

GOVERNOR DAY IN SCHOOL



Westgate Governors' Annual Newsletter

March 2021

Virtually Brilliant Day

The governors really value the opportunity to share the classroom experiences that Westgate pupils enjoy and lockdown was not going to stop us this year. It was very special for us to be welcomed into the virtual classrooms and in many cases your family homes. Having heard the review of the day and experienced Year 4 myself, I can say with absolute certainty that the young people of the school are an amazing, resilient and adaptable set of individuals. The sense of belonging and class camaraderie was wonderful to see and I am sure the return to normality will see this grow even more. These are unusual times, but the teamwork from staff, pupils and parents has allowed the day to day business of learning to continue. Whilst I loved being a part of a 'virtually' brilliant day, I hope it is one we do not have to experience again anytime soon! I hope you enjoy reading about what we all experienced during our online sessions.

Rob Wilks, Chair of Governors

It was good to see how the Year 1 teacher conducts the early morning first meeting of the day - setting the scene for the activities the children were being asked to do - including demonstrations to help them (and adults!) see what was expected and required of them throughout the day. It was especially good to see that there was also the opportunity for children and Mrs Senior to have a quick catch up to share any interesting stories and other things that they wanted to share with the class too - all good for mental health as well of course.

Sarah Mumford, Co-opted Governor

I was really impressed with how engaged and well behaved the children were in Year 5 for their morning meeting. They have adapted really well to online learning and followed the rules of virtual meetings to help it run so smoothly. Some children shared fabulous examples of their lockdown work including drawings and talking about their baking, spooky poetry, and orienteering. Thank you, Year 5, it was a pleasure to join your meeting!

Sally Clough, Co-Opted Governor

This year's Governor day in school was a world away from last year. I had the pleasure of attending Mrs Hattersley's Year 3 class. As my daughter isn't yet of school age, remote learning was certainly an enlightening experience! Emojis aside, the children were incredibly well behaved, and the lesson well-paced with maths, geography and Matilda all on the agenda.

Sharon Mistry, Co-opted Governor

We were excited to join Year 4 with Mrs Hooper. It was a delight to be so warmly welcomed and with great enthusiasm. There were many interesting questions lined up for the end of the meeting for us, about being a governor. In literacy, the STEM sentences discussing the way a character felt in the current reading book were articulate and clear, followed by good discussion. There was conversation about the day of learning in the era of home-school and Teams lessons. It was a positive experience and privilege to be included. Thank you, Year 4.

Louise Shackleton, Parent Governor

This year's Governors Day took place virtually. It is a format that I'm used to, having worked from home since last March, but I was looking forward to finding out how the older students in school were dealing with this very different and new way of learning. I visited Year 6 and having children in lower year groups, overseeing some of their lessons since the New Year, I was interested to see the step up that the students in Year 6 make in terms of workload, structure and student-led learning. The session started with an agenda for the lesson: it was clear that Mr Hackney had established a routine over the last couple of months that pupils are enjoying and there is an excellent learning environment that is being embraced by the students. What I also took away from my visit was the amount of schoolwork the children were doing despite the current remote working. Tasks are set in the morning meeting, worked on by the students during the day, and then progress reviewed in the afternoon. As I have always found of Westgate pupils, they were all polite, attentive, and engaged throughout the lesson. I was heartened to see the amount of support they showed each other when speaking in front of class or presenting work by sending clapping emojis or heart emojis. I might try adopting that in my next work meetings!

Neil Richardson, Parent Governor

Ms Romaine and Year 2 welcomed us into their afternoon online meet. What a great experience to see the children engaged and enjoying the interaction with their peers/classmates! The class was superbly organised, and the recorded lessons were brilliantly delivered. Children were interested in the day's tasks which involved English, Phonics, Maths and History. It was wonderful to see the examples of work that Year 2 had produced. Great to see first-hand the learning delivered in this way, whilst still retaining quality and embedding understanding. The children from Granville house spoke wonderfully about the lovely sentences they had written around the theme of 'Sally and the Limpet' and the Maths estimates they had been making. It was really interesting to hear the 'random facts' they shared about what they have been doing. All students were very involved and engaged with listening and sharing their own ideas. Thank you, Ms Romaine and Year 2!

**Gaynor Cross, Co-opted Governor
& Laura Boddy, Parent Governor**

The staff at Westgate started this term with so many unknowns and so many uncertainties. However, as we now approach full re-opening again, we can confidently say that we have delivered a full remote learning curriculum across all year groups which we hope the Governors were able to sample as they attended a range of the online class meetings. The vast majority of children have remained motivated and enthusiastic and we can't wait to get back to seeing our children where they belong - in their classroom!

Daniel Hackney, Staff Governor

I had the privilege of joining the afternoon Teams call with Reception. The children were all very keen to share the work they had been doing with each other and the teachers. They were all very well-mannered, and already adept with the technology. Great use was also being made of Tapestry to share work from home. The session also included a class story read by Mrs Jagger, again there were questions and interaction with the children. Clearly the Teams sessions were greatly valued by everyone as a way of keeping in touch during home schooling.

Andrew Ross – Parent Governor