



Welcome to the first Appledore Governors' Newsletter!

Hello everyone!

The idea behind this letter, which we aim to produce termly, is to flesh out some of the information you may already get via the website and weekly Newsletters and update you on what we're up to, without having to read through the copious Minutes produced after our regular meetings!

The content will develop over time and do please let us know what you would like to see, read about, know more of but for now, I have been asked to keep it brief and my language clean! So, here goes.....

Who are Governors?

We're a group of individuals from different backgrounds – parents, staff and the community – who work closely with the Head, Staff and parents to ensure the school does well and that our children are happy and achieving.

We all give our time voluntarily and attend special training to help us do our jobs to our best ability.

What do Governors do?

We have various responsibilities, all of which relate to how the school is run. For example, each year we work with the Head (& Staff) to:

- decide on school improvement policies
- monitor the school's progress against set targets
- approve the budget and expenditure
- support the school through any changes or issues as they arise.

We meet regularly so we have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of our school. As well as working together as a 'Board', we also work in smaller committees, with specific subjects (which often directly relate to our skills and experience.) We also cover a specific subject and meet each term with the subject leader to monitor the progress of all curriculum areas.

Parents, Pupils & Staff Surveys

Thank you to those of you who completed our Survey in May. We received twenty completed surveys from you. Parents and Guardians were asked, "What is going well?" and "What could we do better?" Pupils and Staff were also asked similar questions; the most common themes to come out of the collated results were:

Going well:

- School atmosphere; happy children
- Improved communication (eg. website, accessible Staff)
- After School Clubs
- House System
- Learning/Lessons

Could do better:

- Outdoor Learning
- Communication
- Nothing!

We were very pleased with the response, not least because you had seen progress in areas that we have worked hard to improve (eg communication, atmosphere) and correctly identified areas that we are aware we would like to *continue* to improve (eg outdoor learning and communication).

On the subject of communication - the new school website has a Google calendar on the Homepage, for you to view school events, updates, cancellations etc. Instructions are available on the website to support you to be able to access the calendar on a range of devices. The weekly Newsletter is published in the News section and this is a good way of finding out what has happened in each class and upcoming events.

<http://www.appledore-primary.devon.sch.uk/index.php?page=news>

When appropriate, letters, updates, slips with latest information on, are sent home with you child, either by hand or in book bags.

It's not all about the three R's!

Hopefully you have all seen the huge body of creative work all around the school and heard the dulcet, enthusiastic sounds of a variety of instruments (& voices) wafting from the classrooms. Over the last two years, we have supported the Head and Staff in their concerted effort to ensure that the curriculum has breadth. They have dedicated considerable time, resource and effort into developing the creative arts, in all its guises and have focused in their approach to ensure that what Appledore children do, they do *really well*. For more insight and photos of how the school is creatively, widening the curriculum go to <http://www.appledore-primary.devon.sch.uk/index.php?page=arts>

Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific, Indian

Our House system, now in its fifth term, is gaining momentum and provides an opportunity for all pupils and staff to be part of a team and to experience the highs and lows of everything that comes with that. To date, House activities have included the sing-off, cross country races, football tournament, poetry competition, tag rugby tournament, art competition and a bake-off to name but a few. Not forgetting Sport's Day of course!

School results/Data

Due to the continual hard work of the children and staff, our results continue to compare favourably with regional and national averages, eg fifth highest in North Devon last year.

<http://www.appledore-primary.devon.sch.uk/index.php?page=school-performance>

Finally - The Governing Body would like to take this opportunity to thank Jeremy & all the Staff, for their continued dedication, hard work and creativity in steering the uncertain, demanding, goal-post-shifting, current education system; we would also like to thank those parents, carers and members of the school community that volunteer their time for the benefit of the school.