



# A Note from the Governing Body

## Review of the Year 2016/17

### Introduction

Another great year for Willow Tree children and staff. We have continued to see good results as our children make progress in all subject areas across the school and enthusiasm for learning is apparent from nursery all the way up to year 6. Our children have also continued to excel in sports, music and extra-curricular activities, and positive behaviour is visible for all to see in and around school.

As Governors, our role to challenge actions and outcomes and seek evidence to support the data and information that teaching staff are reporting on each class, is ongoing. We continue to take a view of the whole school, ensuring that each child is given the opportunity to reach their full potential in a safe and happy environment.

This end of year review gives a quick snapshot of all that we can be proud of this year.

### SATS Results

It remains a national requirement to formally assess our children in Year 6 and also in Year 2. For our Year 6 children who are more aware of the testing process, as a school our main priority during SATS week is to ensure it's as stress free as possible and the support given by our teaching staff continues to be exceptional. It's fair to say that the children responded really well during SATS week and took it all in their stride and we want to give our thanks as a governing body to our staff for their ongoing commitment and hard work.

In Year 2 our staff has continued to ensure that the children take their national assessments as part of their day to day classroom activities without making a big deal out of it. Again, we would like to thank the staff for ensuring our young children are as stress free as possible during the assessment process.

We can report that the results from SATS are really positive and what we expected; whilst we will not know how we compare nationally until the Autumn Term we are expecting that Willow Tree is in line with, or exceeding, national expectations.

All children have now received individual feedback, and for our Year 6 leavers, teacher assessments have been passed on to their

secondary schools to accompany the SATs results. Overall, we are extremely proud of both our children's efforts and their progress.

We will issue more information, such as benchmarking ourselves against other similar schools, once the national results become available in the Autumn Term.

### Pupil Progress

Our priorities as a school remain the same in terms of continuing to raise attainment and progress across all Key Stages and for all ability children.

An ongoing focus of the Governing Body is to consider how each pupil is making progress towards their expected levels in class, and how we compare with national data. This enables us to know how well the School is performing, and where we can target specific help if that is needed.

Phase Leaders meet with every teacher at each 6-week data point to check on the progress of all pupils in their phase and put into place interventions should they be needed or arrange for Mrs Daggett to give support or advice to teachers. In addition, they observe in lessons and look at books to ensure pupil progress is maintained at all times.

Governors are also linked to phases across the school and we interrogate and challenge the data and report to full governors on progress being achieved.

As the year comes to an end we can report some excellent progress achievements in all areas of the Curriculum. We have this year focused on the new Maths Curriculum, particularly the new ways of working with regards to problem solving and reasoning. The teachers have really noticed how this is impacting on mathematical knowledge and the end of year progress demonstrates this. As this is a new way of working we expect to see the impact grow again in 2017-18.

In terms of Early Years, all the actions set after the last OFSTED have now been completed with the Local Authority Advisors' confirming that it would meet a 'Good' judgement under the current inspection Framework.

## Inclusion & Attendance

Over the last year staff and parents have continued to work hard together to ensure overall attendance of children in the school remains good. We have weekly attendance updates for each class and certificates for children who achieve 100% attendance each term which is proving very popular. Overall the school is taking every possible action to ensure attendance levels are good and that our children are in school learning.

Current attendance levels are 96% (compared to the national average of 96%). As a school, we continue to aim for 97%. The evidence is overwhelming that every day really does count and that missing school has a big impact on achievements. It has been reported that primary school pupils with no absence were around 1.5 times more likely to achieve expected level of progress, and 4.5 times more likely to exceed expected levels of progress, compared to children that missed 15 to 20% of Key Stage 2.

Mrs Daggett continues to lead the support provided for our more vulnerable learners and ensure they are not disadvantaged. Their progress is good and measures such as the inclusion 'passport' and individual provision maps act as a helpful guide for parents, teachers and school leaders. The relentless drive by school leaders to support vulnerable learners was recognised by the Ofsted Inspectors as was the positive impact this has had.

Children with special educational needs or disability continue to receive whatever provision is required to meet their various needs. We have a comprehensive system in place to assess and review children, and involve relevant support agencies where necessary, to ensure children with particular needs have the best opportunities we can provide to help them achieve the best that they possibly can.

We continue to monitor our approach to e-safety and we remain committed to ensure this is regularly addressed, particularly in Key Stage 2 as our children have increasing access to online material and social networks.

## Sports Premium

With the sports premium funding we receive we have continued to provide further training and access to specialist teachers to support our staff and increase their knowledge and expertise in PE. All teaching staff has undergone Continuous Professional Development (CPD) supported by

our PE Specialist staff across the year, with some staff receiving multiple training sessions to help improve confidence in teaching PE. Staff have had support with planning and delivering high-quality PE sessions based on our whole school model. In addition, we continue to establish partnerships with local community sports providers, to ensure we can provide access into more diverse sports. This is a little different from some schools which have chosen to buy in specialist coaching rather than train existing staff. We take the view that the best value we can gain from the money is ensuring our staff are highly trained and confident in delivering PE and that this is the way our children will benefit the most from this time limited funding.

This has had a positive impact on our children's experience in school and this year has been another great year for sport & physical activity at Willow Tree!

We have competed in over 30 different competitions across the Harrogate District and North Yorkshire, with our Yr5/6 Boys football, Yr3/4 Mixed Football, Yr5/6 Mixed Football, Quick Sticks Hockey and Kwik Cricket teams all winning the local round and progressing to the Harrogate School Sports Partnership (SSP) Finals.



The year 5/6 Boys Football team progressed to compete in the i2i Cup final in Tadcaster representing Harrogate, with the Yr5/6 Mixed Football

team progressing to the National Football Trust competition held in Lincoln and doing incredibly well by getting to the semi-finals.

3 children represented Willow Tree at the County Cross Country final at Dalby Forest coming 1st, 6th & 35th out of approximately 600 runners. Our first placed pupil was then selected to run for North Yorkshire at the National finals held in Loughborough, coming 14th out of 233 runners!

This year has seen lots of our children taking part in local festivals, often for the first time in sports such as Archery, Cycling, KS1 Infant Agility, Yr2 & 4 Change for Life Festivals and many more.



We have also entered B & C teams into many of the competitions we have taken part in to give as many children as possible the opportunity to represent Willow Tree, with every child in school taking part in Intra-school competition across the school year.



Willow Tree won the right to attend the North Yorkshire Level 3 County School Games competition on Tuesday 21st June at the University of York, representing the Harrogate District in the Yr5/6 Kwik Cricket competition.

Our achievements that day mean we are in the top 8 best schools across the County for Kwik Cricket; which is great news!

A group of Year 5 & 6 children attended Leadership in Sport workshops in last year's summer holidays, resulting in them returning back to school and running two sports clubs on a lunchtime for Year 3 & 4 children. The 'Sports Crew' have also organised and run a number of lunchtime events and competitions for younger children which have been a huge success.

We continue to build strong relationships with local sports clubs which will allow us to support the children of Willow Tree and their transition into community sport. Two new links have been created this year with Harrogate Town FC and Harrogate Racquets Club and we look forward to working closely with them

In addition, we will have two new football kits for September. One has been allocated to us by Premier Sports and the other has been donated by our PE specialist in school, Jo Martin. Thanks very much Jo! An order has also been placed with Sainsbury Active Kids for new sports equipment thanks to our parents collecting a massive 26,000 vouchers for us to spend!

Finally, for the 2nd year running we have been awarded the National School Games Mark – Gold Award. The School Games Mark is a Government led awards scheme launched in 2012 to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community.



This is a fantastic achievement with very few schools able to achieve the Gold mark across the Country.... Can we keep the School Games Mark – Gold for a 3rd year? We will certainly try our best!

We would like to congratulate everyone in the P.E Team and all staff on behalf of the Governors for another fantastic sporting year at Willow Tree Community Primary School.

## Music

Musical achievements have continued this term with a number of children taking music exams in a wide range of instruments and continuing to develop their skills and confidence. The exam results included some of the highest distinction marks ever for the school - well done!

The Bell School of Music put on a fantastic summer concert on Monday 10 July. The event was well attended and was an impressive showcase of talent from throughout the school. Concert-goers raised £120, which will help sponsor a young musician in the Mbale Schools Band in Uganda.

The KS2 choir has continued to perform at different events this year including attending Young Voices at the Sheffield Arena, and singing at the Royal Hall! Our thanks go to Mrs Williamson, Miss Kirby and Miss Dobrashian for all their hard work in supporting our choir.

## Communications

We strive to continually improve our communications with parents and carers and as part of the marketing strategy that Governors are currently developing we will be considering different means of getting information out into the school communication and also different ways of securing feedback. Look out in the Autumn Term for opportunities to get involved!

This year has also seen the launch of PING, our school app which pulls together parental communication and parents evening booking into one convenient place. We are also currently trialing twitter as a way of bringing parents closer to the day to day goings on in school. If you do not have Twitter you can view the feed on the front page of our school website.

Also look out for when we have articles in the Harrogate Advertiser celebrating things our children are doing; we will make sure we flag this up in the newsletter

## The Governing Body

We welcomed a new Parent Governor on the Governing Body this year; Amy Cresswell, who fills a specific skills gap with regard to marketing. The parent vote was extremely close and runner up Ruth Molton was co-opted onto the Governing Body to support the development and delivery of the marketing strategy which aims to raise the profile of the school within the wider community and to help us really celebrate the successes and achievements of our school. We were grateful for everyone who applied to be a parent governor; look out for positions which will be coming vacant in 2018 and also 2019.

One of our existing governors, Damien Smith, who is our sports link governor, has been appointed to the North Yorkshire Schools forum. Schools forums play an important role in school funding as they were established to give schools greater involvement in the distribution of funding within their local authority and to act as a consultative and advisory funding body. The North Yorkshire Schools Forum is in the North Yorkshire Education Partnership, which also has a remit for school improvement and organisation. The partnership has 35 members and it's great to have a representative from the Willow Tree Governing Body on this forum.

We continue to meet 4 times a year as a full Governing Body and our individual committees (School Improvement, School Inclusion, and Finance, Staffing and Buildings, plus the Chairs Group) have met between 3 or 4 times this year.

In terms of what's next, the Governing Body will be reviewing its Governors Plan which helps deliver the schools strategic priorities and will continue to focus on the elements we need to address in terms of performance and progress. We will continue to work with the Senior Leadership Team to develop a range of different approaches to test and challenge information and data, including targeted monitoring visits, observations, feedback sessions with phase leaders and book reviews.

## Swimming Pool

Over the last 15 months the school community has raised just over £52,000. This is phenomenal and is down to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved to ensure we get our children swimming again as soon as possible. Generous donations of £5,000 have each been received from CNG, Halifax, and Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation. In addition, Ridding Park, Sir George Martin Trust, Carter

Jonas, Straybirds, 10 Devonshire Place, Harrogate School of Swimming, Truth Legal, Lions Club, Andrew Kempston Parkes (Surveyors), Woodlands Church, Envirovent and RAOB, have all donated generously to the pool fund.

However, we have to reserve a very special thanks to our parents and carers and everyone in the PTFA, as all the fundraising efforts so far have resulted in more than £26,000 for the pool fund!! This is an amazing effort by the whole school community. Also, a big thank you to parents, carers and neighbours who have made direct donations to the fund, worth more than £1,000.

In terms of what's next, North Yorkshire County Council have replaced the boiler over the last couple of weeks and we are in the process of awarding the contract to refurbish the pool with works taking place over the summer. With the boiler costs being met by North Yorkshire County Council, the full cost of the refurbishment is expected to be around £68,000 which leaves us with around £16,000 still to raise. To ensure we get the pool functioning as soon as possible the Governors have agreed to borrow the shortfall from the school's budget, giving us 12 months to replace it. So, fundraising will continue in September and we ask that all parents consider whether the company they work for makes charitable donations or will match fund any fundraising we do. We will continue sending out grant applications and making direct requests for donations from business and organisations. It's been a really great effort so far and everyone has been very engaged and willing to help. When you get back after the summer, look out for a range of activities we have planned for autumn.

## Finally, a Big Thank You to...

- **Parents and Carers** for supporting our school and our children in their learning.
- **All the staff** for their ongoing commitment and enthusiasm to ensure our children have the best possible experience at the school.
- **Volunteers** for continuing to support the activities in and around the classroom.
- **School Council** for their time and energy in making sure our children's voices are heard.
- **All our pupils** for helping to make this school a happy, safe and exciting place to be.
- **PTFA** for putting on great events in school for us all to enjoy and raising funds.

**Lastly, from everyone on the Governing Body, have a great summer!**