly the same principle with the school; **Mrs Whitehurst has put together a first class team** and would be the first to tell you that it is about the team and not just her.

In conclusion I wanted to share a document that illustrates what I have written about above. The chart tracks the five year progress of our school against the national average, cohort being the number of pupils. You will note that in each column that our school not only out-performs the national average but we have seen consistent year-on-year progress. **This is why our school is Outstanding.**

Year		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>All subjects</b>	Cohort	90	90	89	89	89
	School	17.1	17.6	17.7	18.4	18.7
	National	15.3	15.5	15.8	15.9	16.1
	Difference	1.8	2.1	1.9	2.5	2.6
	<b>Significance +/-</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Reading</b>	Cohort	90	90	89	89	89
	School	18.0	18.3	18.3	19.0	19.0
	National	15.8	16.0	16.3	16.5	16.6
	Difference	2.2	2.3	2.0	2.5	2.4
	<b>Significance +/-</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Writing</b>	Cohort	90	90	89	89	89
	School	16.4	16.8	17.0	18.0	18.2
	National	14.4	14.7	14.9	15.1	15.3
	Difference	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.9	2.9
	<b>Significance +/-</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	Cohort	90	90	89	89	89
	School	17.0	17.7	17.9	18.3	19.0
	National	15.7	15.9	16.1	16.2	16.4
	Difference	1.3	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.6
	<b>Significance +/-</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>

## Message from Roger Thomas

### Mrs Whitehurst

Having read the outstanding report above compiled by our new Governor, James Rodea, I think it is appropriate that parents should be aware of the high esteem Hertfordshire holds Mrs Whitehurst. For the past two years she has been supporting other schools in the County that “**require improvement**”. Governors have fully supported this work, not only as it is recognition for the tremendous work she has applied to Wheatfields, but also for her own personal development. She also earns a considerable honorarium which she donates in full to the School budget. Governors have been delighted that during Mrs Whitehurst’s absence (occasional day) the School has continued to develop and strengthen. This is due undoubtedly to the School Leadership Team

Miss Cockburn – Teaching and Learning  
Mrs Fitzgerald – Safeguarding and Inclusion  
Mrs Chase – Safeguarding and Inclusion (part-time)  
Mrs Churchill – Premises/Finance/Admin/Health and Safety

For the next two terms Mrs Whitehurst has been given a specific school to support. Again Governors are delighted and the extra funding earned will be used to further improve our ICT hardware in the classrooms.

### Governor resignations

I am sorry to inform parents that two Governors have resigned this term due to work commitments. Mrs Pauline McCormick joined the Governing Body in the Summer of 2015 and has provided valuable experience and support on the Resources committee. Matthew Cray has been a Governor since July 2011 and has completed his term of office (4 years), Matt has been a fantastic Governor for the School contributing in many ways and he always provides a sensible opinion to many debates on the various committees. We will miss them both and begin the search for their replacements.

### Catering

We are delighted with our decision to have changed the school catering contract last summer. Edwards and Blake are providing an excellent service and the majority of children are enjoying their lunch and their plates rarely have food left on them. Naturally there have been some minor grumbles but on the whole the change has been more than worthwhile and a significant change for the best.

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations

Our sincere thanks go out to you all who contributed so generously to the various events organised by the Friends of Wheatfields Infants (FOWI) with guidance and support from Mike Clarke vice chair of Governors. You will all know that our target for July 2016 is £50k, well Mike reports that **we are now over £35k**. Remember all this money is to support our Outside Learning Areas around the school. I was not surprised that the Frost Fair went so well, as you will know Mike, James, Vicky and I were running the bottle stall. I was so delighted for one winner whose number appeared to be the lovely bottle of Champagne, however on further inspection she won a bottle of Tomato sauce!! . A small one as well. I thought for one minute the sauce was going over my head!! One person who should be mentioned by name is Helen Whittington who has provided DJ Jungle (indoor play area) for three nights for groups of Wheatfield’s children to use at a reduced rate, my grandson loves it there and I can read the paper!! So next term and the summer term, **there are more exciting events planned**.

Friday 5 February - 80s Quiz night and Disco  
Wednesday 10 February - Boden night.  
Saturday 27 February - Film night  
Saturday 21 May – Jamboree  
Friday/Saturday 1& 2 July – Camping!!  
Friday 15 July (provisional) – Summer Ball

**Please put the dates into your diaries**

### Governor Morning

Six Governors were able to attend our recent Governor morning, when we go into classes looking at activities relating to this year’s School Improvement Plan (SIP). This time Mrs Whitehurst asked us to specifically review the phonics learning and also the learning being done in the new Rowan Class. Firstly, Miss Read gave us a presentation of a new system the school has introduced to teach phonics. She was brilliant and we all came away muttering the various sounds, some Governors then went into classes to see how the new system would be taught in front of the children, again the feedback was excellent. Those Governors who went into Rowan Class were fascinated how Mrs Kench managed to get three boys to write in such a short time.

We also met the School Council and the Sustainable Ambassadors, who all had some great ideas, among them: RSPB Birdwatch, Solar Panels and Growing vegetables for the kitchen.