



GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

TERMLY REVIEW

Governors have been busy since the start of the new school year. Our last governor meeting had a detailed look at the school finance going forward to 2027, making sure that we are getting best use of the (limited!) resources available, and appreciating the efforts of the senior leadership team to achieve that.

There have been visits to school to better understand the systems used for teaching and how consistency is achieved across the year groups. It was a pleasure to see the children working and putting these resources into practice.

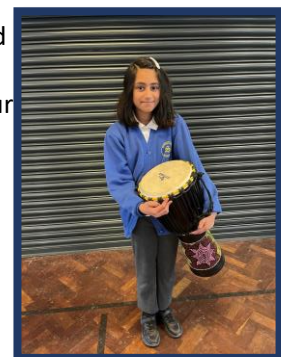
We have also taken part in safeguarding and GDPR training to keep up with the ever changing policies and concern levels.



GOVERNOR AND STAFF TRAINING

Having been elected by the Governing Board to be the new Chair of Governors, I (Kathryn Parkin) was keen to learn more about this role. Having only been a Governor for a year, I felt that being able to connect with others in a similar position would be invaluable. In January I attended an online session titled 'New and Prospective Chair of Governors' and particularly appreciated the focus on the strategic role of the Governing Board and how this works alongside the day to day operational activities of school leadership. I am hoping to organise meetings with Chairs of other local schools to continue my training in this role.

The school had recently subscribed to an Online Safety Training service. To initiate this all staff and governors have been asked to watch a training film, keeping us up to date with the ever evolving world of online safety. Many thanks to Isobel Dent for setting this up and running this aspect of our safeguarding responsibilities so effectively.



GOVERNOR VISITS

Kathryn was kindly invited to come into school to watch in a Y5 Computing lesson by Mrs Dent.

The students were learning about different filming techniques. After reviewing their learning from the previous week, they were given the opportunity to practice and improve their own filming skills by using a set of ipads.

A chance to use their storyboarding skills from Y3 allowed the students to plan the shots they wished to practice before pressing record. The students then grouped together to constructively critique each other's work, giving positive pointers on where to improve (we all agree it was probably best not to chop the subjects head off in a close up shot!). It was especially nice to talk to the children about their overall aim for this learning unit, whether it be filming an instructional video on how to make slime (!!) or being able to share the excitement of opening a set of football cards with their audience. Their confidence visibly grew throughout and I look forward to watching the final films. Lights. Camera. Action!



PARENT AND PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRES



Thank-you to all the parents who completed our annual parent questionnaire. The responses were all very positive and revealed that parents either agree or strongly agree that Stonelow is a good school, with an effective curriculum. It is heart-warming to see that all parents would recommend Stonelow to another family member or friend. Thank-you for this vote of confidence.

Some of the positive comments were around how Stonelow has a team of wonderful teachers, how well we communicate and plan and deliver an effective curriculum, and how staff in school have an open door policy and will respond to all concerns 'no matter how small'.

You also shared some suggestions about how we 'could do better' which have been shared with all staff. These included improving the variety of after school clubs [we hope you can see that this has been done!], sharing information about non-homework, which has been done, and reducing the number of parenthub posts. This is still something we are trying to be better at, as we recognise there is a fine line between too much and too little.

GOVERNOR SPOTLIGHT

My name is Andrew and I am one of your Parent Governors and Vice Chair of the Governing body of Stonelow. I have a daughter who is in Year 4, and a son who started Dronfield Henry Fanshaw School in September having also been a pupil at Stonelow. We've lived in Dronfield for about 7 years. I took early retirement a couple of years ago after a long career in the NHS and higher education. My last post in the NHS was as a Nurse Practitioner in Urgent and Emergency Care, while my last post in higher education was as a Senior lecturer in Paramedic Practice. I'm also an occasional barista and have just started work as a School Crossing Patrol right outside the Stonelow playground entrance!

I have a PGCE in Adult Education and a wide range of experience in this field from teaching GCSE to 16+ adults to supervising Masters Degree dissertations. I'm also a qualified teacher of adults. The themes in the curriculum that I'm linked to as a Governor are science and RE. I have Bachelors and Masters degrees in Science, so I do understand scientific principles and STEM, but I'm praying for more insight into the RE curriculum. I visited a Y3 science lesson recently and was pleased to see how well the pupils were engaged with the life and work of Mary Anning, who was the paleontologist who discovered the first ichthyosaur fossil. I never fail to be amazed by how the teachers at Stonelow are able to focus the enthusiasm of the children and manage to monitor and meet the needs of such varied range of personalities and abilities in the class..

WHAT'S NEW

It is with both sadness and gratitude that we bid farewell to Dianne Webster and Rob Hubbard, who have stepped down from their roles as governors. Their immense contributions to the governance of Stonelow have been invaluable, and their unwavering support for our initiatives will be greatly missed. We extend our heartfelt thanks to them for their dedication and service.

We are pleased to welcome two new members to our panel: Jennie Crunkhorn as a parent governor and Howard Elliott as an LA governor.

Furthermore, we are delighted to announce that Kathryn Parkin has agreed to take on the role of Chair of Governors, whilst Andy Whitfield continues in his position as Vice-Chair. We look forward to working alongside our new and existing governors to further enhance the educational experiences at Stonelow.

WANT TO MEET US?

Howard Elliott, Kathryn Parkin, Jennie Crunkhorn and Laura Wickert will be available at our parents evenings for a chat and to answer any questions you may have.

