

GOVERNORS' ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS

JUNE 2011

Letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and Carers,

The governing body of Heath Lane Nursery School is made up of parents, staff, local authority representatives and other people from the local community who are appointed by the governing body because they have an interest in the nursery and have particular skills to offer. The governors are responsible for the appointment of staff, the welfare and safety of children and staff, the maintenance of Heath Lane Nursery buildings and the general direction of the learning environment. The governors and the Headteacher are responsible for managing the budget. We are always on the lookout for new governors to join us so if you are interested please let us know.

The governors of Heath Lane are very proud of the excellent facilities which the nursery, Children's Centre and Children's Club provide for the children and families served by the Centre. Rachel Heath and her team continue to plan and develop new and innovative ideas to involve our children and their families in exciting ways of learning.

Rachel has now been in post for nearly two years and her very positive contribution to the efficient running of the Centre, developments in the nursery and contact with parents is evident. On behalf of the governors I wish to thank her for all her hard work, her dedication and for the way in which she gives so freely of her time. The governors also appreciate the time and effort put in by all the staff, in the nursery, club and Children's Centre.

Other reports in this document provide details of future developments and plans. All the governors are committed to supporting the staff and improving the opportunities offered to our children and their families. If you would like to discuss any issues with me directly I hope you will feel free to contact me through the office at the nursery or by email on peter.norman550@ntlworld.com.

With best wishes,

Peter Norman
Chair of Governors.

HEATH LANE NURSERY SCHOOL and CHILDREN'S CLUB

Governors' Annual Report to Parents

The governors of Heath Lane Nursery School and Children's Club are delighted to have this opportunity to write their report on the current school year to the parents of children in the school.

Who are the Governors ?

Name (term of office)

Mr Peter Norman (09/07-08/11)	Local Authority (Chair)
Mrs Judy Davis (05/09 - 04/13)	Community (Vice Chair)
Mr Daren Norris (09/09 - 08/13)	Community
Mrs Helen Jones (02/08- 01/12)	Community
Mrs Helen Mutio (11/10 - 11/14)	Community
Mrs Sophie Masters (10/09 - 10/11)	Parent
Mrs Liz Robinson (05/10 - 05/12)	Parent
Mrs Hermie Willetts (10/09- 10/11)	Parent
Ms Samina Yasmin (11/10-11/12)	Parent
Mrs Sharon Fowler (01/08-12/12)	Teacher
Mrs Rachel Heath	Headteacher (ex-officio)
Mrs Anita Harris	Associate Governor
Mrs Melissa Haynes	Associate Governor
Clerk to the governors	Mr Andrew Pennycook

Who are the staff ?

Heath Lane Nursery School

Rachel Heath	Headteacher
Tracy Humphrey	Financial Administrator
Sharon Fowler	Teacher
Nicky Gower	Teacher
Carolyn Crawley	Nursery Nurse
Sarah Maddison-Neill	Nursery Nurse
Julie Cook	Nursery Nurse
Karen Robinson	Teaching Assistant
Barbara Hawkins	Learning Support Assistant(LSA)
Lesley Kwaricany	LSA and Midday Supervisory Assistant
Rachel Few	Midday Supervisory Assistant
Janet Graham	Midday Supervisory Assistant
Loraine Williams	Cleaner
Alfie Davison	Caretaker

Heath Lane Children's Centre

Anita Harris	Children's Centre Manager
Mary Plows	Outreach Worker
Jessica Foster Edwards	Outreach Worker
Stephanie Hudson	Administrator

Heath Lane Children's Club

Melissa Haynes	Co-ordinator
Rachel Few	Deputy Co-ordinator
Maria Sear	Play Assistant
Maxine Reece	Play Assistant
Sharon King	Morning Assistant/Walker
Janet Graham	Lunch time/afternoon assistant
Dawn Pickles	Bursar

As a small school all the staff work closely to ensure that your child has the best educational start within a caring and secure environment.

1. Update on provision at the Nursery School, Club and Children's Centre

The nursery has funding for 60 part-time children, 30 morning/30 afternoon in addition to 10 all day places. The governors meet to discuss the allocation of full-time places. The nursery manages the admissions procedure in line with county guidelines and has an admissions policy which can be found on the nursery website. The Children's Club has places for 16 children in any one session and works in conjunction with the nursery. From September 2011 the Club will have a new name and come under the nursery management.

The Children's Centre has 640 families registered with them now and all are accessing a range of services and support. Many of the families do not come to Heath Lane Nursery but attend other early years settings in the Hemel Central Area

The Children's Centre provides a one stop shop of information and advice.

Families with children under the age of 5 years can expect:

- information on early years provision
- information on childminders and childminder support groups
- advice and support on family health and wellbeing
- parenting support through groups, courses and family learning
- drop in sessions, stay and play in the community which provides activities for children and carers to play and learn
- support in finding a job, accessing training opportunities and benefit advice
- support for families with additional needs
- information on tackling behaviour issues
- information on divorce and separation

Anita Harris, the children's centre manager, is keen to find out about gaps in services. She has started a parents forum, where local parents can share opinions and ideas about issues that affect them and their families. If you would like to find out more about the forum please speak to Anita, Tel 01442-261043.

2. Children's Learning

We are proud of the school's achievements and believe that young children learn best through first hand experience within a happy and secure environment.

Most of what the children have learned so far, they have learned from you at home. We hope to build on those experiences through our curriculum which is planned to match children's needs and interests to maximise learning.

The *Early Years Foundation Stage* (EYFS) is the period from birth to the end of the reception year, age 5. It is a distinct stage and important both in its own right and in preparing children for later schooling. The *Early Learning Goals* inform parents and staff what most children will achieve by the end of the foundation stage. Please ask Mrs Heath if you would like to read more about the early learning goals which can be found in the Early Years Foundation Stage Document along with the Development Matters Statements.

The curriculum at Heath Lane Nursery School and Children's Club is planned to help children make good progress towards the early learning goals. We believe that structured play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn and that the role of the adult is crucial in this process. Young children are naturally curious and actively learn through their play. We encourage children to 'do' rather than just being talked at, 'discover' rather than be told how things work. When children find something out for themselves it is much easier to remember. During play children explore, investigate, talk, listen, learn to share and cooperate, and find out about the world in which they live.

The curriculum offered at Heath Lane Nursery School and Children's Club gives children an opportunity to make decisions and choices in their learning. It has a daily routine which is carefully balanced to include adult and child initiated learning. It is balanced to include individualised learning opportunities for all children and especially for those with special educational needs.

Assessment is the way in which teachers make decisions about children's learning. Staff use an observation, assessment and planning cycle to ensure children access appropriate learning experiences and make good progress in their learning.

Staff are able to share with parents and colleagues all aspects of a child's development. We do this by :-

- termly baseline assessment
- sharing learning journeys from previous settings
- considering next steps in learning
- observing, listening, interacting and talking.
- keeping samples of children's work.
- collecting information from parents and other adults.
- recording children's development in all areas of the curriculum.
- reporting to parents.
- sending transitional records to the child's primary school.

Much of this information is kept in the Learning Journey Book for each child. We would encourage families to include photographs and post its from home activities into the Learning Journey book for their child so a more complete picture of a child's learning can be made whilst at nursery. Examples of activities include role play, forest schools, cutting and sticking and music making.

Termly visits outside the immediate nursery environment are organised to develop children's understanding of the local community and the wider world. During the last year we visited Lockers Park School grounds, and the Water Gardens.

As well as a daily exchange of information between parents and staff we encourage parents into school to share stories, work alongside staff in the classroom, help with maintenance of equipment, discuss their child's progress and organise social events so parents can meet each other.

3. What else do Governors do ?

The governors support the school in many different ways. Here are some of the things we do:

- Approve school and children's centre policy and share responsibility for the management of the school and children's centre. Please find a list of available policies on the parent noticeboard. All policies are available for parents to access.
- Advise and support the head and staff
- Support the school to meet the needs of the children in the school
- Approve how the school budget is spent
- Appoint new staff with the head of centre
- Audit safeguarding practices
- Audit health and safety practices
- Audit security procedures
- Monitor and challenge Special Educational Needs provision, Accessibility, behaviour management and equal opportunities
- Approve full time places for up to 10 children

We also act as a link between the school, the Local Authority and the local community.

4. What have the Governors been doing ?

We have at least one formal meeting of the full governing body each term. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher and staff and other governors have visited the school, children's centre and club to find out more about certain aspects of the day to day running of Heath Lane. As a result of increased responsibilities individual governors have been working on specific areas of management. We have five committees: Building and Finance, Community Partnership and Curriculum, Personnel, Children's Club and Children's Centre Management. During the last year the committees have been involved in the following :-.

Community Partnership and Curriculum Committee

The major part of this committee's work is monitoring the School Improvement Plan which aims to raise levels of achievement in the nursery and club. It takes a long term view of areas for development and outlines the curriculum, how staff and resources will be used, what staff training is needed, what aspects of the school should be prioritised and what funding is required.

Data is regularly discussed at committee meetings. This allows the Governors to monitor the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning in the nursery and Children's Club. This data allows the staff to respond appropriately to children's needs to support their learning. It also enables planning for activities and resources to support children with special educational needs and English as an additional language which are regularly reviewed at this meeting.

This year the children have experienced a wide range of topics and interests including a week spent on sports activities, music, storytelling, a jungle theme, and the Royal Wedding. To extend their knowledge and understanding of the wider multi ethnic community the children and their parents have been involved in celebrating aspects of the Chinese New Year, Diwali and Remembrance Day. Other activities which also support community cohesion are discussed.

Planning for all these activities can be found on the wall in the nursery entrance.

Results of last July's Ofsted inspection confirmed that Heath Lane Nursery School and Children's Club provides a 'good education' for your children. Positive comments from the inspection included 'children feel safe, make good progress in their learning, are very happy and that 'good leadership and governance show a clear vision for the development of the nursery. The governors value and are pleased to support the headteacher and her staff, who through their hard work

and commitment to the children, enable these comments and judgements to be made.

The returned questionnaires from parents and children echo the Ofsted reports conclusions and in the main were very favourable, particularly in the areas of how well the children settle into the nursery and their interest, knowledge and learning of other cultures.

Staff training over the year has included:

- Child Protection
- Persona Doll
- Moderation of EYFS assessments
- Emotional well being of children

The curriculum committee has reflected on and agreed several school and centre policies and these are available at the nursery for you to read.

As parking restrictions cause parents considerable problems the governors on this committee are also working with the local council to negotiate more favourable parking times at beginning and end of the two sessions.

Children's Club Committee

The Children's Club works in conjunction with the nursery as many children access their 15 hours funding on a flexible basis. The committee review the different patterns by which the children access club and how some children come to club for pre-school type sessions. The governors monitor how the EYFS curriculum is followed and how the subsequent assessment formats mirror those in the nursery. This facilitates transition between club and nursery. This year the committee has been involved in the plans to incorporate the club with the nursery.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee, comprising of four governors and the headteacher, oversees the schools pay policy and ensures that procedures are in place for dealing with any staff grievances or issues of discipline. In addition, it works with the headteacher in making arrangements for staff appointments and in maintaining the general welfare of the staff.

During the year the committee has met on three occasions, once each term. One of the main issues explored has been Performance Management of all staff and efficient strategies to implement this across the Nursery, Children's Centre and Children's Club.

Other key issues addressed over the past year have included:-

- Considering options for the future organisation and running of the Children's Club
- Exploring possible ways to improve the accommodation for the Headteacher and Admin support.
- Implementing a new admissions policy.
- Reviewing the training opportunities for staff and governors.

We have also reviewed and revised several policies. Looking ahead, the committee will be monitoring the impact of changes in contracts for non teaching staff.

Children's Centre Management Committee

This committee is made up of 6 governors and 5 associate members who come from partner organisations such as health, a local church charity, and the local primary school.

The role of this committee is to

- provide support and challenge
- work with the centre manager to identify priorities through consultation with the local community
- agree objectives and development plans
- monitor progress through performance management
- ensure services on offer meet local need and contribute to improving children's outcomes

The committee meets at least 3 times during the year, with additional meetings as appropriate.

Our meetings this year have been somewhat dominated by the Ofsted inspection in October 2010. Judged as satisfactory overall, the inspectors agreed with families that services are enjoyable and valuable; and information and advice is of a good quality. Recommendations were made for how the centre can improve and an action plan was drawn up, monitored by the committee.

The committee also monitors the children's centre budget, and ensures that the Sure Start funding is spent appropriately with consideration for " best value" at all times.

A number of the committee members have attended governance training this year which has been of real benefit to the members, clarifying their roles and responsibilities.

Building and Finance Committee

During the financial year April 2010 to March 2011 the committee monitored the income and expenditure of the school and provided support to the headteacher on all matters relating to school premises and grounds, including health and safety.

The building generally is in a good state of repair although as the building gets older we are seeing a steady increase in the costs of repairs and maintenance. We continue to explore possibilities of extending the building to provide much needed additional office space for the nursery and the Children's Centre. In this time of financial uncertainty the Nursery budget remains in a healthy financial position and able to meet expenditure commitments for the coming year.

Approximately eighty percent of the schools and club budget continues to fund staffing which we believe is a crucial element in providing the best possible learning environment for the children.

A detailed breakdown of the budget and the different accounts follows on the next page. If you wish to see the children's centre budget please inform Mrs Heath.

5a. PTA - Fund raising for year ending 31st March 2011

The school values its partnership with parents and has an enthusiastic and hardworking Parent Teacher Association (PTA) which meet regularly to organise fundraising events. All parents of the school are welcome to attend meetings.

Event/Contribution	Income	Expenditure	Balance
Balance b/f 31.3.10	2717.65		2717.65
Balance c/f (reserve)	2844.27		2844.27
Smartie Tube Event 2010	551.75		551.75
Quiz Night	274.95	142.20	132.75
Summer Fair	813.45	293.10	520.35
Pampered Chef Evening	230.79	69.70	161.09
Christmas Raffle	393.00		393.00
Christmas Play DVDs	370.00	40.00	330.00
Tote Bag Sales	35.00		35.00
Smartie Tube Event 2011	716.28	40.20	676.08
Expense not yet claimed	40.20		40.20
Bunting		12.60	-12.60
Christmas Entertainer		300.00	-300.00
Chicken Hatching 2010/11		543.75	-543.75
Educational Displays Visit		300.00	-300.00
Royal Wedding Mug Gift		385.56	-385.56
Public Liability Insurance		76.00	-76.00
Bank Interest	1.42		1.42
	-----	-----	-----
Total Income	£8988.76	£2203.11	£6785.65
/Expenditure			

**The balance in the PTA account
as of 31 March 2010 is £6785.65**

Reserve a/c : £2845.69
Current a/c : £3939.96

5b. School Fund Account for year ending 31st March 2011

The PTA is the primary source of fund-raising for the nursery, however there is still money remaining in the school fund account. Some of the money remaining is used to subsidise educational trips and entertainment as follows:

Event/Contribution	Income	Expenditure	Balance
Balance c/f 31.3.10	5280.54		5280.54
Snack	1099.00	1075.10	23.90
Uniform	967.50	867.25	100.25
Photos	269.00		269.00
Yellow Moon	5.60		5.60
Bank	0.55	13.82	-13.27
Pirate Party/Boxmoor Trust	189.00	418.16	-229.16
Donation to School for resources		53.81	-53.81
Christmas		38.22	-38.22
	-----	-----	-----
Total Income	£7811.19	£2466.36	£5344.83

The balance in the school fund account as of 31 March 2011 is £5344.83

6. Transfer to Primary Schools

This year the majority of children will leave the nursery in July to go to their primary school.

They are transferring to the following primary schools :

Belswains Lane	Boxmoor
Broadfield Infants	Brockswood
Bovingdon	Berkhamsted School
Chaulden Infant	Gade Valley
Gaddesden Row	George Street
Holtsmere End	Yew Tree
Hobletts Manor Infants	Pixies
Hammond	Holtsmere End
Potten End	Micklem
St. Roses Infant	South Hill
Tudor	Two Waters
Westfield	Aylesbury Vale

We wish them well and hope they treasure their learning journeys in future as they really do show a positive attitude to learning in their formative years.

7. Our Thanks

The governors would like to take this opportunity to thank the headteacher and staff whose work, commitment and enthusiasm ensure the very best nursery education for your child.

We would also like to extend our thanks to parents, grandparents and childminders who add so much through their invaluable support and involvement to the life of the school. Your contributions to your child's learning journey book are also appreciated.

As always we are extremely thankful for your continued support when fund raising is needed. Your time, effort and financial help so generously given is greatly appreciated.