

WHITECROSS NURSERY SCHOOL



Governing Body Newsletter – Spring 2017

The purpose of this newsletter is to introduce the Governing Body to you. It gives you a quick summary on who our governors are, what we do, what's been happening and how to contact us!

Our Governing Body comprises a number of different types of governors, all with differing backgrounds and skills...

Parent Governors:

Vikki Small
Claire Devey

The Governing Body can have two parent governors at any time and these governors are elected by you, our parents.

Staff Governor:

Jayne Staves

We can have one staff governor on the governing body and the staff governor is elected by our staff members.

Co-opted Governors:

Ian Ronald (Chair)
Cathy Britland
Julie Jennens
Claire Leggett
Joanne Hodgson
Shashin Ruparel
Suzie Feist

Authority Governor:

Cathy Travis (Vice Chair)

Authority governors are nominated by the Local Authority. We can have one authority governor.

Clerk to Governors:

Julie Fowler

It's the clerk's role to support our governors in their work, offering advice and taking the minutes of the meetings.

Co-opted governors are chosen by the governing body on the basis of their skills and experience. We can have seven co-opted governors on our governing body.

Governor Areas of Responsibilities

Each of our governors is responsible for overseeing a particular area of the curriculum and work closely with staff members to monitor these. Their allocated areas are as follows:

*Personal, Social & Emotional Development –
Claire Leggett
Communication & Language – Cathy Travis
Understanding the World – Ian Ronald
Literacy – Cathy Travis
Physical Development – Claire Leggett
Maths – Joanne Hodgson
Creative – Shashin Ruparel*

As well as curriculum subjects, governors also work with the head teacher on other areas of nursery management and these are listed below:

*Performance Management – Ian Ronald &
Claire Leggett
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities – Suzie Feist
Safer Recruitment, Safeguarding & Looked After Children – Julie Jennens
Community Cohesion – Cathy Travis
Inclusion & Equality – Joanne Hodgson
Health & Safety – Vikki Small*

What does the Governing Body do?

The Governing Body helps the nursery to provide the best possible education for the children who attend Whitecross by:

- Setting the school's values, vision, strategic aims, agreeing plans and policies and making creative use of resources.
- Monitoring and evaluating performance.
- Ensuring the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves; to the local community; to those who fund and maintain it; to the staff it employs.
- The full Governing Body meets every half term. Sub-groups of the Governing Body may meet at other times for specific purposes (e.g. Finance Committee, Premises Committee). We also help out with a range of activities and projects throughout the year such as the Spring Fayre and Nursery outings.



What we have covered during recent governor meetings...

- From September 2017 eligible families will be able to benefit from 30 funded hours; this is a big increase from the current 15 hours which all 3-4 year olds are entitled to. We've been working hard to see how best we can offer the additional funded hours to our new starters this September while still meeting the needs of all of our families.
- Following recent changes to the funding which nursery schools receive from the government, we have been looking carefully at what lies ahead for stand alone nursery schools like ours. Derby has seven such nursery schools and we know they are greatly valued by the community in which they are based. We have been trying to ensure that these nursery schools are recognised for the high standards of care and education which they provide, and to ensure that they can continue to support children and their parents long into the future.
- A big emphasis continues to be placed on Whitecross school policies, which staff and governors have been working hard to keep up to date and accurate. Copies of the policies are always available in the office if any parents would like to see them.
- Monitoring of the Whitecross budget takes place termly and all is on track for this year with money allocated for various things such as ongoing improvements to the building.
- We continue to monitor progress on the School Improvement Plan, a document which is put together annually. This focuses on the main targets for the school for the year and gives details of how we plan to achieve and measure success against these targets.



Links with Peru....

Over the past eight years our local authority governor, Cathy Travis, has helped to establish the partnership between Whitecross and the Westnell Nurseries in Lima, Peru. Cathy regularly comes into the nursery to talk to the children about Peruvian celebrations, Peruvian food, musical instruments, hats and clothing and they love to hear about what the children do in Peru!

Your Whitecross Governors...

Ian Ronald, Chair of Governors (Co-opted Governor)

I live close to Whitecross in Park Grove with my wife Julie and our son Bailey, who left Whitecross in January 2015. The welcome from staff for Bailey and for us as parents was exceptional. Being involved in our community is important to me and I'm pleased to be able to help Whitecross continue to be a nursery that gives a great start in education and wider life to all the children that attend.



Cathy Travis, Vice Chair of Governors (Local Authority Governor)

I became a parent governor at Whitecross in the spring of 2007 when my son Tomás attended the nursery. I continued in this role when my younger son Rafa was at Whitecross in 2010-11. Whitecross gave my sons a fantastic start to their education and it is a huge privilege to be involved with the highly skilled team at Whitecross. I am now a local authority governor with curriculum responsibilities for Communication, Language and Literacy as well as Community Cohesion.



Julie Jennens (Co-opted Governor)

My eldest daughter Isla attended Whitecross last year and my youngest daughter Elodie will hopefully start next year. I cannot say enough about how utterly fantastic Isla's experience was. The staff were so welcoming and made her journey into 'formal' learning a real adventure. I live locally and like other governors, wanted to give something back. I have worked for the Probation Service for over 10 years and will use some of my experience in my new role as Co-opted Safeguarding Governor.



Clare Leggett (Co-opted Governor)

I'm Claire Leggett and I have two children, Katie aged seven years and Thomas who is four. Katie attended Whitecross before starting school and received fantastic support and extra help when she needed it. Thomas is currently at Whitecross and thoroughly enjoying it. My husband and I feel that Whitecross provides an excellent grounding to support the transition into primary school. I became a governor in June 2014 as, like other governors, I wanted to give something back.



Claire Devey (Parent Governor)

I'm Mum to Alexander, who started at Whitecross last September, and Joseph who will hopefully be starting in 2018, and we live in Allestree. Alexander has settled very happily into this wonderful setting and we have been wowed by the professional and caring team here at Whitecross, which made my application for the recent Parent Governor vacancy an easy decision. For me, the Parent Governor role is an exciting opportunity to support and contribute to the success of this lovely school.



Joanne Hodgson (Co-opted Governor)

I'm Joanne Hodgson and I have recently joined the Whitecross governing board as a co-opted governor. I have a daughter, Leila, who attended Whitecross last year and a son, William, due to start in 2018. When the opportunity arose to join the governing board I was keen to volunteer my finance and project management skills, hopefully contributing to the continued success of Whitecross.



Shashin Ruparel (Co-opted Governor)

I'm Shas and I live in Allestree with my wife, Manesha and our son, Anay, who is due to start Whitecross in 2018. I am a strong believer in forming a supportive community framework. Being passionate about improving the prospects for every child, underpinned by extensive experience of delivering IT transformation into various educational institutions; it gives me great pleasure to be part of the Governing Board and support the great work carried out by Mrs Mitchell & the team.



Suzie Feist (Co-opted Governor)

My granddaughter left Whitecross Nursery in July 2016. During her time at Whitecross she learned a great deal and was extremely happy. Having retired from a job in Education, I felt I still wanted to be involved in this area and when the opportunity to be a governor at Whitecross Nursery arose, I was happy to take on this role. I like the atmosphere here at Whitecross and I felt I could contribute my experience, especially in the area of learning difficulties.



Vikki Small (Parent Governor)

I became a Parent Governor in February 2016 and my specific governing body responsibility is Health and Safety. It is a pleasure to work with the committed nursery staff and other governors. Supporting a nurturing environment to the children and contributing to the future success of the nursery school, is the core of what we do. Whitecross made the transition to full time school life for my son, an easier one and I hope my youngest child, Isla, will start in September 2017.



Jayne Staves (Staff Governor)

I began my teaching career at an Infants' School in Wirksworth and then took a break to raise my family. I returned to teaching at Whitecross and feel very privileged to be working in a stand-alone Nursery School where the focus is on how children learn in the early years. I appreciate being part of a small team as it means I can play a part in decisions about the way in which the Nursery continues to move forwards.



Cathy Britland (Co-opted Governor)

I have been involved at Whitecross since my children were here over 25 years ago and I now work at Whitecross as a teaching assistant for children with additional needs, and also a playworker at lunchtimes. When I started working here it was just for 5 hours a week and now I am almost full time!



How to contact the Governors:

If you have any messages or would like to discuss anything with the Governors, please leave a note in the Governor Pigeon hole (next to the children's pigeon holes). Alternatively, please speak directly to any Governor when you see them at nursery (photos can be seen here and in the reception area).

***The next meeting of the governing body will take place on
Wednesday 5th April at 7pm.***