

Changes to the Governing Body

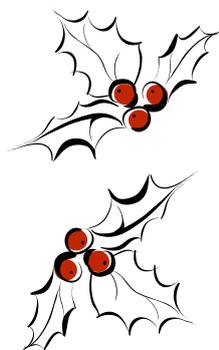
Earlier this term we invited nominations for candidates for the **Parent Governor** vacancy on our Governing Body. There was just one nominee, so we were able to fill this vacancy without a contested election. We would therefore like to welcome **Mrs Sarah Branton**, to the Governing Body.

We have also been required to reconstitute the Governing Body, following changes in legislation about how Governing Bodies are made up. We had considerable freedom to choose what the new GB would look like – to make it larger or smaller, or to change the balance of people who serve on it. At this term's GB meeting, we debated how we felt the school would be best served, and decided the following:

- **Not to change size:** We are an active Governing Body, and all individuals have key roles to play in school, so that it would be difficult to be as effective as we are currently with fewer people on the GB.
- **To keep the same parent representation:** the new minimum requirement is just 2 Parent Governors, but we felt strongly that we are well served by valuing and listening to our parents. We therefore decided to keep the current number of **5 Parent Governors**.

The remaining changes to the constitution amount to a re-naming of positions. We will not have to alter any personnel as a result of these changes. Our resulting GB make up is therefore as follows:

Governor	Role
H Pemberton	Headteacher
D Dobson	Staff
L Porter	Co-opted
S Branton	Parent
J Cox	Parent
A-L Kenny	Parent
S Mander	Parent
P Smith	Parent
M Wilson	Local Authority
J Barker	Co-opted
R Barker	Co-opted
K Ashley	Co-opted
C Whiteley	Co-opted
J Heffernan	Co-opted
D Fay	Associate



Developing homework at SJB

We have been reviewing Homework provision within school. This was the topic of discussion at October's **Governor Coffee and Chat**. Here is what you told us:

- Parents were positive about the value of good quality purposeful homework
- Homework set over a few days is appreciated
- Range of subjects to keep interesting; regular format for spelling, maths is viewed positively
- Parents liked introductory letters outlining homework policy for each new academic year
- Parents would like support in how they are meant to be involved in exercises as this is not always clear e.g. phonics or calculations.
- Parents felt it was important for teachers to reinforce the importance of homework exercises by giving some form of feedback – either verbal to pupils or by marking
- It is important to parents for school to have a consistent approach e.g. within a year-group
- Parents would like opportunity to comment e.g. if an exercise went really well or was enjoyable, or if it was confusing or unclear
- Some parents keen for homework to be used as an opportunity to stretch children in imaginative ways that can't be done at school, using home resources.

We have fed this back to the school Senior Team. The revised SJB Homework Policy will be available for your comments and discussion at the next **Governor Coffee and Chat, Friday 6th Feb 2015, 8.45am**. Thank you to all who have contributed to this discussion so far!

Season's Greetings

It has been another busy term for everybody at SJB. Classes have been out and about as we try to support the curriculum in school with trips into the community so the children can see how their learning fits in the wider world. We have had an array of colourful **class assemblies**, a bumper **Christmas Fayre**, marvellous costumes at **the Infant Nativity Play** and a full house to enjoy the children's singing at our **Candlelight Concert**.

We would like to thank everyone in the SJB team – pupils, parents and carers, teachers and staff and the wider community – for their involvement in the school's successes. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and look forward to carrying on working and playing hard together in 2015.

The SJB Governing Body

Swimming provision in school

Following interest from parents in our swimming provision, we have revisited our position in school on this area of the National Curriculum this term.

It is a legal requirement for schools to teach swimming in either Key Stage 1 or 2, so that all pupils can swim 25m confidently, use a range of strokes effectively, and perform self-rescue from the water. As well as meeting our minimum legal responsibilities, we feel that it's especially important for our children to become swimmers, given the amount of water in and around Ulverston!

This is a minimum requirement for all of our pupils to reach. However, we feel that helping all pupils to reach a basic level is not at odds with the aim of stretching our more able swimmers – of which the school has many. We are hoping to develop the school swim team to give our children the opportunity to shine, and so that the school can have a strong presence at local swimming galas. We are planning to train more of our teachers in this area, so that we can make sure that all of our children are supported at the appropriate level for each child.



Ford Park Gardening Project



This year 12 former Gardening Club children in years 4, 5, and 6 have been involved in a **Ford Park Community Project**. Together with older members of the Ulverston community, they have-

- helped to develop a wildflower meadow at Ford Park,
- planted wildflowers including endangered Corncockles at school in our own new wildflower meadow area,
- expanded their knowledge of the natural environment,
- given ideas to the artist who has incorporated these into his magnificent wall mural at Ford Park, and
- at the very exciting last visit a few weeks ago ... christened the Christmas Snowflake Trail, decorated the Ford Park Christmas Tree, and switched on their Christmas Lights!

The children, Mrs Barker (Year 2), and myself thank **Sarah the Ford Park Gardener** for her marvellous input in what has been a really valuable and enjoyable learning experience this year. We also express our gratitude to **Sheila and Mike from Tyson Square** for their friendship and kind assistance, and company.

We even managed to fit visits to the adventure playground into this hectic schedule!

In the New Year the children will be visiting residents at sheltered housing in **Tyson Square** to give a presentation about their experiences.

Ramsey Barker