



WOOKEY PRIMARY SCHOOL
And Little Acorns Pre-School
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A Letter from the Chair of Governors

Hello everyone, I hope you are all well.

Following the recent parent wellbeing survey, it is clear governors aren't making their presence felt enough within the school. As part of our governor development plan for this year we aim to raise our profile, so that you know who we are and what we do.

A little about me. I've worked in education since I finished my own, which has included working in an independent sixth form, university, and an FE college. This is my first proper experience of primary, except for five months teaching English in Nepal, which introduced me to the challenges of a small rural school. Yes, there are places with worse transport links than Somerset. I have been a governor at Wookey for four years, and in my third year as chair. To say this has been a big learning curve is an understatement, having not previously served on a board; but I feel that over the last year particularly I have started to get to grips with the role of chair (just in time for my term ending- 4 years is the usual time for a chair re-boot). As part of our development, the board are going to be reflecting more regularly on how effective we are and building stronger relationships with our school community.

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week, which aims to tackle stigma and help people understand and prioritise their and others' mental health. Every year, 1 in 4 of us will experience a mental health problem and since 2017, the number of young people struggling with their mental health has nearly doubled. A key part of our school development plan is focused on the wellbeing of our children, which includes interventions aimed at supporting them to be in the best possible mindset to learn.

As a governing body we are very aware of the huge pressures on staff wellbeing- in a sector with limited resources, a vast amount of work is fuelled by a sense of purpose and goodwill. As the governor role is predominantly strategic, it can feel like there is little impact we can have on reducing stress as we are quite far removed from the day-to-day operational running of the school. However, we do have a part to play as we set the strategy and ethos for the school and are central to fostering an atmosphere of support and openness. The 2023 Teacher Wellbeing Index showed that 55% of all staff consider their organisation's culture has a negative effect on their wellbeing; we obviously want Wookey to be in the 45%, and for the environment to be positive and purposeful, for staff as well as children. To support this, we will be asking all staff to complete a survey to inform governors of key themes relevant to the staff experience of working



at Wookey. We want to ensure that every staff member feels valued, heard, and supported in their role. Once we have analysed this feedback, we will work with school leadership to develop an action plan to implement positive changes. This may involve refining policies or enhancing support structures for staff well-being. Our goal is to foster a school environment where everyone feels empowered to thrive, both personally and professionally. I hope this has given a little insight into some of the governors plans for this term, over the coming months we will be sharing more about our involvement with the school.

To finish I would just like to say that I am very grateful, not just as a governor, but also as a parent of the school community, for all the hard work, dedication, and care that the staff at Wookey show to our children.

Best wishes

Amy Donald
Chair of Governors Wookey Primary

