



# Governors' News

Ashton Vale Primary School

Winter 2014

Term 2 Edition 4

This is our term 2 newsletter from the Governing Body at Ashton Vale School.

## *Ofsted Inspection By Jenny Smith, Community Governor*

It gives us immense pleasure to pass on our thoughts on the recent 'Good' Ofsted Inspection. It was not the

over the last six months we have seen further improvement. It is getting increasingly difficult to be graded an outstanding school, but as you will have seen on the Ofsted report, we only missed this top grade on two small points. Immediately action was taken and already we can see progress. Our link Maths Governor is working closely

***'Pupils are routinely friendly and welcoming. They appreciate the support that Teachers and other adults provide. They say how much they enjoy school and all that they do'***

*Extract taken from Ofsted Report – October 2014*

easiest two days as every aspect of the school is thoroughly scrutinised. Since the last inspection the staff have worked on new initiatives that have made learning interesting and has motivated the children to produce some amazing work. Governors' spend time visiting the school to see for ourselves how the children are progressing. We also have meetings with senior staff to analyse results and

with Maths leaders and is seeing teachers providing more challenging work, the children are responding well to this.

New spelling and grammar skills are being introduced, but we are asking parents to help the children by encouraging them to read at home when possible. We are also thinking of introducing word games such as word-search and crosswords. This will help

## *Gardening By Yvonne Bushell, Trust Governor*

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As a governor I enjoy coming in to the school, meeting the children and finding out different aspects of their school day. One way of doing this is gardening in the school grounds.

When I come up to school and do some gardening I often have many of the children talking to me about what I am doing, why am I gardening and what sort of plants are in the sensory garden.

Many of the children will offer to help by either weeding or planting, and in the summer, watering. Many of them take great delight in finding insects and showing them to me.

Often the children will talk about their own gardens and plants that they have grown at home, some say that they have not got a garden so like to garden at school.

The school has done brilliantly this year, winning Gold in the Bristol in Bloom competition.

This has been accomplished by the participation in the gardens from the children throughout the school.



increase vocabulary and make learning fun.

The Governors' would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for all their hard

*Handfuls of Harmony  
Community Choir Concert by Jenny Smith,  
Community Governor*

Saturday 29 November 2014, St Francis Church

Handfuls of Harmony held two sell out concerts at St Francis Church; these were made up of children from our trust schools, together with Ashton Gate School. The adults have the privilege of singing several songs with the children which is magical and makes the whole event worthwhile. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the children from Ashton Vale who took part, not only did they sing brilliantly but their behaviour was outstanding, we were so proud of them.

The criteria for joining Handfuls of Harmony is not to be a brilliant singer but just to enjoy yourselves. We sing everything from gospel, folk and modern so there is something for everyone. We have won the money from the Peoples' Millions, which will be used to increase singing in every area of the community. So, if you feel like joining when we start up again don't be shy, we would like to welcome you. We meet for two hours at Ashton Park School

work and thanks to parents for supporting the school.

If you would like to know more about how the Governing Body works within

and more information will be on the school Newsletter later.

*The Lantern Parade. By Richard Higgs, Parent Governor (Arts and Music)*

It's Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December, as our Family, wrapped in our warmest clothes, head to the Tobacco Factory. As we walk past St. Francis Church, a wall of sound cracks the air as a samba drum band strike up. It's deafening but infectious. Then the sound of hundreds of excited families, many with home-made lanterns, await the order; the start of the parade. An enormous butterfly and the hungry caterpillar swing above the

the school please don't hesitate to contact us.



Ashton Vale crowd at the back of the procession while children carrying illuminated bugs run around finding their friends. It was getting dark as the signal was given for some 500 people to move off up

North Street led by the drummers and dancers. The traffic was halted by an army of 50 yellow jacketed volunteers as cars and busses resigned themselves to a short wait waved as we passed. Work on the lanterns had started weeks before, led by local artist Malcolm Brammer, who had come into our school and helped the children to build these large colourful bugs and insects from willow sticks and tissue paper. Our butterfly was the largest lantern in the procession and required teams of two people





to hold it aloft with thick bamboo pole. To our surprise we were met by cheering crowds 3 or 4 deep amongst them George Ferguson was spotted taking pictures of our Butterfly. Unlike last year the evening stayed fine saving all the lanterns and children from collapsing before we ended at Compass Point. A noisy but explosive firework display ended a truly memorable evening. Thanks to all the families and children for such an impressive event.



*Literacy. By  
Suzanne Hayes,  
Parent  
Governor(Literacy)*

I have had the opportunity to go round to classes and hear children read. I have been fortunate enough to hear students from most classes and have been really impressed by their confidence and abilities. Students are encouraged to be independent

readers and to become life long readers. They often read at the start of the day and some classes have their books on the desk ready to read whenever they have a free moment. It was great to see that children understood how to pick the right book for them – some used the book boxes and knew what colour they were reading at. The free readers could explain that they would read ‘the blurb’ on the back and check they could read it and would find the book enjoyable.

The children read so well using great expression and clear voices. Nearly all of them read regularly at home, at least 3 times a week and enjoyed reading to their parents or siblings.

Here are some of the questions I asked the children and their replies. I hope they make you smile as much as they did me!

**Why do we read?**

- To learn new stuff
- To imagine the pictures in the story
- Enjoyment
- To learn about interesting topics
- To learn about how things were in the past

- You find new words that you can use
- Imagination

**What sort of books do you enjoy reading?**

- Fantasy
- Funny books
- Books about planes and trains
- Diary of a Wimpy kid
- Sad stories
- Roald Dahl
- Non- Fiction

**We would like to take this opportunity to thank staff, parents/carers and all the children for their support and hard work this year in wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.**

**We are looking forward to an exciting 2015!**

