

GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

Both the La Fontaine and Heathfield Academies are building excellent reputations, attracting large attendances at both their recent Open Days. The number of applications received by both schools has increased compared to last year, with La Fontaine being three and half times oversubscribed, and Heathfield receiving 72 applications. This is despite both schools being housed on temporary sites and the on-going discussions and negotiations for permanent sites. As previously communicated, Bromley Council and the Education Funding Agency are due to make a final decision on the release of the Widmore Centre, as the permanent site for La Fontaine, at their meeting on 14th April. Whilst there are unexpected delays with the works at the permanent site for Heathfield, we can confirm that temporary accommodation has been made available at another school in Croydon until the premises are ready. The school will write to parents as soon as more information can be shared. The utmost efforts are being made to ensure minimal disruption to children and parents and we are most grateful for your continued support.



Thank you to the staff for organizing varied activities throughout the school to make children's learning enjoyable and interesting. At both Academies, World Book day saw the children dressed as their favourite story book character and different activities took place during Science Week, the highlight being when Heathfield Academy children visited La Fontaine Academy. It was wonderful to see our two Academies learning together. Multicultural week and the Shakespeare workshops at La Fontaine Academy were also lots of fun. The trip to Deen City Farm and the pond making experience for Heathfield Academy children were very popular. It is wonderful to note that our children are receiving such rich learning experiences!

Congratulations to La Fontaine Academy which was joint winner with Gonville Academy in this year's STEP Academy Trust Spelling Bee Challenge. We congratulate all the children who took part for their hard work.

We are sorry to see Madame Crittenden leave La Fontaine at Easter. She will be greatly missed. However, her departure is temporary. We are delighted for her and her husband on the impending arrival of their baby. Our best wishes to both! A big **Thank You** to Madame Leroy for leading on Phonics while Madame Crittenden is away.



Congratulations also to La Fontaine's Learning Support Assistants who are going through their qualifications at an accelerated pace!

We also would like to welcome Allison Allen who joined the governing body in January. Allison brings with her extensive experience in education as she has been a teacher, head of department at a secondary school and a senior primary and secondary school improvement adviser.

We thank you all for your support and commitment to the academies and wish you a great Easter break.

Isabelle Dennigan, Chair of Governors (Strategic Governing Body of La Fontaine and Heathfield Academies)

ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Every year, head teachers and governors discuss and agree the academies development plans which detail the schools' long term aims (5 year plan) and the annual priorities. We aim high and are ambitious for all our pupils to achieve the best they can be. Progress on priorities is reviewed each term by the SGB. At a high level, here are the main priorities we set for the year.



Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

To ensure that all behaviours, assessment and interventions systems are embedded to achieve good or better progress and attainment gaps are closed.

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

To ensure that children's books evidence a depth of understanding in writing and mathematics, particularly in terms of sustained writing and problem solving. To further embed Assessment for Learning systems to ensure that our children's work is continuously assessed in order to set up immediate actions in terms of support and challenge.

Personal Development, behaviour and welfare

To ensure that our children's leadership skills and ability to express themselves clearly are further developed by establishing clear roles and responsibilities for them across all classes and the school and that they are able to justify their choices and opinions.



Outcomes for children and learners

Establish high expectations to ensure all children make rapid and sustained progress and attainment is raised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Establish an integrated and skills based curriculum including the use of new technology which nurtures passionate children who love learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Ensure that behaviour and behaviour for learning is outstanding across the academy.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Establish and promote children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development so that they have a fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR STRATEGIC GOVERNING BODY

WWW.LAFONTAINEACADEMY.ORG/GOVERNANCE

WWW.HEATHFIELDACADEMY.ORG/STEP-GOVERNANCE

PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT



A key objective of the Strategic Governing Body (SGB) is to monitor the progress of all the pupils. The SGB currently meets twice a term to discuss pupils' progress and to do this objectively we rely on data which is provided by the head teachers. We also visit the schools regularly to see at first-hand what is happening, to get to know the schools better and see how they operate. In particular, the visits give us the opportunity to speak to pupils, parents and staff, to see how the schools implement policies and how staff are deployed and supported. It is a good way to get to know the schools and see how they operate. However, our role is not to judge but observe. On recent visits to the schools, we were

delighted to receive such positive feedback from pupils and parents.

As the schools are new, we have little data published in the public domain apart from the Data Report for La Fontaine for the academic year 2014/2015 which you can view online [here](#). The results were excellent and above national average in most categories. Staff at both schools are working very hard to develop our pupils to ensure that they each achieve the right level of progress and attainment.



Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are very important. Studies have shown that “children with low attendance in the early years are likely to start school already behind peers, particularly in their acquisition of language and their social development”. At La Fontaine and Heathfield, we track pupils' attendance and we have set a high target of 97%. Attendance rates currently stand at 93.52% at Heathfield and 95.9% at La Fontaine. Whilst we understand that there are valid circumstances for pupils to be absent from time to time, we would like to emphasise the importance of school attendance and punctuality.



PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

It is a requirement for schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. At La Fontaine and Heathfield academies, we want our children to learn to challenge opinions and behaviours that are contrary to fundamental British values. We want our schools to nurture our children to become responsible and open minded citizens who respect differences in people. Teachers and staff create an environment where those values can be learned and celebrated and integrated into daily activities.



Mutual Respect

During family dining, children have opportunities to develop their leadership and social skills, taking more responsibilities for dishing up food and clearing away. They support each other and work together to give lunchtimes a family feel. During Circle Time sessions, children have a big focus on respecting each other, using kind hands/feet and sharing and taking turns.

Democracy

The children complete questionnaires giving their views about their school. The elections of representatives on the School Council are based solely on pupil votes. Children can decide on some of the charity events the schools organize.

Tolerance of those with different beliefs and faiths

The children learned about celebrating Chinese New Year. They learned how children in China eat and learn at school and compared this to their own experiences. The children learned about the significance of Pancake Day and why British people celebrate this day. During Circle Time sessions, children have learned about people's similarities and differences and that it is ok to like different things.

Rule of Law

The schools offer a wide range of opportunities for children to be leaders in different contexts, and they understand that the rules they have created are there to keep them safe and happy in all the learning they take part in. These leadership opportunities include: during lunchtimes, leaders in the classroom, library leaders and leaders in the playground. This extends to visits and learning outside the school, acting as ambassadors while on school trips and when the schools welcome visitors.

Individual Liberty

The children celebrated "Safer Internet Day" and learned about the importance of and how to keep themselves safe online. Children are given specific roles in school, for example children's parliament and lunch supervisors. We celebrate STEP Academy Trust PUPAC Values, known and understood by all stakeholders. These are displayed in school (Passion, Urgency, Positivity, Aspiration and Commitment).

