

Stedham Primary School Governors' Newsletter



Welcome to a Brand New School Year

It's a new and special year at Stedham Primary School. We no longer have the threat of closure looming over us and, having done a fantastic job as interim Head last year, Malcolm Meaby is now permanent Head Teacher at Stedham. We feel very positive about the year ahead, knowing that our school is safe and that we have an excellent Head in the driving seat.

It's such a pleasure to be able to welcome all our families back, especially after such a long and strange break from school. We would like to extend a special welcome to all our new families.

Mr Meaby and the teaching staff have been working hard on a new and exciting curriculum for the children, in line with Stedham's vision of enabling all our children to be the best that they can be. We can't wait to see the new learning in action.

In supporting Mr Meaby and his senior leadership team in planning for the return to school, the conversation at governor meetings have centred around the importance of making sure that children are happy and feel safe. Children learn most deeply when they are happy; this is the principle which underpins governor thinking and decisions.

We wish all the children of Stedham Primary School a happy new academic year!



Welcome to Stedham
2020-2021



Reflections on last year



Stedham School Vision
& Values



Stedham School
Governance

Reflections on Last Year

2019/20 was a year of extreme highs and lows. The year started with no hall and a consultation on closure. The silver linings were: new learning for the children about the rare bats that were roosting in our hall roof and a strengthened sense of community as we all pulled together to save our school.



In October we had a clean-up day, where the whole school family came together to tidy, paint and do gardening work. These days always feel special; pupils, staff, parents and governors (and any family members who can be roped in!) get together to create the sort of environment we would all like to learn and work in.



We can't talk about last year without mentioning the consultation on closure. Much of governor time last year was spent campaigning to keep the school open. (We are all very happy that, this year, we can focus on taking the school forward instead). A positive aspect of the campaign was a federation evening we hosted at Stedham in December for all the schools in our locality. There were head teachers and governors from nine different schools, with presentations from federated schools telling us about their experience of federation. It started some great conversations as well as Stedham Primary's journey towards federation. Mr Meaby and the governing board had conversations and meetings with 15 schools to try to find a suitable "fit" for federation.

Federation With South Harting Primary school

Since our "soft federation" with Harting in January, the Head Teachers and three governors from each school have been meeting monthly to plan for our partnership. The collaboration between the two schools will allow staff and school leaders to share resources and ideas and most importantly, to provide enhanced opportunities for the children of both schools. The federation has already provided opportunities for school leaders to share ideas around school development, including curriculum design. It has also been a great support system during the lock down period. When it is safe to do so, we look forward to children, parents and staff from both schools being able to meet.



Stedham School Vision and Values

Having a new head teacher seemed like the perfect opportunity to review our school's vision and values. The governing board joined the teaching staff in two workshops to map out a new strategic direction for Stedham Primary School.

The result of these workshops was a brand new mission and vision for our school, whilst holding onto the values which have become an integral part of school life and continue to be central to the children's learning at Stedham.



Our Mission

Equipping today; empowering tomorrow.

Our Vision

To be the small school of choice which enables all children to be the best that they can be.



Our Values

Creativity

Confidence

Independence

Responsibility

Motivation

Stedham School Governance

The governors extend their warm thanks and massive congratulations to Malcom Meaby and his team for an incredible year of teaching and learning in extreme circumstances.

It is a great pleasure to work with such an energetic and cheerful head teacher and his team of dedicated teaching staff. They have continued to deliver an outstanding, individualised education to the pupils of Stedham Primary School with enthusiasm and care.

Thank you!



The Role of Governors

The role of school governors is to oversee the strategic direction of the school, to check that the budget is being spent wisely and to ensure that all statutory requirements are being met. We are also there as a sounding board and to support the head teacher and his team. Most importantly, however, a governor's job is to continually ask the question "how will the children at the school benefit?"

Effective governance entails a high level of involvement in the school, including several school visits every year. This, of course, is impossible at the moment. However, we continue to conduct our business as governors via virtual meetings and are lucky to have an excellent working relationship with Malcolm Meaby, who keeps us up to speed with everything, even though we cannot see it for ourselves.

The Governing Team

We were very fortunate in gaining three new governors to join our team in June. They are all very enthusiastic individuals with a wide variety of skills and expertise. We hope that you will be able to meet them very soon.

We always welcome comments or questions so please feel free to email us:

governors@stedham.w-sussex.sch.org

The Stedham School Governors



Pippa Bass - Clerk to Governors

I live with my husband and dachshund in Midhurst having moved here from the Surrey Hills when I retired from the Cabinet Office a little while ago. I was a Civil Servant for many years following a career in management consultancy and IT in the public and private sectors. Before that, I graduated in mathematics and computer science and spent a few summers as a maths tutor, helping students with their confidence and understanding of GCSE level mathematics.

Jane Hines

I have been teaching for 16 years, initially in Devon before moving to Stedham Primary School as class teacher, and now as Assistant headteacher. I love working in the beautiful surroundings of the South Downs and the community environment of a small village school. I have taught all of the primary age phase but am currently teaching year 3 & 4. I am a qualified student mentor and have also gained qualification in middle leadership. I am the Maths lead here at Stedham and really enjoy finding new and creative ways to allow children to enjoy and thrive from their learning. I have two young children of my own and love being in the outdoors exploring as a family.





Matthew Pitteway

I am Director of Boarding at Seaford College. I am a school inspector for ISI and have been teaching for 19 years. At Seaford I run a boarding house and also run university admissions. I have two children (Lily aged 11 and Freddie aged 9). Outside of work I enjoy running, cycling and most other sports as well. My role at Stedham is to look after the safeguarding and child protection aspects of the school.

Toni Barrington - Vice Chair

I have lived in Stedham for 5 years, and my family have lived in the village for over 50 years. I have 2 girls - my eldest is at Stedham. I work locally as the community midwife and have done for over 10 years. I also have an economics degree, prior to my career in midwifery.

My role on Stedham's governing board is Finance and Literacy monitoring.

My interests outside work are running and gardening. I have a huge interest in SEN and disabilities, ensuring the child is the central focus of any education. My youngest daughter has taught me to fight, and has given me more determination than I ever dreamt imaginable. I'm passionate about providing our village with a school to be proud of, one where the children are happy, safe and thrive as individuals.





Debra Chalton

I have lived in Stedham for seven years, during this time I have been Vice Chair of Stedham Parish Council and am currently on the Stedham Memorial Hall Trust committee.

I run my own IT Project Consultancy business, managing the plans, budgets, stakeholders, issues, risks and governance for my clients.

I have 2 grown up children and 2 grandchildren and believe in a rounded education which suits each child, something I was delighted to see that Stedham Primary has real focus on. In my spare time I enjoy pyrography and calligraphy. We have a cat and a puppy border collie, so do lots of walking – often with both of them as the cat likes to join us on our walks!

Malcolm Meaby

My role within the Governing Body is one which I both value and enjoy. The opportunity to share my thoughts, ideas, vision and values, with other governors, who also hold our school close to their hearts, is incredibly exciting. Being able to develop and share long term strategies together, will ensure that Stedham Primary School grows and evolves into the small school of choice in the Rother Valley. As headteacher, I regularly report on the progress that the school is making and, as critical friends, my fellow governors, support and challenge in all strategic areas. Being a parent of two energetic boys, time away from work is often spent outdoors and sport related. I run, cycle and play squash regularly and, like my sons, am an avid LFC fan despite my West Sussex roots! The infamous motto: 'You'll Never Walk Alone', fits in well with my position as headteacher and governor.





Mark Leah

I moved to the village from nearby Fernhurst in 2018 with my wife Emilia and young family. Our eldest started school at Stedham in September 2020.

I am a Chartered Surveyor specialising in commercial property and along with four fellow directors, run our own agency and consultancy practice. Becoming a school governor has enabled me to take an active role in our close-knit village community and ensure the continued success of arguably our most important asset.

Outside of work I like to keep fit and I am a keen runner and cyclist. Other interests include; sailing, travel and spending time with my young family.

Katie Nicholson

I have lived in the village for many years and have children who attended and are currently at Stedham Primary School. I love its ethos, values and close knit care for the children and knowledge of who each child truly is. I am particularly excited to have Malcolm as our new head. My responsibility on the governing board is for Health and Safety and Early Years monitoring. I work locally and in my spare time like to knit, read, run and speak Italian - all at the same time obviously....



Sally Bloomfield

I believe in a child centred approach to learning and that children thrive in a small village school environment. I advocate the immense importance of outdoor learning within a broad and rich curriculum and firmly believe that children should be able to make choices about their own learning. I

believe that reading is a gift which opens up the world to children's imaginations and that mathematics can help children to make sense of the world around them and enrich their thinking about their own connections to it. Armed with this knowledge, children will know that their possibilities are endless.



I was Assistant Head Teacher At the Federation of Graffham and Duncton Schools, and the KS1 and Foundation Stage lead. I also introduced Forest School. Mixed year groups enabled children to move confidently between classes and to access the curriculum at their own level with excellent results. Ofsted Inspectors rated both the school and the Foundation Stage as Outstanding, the latter being attributed to my Leadership.

Most recently, I was Head Teacher of Grayswood Infant School (Outstanding). I won a £15,000 grant from Surrey Creative Thinking and used it to introduce Forest School. Under my leadership, after battling against closure, we

expanded from a 3 class Infant School to a through Primary. Since retiring I have always had a nagging feeling that I have something more to give as an Educator; I think that Stedham Primary School may give me that opportunity.

Celia Billington - Chair

I am fascinated by how children learn and have a special interest in visual and creative maths. I believe in finding a child's passion and feeding it, which is why I love the individualised approach to education at Stedham Primary. I have a PGCE and teaching experience in KS1 and KS2. My specific areas of responsibility on the governing board are Teaching & Learning and Maths monitoring. I'm very excited to be part of Stedham's new chapter - the future's bright! I have three lively boys, the younger two of which are at Stedham. Family time is spent mountain biking and playing in the great outdoors. Being Norwegian, it is the law that my first and greatest love is skiing.

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