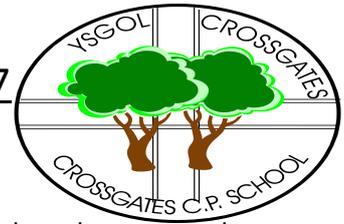


## Governors' Newsletter to Parents Summer Term 2017



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our second newsletter! This edition will give a flavour of what we have been recently doing. As well as the standard meetings, some of us have attended LA training on 'Asking the Right Questions', Dyslexia Awareness, Hearings and Appeals and the Annual Governor Conference.

### Data and Curriculum Group

Two visits during the school day have been held. The first focused on a numeracy and problem solving book scrutiny whilst during the second the group reviewed literacy books with an emphasis on peer and self-assessment and undertook a learning walk. This gives the opportunity to see the school in action. By 'walking' through the classrooms evidence can be collected about teaching and learning, evidence of progress and areas for development. Thoughts and findings are discussed with the head teacher and fed back to the full governing body.

### Finance and Resources Group

A major part of the Finance Committee's work has been setting the school budget for the 2017/18 financial year. It will be no surprise to hear that during these times of austerity difficult decisions must be made. We take great care to ensure that we minimise the impact on pupils, however increasing pressure is being placed on staff to maintain the same quality of provision for all pupils, with reduced resources.

### Community and Environment Group

The team have compiled the health and safety report and action plan. Derek Price and Andrew Morgan have both visited school and their reports follow below:

### Civil Engineering Presentation to Year 6 Pupils by LEA Governor – Derek Price on 3rd May 2017:

Following feedback from the inspection regarding problem solving exercises, and having recently delivered a presentation to Meifod Yr 5/6 class, I thought it would be an opportune moment to replicate the presentation for our own Yr 6. It was also an opportunity to wish this particular age group good luck for the future as they head for high school.

The presentation started with making them aware that time would go by quicker than they would realise and they would soon be needing to make subject choices to fit in with possible career choices. So the 'ice-breaker' was to ask them to think of various occupations. Normally this doesn't feature Civil Engineering, which allows me to move into my next part, but on this occasion the 3rd response was – engineering!! Luckily I was brought back on track with the question why CIVIL engineering? Questions and answers flowed as we had a good chat about numerous aspects, as most features are seen daily. Whilst it basically deals with the construction industry, I stressed that it wasn't a 'boy thing' which was borne out with girls coming up with the solutions to problems set, although the rest got there eventually.

I initially started with demonstrating centrifugal/ centripetal forces on a bend in the road and how high-friction surfacing helps prevent cars leaving the road, simply adding a piece of sand paper to some anaglypta wallpaper. I then showed them part of a video of Newtown Bypass, which illustrated most of the features of highway engineering, and quickly moved into the problem solving exercise by handing out 2 blocks of wood 2 pieces of A4 paper a small amount of sellotape, and challenged them to build something which would allow a model car to cross the gap. This helped to demonstrate that there was more than one solution and some better than others although could be

more costly. Various solutions were eventually achieved in about 5 – 10 mins, and I was able to re-cap with 5 solutions.

I then moved on to another video of a recently completed retaining wall project, which utilised a new environmental system, and set the problem of working out which of 2 solutions to the problem was more cost effective. More than an hour and a half later I drew the presentation to a close, and hadn't sent anyone to sleep. They said thank you/diolch and I was pleased to tell them that in my many years of involvement with the school (almost 20) that they were the best group I have met, in terms of general behaviour and achievement.

### **Enterprise Week (19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> June) Report from Andrew Morgan – Community Governor**

I was invited to the school to give an assembly talk on the importance of a business logo, and also the associated elements of running a business. The children were very engaged throughout the presentation, and afterwards the Q & A session raised some great questions. This proved that the children had not only listened but also thought about the potential problems that small businesses can occur.

The day prior to this presentation and also later that morning, I did a walk-through of every class in the school to discuss their enterprise projects and ideas. In every class not only did I find great enthusiasm and commitment from the children; they also displayed a very mature and progressive approach to their business ideas. I then talked to every class about the importance of "Profit & Loss" and achieving profit margins etc. There was a huge variation in questions raised across the years but the most notable being the grasp of basic business acumen from every class. As a governor of the school and also a parent, the whole project was a pleasure to be involved in and something which I found very endearing. Every parent in this school should be proud of what their child produced.

### **Post Inspection Action Plan Progress**

Following monitoring by the Local Authority this term, the school was judged on its continual progress at addressing Estyn's recommendations.

R1 Raise standards of writing, problem solving and reasoning skills in key stage 2-**satisfactory progress**

R2 Improve the standards of Welsh oracy across the school-**strong progress**

R3 Plan better opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills progressively across the curriculum- **strong progress**

R4 Improve planning to ensure consistent challenge for pupils of all abilities, especially those who are more able-**satisfactory progress**

R5 Sharpen self-evaluation and improvement planning processes so that they are effective in raising standards of teaching and learning-**strong progress**

R6 Improve the role of governors in allocating the schools financial resources and in holding the school to account for its outcomes-**strong progress.**

And finally, as Governors, we want to say a huge thank you to Mrs Williams and all the staff for their hard work. The loyalty and commitment of our staff during the past year has been incredible with significant contributions made to the progress of the school. We also want to thank the PTA for holding enjoyable and successful fundraising events, parents for all their support and, last but not least, the children for making Crossgates such a wonderful school. We wish all leaving children, and parents, the very best for the future in their new schools. Happy Holidays and see you in September!