



Dear Parents & Carers,

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our Governor Newsletter and it will be our intention to write out to you on a termly basis. Our newsletter will provide us with the opportunity of keeping you updated with some of the work that we are undertaking and other related matters.

But firstly, what do we do and who are we? Well, you can find out more about the Governing Body in our section of the school's website at [www.clavering.essex.sch.uk/school-governors/](http://www.clavering.essex.sch.uk/school-governors/) but our role, as defined by the Department for Education "DfE", is as follows:

### **1.1 The purpose of governance**

*1. The purpose of governance is to provide confident and strong strategic leadership which leads to robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.*

*2. All governance boards, no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern, have three core functions\*:*

- *Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;*
- *Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and*
- *Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.*

*\*The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 and the Academies Financial Handbook 2018*

The above definition formalises our roles and responsibilities and, as one of the stakeholders within the school (pupils, parents, carers, staff, governors and the local authority), our priority is to provide a safe and caring environment to allow all of our pupils to achieve their objective of **Learning together to be the best that we can**. In fact, it was at one of our previous Vision Days that we created this particular mission statement and we have our next vision day planned for the autumn.

We also get to share in the success of the school and we were delighted to receive our copy of the DfE's recent letter congratulating the school on being in the top 1% of schools for Reading at Key Stage 2, in addition to similar communications that we receive from the Local Authority, Essex County Council and our MP.

Last Tuesday was the official opening of our Food Tech room, undoubtedly the envy of many schools around, and I was privileged to be invited to cut the ribbon with Trevor Oliver. This was a whole school event and it was wonderful to see the pupils enjoying the opening ceremony, with the associated assembly evidencing some wonderful work by all of the year groups.

At our regular meetings, we receive updates from the Friends of Clavering, the Parent Forum and the School Council. We are eternally thankful to the Friends of Clavering for all the good work that they do and for the amazing amount of funding that they raise from their events, such as the most recent Quiz Night. In the near future we have the Easter Fayre and the Clavering Ramble. Recently, thanks to the aforementioned fundraising, the school has been able to buy three more 'Clevertouch' screens for the classrooms. Without this much-needed fundraising, the purchase of such items would not be possible.

Clavering Primary School is a wonderful environment for learning and we are all delighted to be part of its journey and continuing success. Finally, may I take the opportunity of wishing you all an enjoyable Easter.

Julian Hall  
Chair of Governors

### Year 5 and 6 River Study

Peter Smith and I joined year 6 on a bright spring morning at the beautiful Daws Hall outdoor education centre on the Essex-Suffolk border. During the visit the class re-visited the Water Cycle, completed an orienteering course, developing map and compass skills. This was followed by study of the picturesque Stour river understanding measure, flow, depth erosion and much more. The day was punctuated by a well-deserved picnic lunch in the sunshine. Feeling re-energised the children returned to the river. This time the children conducted fresh water sampling where there was a particular interest in finding leeches! Much delight was taken wading in the brook, even when this resulted in wet socks. This was followed by studying of the landscape and impact of pollution. It was great to see the children enjoying a memorable and educational trip much as many parents may recall from their childhood.

Edward Bailey (Parent Governor)



### Forest School with Reception Class



Spring was in the air for the reception class forest school, on a gloriously sunny Friday morning. And Spring was very much the topic for discussion, with the children pointing out the tell-tale signs: budding branches, blossom on the trees and daffodils. Sadly, we couldn't find any frogspawn in the many ponds but the sight of a Moorhen chick soon made up for that. The children absolutely loved building dens in the woods and there was much competition between boys vs girls on who had the best. At snack we talked about what sounds we could hear and what sort of animals were making it – including some marvellous imitations of a pheasant and a highly impressive 2 whole minutes silence by the class. The morning reminded me what a wonderful thing forest school is, how much the kids get out of it, and how lucky we are to have it for the school. For those parents who can, I would highly recommend volunteering.

Toby Pellew, (Parent Governor)

### Class Visit

All governors are expected to make at least one class visit per year. We aren't education experts so the main purpose is to give us a greater understanding of what is being learnt in the classroom.

As governor for Class 2 and Maths I attended a Maths lesson in February. After formal teaching, the children worked in pairs to work out whether sums came to odd or even numbers, and used three calculations to test whether all the methods came to the same result. I thought this was a nice exercise in reasoning and testing hypotheses, as well as co-operation.

Mike Cannell (Community Governor)



### SEN "Special Educational Needs" Provision

It is vitally important for the school to provide an inclusive learning environment for all of our pupils and I recently attended a meeting with Ms Crosby, the school SENCo (SEN coordinator), and Anne Fisher, the school's education advisor. My first impression was that we have a very strong team in place, who work well together, share ideas and are always keen to learn more about development in this area. The team work extensively with a number of children within the school, where each of the pupils have their own personalised learning plan. There are also individual provision maps that will follow the pupil throughout their time at Clavering, which again demonstrated to me the level of care being provided. As a governor for many years, I have often been frustrated by the media focus on headline results but it must never be forgotten that of far more importance is the opportunity for each and every pupil within the school to make progress and to achieve their own goals. To the SENCo and her team, keep up the great work!

Julian Hall, Chair of Governors

### School Improvement Plan

A school improvement plan is a road map that sets out the changes a school needs to make to improve the level of pupil achievement and shows how and when these changes will be made.

Once agreed, the next step is to implement the plan, which leads to a focus on what is actually happening in the classroom. The role of the Governors around the school improvement plan includes working with school leadership in setting the strategic direction, as well as offering support and challenge around its' implementation. Observations are made through governor visits, which are both an important and enjoyable part of the role.

Clavering School's Improvement Plan is well established, some of the 2018 – 2019 priorities include:

- To continue to raise attainment and progress in writing across the school – with a particular focus on boys
- To improve further the rate of progress including gender imbalance, SEN and challenging the high attainers
- To embed assessment for learning (pupils' owning their learning)
- To continue to develop our outside area.
- Further development of multicultural awareness within Community Cohesion – visitors (classes/assemblies)
- Pupil voice to strengthen pupils' emotional development and Mindfulness.
- To develop our after school clubs offer
- To make more explicit to parents our behaviour policy and pupil progress information/communication systems
- To develop/review homework policy
- To develop electronic payment system
- Attendance – reduce the number of unauthorised absences.

Jonathan Hill – Parent Governor, Vice Chair and School Improvement Plan Lead

Jayne Liddle – Parent Governor