

# Whitstone Community Primary School

“Learning for life.”

Oak Lane  
Whitstone  
Holsworthy  
Devon  
EX22 6TH

Telephone Number: 01288 341241

Email: [head@whitstone.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:head@whitstone.cornwall.sch.uk)



Dear Parents /Carers of Whitstone Community Primary School

I'm writing to introduce myself as the new chair of governors of your school. I am a National Leader of Governance and I work in Cornwall schools with governing bodies who require a little extra support and expertise.

I'm sure you'll be aware that Whitstone has been going through a challenging time recently, with the transition to new leadership, an Ofsted inspection and a very small governing body, so I was delighted to accept when the Local Authority approached me and asked me if I'd be able to work alongside the Whitstone team.

I've been involved with school governance since 2001 and have been providing professional governance consultancy and training since 2013. This has included working with the National Governance Association as a trainer and being a governor in four different maintained primaries, a school on the Isles of Scilly and chair of a Multi Academy Trust.....it's a busy role but always rewarding helping schools and communities to work together and allowing the school to be the best that it can be. As a bit of extra background, I have three grown up sons, I live in Wadebridge and I also work with the Bikeability Trust and British Cycling, promoting cycling across all ages, but particularly for children.

Governance is an important strategic aspect of school life, but it's often misunderstood so I thought it may be useful to give a brief description. There are three main roles:

1. Providing the vision, values and strategic direction for the school. Our school has a clear mission statement that was developed this year, and we'd like to take this to the next step and work together to develop a strong set of values that we can all use to work together with the children.
2. Providing challenge and support for the head teacher of the school, to ensure that the children receive the very best education possible. Mrs Mould has developed a clear school development plan that has been praised by both Ofsted and the Local Authority, so it's our job to monitor how this is implemented and evaluate the impact.
3. Ensuring that money is well spent, this is a challenge in all schools at the moment, with funding being so tight that setting a balanced budget is nearly impossible.

It has been a pleasure to visit the school this term. I first met with the staff and toured the school to see your children working well in the classrooms and enjoying their play time. I even shared lunch with them and they were eloquent and very welcoming. On my second visit last night I met with all of the governors, to review a governance action plan and adopt new policies and roles. All of these documents will be shared with you on the website over the next few weeks.

This is also a transitional time for governance, and we are sad to say goodbye to Justin Uglow and Kate Sobey (after July 3<sup>rd</sup>) from the governing body. I've met both Justin and Kate many times through governor training and conference events and would like to thank them both sincerely for their enormous contribution to the school. Kate has done a brilliant job as safeguarding governor and Justin has been a strong advocate for the school, ensuring that governance support was provided by the LA. Thank you both. Andrew Wood has also now been able to stand down as chair, as he was only fulfilling the role until a local chair was found.

For your information, Kate is going to hand over her role of safeguarding governor to Jenny McCabe, and I will take over the role of whistleblowing governor. We also welcome Gerry Ingram to the team as an associate governor of the school, Gerry is a Local Leader of Governance and works on two boards in two other schools in Devon.

One of our greatest and most immediate challenges is that we now have five spaces to fill on the board, and really do need a strong community effort to find new governors. We will be running parental elections before the end of term, so if governance is something you'd like to consider, or you know of someone in the local community who may be interested, please do get in contact. We need to expand our team of committed, dedicated and friendly people to support the school. Please watch the website and look out for letters for more information on this over the coming weeks.

My email address is [jeason@governorconsultant.co.uk](mailto:jeason@governorconsultant.co.uk), please do contact me if you have any questions about governance of the school.

I am looking forward to meeting you all at the Sports Day on the 9<sup>th</sup> July, please do come up and say hello.

Very best wishes,

Jackie Eason

Chair of governors, Whitstone Community Primary School