



Birley Spa Primary

Academy Governors Newsletter to Parents

July 2025



Birley Spa Primary Academy
A L.E.A.D. Academy



Welcome to our first Governors' newsletter to parents.

We would like to introduce ourselves, say briefly what our role is and share with you our experiences of being a governor at Birley Spa Primary Academy. If as a result of reading our newsletter you want to know more, please contact us or better still consider becoming a Parent Governor.

We are appointed as governors by the LEAD Trust and have oversight of the school. We do this by visits to the school, meeting staff and pupils, attending social events and through formal governing body meetings. We also attend courses to learn how to be an effective governor.

Some personal reflections on why being a governor at Birley Spa Primary Academy is so worthwhile:





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As a community governor I have recently supported in school during the Easter Fayre and previous Christmas Fayres, which are generally well attended by the parents and carers. In previous years I have supported on KS1 and KS2 trips. I have also been involved in staff recruitment.

In my role as SEND governor I attend SEND meetings every term to discuss progress and issues around SEND provision. I have recently been in school during the Y6 SATs and was very impressed by the resilience of the Y6 pupils and their determination to do their very best in the tests. I was also impressed by their embrace and practice of yoga techniques they had learned in school in order to be calm and ready for their tests or indeed when facing any stressful situation.

As governors we are invited to Engagement Meetings in school each term; these are very interesting and informative as we often meet pupils from different year groups to discuss their learning. At a recent meeting we were treated to a talk (presentation) by KS2 pupils, about an area of the Science curriculum, in order for them to explain their understanding of how new learning builds on their previous learning from KS1. The pupils were very articulate and confident in their explanation to governors. They were a credit to the school.

Sharon Damms
Community governor

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I am a Parent Governor and also the Link Governor for Communication, which means I take a particular interest in how well information is shared between staff, and between home and school. Whether it's updates for parents or communication within the staff team, clear and timely messages make a real difference in helping everyone feel informed and supported.

As a parent myself, it's been valuable to see the school from another perspective. I see how dedicated the staff are and how much thought goes into making Birley Spa a positive place for children to grow.

Hannah Ireland
Parent Governor

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As the staff governor my role is to be part of the school's governing board, working alongside other governors to support and challenge the school leadership team. I don't represent individual views or speak on behalf of colleagues-instead I contribute to a balanced and informed discussion, using my day-to-day experience within the school to support decision making. While I bring the perspective of a staff member to discussions, it is my responsibility to help make decisions that are in the best interests of all pupils, staff and families.

It is a real privilege to help shape the future of our school community and I look forward to continuing to work with parents, staff and governors to ensure our school remains a positive and inspiring place for every child.

Jane Thomas
Staff Governor

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I am delighted to introduce myself as a member of the Governing Body. I am the Attendance Officer here at Birley Spa and my role is to support and challenge the school to ensure all children can achieve their best and regular attendance is a big part of that. Good attendance helps children build strong friendships and maintain consistent positive habits for the future. I am passionate about supporting children's education and well-being, and I look forward to working with staff, families and the wider school community to help every pupil enjoy their time in school and make the most of every learning opportunity.

Lynn Mathews
Staff Governor

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In my role as Safeguarding governor and Health Safety governor I visit the school every term. I tour the school meet staff and pupils and ask them about their work. I am always impressed by how friendly, polite and interested the pupils are-and they ask me some challenging questions! Over the last year I have been especially impressed by the cleanliness of the school and the well-kept grounds. I look forward to my visits. It is a privilege to be a governor at Birley Spa.

Ed Wydenbach
Co-opted Governor

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The Governor Team

Ed Wydenbach

Co-opted Governor. Chair

Sharon Damms

Community Governor. Vice Chair

Cathy Gibson

Head

Hannah Ireland

Parent Governor

Lynn Mathews

Staff Governor

Ella Swinley-Harmston

Parent Governor

Jane Thomas

Staff governor

We hope that after reading our first newsletter you will understand why becoming a governor is so rewarding and understand better what we do as governors. Remember please do consider joining our AGB. If you want to know more just contact the school and one of your governors will talk with you about the role. It is a great opportunity to help your school.