



## Shepherds Down Governors Update

Hello and welcome to our 1<sup>st</sup> School Governor Newsletter of this school year.

We started our school year as a group of Governors finalising our **Strategy** for our school.

School budgets have also been a topic of our first meeting and Debby shared with you a letter explaining how hundreds of Headteachers across the country gathered at Downing Street to insist that the Chancellor and his colleagues use the upcoming Autumn statement to invest properly in our schools. Debby and our Governing body are in full support of this.

Another area that we as a Governing body, but also the leadership of the school, are focussed on is Safeguarding and one of the important topical subjects is **Online Safety**.

### Shepherds Down Needs you

#### Do you have any contacts that could help us??

We are still recruiting for Community/Co-opted Governors to join our team, if you know anyone that could be interested please contact Trudy in the school office for more information... we'd love to hear from them

### Governors visiting Shepherds Down

Two of our Governors will be visiting school after the half term to specifically look at the ASD provision in the school.

We will share our findings from this visit in our next Newsletter

### Shepherds Down 3 Year Strategy

Our key Strategic Priorities that we as a Governing body will be focussing on are:

- For the school to be comparable to local mainstream primary schools in appearance and atmosphere for the benefit of children that attend Shepherds Down, their siblings and families, keeping the premises maintained to a high professional standard, providing a welcoming site where pupils are happy and want to learn, including:
  - Ensuring Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do
  - Valuing the state of the school, its look and feel
  - Sustaining a strong presence and image of the school in the community
- To ensure that there is an established, consistent method of measuring attainment, success and achievement for all pupils and to ensure a strong system of evaluating the effectiveness of our teaching. It is imperative that pupils reach the highest levels of achievement and personal development possible with a highly engaging curriculum, focusing on the whole child. This will include:
  - Effective monitoring of pupil progress and appropriate challenge
  - Increased collaboration between staff to ensure best practice and sharing of ideas
  - Monitoring of the curriculum
  - Monitoring the robustness of target setting
  - Continuing to embed "I Can" statements
  - Targeting Software to assist in recording attainment levels
- To make Shepherds Down School a workplace where staff are fulfilled and want to work, ensuring that we maintain safe staffing levels with a good balance of skills. The motivation of our staff is a high priority. We will look to:
  - Maintain staffing levels
  - Maximise staff retention (while recognising healthy reasons for organic change and support for staff career development)
  - Ensure there is provision for suitable training and personal development, within budget constraints
  - Monitor Staff engagement surveys
  - Ensure Exit questionnaire and/or interviews capture reasons for leaving, and then to give due regard to negative responses that the school can influence, and improve upon
  - Ensure robust performance management
  - Ensure there is provision of a strong, clear and supportive induction programme
- To ensure robust monitoring of the Budget, and make the most effective use of the budget provision and all funding sources available to the school for the benefit of all the children. This will include:
  - Overseeing, monitoring and implementing strong financial control
  - Finance meetings
  - Support for fundraising efforts, including FOSDA's work
  - Ensuring Pupil premium/ sports / additional funding is well spent
- To offer a range of support and effective communication to parents to help provide a clear pathway to external support, (e.g. access to social services, occupational health, SHIP, CAHMS etc.). In pursuit of this we will:
  - Seek to learn about parents' views and understanding, via questionnaires
  - Make clear what the school is obligated / accountable to provide and what is an additional service (through the home school agreement established at the beginning of the academic year)
  - Encourage strong relationships between parents and classes
  - Issue Newsletters
  - Conduct Parents' Evenings
  - Listen, respond, and inform in a timely fashion