

WH/RNM/MAYLET

27 May 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCY

We have a vacancy on our Governing Body for a Parent Governor. Governance is a public service, and we are always very appreciative of the commitment and professionalism that we receive from them all.

All parents of young people in school are entitled to stand as a candidate and to vote in any election. A Parent Governor serves a four year term of office irrespective of whether their young people leave the school during this time, although they can resign at any time. The eligibility criteria for Governors, and a Nomination Form, are available on our web site. Go to the 'Visitors' tab, and then click on 'Vacancies'. If you would prefer to receive paper copies please ring Reception.

If you wish to offer yourself as a candidate to become a Parent Governor you should complete the Nomination Form and return it to school by noon on Friday 17th June. If just one nomination is received then that person will be automatically declared as a Parent Governor. If there are more nominations than places then a ballot of all parents will be held to select the Governor. For this purpose nominees are invited to prepare a short statement which will be circulated with the ballot forms. Space for this is included on the nomination slip. The length of the statement should not be more than 200 words; I would have to shorten any statement that exceeds this limit.

To be a Governor no particular qualification is needed; other than a commitment to the school and some time to spare. In addition to the Parent roles, other Governors include staff, Leeds City Council appointees, and representatives of both our local community and of our Trust. All share in the important role of overseeing the strategic direction of our school; something our current Governing Body do very well.

You would be joining a well established and effective Governing Body. There is training, induction and support for Governors so no parent should feel deterred from putting themselves forward; it is important that the Governing Body should reflect the diversity of our school. If you would like more information before deciding whether to stand you can contact the Governor Support Service at Merrion House on Leeds 0113 247 5560.

GOVERNOR DECISION ABOUT UNIFORM

As I explained in both my February and April letters home we have been reviewing our uniform, with the intention of making sure that it reflected the rising standards and expectations of our school.

I was appreciative of all the parents who took the opportunity to give us feedback, which was then reported to Governors. We also listened to staff views. We commissioned a representative group of young people to lead a consultation through our young people, which included assemblies, surveys of different opinion, visits to other schools to see a range of different uniforms, and also a face to face discussion with a Governors' Committee earlier this month.

The most significant development is that Governors have decided that Years 7 to 11 will wear ties and blazers from 1 September 2011.

Both boys and girls will be in a black school blazer, with a school name and logo woven on the breast pocket. They will wear a plain white shirt with a collar for a tie. The clip on tie will be in our school colours with diagonal blue and green stripes. There will be an optional black 'v' neck jumper with a trim on the collar of our school colours for those who want to wear three layers in the colder months. Young people will be given an enamel badge for their tie or lapel to indicate the School House to which they belong.

For boys the uniform will be worn with black trousers and plain black shoes, but not trainers.

Girls will be able to choose between wearing plain black trousers or a standard design school skirt. This will be a plaid material, lined, knee length and reflecting our school colours. This will be the only type and length of skirt allowed to be worn. Plain black or natural coloured tights can be worn, with plain black shoes, but not boots or trainers.

We very much hope that these alterations and additional clarity will support our parents in their daily debates with their daughters or sons about uniform. There is a drawing of our new uniform on the school website, if you go to the 'Parents' tab, and then click on 'Uniform'.

We are sensitive about the cost involved, and so will remain with APC as our main supplier. Our current polo shirt and sweat shirt uniform costs £23.98, while the tie and blazer will cost a total of £27.39. This is the same price as other local schools with similar uniforms. Where families are in difficulty with the cost of our uniform we will continue our current practice of providing practical support. If you anticipate that the cost of uniform will be difficult for you please let us know, we would want to support you in this. In the first instance it would be good for you to contact Mrs Moore, our Parent Support Adviser via Reception.

The discussions about dress have not been restricted to Years 7 to 11; Years 12 to 13 will have a new dress code in September, and staff are also taking part in a consultation about their own new Dress Code.

This is the first uniform alteration in our school for some ten years; can I take this opportunity to thank you in advance for the support and effort you will be providing to make this change? We are always appreciative of the strong partnership we receive from our families. The exact specifications and details about ordering the uniform will follow in the next few weeks.

WEBSITE

Weekly news about events in our school appear on our school web site. You can find them in the 'Visitors' tab and then click on 'Head's Blog'. I hope you find it a useful way of staying in touch with what is happening. I also place all my newsletters in the 'Visitors' section of the website.

In the 'Vacancies' section I place all details of job opportunities in our school. Next month there will be vacancies posted there for some parallel professional roles, such as Teaching Assistants. I am always glad to receive applications from members of our community.

COMPETITION SUCCESSES

Our young people have had so many successes in the last few weeks, we are very proud of them. All the detail is on the Head's Blog, but in brief;

Year 10 have won the TV Harrison Rugby Trophy, the U19 footballers won the West Yorkshire County Cup, and we were 10th in the UK Rocketry Challenge for 2011 and 3rd in the Leeds Cheerleading Championships. Congratulations to the Year 8 football team, who completed the Cup and League double, and both the Year 11 girls and boys reached the finals, with the boys winning one. Our Year 7 and 8 Cricketers also both reached the finals, with Year 7 winning theirs, while we have seen great performance in Year 7 Girls Tag Rugby and KS3 Trampolining where we won Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals.

These brief lines do not do justice to the many hours of commitment by families and staff, but we are really proud of all that has been achieved and appreciative of all the commitment that all associated have shown.

HALF TERM

I felt very sad today bidding farewell to our Year 13. I will miss them, it has been a privilege to watch them become such great adults; I wish them every possible success looking forward. I trust that they, and all our other exam candidates, use the next week well.

I hope that the break from school brings many good moments for you and your family.

Yours faithfully



CHRISTOPHER WALSH
Headteacher