



# Governors' News



Ashton Vale Primary School

Autumn/Winter 2016/2017

Term 4 Edition 9

Welcome to our Term 4 Newsletter from the Governing Body of Ashton Vale Primary School.

Term 2 was a wonderful time. Leading up to Christmas, the school was filled with activities involving everything from Christmas card making, Christmas parties and even a visit from Father Christmas.

## Christmas Productions

We had the opportunity to see the Nativity play by the younger ones, which involved some of our children's first big acting roles in front of such a large audience; they were brilliant. Our older children's concert was, once again, well worth the accolades they received from everyone who had attended.

## PTA

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PTA and volunteers on the day for organising the Christmas Fair, it was a great success.



## Headteacher

The New Year was tinged with some sadness. As you are all aware, Ms Champeney had given us her resignation as she is retiring in August 2017.

With this news, the Governors set about organising the recruitment of a new Headteacher.

This was an arduous task. Many hours were spent getting everything right (I cannot believe the amount of paperwork involved in the whole process).

We were given advice from Amanda Pritchard from the Local Authority, which was a great help.

The Chair of the Co-operative Trust, Roger White, was also an advisor and his calm advice and knowledge was invaluable.

Mrs Carpenter was a vital contributor in the process and organised us in the most efficient way, making the two

days of interviews work without a hitch.

At this point, I must mention our Student Council. They had written the questions themselves and interviewed the four candidates in the most grown up way (So glad I wasn't looking for the job).

We listened to their comments very carefully and were amazed how they analysed each applicant thoroughly.

This was a challenging but interesting time for everyone involved with the process. The Governors here at Ashton Vale took the job with the seriousness it deserved.

As you are all aware, we have appointed Mr Hollis, who will be starting in September 2017. He is looking forward to being our new Headteacher and I know children, staff, parents and Governors will make him welcome.



## **Governing Body**

We are pleased to have a Full Governing Body, having appointed four new Governors last year. They have all settled in really well and I would like to welcome Sara Sainsbury, Kathy Clarke, Sam Bird and Nancy Horlick.

If you would like to learn more about the Governing Body or wish to talk to myself or any

other Governors, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Details of our Governing Body can be found on the School's website by selecting 'School' and 'Our Governors' or by using this link:  
<http://ashtonvaleprimary.weebly.com/our-governors.html>

## **Belated Happy New Year Wishes**

This school year is flying by, but I would like to wish you all a belated Happy and Healthy New Year.

*Jenny Smith*

*Chair of Governors*

## **Building Boats STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) By Suzanne Hayes, Parent Governor**



During Science week I was lucky enough to attend a fantastic day with our Year 6's. Mark Friend, an engineer and parent, came in for the day to run a really interesting STEM day.

The day involved designing and making boats, powered by mini electric fans, that students built themselves. At first the students sketched out their plans, then built prototypes from cardboard. Then they got their designs checked by the engineer, before being let loose with the polystyrene and glue guns!

Once the boats were built, it was off outside to test them in the paddling pool – have a look on the website as there are some brilliant pictures that show how much fun the students had.

I am passionate about the need to make Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths accessible and enjoyable for all. I believe that if we can inspire our children in these areas, then they will become engineers and inventors of the future. I was really impressed with the students' ideas, enthusiasm and building skills. There are some very talented Year 6's who we should watch in the future as they really could go on to great things.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to Mark and Year 6 for letting me be part of the day, it was a really rewarding experience.



## ***Cinderella at the Tobacco Factory*** ***By Richard Higgs,*** ***Parent Governor***

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In January I received a last minute call which resulted in a memorable afternoon helping escort 192 children to visit the Tobacco Factory Theatre for a performance of Cinderella.

We walked the entire school (except Reception) over a mile to the Tobacco Factory in Bedminster. The older children walked in pairs, hand-in-hand with the younger ones, all wearing Hi-Vis jackets. The children were all very well behaved and listened to staff when crossing the roads.

In the theatre the children found their own seats. They all sat through a two hour performance.

For some of our Children, this may be the only visit they will get to a theatre.

They have learnt how to behave in this environment. The children watched and heard an extraordinary example of theatre at its best.

The Independent reviewed it as "A funny, heart-warming, beautiful piece of stage craft" and it truly was.

What a privilege to walk our children to a local theatre, where local acting and musical talent held them spellbound for the entire performance.

## ***Making Lanterns*** ***with Artist,*** ***Alan May***

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Parents came into school for two days to help Years 1 and 6 who worked with community artist, Alan May, to create lanterns on the theme of Roald Dahl's, James and the Giant Peach. The book has been read by the children as part of their reading week.

The biggest Lantern was a peach with the character of James on the top. Other groups built a centipede, a ladybird and a spider. The children all worked well in groups even helping other groups when they had finished theirs.

They all cleared the hall for lunch and at the end of the day; I overheard many animated discussions on how they should make the sculptures and how best to collaborate to make them work.

They all knew the book, so ideas came flowing out on how to design and colour the creatures. They listened well and followed instructions, sharing tools and materials.

We were all under the two-day time limit and as the second day neared the end all students worked quickly, helping each other to finish on time.

They had all learnt how to design and turn the drawings into 3D objects.

Simple use of tools including Willow sticks and tape, scissors, secateurs, plastic ties, then tissue and glue. The finished lanterns are beautiful, with the children feeling very proud of their efforts.

The Lantern parade itself was re-scheduled, due to bad weather, and moved to early January. On the evening it was perfect. Our lanterns looked amazing as we walked them from St Francis' Church, with Samba and marching bands, to Compass Point School.

What a great atmosphere, with all the streets en-route lined with cheering crowds and delighted children.

Well done to all who built and walked the lanterns in the evening. A fantastic event, which may be the last as funding is being cut for next year.

A massive thank you to Artist, Alan May, who once again brought artistic inspiration to our School.

*By Richard Higgs*  
*Parent Governor*

