

20 October 2017

Dear Parents

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 Vacancy</p>	<p>Staff Governor Josie Glover</p>
<p>Co-Opted Governors Sue Dutton Gwenda Lilley Peter Thorn Richard Pelly</p>	<p>Ex Officio Governor The Headteacher, Joolz Scarlett</p>
<p>Associate Governor 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 Body' page within the 'About our school' tab.

We seek a volunteer to fill the current vacancy for a parent governor. If this might be of interest to you, please do contact me or the Headteacher to discuss how you could help.

At the Governors' meeting on 13 September 2017, we agreed our main strategic priorities for the academic year to be:

1. Securing excellent outcomes for students
2. Maintaining long term financial security
3. 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 five features:

1. Having developed a 'Mastery' curriculum of key skills, teachers now provide robust evidence of student progress. There is richer data across all areas of ACE. We are confident that student progress was good for the year; indeed, the pass rate for exams increased by 33%.
2. We admitted 25 more students compared to the previous year.
3. The Link one-year pilot, a service for RBWM SEN students who are at risk of failing in mainstream schools, was set up at short notice. Following its success with 39 students, the RBWM agreed that it should continue.
4. A largely positive staff survey provided evidence that we have a dedicated team doing their best for the students.
5. The organisation and leadership of the school has been reshaped. We now have cluster groups and three tiers; First Middle and Upper. We also have new leadership posts and several new Governors on our Board with a broad range of skills and experience.

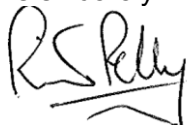
Our major challenge last year was financial. More information can be found in the Annex to this letter. We are not completely out of the woods yet, but we are in a much better position. We are pleased that we have recovered the situation without making any staff redundant.

On a personal note, I joined as the Interim Chair of Governors from February 2017 at the request of RBWM. In July, I was co-opted as a Governor and elected Chair of Governors and, having worked with the school for eight months, I am impressed by the school's impact on its students and am proud to be its 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 the dedication of our staff 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 last year was 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 Budget Plan
Total income:	6,626	6,670	7,587
Total expenditure:	6,553	7,342	7,497
Carry forward	74*	-672**	147***
Notes:	*The 2016-17 budget was prepared using a carry forward of £418k. Early in 2017 it was found this had been overstated by £344k.	**Deficit covered by loan from RBWM	***Will be used to repay part of loan
Pupil numbers	237 (as reported in January 16 censuses)	256 (as reported in January 17 censuses)	258 (September 17 intake)

As shown in the Table, the last financial year ended with a deficit of £672k. Once the carry forward problem and other inadequacies had been identified, Governors introduced new financial procedures after Easter. Staff responded superbly. Thanks to the hard work of the school leadership team and cost centre managers, we now have a robust plan to manage the school within our budgetary constraints.

We have recruited a new Finance Manager, Didem Allen, who joins us at the end of October. We also thank our interim Finance team who have been in place since early in 2017.

There will need to remain a strong focus on financial procedures but, as mentioned in the letter, although we are not out of the woods yet, our financial situation is in much better shape.