

GOVERNOR NEWS

ISSUE 1

THE MAGAZINE FOR
BROOKE WESTON TRUST
GOVERNORS



Dr Andrew Campbell

WELCOME

I am delighted to be sending you this first issue of the Brooke Weston Trust's brand new magazine for governors. Along with the soon-to-be-launched governor section of the Trust website, I hope this will become a resource that provides you with guidance to help you fulfil your duties as a member of a local governing body within the Trust's family of schools.

More than that, I hope it will also become the place to celebrate the wide variety of activities undertaken by governors; to profile interesting community or business projects and links,

and to learn more about the diverse range of personalities active within our governor community. We are always seeking to improve in everything we do, so any feedback on this first issue and suggestions for future content would be much appreciated.

Thank you once again for your continued support for our schools and the young people we educate.

DR ANDREW CAMPBELL
BROOKE WESTON TRUST



LOG ON
TO KEEP IN
TOUCH!

We will shortly be launching a new section on our Trust website especially for governors.

This will be a password-protected area where you can access important information such as agendas, minutes, and a meetings calendar.

It will also be uploaded with links to useful websites and important documents and policies.

An exciting feature will be the forum where you can discuss topics within your governing body as well as other governors from other schools.

We hope this will be a useful resource and allow LGBs to share good practice as well as drawing on the wide range of expertise that we have within our governing bodies as a whole.

IN FOCUS

Each edition we will be putting the spotlight on a relevant subject area. It seems fitting for this first newsletter to outline the role of a governor and to explain the Trust's governance arrangements.



THE GOVERNOR'S ROLE

The main roles of all members of a Local Governing Board (LGB) are to ensure the highest standards of:

- Achievement of students
- Quality of teaching
- Behaviour and safety of students
- Leadership and management of the school

All members of an LGB must be prepared to:

- Accept difficult challenges and take long term perspectives to deliver and sustain improvements
- Demand high expectations from everyone within the school and encourage a culture of ambition
- Provide a professional challenge to the leadership of the school which results in high achievement by students

The role of a member of an LGB is to work with other governors to provide challenge and support to the Principal and the Leadership Team of the school. This means ensuring appropriate and rigorous performance targets are set for the school; robust quality assurance is regularly carried out and that the questioning of progress is at the heart of LGB meetings.

Being a member of a local governing body can be highly rewarding. It is an opportunity to utilise personal and professional skills in an educational setting while having the chance to interact with people from a variety of backgrounds but who share a common goal of supporting the school. Governors have spoken of gaining satisfaction from the knowledge that they are putting something back into society – an investment in the future.

As a member of an LGB you will be encouraged to consider undertaking specific roles that reflect your interests and expertise and to participate in a variety of activities within the school and the local community.

BROOKE WESTON TRUST-CHARTER FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES

As soon as possible after appointment, members will be required to attend a Trust Governor Induction session. After this there will be annual update training which will cover a number of things including information on understanding student progress data; quality assurance; performance management; curriculum changes; attendance and behaviour; the school's development plan and Ofsted expectations.

It is expected that all governors attend at least two out of three meeting per year, or in the case of LGBs that meet more than 3 times, achieve at least 75% attendance. In the event an individual governor's attendance falls below this, their ability to effectively discharge their duties as a governor will be reviewed with them by the Chair of the Local Governing Body.

Governors should also make at least two visits to the school during teaching time each year to meet students and staff and gain direct experience of specific aspects of the Academy agreed with the LGB Chair and Principal. As part of this they should talk with parents during the visit wherever possible.

It is crucial that each governor makes an active contribution to LGB meetings. A key role is also to champion the common purpose of the Brooke Weston Trust and the goals of the LGB outside of meetings and within the community.

Governors should also aim to remain current with the national agenda on education, including reading relevant update literature issued by the Trust and/or DFE.

OUTLINE OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Trust appoints the majority of governors on each LGB. To enhance links between individual school LGBs, the Trust central administrative team and Board, the CEO provides a personal representative to attend all LGB meetings. This is usually a senior member of the central team staff.

Current LGB members come from a wide range of sources, including the Local Authority, elected members, successful local and global businesses, Further Education colleges, as well as from partnerships established with professional services companies.

The Trust also partners with the School Governors One-Stop Shop to find potential recruits for its LGBs.

THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

The LGB is responsible for ensuring that it is run effectively to promote student achievement. Its duties include: Setting strategic direction, policies and objectives, reviewing progress against the school's attainment targets, and challenging and supporting the Principal.

As a minimum, the LGB comprises; parent governors (elected by parents); staff representatives (elected by school staff); Trust appointed governor and other Trust employees as required.

The responsibilities of the LGBs include being responsible for ensuring there is local adaptation / adoption of central policies and functions as directed by the CEO on behalf of the Board of Directors; holding the Principal to account for the educational performance and student progress and being aware of the school's performance and challenging through regular visits and good management reporting.

The LGB must also understand the academy's strengths and development needs and agree strategic planning priorities with the Principal subject to approval by the CEO and Board of Directors.

A KEY ROLE IS LISTENING TO AND ENSURING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS' PARENTS AND LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

LGBs will also work with their Principal and Executive Principal/CEO to ensure:

- Staffing capacity and professional development is appropriate
- Quality assurance is effective and appropriate targets are in place
- Student progress meets Trust expectations, for different groups and in general
- Pupil premium expenditure has an effective impact on reducing gaps between groups and the average
- Student applications, admissions, attendance and exclusions information is regularly reviewed
- Staff absence, recruitment and retention is regularly reviewed

The effectiveness of the work of LGBs will be evidenced by:

- Challenging debate at meetings on performance and improvement (i.e. in minutes of meetings)
- Good parental feedback (through questionnaires and records of other consultation events)
- Good feedback on the impact of the academy in the community (range of evidence sources)
- Demonstrable checks on their own effectiveness using a Trust-wide effectiveness self-audit tool for LGBs

THE BROOKE WESTON TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors (which meets at least three times per year) is responsible for the effective operation of the Trust and each academy or free school. It provides ongoing challenge and support to the executive team and to LGBs.

The Board comprises: two Directors nominated by the de Capell Brooke family; two Directors nominated by the Weston Foundation; five Chairs of Governors from BWT Academies; two Parent Governors elected by parent members of BWT LGBs.



The next IN FOCUS will look at Ofsted and the governor's role in an Ofsted inspection 

GOVERNOR Q&A

Peter Shirtcliffe was appointed as Chair of Governors for Thomas Clarkson Academy at the start of this academic year (September 2013). With two decades of business experience, he has already become involved in assisting the Brooke Weston Trust with internal reviews and he is looking forward to helping shape the future at TCA.

Q&A Please explain your business background

I have operated in the procurement profession for over 20 years in various industry sectors including pharmaceuticals, airline and more latterly as Head of Procurement at British Sugar. I have an in-depth knowledge of change management and have successfully devised and delivered re-engineering programmes within the procurement function. My experience includes leading and coaching cross-functional international teams across a broad range of categories, capital projects and maintenance repair operations.

Q&A Why did you choose to take on a governor role?

The chance to help advance the development of the BWT schools for the betterment of the students was too good an opportunity to miss.

Q&A What do you see as your main role as chair of governors?

To work with the Principal and the Governing Body to ensure that progress is being made with regard to student development, ensuring that academic performance and the challenges that the academies have are regularly reviewed and tested to continually deliver the highest possible standards. This includes understanding the local issues with regard to attendance, student behaviour, budgets, evaluating parent satisfaction and the development of staff.

It is also important to ensure that as a chair of governors, I keep up to date with the national agenda on education and make an active contribution to the Trust and academy.



Peter Shirtcliffe

Q&A What skills do you think are needed to become an effective governor?

I see a number of attributes to being an effective governor including objectivity, accountability, openness, leadership, being approachable and a good listener.

Q&A What work have you undertaken so far?

Initially it has been around getting a good understanding of the existing situation at the academy – what are its strengths and weaknesses and what can be done to develop and enhance the development of the school. Additionally, at a Trust level supporting the coming together of the academies has given me the opportunity to support the review of external budgets to find opportunities to buy goods and services better.

Q&A In what ways can governors help shape a school?

Governors have the ability to shape the Academy's future by providing challenge and support to the school in order to ensure that high quality education to students is achieved.

HISTORY OF THE TRUST



Sir Peter Simpson

The Trust was founded in 2007 under the leadership of Sir Peter Simpson.

Sir Peter was Principal of the highly successful Brooke Weston Academy for the eight years prior to this.

The Trust opened the Corby Business Academy in 2008, and Kettering Science Academy was established a year later. In 2012, the Trust opened a Free School,

Corby Technical School and the same year it also took over the sponsorship of the Thomas Clarkson Academy in Cambridgeshire. Two primary schools in Corby – Gretton Primary School and Beanfield Primary School – also joined in 2012 and this year we have been delighted to welcome Peckover Primary School (in Wisbech) and Oakley Vale Primary (Corby).

From September 2013 Dr Andrew Campbell has led the Trust as the new CEO following the retirement of Sir Peter.

The Garfield Weston Foundation

Founded with the aim of supporting a broad range of activities in the fields of religion, education, the environment, the arts, health (including research) and other areas of general benefit to the community in the UK, the Garfield Weston Foundation makes generous donations to a wide range of organisations each year. The Foundation contributes three sponsor trustees to the Brooke Weston Trust and the current Chairman, George Weston, is the CEO of Associated British Foods.

de Capell Brooke Family

Hugh de Capell Brooke was a founding sponsor of Brooke Weston City Technology College and along with his wife, Bianca, has been a consistently strong supporter of the school over many years, taking an active interest in its progress and development both as a CTC and in more recent times as an academy. For many years Hugh served as Chairman of the Trustees of Brooke Weston. The Brooke Weston Trust also benefits from the strong support of Hugh's son, Alex de Capell Brooke.

Corby Developments Ltd (formerly Bee Bee Developments)

Corby Developments Ltd is a property development company with an international portfolio. A founding sponsor of Corby Business Academy, CDL continue to offer support to the Brooke Weston Trust through their nominated representative, Heneage Stevenson.

SCHOOL NEWS



CORBY TECHNICAL SCHOOL OPENED ITS NEW BUILDING ON NOVEMBER 18TH

The £6m building features three learning wings as well as a restaurant, hall, sports hall and theatre (which was funded by the Garfield Weston Foundation).

The school is located on a site on Cottingham Road in Corby, next to the previous building, which will be knocked down and used as car parking space.

There are currently Year 7 and Year 8 students learning at the school and eventually the school will cater for 475 students. The school is already proving extremely popular with well over 300 applications for 2014.

An exciting development is that the school will open its restaurant to industry for business breakfasts.

OAKLEY VALE PRIMARY JOINS THE TRUST

Oakley Vale Primary School in Corby is the newest member of the Brooke Weston Trust. Led by head teacher Mike Dean-Hall, the trust is delighted to welcome the school and looks forward to its continued success.

THOMAS CLARKSON ACADEMY

A careers convention was held at the academy in November. Targeted at Year 8, 11 and sixth form students, the event was held in conjunction with the Fenland Enterprise in Education Project.



PROTOCOL FOR GOVERNOR VISITS

- It is accepted good practice for governors to routinely attend during the school day and to attend school events in order to gather first hand information about the school at work
- Visits during the school day are an opportunity to see lessons, undertake learning walks and talk to staff, parents and students to gain a better understanding of their experience of the school
- It is crucial that there is a shared understanding of the purpose of the visit, how it is to be conducted and how it is to be reported back to the Governing Body and to the Senior Leadership Team
- The protocol for the visit should be agreed between the Principal and the Governing Body. It should be made clear that lesson visits are not for Governors to judge the quality of teaching, as this is the role of the SLT. The visits should provide governors with a broader understanding of the context for their work and help them inform their strategic decisions

INSIDE NEWS



Phil Harris-Bridge, Chair of the LGB for Brooke Weston Academy, lifts the lid on what the LGB is focusing on.

- The Governing Body is working closely with the Academy Executive Management team and Heads of Department to embed the LINK Governor process whereby individual governors align themselves to and regularly engage with specific departments. The core objectives of this process are for governors to:
 - expand their knowledge and understanding of the operational and daily life of the Academy
 - understand what their chosen department is aiming to achieve in the short, medium and long term
 - use this additional knowledge and insight to inform discussions within the Governing body meetings

The LINK governor initiative commenced at BWA in May 2013 and has accelerated rapidly since then for the benefit of both Governors and the Departments involved.

- The BWA Governing Body is one of the first in the Trust to embrace the new Local Governing Body effectiveness Toolkit, in order to drive continuous improvement in the way the Governors add value to and further support the Academy. The LGB Effectiveness Toolkit was used in September to audit/assess the effectiveness of the Governing Body and based on the results, we are now planning specific performance improvement actions.
- The BWA Governing Body is pleased to be able to share our structure and operational expertise with other Chairs within the Trust. One of the other Chairs of Governors will be observing at our January 2014 meeting.
- The BWA Governors are delighted to have supported the proposal to invest in the construction of a new gymnasium/health facility on the grounds of the Academy. The BW Trust formally approved the project in November and contractors have already started work. Completion is scheduled for June/July 2014, ready for the start of the 2014/15 academic year. The gym closes a gap in the Academy's sport and exercise facilities during the school day and will be available for local community use outside normal Academy opening hours.

DIARY DATES

December 16th	Beanfield Governors meeting	5.30pm
January 15th	Oakley Vale Primary Governors Meeting	6.30pm
January 16th	Corby Technical School Governors Meeting	4.00pm
January 22nd	Thomas Clarkson Academy Governors Meeting	7.00pm
January 27th	Gretton Primary Governors Meeting	4.30pm
January 28th	Brooke Weston Academy Governors Meeting	4.00pm
January 30th	Corby Business Academy Governors Meeting	4.00pm
February 4th	Kettering Science Academy Governors Meeting	4.00pm
February 26th	Trust Governor Training, Venue and Timing	TBC
February 27th	Trust Governor Training, Venue and Timing	TBC
March 3rd	Gretton Primary Governors Meeting	4.30pm
March 12th	Oakley Vale Primary Governors Meeting	6.30pm
March 20th	Corby Business Academy Governors Meeting	4.00pm
March 25th	Thomas Clarkson Academy Governors Meeting	7.00pm
March 31st	Beanfield Primary Governors Meeting	5.30pm



THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS ACROSS OUR BWT SCHOOLS ARE:

BW:	Phil Harris-Bridge	TCA:	Peter Shirtcliffe	Beanfield:	Jan Banham
CBA:	Kerry James	CTS:	Gary Campbell	Peckover:	David Oliver
KSA:	Steve Barton	Gretton:	Robert Preston	Oakley Vale:	Andy Cuddihy

INTRODUCING HEATHER LINDLEY CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS

As well as being CEO Andrew Campell's PA, Heather Lindley is Clerk to the governors for several BWT schools.

Heather is almost always the first point of contact for any governor related issue and if she cannot deal with your query then she can point you in the right direction. Her duties include: dealing with the paperwork for the appointment of new governors, keeping a record of agenda and minutes, keeping a database of all Trust governors and she will be overseeing the new governor section on the Trust website.

Heather is based at Brooke Weston Academy and to contact her governors can go through the switchboard on **01536 397000** or email **hlindley@brookeweston.org**

Richard Bernard (Vice Principal at Brooke Weston Academy) can be contacted for a governor specific issue. To contact Richard, governors should go through Heather who can arrange a meeting/phone call.

*Could all Peckover Primary and Oakley Vale governors email Heather their home address and phone number for her database.

We would like your feedback on this first edition. Please email any comments to Heather Lindley at **hlindley@brookeweston.org**

Also we positively welcome contribution from governors to this newsletter (which will be published three times a year) and if you have any articles or news you would like to include again please contact Heather.



Heather Lindley

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

We are delighted to welcome some new governors. **Shane Cousins** and **Louise Mole** both joined Corby Business Academy in October and **Janine Mulligan** and **Steve Ellis** joined Gretton Primary.

We would also like to thank **Charlotte Orton** (Corby Business Academy), **Nicoleen McConnell** (Brooke Weston Academy), **Helen Moore** (Gretton Primary) and **Tracy Freeman** (Beanfield Primary) who have now left their positions.