

## **Brookland Schools Governing Body Newsletter**



**September 2009**

Dear Parents/Carers

We would like to welcome you all back and extend a warm welcome to all our new parents. Being the start of a new academic year, we wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the governing body's current activities and concerns, in line with our commitment to providing a regular newsletter and feedback to parents. For an overview of our role and a list of those currently on the governing body please refer back to the first newsletter dated January 2009 which you will find on the school's website.

### School Development Plan

Each year the head teachers of both the Infant and Nursery School and the Junior School, together with their senior leadership teams, produce a Self Evaluation Form which forms the basis of their School Development Plan for the following (April-March) year. The School Development Plan covers all aspects of school life, not just the curriculum and assists the governing body in tracking and monitoring the progress of each school. Last term the governing body reviewed this document and discussed how best to build on the schools' successes and agree areas for improvement.

### After School Club

A new After School Club, TEAMY, already successfully operating at Martin Community School, is now providing a service at Brookland, Monday to Friday from the end of school until 5.45pm. We are well aware how important it is to many parents that they have access to a safe, secure and reliable provider of after-school childcare and were very pleased to be able to engage the services of TEAMY. We will continue to monitor the service to ensure it is in line with parents' needs.

### School Meals

With the school's catering contract up for tender, a sub-committee of governors reviewed our school meals with a view to appointing a company which offers value for money, encourages a good take-up from the children and meets the 'Food for Life' standard originally set by the Soil Association in 2003 and now taken up nationwide as a benchmark for the provision of quality, healthy food. A short list of three companies was invited to give a presentation. One company, Pride, particularly impressed us with the quality, taste, presentation and value for money of their food and as a result they have been chosen to replace our existing provider. After the first hectic days and Pride have had time to settle in, we will review with children the menu and service so we can fine tune the provision. Pride will be laying on a tasting session for parents a little later in the term. More details will follow shortly.

### Security

The governing body has been working with the schools on plans to improve security on the site. Having identified our needs, we have been in discussion with three separate providers of security systems. As well as obtaining detailed quotes from them, we have also visited other schools where they have already installed systems and sought feedback about their efficacy and value for money. At the end of last term, the premises sub-committee of the governing body settled on a company to perform the required improvements and most of the work was carried out during the summer holidays.

### Secondary School Transfer

The governing body is aware that this has long been an issue of concern for many Brookland parents: our children transfer to a wide range of secondary schools and many parents feel that the current system – where they are invited to state a preference for a state school in or outside the borough (which may or may not be acceded to) offers little satisfaction. A new Director of Children's Services in the borough is about to be appointed and our intention is to raise this matter with them once they have settled into the post.

### Suggestions Boxes

There is now a suggestions box in the reception area of each school. If you wish, you can use these to express your comments or suggestions which will be read by the head teachers.