



CLIFFORD ROAD GOVERNING BODY

Spring Term 2009

Dear Parents and Carers

It's been another busy term at Clifford Road and as we approach Easter, this marks one year since Steve Wood joined us from Earl Soham. I'm sure you will agree that a lot has happened in the past year and the Governors are very pleased with the direction of the School and the work that Mr Wood and his team have done.

The Full Governing Body met on Thursday 26th March and the focus for the Spring Term meeting is the agreement of the budget. At a time of national recession and increases in costs, schools are not exempt from feeling the knock-on effects and our budget for 2009/2010 is very tight. Increased energy costs and staffing costs, including maternity leave and supply cover, mean that Jan Risby and the Senior Leadership Team have had to work hard to put together a positive budget which supports the delivery of the School Development Plan. Each year we set a 3-year budget plan and this year, following the Ofsted report, staff and the Governing Body have paid particular attention to funding improvements in teaching and learning over the whole period.

The Governing Body also received a report from the Headteacher on developments over the past term. There have been considerable successes and achievements including the achievement of 'Healthy Schools' status and the award of 'Active Mark' to recognise the quality of the PE teaching at Clifford Road. In January we saw the launch of the Life Channel and this has proved to be a great success as a showcase for children's work, photos and videos from school activities and a channel for communicating events and news. Events, such as the Mothers' Day lunch and a very successful Comic Relief day were also reported.

On other matters, the Premises Committee presented to the Governing Body proposals for 2 projects which were agreed and will take place over the Easter and summer breaks. These projects will see the provision of a dedicated Library area in part of the existing Class 7 and the provision of outdoor play opportunities for the Reception Class. This will be achieved through some class moves and a new door accessing the playground from Class 4. This addresses an area for improvement identified in the Ofsted report.

On personnel and finance, I have already talked about the approval of the budget, but we also considered a number of staffing matters and recognised the contribution of those staff that have left the school over the past term. We also recognised the very positive work that Mrs Noon has done as Acting Deputy Head over the past term.

Visit the Clifford Road website at www.cliffordroadschool.org.uk

On performance matters, you may have heard about the problems with the marking of SAT papers during the summer of 2008, and the results are only now being finalised and reported. Schools are measured in two ways, by their results and also by the amount of progress children make between Year 2 and Year 6. Clifford Road performed well in both areas; more than 8 out of every 10 children at the School achieved a Level 4 in English, Maths or Science and Clifford Road demonstrated that its children make very good progress whilst in the school. This is very pleasing for the Governing Body and is a credit to the hard work of the teaching staff in making progress in this area a priority.

Finally, over the past couple of terms we have also seen the beginnings of a very strong and active Parents' Forum and Parents' Council. As a Parent Governor, it is absolutely vital that we take every opportunity available to influence the direction of the School and deal with those issues that concern us.

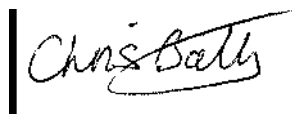
The Parents' Council identified road safety around the school as an issue of concern and have written to a number of local councillors and the local MP to express this concern. The school have received responses and, together with representatives from the Parents' Council, we expect to meet with decision makers to look at what can be done to make the roads safer around the School.

The initial Parents' Forum sessions focused on homework and the feedback from these meetings and discussions with staff and governors is currently being turned into a new approach to homework at the school. The most recent Parents' Forum sessions have looked at the School's new approach to Special Education Needs.

We look forward to developing both the Parents' Council and the Parents' Forums over the coming terms.

I hope you have found this summary useful and would remind you further information can be viewed on the school's website. Should you have any questions about the work of the Governing Body or any observations that you wish to share, please do not hesitate to contact me at the following e-mail address (chris@bally3.fsnet.co.uk) or through the school.

Best wishes and have a good Easter break,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Bally". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of a vertical black line.

Chris Bally
Chair of Governors

Steve Wood
Headteacher