



BEECHEN CLIFF

Letter to all Parents and Carers from the Local Governing Body

10th July 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

As the academic year draws to a close, it is an opportune moment to reflect back on all that has been achieved since September, to celebrate the breadth of work that has gone on and to look forward to the coming year.

The Governing Body has undergone major changes this year as Beechen Cliff joined the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership on February 1st. This is a key move in securing the future of the school and all we hold dear. We would particularly like to thank our leadership and support staff who have worked really hard to get to grips with new systems so that there has been minimal disruption to teaching staff and pupils. We are also very grateful to the Trust for all the support they have given us this year and we are looking forward to getting to know our new 'family' as we move forward. If you would like to find out more please visit the MNSP website:

<http://www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com/>

We also have to thank and say farewell to some long-standing governors this year. Charles Oldham, Charles Draper, Phil de Glanville, Louise Grendon, Martin Williams and Richard Stewart have all come to the end of their terms as Governors. Beechen Cliff wouldn't be the school it is today without the generous gifts of time and skills they have given. Fortunately we are pleased to welcome Gabby Akbar and Martin Williams to join our Board, and will be recruiting further in September. If you, or someone you know would be interested in becoming a Beechen Cliff governor please email us on governors@beechencliff.org.uk

The Governing Body has three core functions around which our work is structured:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Since joining MNSP the Local Governing Body, as we are now known, has been working with the senior leaders of the school to refresh our vision and values to ensure that we are clear what we are working towards for all our pupils. You will be hearing much more about this next year as we continue working to make the vision a reality and ensure that all we do

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can relate back to it. This year is the first year when all pupils in years 7-11 have been wearing the 'new-style' uniform and this illustrates the reality that real changes take time to fully embed and we want to be sure we are taking time to get things right for the long term. However, we are confident that we are moving in the right direction with our culture, particularly with regards to our safeguarding. Plans are in place for next year to raise the profile of the library and literacy within the school and also to promote good mental health and well-being for all pupils and staff.

2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.

The governors continue to be aspirational for all our students and were delighted by the report that Beechen Cliff sends more students to Russell Group universities than any other state school in Bath. We are so proud of and grateful for the staff team as they have gone above and beyond to educate our pupils both in and beyond the classroom and we are looking forward to celebrating the successes in public exams when results are published.

Looking ahead to next year we will welcome our new year 7 and lower 6 cohorts who have already undergone their induction. We have exhorted them to make the most of their time here, as it will fly by. We know that the year 7's are looking forward to their Trip to Tir-y-Cwm and extend our thanks to the Trustees of Tir-y-Cwm for all their work in maintaining this amazing facility. If you would like to donate to their fundraiser here is the link:

<https://donatemyschool.com/tir-y-cwm-trust>

The new OfSTED framework places emphasis on a broad and balanced curriculum and we will continue to work with the staff as they facilitate this, alongside comprehensive careers advice and guidance. Next year we are also looking to develop further the provision for mental wellbeing and character development for our pupils. As always at this time of year we say farewell to some staff members, but also we are excited by the appointments we have made for September and congratulate our successful applicants and those involved in the recruitment process.

3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

As you will be aware from the news, schools are facing unprecedented financial constraints. The Governors scrutinise the budget and continually challenge the school to make the most of the money that we do have to ensure we are offering our pupils the very best we can. I'm sure you will agree that what is on offer at Beechen Cliff is education of high quality, enhanced by a wealth of extra and supra-curricular opportunities, which is something we prize. However, the reality is that often finance is the limiting factor in what we can provide, and we would ask you to consider setting up a regular payment to the Beechen Cliff Foundation Fund <https://www.beechencliff.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Foundation-Fund-Giving-Form-June-2019.pdf>

which is spent by the school to enrich the opportunities we can offer and make sure they are available to all our students.

We are blessed to have input from our lively and dedicated PTA and all that they do to build community. This year has been hugely successful, with the auction of promises to raise funds for the club house for the playing field, the ongoing 50:50 club, quizzes, Riverford evenings and Give as you Live amongst other events raising in the region of £20,000. All our pupils benefit hugely from the support they give the school, particularly this year to the PE department and the Tech Department.

Huge thanks to Kate and Annie who have shared the PTA chair this year and have led them to achieving so much for the school, and their support team of the year reps and the committee. Kate and Annie are stepping down, leaving an opportunity waiting to be filled – if you would be interested in the chair role or getting involved in another way please go along to the AGM which will be held in September.

We are aware that you, as parents and carers, do so many unseen things to support the school. From adapting to the parking changes, sourcing food tech ingredients, and the myriad other vital tasks you ensure your children don't forget, thank you for all you do. We hope that you can look back on this year and see that your children have taken a step closer to adulthood and feel that any resulting grey hairs are worth it.

Finally, we must thank the pupils themselves, for giving us such a great school to volunteer for. Their zest for life, curiosity, courage and individuality is what makes being part of Beechen Cliff so rewarding – we look forward to welcoming you all back next year after a refreshing summer for new adventures.

Best wishes



Nigel Stevens
Chair of the Local Governing Body