



Headteacher:
Mr P German BA

Wyvern College - Chair of Governors annual report 2015-16

Here we are at the start of another school year and an opportunity for governors to take stock of the last school year and the lessons to be learnt from it. All this at a time when education is a key focus of government attention.

On the whole Wyvern has made good progress this year and governors have played an important part. Through the meetings of the full governing body and its various committees, governors have continued to monitor closely all aspects of school life: from finance to academic progress; health and safety; safeguarding; staffing levels and appointments; and the school's underlying ethos. In addition, individual governors have monitored specific subjects and aspects of school life. This is a time-consuming task demanding high levels of commitment, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their willingness to take on this responsibility.

As you all know, we began the year in a long-awaited splendid new building, and in the course of the year various 'snags' have been sorted out. We can now claim to have a school truly 'fit for purpose'. I hope you've all had an opportunity to see for yourselves what an improvement it is! The boys have reacted well to their new environment and take great pride in maintaining it in pristine condition. As governors we're particularly pleased with the new dining-hall where boys can have good, healthy meals in comfort, and with the large multi-purpose hall in which to hold full-school assemblies and events. One of the first was the very successful prize-giving attended by international rugby star and former Wyvern pupil, Mike Brown. In future we expect to see it used for theatrical and musical occasions, as well as for events organised by the recently relaunched Friends of Wyvern. (The hall is also available for events organised by external organisations and as such we hope will provide a very useful source of additional income for the school. Your assistance in promoting this facility would be much appreciated.)

As ever in all local schools finance continues to be of major concern. Through their participation in the Finance and Facilities Committee your governors have sought to ensure that the school is well-managed financially, whilst ensuring that budgetary concerns don't interfere with providing the best level of education possible for the boys studying at Wyvern. I'm pleased to report that careful management has resulted in a reduction in the school's deficit with no accompanying reduction in teaching staff levels.

This year we've kept a close eye on teaching standards through our participation in the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum or TLC committee. In the course of the year the TLC has been attended by various heads of department who have reported on curriculum changes, teaching methods and the resulting outcomes. Apart from on-going monitoring of progress of special needs and pupil-premium students, special attention will be paid in the coming year to making greater provision for more able pupils.

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As regards Wyvern's GCSE results governors were delighted to note the accuracy of predictions in almost all subjects. Maths and Science, which had been carefully monitored throughout the year, provided very pleasing results. But our English results were disappointing. We've taken action, and it's hoped that the recruitment of Mrs Burke, our new Head of English who has an outstanding track record, will do much to rectify this. Furthermore, the recruitment of additional well-qualified intervention staff should do much to further improve general standards in both English and maths.

As you'll have noticed, reporting on school achievements is now done in terms of progress or "value-added" from initial entry levels to final GCSE results. (Not everyone understands it, but value added is for example when a boy who came to us with very poor reading and writing skills emerges with several top-grade GCSE's four years later. That is Value Added.) And here Wyvern is well above the national average. Unlike us, last month not all other local schools revealed their Value-Added figures (as requested by the government) but as of this school year they'll all have to do so.

My own time this year has also been taken up with negotiating conditions governing the multiple academy trust (MAT) to be formed with St Edmund's and Trafalgar Schools. It had been hoped to complete the process by the autumn but unfortunately this has been delayed by budgetary concerns and is now unlikely to come to fruition before next Summer. However, the increased contact between the schools has already led to greater collaboration on staff development and exchange of teachers which should lead to improved opportunities for the boys.

I'd like to reassure you at this point that, in the MAT, schools will still maintain their individual identities and ethos: this was one of the fundamental principles agreed upon at the start of negotiations. Obviously you will be kept informed of developments by the head teacher.

I look forward to the continued progress of the school in the coming year and assure you that we, as governors, will continue to play our part in ensuring that Wyvern provides the best possible education for all its pupils.

Frances Smith Wain
Chair of Governors

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