

## **Governor's Newsletter**

Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the summer holidays, I think we can all agree that the last academic year has seen unprecedented challenges for pupils, parents/carers and school staff. We would like to thank you for your support, patience and perseverance and we would also like to record our appreciation to every member of staff at Jessie. We know that the last 12 months will have affected some children more than others and throughout the pandemic the school's priority has been to identify those who need extra support (in whatever form that takes) and to provide it. This will remain our focus as we move forward to the next school year.

However, there are reasons for cautious optimism and already the school has started to organise activities that were unthinkable this time last year, with successful camps already held for Years 5 and 6. We hope that the Government's ambitions regarding the complete lifting of restrictions in July and no return to lockdown is not misplaced; but we have also learned not to take anything for granted and there will be no complacency as to what the future may hold – particularly as we approach the winter months. A thorough review of home learning has been requested by the Governors as we believe we may not have seen the last of it.

This is also a time of change in other ways. Firstly, we have the retirement of our Headteacher, Mrs Mandy Sadler at the end of this term and the arrival of Mr Luke Hanna to replace her in September. There will be a number of occasions to express our thanks and gratitude to Mrs Sadler before she departs, but we would like to use this opportunity to thank her for all her hard work in making Jessie Younghusband the school it is today. Jessie has an enviable reputation amongst parents, the local community and Chichester as a whole. It is a school that parents are proud to make their first choice and which children love to attend. Our thanks also go to our Deputy Headteacher, Mr Paul Neaves, who stepped up magnificently to become Acting Co-Headteacher for three days a week during the last academic year.

Inevitably, a change of Head will provide new opportunities for Jessie and the Governors look forward to working with Mr Hanna and his leadership team. Mr Hanna has already introduced himself to you via ParentMail and there will be some opportunities to meet him in the playground before the term ends. Our new Headteacher is acutely aware of the challenges that lie ahead, but it is our hope that he can have a period of relative calm and tranquillity in order to get to know the pupils, parents and staff well.

The life of a school is never static and there is always something happening (both inside and outside the school) that comes along to question the direction we are heading. Sometimes we have greater control over these events than others, but the new Headteacher and Governors will certainly not lack for challenges to manage in the future. One such challenge is the ever-changing community we serve and the size and age of the current school to accommodate demand for places. The location of the current school has started to draw more pupils from the Roussillon and Graylingwell developments and that has been positive for both school and pupils. However, we are also conscious that substantial new housing is now being built very near to our school and it is inevitable that this will have some consequences for us in terms of demand for places until new provision is provided. What that provision will be and when and where it will be built is still a matter for discussion and decision by West Sussex County Council.

In the meantime, we will do our best to ensure that Jessie continues to do what it has done for generations and provide the best educational experience it can for the community it serves. We will keep you updated of any developments when there is something to report. We hope that all our pupils enjoy their well-deserved summer holidays and let us hope that the next school year brings a return to some sense of normality.

Yours Faithfully,

Clare Few  
Ian Lomax  
Co-Chairs of Governors