

## Mereworth's Journey to Outstanding

Staff and governors at Mereworth are committed to making sure that Mereworth achieves 'Outstanding' school status and so we were delighted to be one of 15 'good' schools in the county invited to attend KCC's Journey to Outstanding programme. The programme runs over the 2017-18 academic year and consists of a range of opportunities to share excellent practice, including school to school visits and face to face events.

As part of the programme, governors have been reviewing the effectiveness of their role in the development of the school and have identified five focus areas;

- Governing body's role in developing a vision and 3 year plan with the school, articulating its journey to outstanding.
- Governing body's engagement with staff, pupils and community.
- Clarity of the governors' strategic role and confidence in making impactful challenges.
- Governance responsibilities discharged with maximum efficiency.
- Governing body's skills development, succession planning and self-evaluation.

Over the coming months, we will be visiting a number of other schools to explore new ways of working and how we can develop outstanding governance here at Mereworth.

As you can see, one of our focus areas is to develop the ways in which the governing body engages with parents, pupils and the wider community. We want to work towards the governing body becoming more visible within the school and ensure that we have opportunities to take account of your views in the work that we do.

We would very much welcome your thoughts on how this could be achieved and will be offering the opportunity to share your ideas before the end of the year. Don't forget, you can also contact governors through the governor section of the school website.

## MEET OUR NEW GOVERNOR

### Miss. ALISON CURRIE

Alison is an experienced accountant currently working in central government. She has worked in both public and private sector including in education. Alison has lived in Kent for most of her adult life, moving to Mereworth in early 2017. Outside work she loves to travel, hill walking, cycling and gym and is embracing rural life and creating a small country garden.

Alison joined the governing body at the end of last year and is responsible, alongside Jane Carnegie, for monitoring Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare, including Safeguarding. She has also recently joined the Finance Committee.

## The Impact of 21 Steps

Part of our role as governors is to provide an external perspective, to the leadership team, on what is working well and how things could be improved. This is done by monitoring the impact of significant developments within the school.

One area that we have been looking closely at over the past few years is the new 21 Steps Assessment framework, which the school adopted following the removal of the national framework for assessment (levels). Adopting a new assessment framework is a complex and time-consuming process and it has been necessary to monitor this over several academic years to see the full impact.

What is now clear, however, is that the 21 Steps framework has had a significant impact on teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school and provides an extremely robust method of tracking pupil progress through the academic year. The fact that there are multiple criteria for each individual step helps teachers to target their teaching more effectively and focus on the needs of each pupil. Teachers are rigorous in their use of assessment data to plan their lessons and ensure that pupils make good progress. Moderation of assessment decisions with other schools has highlighted that, at Mereworth, the 21 Steps system encourages staff to have very high expectations of their pupils; a key factor for ensuring the best outcomes.

Governors will continue to monitor the impact of the 21 Steps system over the next few years.



### A Big Thank you to Miss. Maryon and All the Staff!

As governors, we have been fully involved in ensuring that the right arrangements were in place to support the school during Miss. Lavelle's maternity leave. Miss. Lavelle and Miss. Maryon were extremely thorough in their planning for this period and this has been very evident in the smooth running of the school this term.

Governors would particularly like to thank all the staff for their efforts to get into school on the snow days at the beginning of March which allowed us to keep the school open when many other local schools were closed. This is a real testament to the commitment and dedication of the staff team here at Mereworth. A special word of thanks is due to Miss. Maryon for her efficient management of the situation, despite it being her first day in the driving seat!