

Frieth Governors' News

Developing potential without limitations

Issue 16, December 2016

End of the Autumn Term...

As another busy term draws to a close we would like to thank the children, staff and parents for all of their hard work.

We held our whole school meeting back in November and it was great to see so many faces there. We were able to share information with you about the changes in assessment, maths, British Values, Academisation (more info in the Q & A section) and our School Development Plan for the next academic year.

The whole school put on a spectacular Christmas Nativity, Children of the World, and the children were fantastic. The costumes and props, which the staff and parents had put a lot of time and effort into, were marvellous.

The panto has visited school, the children have been involved in cross country races, football tournaments and netball ones, we have had the Frieth Hilly, a Christmas fair and a Lost Ball! A busy, and very successful term.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Could you be a school governor?

We are looking for someone to join our governing body in the role of a foundation governor (appointed in consultation with the church). We try to balance the skills represented in our FGB so we are currently seeking to recruit someone who comes with strong financial skills to assist with our Finance Committee. The role involves attending 3-4 meetings per term and full training is provided through attending Bucks CC courses. If interested please email the school office for more information.

Thank you to the staff....

The Governors would like extend a special thank you to Mrs Reid, and the entire teaching staff at Frieth , for their continued dedication and hard work.

We are still in the process of recruiting a teacher, for the role of Key Stage one lead, who will also form part of the Senior Leadership team with Mrs Tyzack. We are very fortunate that every staff member we have, from lead teachers to support staff, have offered their support to ensure the learning in school continues at the highest standards.

Of course to help with the smooth running of the school we have the ever helpful, and super efficient, staff of Mrs Houghton and Mrs Palmer and the support and advice of the school bursar Mr Taylor.

Thank you, thank you

To all of you who have given your time, help and your financial support to the PTA, we are hugely grateful. With your generosity we are able to make the school, and its facilities, the best that they can be.

We would particularly like to thank the chair Emma Wharfe.

Some questions about Academisation

Do we have to become an Academy ?

No, at present we don't but if the County can't provide us with the support we need, then we would. Government policy appears to be that all schools will become academies in due course.

Isn't an academy a sign of a failing school?

No, not at all. When the academy process started this was often the case and there are schools which are forced to become academies because they are struggling in some way. Such a school would be directed to become a 'sponsored academy' with another school directing them in order to improve their performance. The vast majority of secondary schools in Bucks are already academies by choice, either single-school academies, or, which is becoming more common, as part of a group.

Why make the move?

It's mainly about control – over money, curriculum, length of day and term – economies of scale, sharing skills and staff between schools, saving time, a bigger pool of potential governors etc.

Could we join one of these existing academies?

No, not really, because hardly any of the Bucks secondary schools are church schools and we wouldn't want to lose or weaken our ethos as a foundation school. We are not a feeder for any particular school, and we could feel outnumbered by a school much bigger than ours.

So what happens to Foundation Schools like ours?

Many village schools like ours are too small to become stand-alone academies but they could join with others to form a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). The Diocese of Oxford set up a MAT nearly 15 years ago and it now has about 20 schools, mainly in Oxfordshire. It has set up a 'sister' MAT mainly for Bucks schools, which will start accepting schools in the New Year. We could apply to join either of these, or look at forming our own MAT with other fairly local, like-minded schools.

What are your governors doing at the moment?

Ibstone and Mary Towerton schools have both applied to extend their age range to become Combined Schools, taking children up to year 6 rather than just to year 2. These applications will be decided by the County in mid January and it seems sensible to see what happens and what will be the effect on other local schools before taking any further steps. We will continue to look into the various options open to us, but no decision on the future of the school will be made without a formal consultation period for parents, staff and other interested parties.

