

PHOENIX INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Phoenix Avenue, Gedling, Nottingham, NG4 4EL

Telephone: 0115 9539927

E-mail : office@phoenix.notts.sch.uk

Web: www.phoenixinfant.co.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs. L Harper



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It was cold March afternoon in 2016 when I walked through the front doors of Phoenix for the first time. Heavily pregnant and gently encouraging a non-compliant four-year-old to behave as we visited his new school, the panic of having to leave my first born at a school I knew nothing about with people I'd never met before was setting in fast. I need not have been concerned. Within a short period, time spent with Mrs Harper I had a sense of relief that the atmosphere and ethos of the school was one where the children feeling safe and happy is the foundation of learning. Every child (and adult) had a smile on their faces, were polite and well-mannered and looked happy to be there. Since that day I have spent a significant amount of time in school and my opinion of the school has remained unaltered. My first child has moved on just as my youngest has started his learning journey at Phoenix. I had no such concerns about the youngest's first days at school – I was as excited about it as he eventually was! It was for all these reasons that I did not hesitate when asked if I would become Chair of Governors at the school. It's not always an easy job but one that allows for me to give back to the school that has given my children so much. I hope that everyone – child and adult, feel the same happiness and confidence as I did that day and as a Governing body we hope to play our part in making sure that is the case.

At this point I would like to say thank you to David Colyer who has stepped down as Chairperson but remains an active member of our Governing Board. We have appreciated your leadership over the past 4 years and are delighted you continue to support the school. Helen Derby has kindly agreed to become vice-chair of governors and I know how much she will bring to the school in this role. Our other board members continue to work hard behind the scenes. Anna Scrivens-Sabin continues her vital role as safeguarding governor. The rest of our Board of is made up of parent and co-opted governors – James Saunders, Andy Dunn, Tanya Jones, Nicola Broad. Our staff governor is Mrs George and finally Mrs Harper. Every Governor takes an area of responsibility to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

This has been an unprecedented year for us all. Seeing the empty classrooms and playgrounds as the first lockdown began was a difficult sight to witness. Whilst a small number of our key worker children continued to access provision it was hard time for us all not to see our classrooms full of laughter and learning. As September arrived, we all came back into a very different version of school. Without our usual coffee mornings, discos or even quick ventures into classrooms at home time, it has felt very different to previous years. We have asked so much of our school team, families and children over this term and I have been delighted at the way we have pulled together to keep our school community safe. When we add to this the overwhelming response to our foodbank appeal, we have seen many positives this year.

I hope this to be the first of a termly newsletter from the Governing Body so for now I would like to say thank you to all our wonderful team at Phoenix – our headteacher Mrs Harper and deputy head Mrs Broad, our teachers and teaching assistants, the office staff, Mr Dunn, our cleaners, midday supervisors and kitchen team. To our families for supporting us during a very difficult time but mostly to our wonderful children who have shown us a resilience we could never have imagined, they make every school day a happy one.

Merry Christmas everyone and a Happy New Year

Sonya Hand

Chair of Governors.