

7 December 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

News from the Governors

I am writing on behalf of the Governors to share key information about your school and its governance. Firstly, the Governors are:

<p>Parent Governors Fiona O'Donnell Tabitha Marsh</p>	<p>Staff Governor Rachel Goymer</p>
<p>Co-Opted Governors Gwenda Lilley Peter Thorn Richard Pelly</p>	<p>Ex Officio Governor The Headteacher, Joolz Scarlett</p> <p>Local Authority Governor Sue Dutton</p>
<p>Associate Member Helen McHale</p>	<p>Clerk to Governors Jacky Cope</p>

Governor responsibilities (as stated by the DfE) are:

- a) Working in partnership with, and providing support to, the Headteacher in the strategic leadership of the school, ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b) Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students, and the performance management of staff; and
- c) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

For further information about Governors, please visit the school website and explore the 'Governing Board' page within the 'About our school' tab.

We currently have a full complement of governors but would always be keen to hear from anybody who might be interested in becoming a governor. If this could be you, please do contact me or the Headteacher to discuss what this would involve.

Governors have agreed that their main strategic priorities for this academic year are:

1. Designing a new curriculum provision to focus on the quality of teaching and learning, embracing technology as a key area.
2. Establishing longer-term financial stability and security.

3. Consolidating last year's good work improving communication with parents and carers

These are reflected within the School Development Plan which you can view on the school website by going to the 'About our School' tab, and then clicking on 'School Development.'

Reflecting on last year, we are especially pleased to highlight some features:

1. Ofsted visited in November 2017 for a short inspection and judged the school continued to be 'Good'.
2. Students sitting external examinations had a 92% pass rate, which was a 17% increase on 2017 and a 48% increase on 2016.
3. The restructuring of the school into three tiers with cluster groups of classes has been reviewed by other special school headteachers in a Peer Review and judged to be a very positive move.
4. The Link has been running successfully for two years and has proved it is a financially viable outreach service that earns additional income for the school.
5. The reputation of the school has been building locally with events such as the visit from HRH the Earl of Wessex and the viral fundraising video of 'This is Me'.

Our major challenge remains financial. More information can be found in the Annex to this letter. The situation is much improved from a year ago, but we do still expect significant challenges balancing the budget in the years ahead.

On a personal note, I joined as the Interim Chair of Governors from February 2017 at the request of RBWM. In July 2017, I was co-opted as a Governor and elected Chair of Governors and, having worked with the school for nearly two years now, I am impressed by the cheerfulness of the staff and their impressive impact on its students. I am proud to be the Chair of Governors.

Finally, we really are grateful for the partnership working between parents and school that helps our students do their best. We look forward to seeing our dedicated staff and the good outcomes for students enhancing the reputation of Manor Green School as being the Centre of Excellence for Inclusion and one of the most successful special schools in the country.

Yours sincerely



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Chair of Governors
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Annex: Finances

As mentioned in the letter our major challenge remains financial. This Annex provides more information.

The situation is summarised below:

£k	1 Apr 15 – 31 Mar 16 Actual	1 Apr 16 – 31 Mar 17 Actual	1 Apr 17 – 31 Mar 18 Actual	1 Apr 18 – 31 Mar 19 Budget
Total income:	6,626	6,670	7,192	7,522
Total expenditure:	6,552	7,342	7,154	7,422
Carry forward	74*	-672**	-634**	-534**
Notes:	*Note 1	**Note 2	**Note 2	**Note 2
Pupil numbers	237 (as per January 16 censes)	256 (as per January 17 censes)	258 (As per September 17 intake)	263 (As per September 18 intake)

Notes:

1. The 2016-17 budget was prepared using a carry forward of £418k. Early in 2017 it was found this had been overstated by £344k so that the actual carry forward was only £74k.
2. Deficit covered by loan from RBWM

As shown in the Table, the financial year to 31 Mar 17 ended with a deficit of £672k. Once the carry forward problem (Note 1) and other inadequacies had been identified, Governors introduced new financial procedures in May 2017. Staff responded superbly.

Our Finance Manager, Didem Allen, joined us in October 2017. Thanks to her hard work supported by the school leadership team and cost centre managers, we now have robust control and forecasting of our finances.

Our challenge for the years ahead is that expenditure is expected to rise faster than income. We are required also to include a loan repayment of £150k per year until the loan from the RBWM has been repaid. So, although the situation is far better than a year ago, Governors must continue to look at every possible way of operating more efficiently.