



## GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2024/25

### NEW-LOOK GOVERNING BOARD

At the end of the 2023/24 academic year, we said goodbye to Janet Mills, Karen Storrie, Deborah Garvey and Stella Kalamaj, who all stood down after serving on the board for between 3 and 4 years. We are very grateful to them all for their support during their time as governors and wish them well for the future.

As a result, the Governing Board has a fresh look this term as we have welcomed four new faces, including a new chair. We are delighted that Sundesh Hemraj, Sharon Cliffe, Paula Franklin and Angela Atkinson-Thurtle have joined us and look forward to working together with them over the years to come. A special message from Sundesh, who has taken on the role of Chair, is below.



### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

*Hello Widmer End Community,*

*I am excited and honoured to be the new of Chair of Governors at Widmer End Community Combined School. I look forward to getting to know the children, their parents, and the staff during my time as Chair.*

*During a recent visit to the school, I had the pleasure of observing the core curriculum time. When the children were not focused on their work, fist bumps were flying with confidence. More importantly, I witnessed highly engaged and hard-working students supported by excellent teachers. This level of engagement and dedication is only possible with the support of parents who ensure their children wake up in the morning, get fed and dressed, and arrive at school ready to learn.*



*As Chair, I am committed to helping the school develop a strategy that maintains this outstanding performance while adapting to the ever-changing world through technological and cultural advancements. These changes impact the future economic landscape, shaping the needs of our children to work and succeed. Together, we can continue to support our children and help them thrive in their educational journey.*

*Thank you for welcoming me into your community. I am excited about the future and the opportunities that lie ahead for our school.*

*Best regards,*

*Sundesh Hemraj*

## LISTENING TO FEEDBACK

Thank you to the 97 parents who completed the survey at this term's Parents' Evenings. At our meeting at the beginning of December, governors reviewed all the responses and monitored for any emerging trends. It was good to note that the overwhelming majority of parents say their children are happy at the school and that they would recommend Widmer End to others.



We also reviewed the findings from a pupil survey, taken just after half term. Again, the majority of feedback was very positive. Governors discussed with Mrs Marshall and Mrs Ross-Wood how any concerns that were identified were being addressed.

## ENSURING RESOURCES FOR ALL TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

The latest Pupil Premium statement has recently been published on the school's website. This document describes how the school uses the very valuable funding it receives from the government to support children from lower income families and those in receipt of certain benefits to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in comparison to their peers. The Pupil Premium governor met recently with Mrs Ross-Wood, the Pupil Premium lead, to discuss how the school decides how to use this money and how it knows that the money is being well spent.

If you think there's a chance you may be eligible for Pupil Premium, please do ask the School Office for further details and an application form. This additional funding could make a big difference to your child's education.

## PLANS FOR EXPANDING OUR EARLY YEARS PROVISION

We are very lucky at Widmer End to have a thriving pre-school. As well as giving our youngest pupils a fabulous start to their education, the pre-school acts as an important pipeline for our Reception intake each year. At our December meeting, governors agreed to progress with a plan to expand the pre-school provision to include children aged 0-2 years which will provide an important service to the local community as well as give an additional boost to the numbers of children joining Widmer End. The school is currently applying for grants to fund the changes to the current buildings to enable this important project to go ahead.

## CURRENT GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

As of December 2024, the Governing Body consists of:

*Sundesh Hemraj, Chair (Co-opted)*

*Laura Air, Vice-Chair (Co-opted)*

*Dan Allen (Parent)*

*Angela Atkinson-Thurtle (Parent)*

*Helen Carmody (Co-opted)*

*Sarah Clarke (Co-opted)*

*Sharon Cliffe (Local Authority)*

*Paula Franklin (Co-opted)*

*Vicki Marshall (Acting Headteacher)*

*Liezl van der Merwe (Staff)*

*Martin Skitt (Parent)*

*Mike Smith (Parent)*

Meetings are also attended by our Clerk, Paul Treadwell; the Acting Deputy Head, Louise Ross-Wood and our Bursar Philippa Bailey.



**The governors wish all Widmer End families a very peaceful festive season**



**and a happy and productive 2025**