

Dear Parents,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the governors of Princess Frederica School to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a restful break over the holidays.

As we approach the end of the Autumn term, we also wanted to welcome new parents and staff to the school and update everyone on how we will offer the strategic support to guide the school through this academic year, setting out the governors' priorities and responsibilities. I'm also pleased to announce the introduction of Parent-Governor Forums, the first of which will be held towards the beginning of next term (date to be advised and please see the end of this letter for further information).

The governing body has three primary roles: (1) It sets the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school; (2) it holds the senior leadership team to account for the performance of pupils and the performance management of staff; and (3) it ensures our school's finances are well spent. These functions are strategic in nature, and underpin the need for the governors to avoid being drawn into operational day-to-day matters. We need to ensure that we fulfil our governance role as professionally as possible and we meet as a Full Governing Body twice a term. These meetings are attended by the senior management team and representatives from the staff team. In addition, we meet in smaller groups once a term for the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Resources Committee. Finally, the Admissions Committee meets twice a year to consider applications and the admissions policy generally. Governors also have individual responsibilities for different aspects of the school including music, art, sport and safeguarding. There are many ways in which the governors carry out their various tasks including attending training, workshops, speaking to governors at other schools and making regular visits to the school to speak to children and teachers and observe.

Crucially, the governing body supports and challenges the school as a whole to ensure that it continues to improve in line with the school development plan. We are extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated staff team that delivers a broad and enriched curriculum well beyond what is expected and well beyond national average test scores.

The governors are particularly focused on leadership and staff management this year, so that we can give the recruitment, development, reward and retention of the school's staff the attention it deserves. Whilst we are always sad to see any member of staff leave, new joiners bring fresh perspectives and new ideas and we are seeking to harness this energy so that it immediately contributes to the future improvement of Freds. Following our Full Governing Body meeting on 16 October 2014, we welcome Mr Duker as the new staff representative on the governing body. We have also instigated a staff governors forum where members of staff can discuss their ideas and concerns with us outside of the busy full governing body meetings.

I think it is helpful if I set out what the governors' top priorities are for this year in order to help the school maintain its excellent record of teaching:

1. To monitor the implementation of the new curriculum, track pupil progress, set clear targets for the teaching staff in terms of student achievement, the delivery of outstanding lessons (including the setting and marking of homework).
2. To ensure value for money and that our Special Educational Needs budgets and Pupil Premium payments are put to effective use.
3. To track excellent teaching, reward outstanding performance and ensure that the school retains and develops its best staff.

Similar to the staff governors forum, I have also proposed that the governors make themselves available once a term for **Parent-Governor Forums** which will provide parents with a chance to ask questions and bring ideas to support the further improvement of our school. Dates of these forums will be available on the school website when they become available. Please do come along and take the opportunity to raise your queries. We appreciate that whilst there is an abundance of information on the school website and the governors section, it isn't always easy to find what you need or make suggestions. The question and answer sessions will last an hour and we then hope to informally mingle for the last hour with staff and governors over light refreshments.

With kind regards,

Andrew Moss

Chair of Governors
Princess Frederica School