governors@charmouth.dorset.sch.uk

 

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Governor’s Newsletter. We would like to wish all staff, parents and Children of Charmouth Primary School a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Farewell to Gillian Morris**

We enter a new era next term with our new Head Teacher Laura Cornish. This also means that we have to say a sad and a fond farewell to Gillian Morris.

Gillian has been Head Teacher since September 2012. She took over the school in difficult circumstances and was faced very shortly with an OFSTED inspection which graded the school as Requiring Improvement (RI). Within 2 years Gillian led the school to achieve an OFSTED rating of Good, no easy achievement.

To do this she had to implement a strong leadership team and drive rapid improvement in standards and performance. Much of this was achieved by setting up robust monitoring and evaluation systems so that our children’s progress could be accurately measured. OFSTED noted that “Pupils achieve well at Charmouth Primary School and are well prepared for their next stage in education”.

Gillian’s early days at Charmouth were without a properly structured Senior Leadership Team and without a Deputy Head. The fact that she had to put all of that together as well as the systems and processes in order to achieve a “Good” rating by the next OFSTED is an achievement indeed.

Under Gillian’s leadership we saw the school achieve Sports Status and attract more funding for sports provision. Beach School was introduced which has always been a tremendous success and helps to establish our identity as a coastal school.

Gillian has done so much for the school and pupils past and present. She now hands over a strong and well established school to Laura Cornish to take on the next stage of the journey.

I am sure you will all join me in wishing Gillian our very best wishes for the future and her new life in Surrey. She will be sadly missed, and we hope that if she finds herself coming this way again that she will drop into the school and visit everyone.

Thank you Gillian for all you have done for the school and for our Children.

**A Letter from Laura Cornish, our new Head Teacher**

Dear all at Charmouth Primary School,

I am delighted to have been appointed as the new headteacher at Charmouth Primary School and am looking forward to properly meeting members of both the school and local community in due course.

I have spent many hours on the beach at Charmouth with my family; every time we have driven down Lower Sea Lane, I have pointed out the school commenting on the learning possibilities of the unique location - now I will be leading the school and working with the staff to realise the renewed vision.

I have spent many hours on the beach at Charmouth with my family; every time we have driven down Lower Sea Lane, I have pointed out the school commenting on the learning possibilities of the unique location - now I will be leading the school and working with the staff to realise the renewed vision.



My experience as a teacher and school leader has been varied; I have worked in the local authorities of Hertfordshire, Kent, Southampton and Hampshire, at an International School in Sri Lanka and at a secondary school in the Kingdom of Tonga. I have held various responsibilities including, but certainly not limited to, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, key stage leader, SENCO, subject leader, curriculum leader and mentor to colleagues. I am passionate about working together as staff and parents, providing opportunities for and celebrating success and striving to inspire life long learning.

I am married with two children; a six year old daughter and a four year old son. We love to spend time together as a family; going to the park, walking in the countryside or on the beach, fossil hunting, crabbing, baking and spending time with our wider family and friends.

Over the next few weeks, I will be in communication with Mrs Morris and other staff ensuring a smooth transition. In January, I will regularly be on the steps or at the gate in the mornings and at the end of the school day, where I hope you will say hello and introduce yourselves – do bear with me as I learn names!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas and a very happy new year.

Mrs Laura Cornish

**Facilities Update**

2017 has been a busy year for the school

We have had the usual maintenance issues during the year which culminated in a serious problem with the roof causing water to leak into one of the classrooms and main corridor. After much investigation by Dorset's County Surveyor and various roofing contractors with great relief the problem was traced to one of the valleys and has now been repaired within the last month.

The leadership team with our assistance have made great improvements to the KS1 outdoor play area with the removal of the climbing structure, landscaping to the extended garden area and installation of a new fencing and gates, we have also installed an exterior water supply and water butts to harvest rain water.

The PTFA have kindly supplied and installed a superb outdoor kitchen within the KS1 play area which the children are loving, thank you PTFA!

In 2018 the school building is celebrating its 25th birthday and we are aiming to rectify some of the age related problems that such a well used building inevitably has,

Our major project will be to solve the continual problems we have with the Key Stage 2 boys toilets, we are in the process of redesigning the area to make it enclosed, improve the ventilation and replace the existing sanitary ware. This however is a very expensive renovation which the school cannot afford at present as all of our maintenance budget went on repairing the roof.

We are however installing new fencing to the front of the school to improve the security and safety of the pupils, and this work will be carried out at the same time as the work to redevelop the outdoor learning area led by the PTFA.

We would also like to clean up and repurpose the area to the left of the heads/admin office to make better use of what has become an unloved and unused part of the school and repair the guttering around the building which often overflows.

It is a constant job to maintain and repair our school building and we often have offers from parents of help and materials. Whilst we would love to accept, unfortunately the Local Authority insist that we have to used the official approved contractors for all works so that it is covered by insurance.

This is a constant drain on our ever decreasing budget, but unfortunately, try as we might, we cannot find a way around this.

**Becoming a Governor**

We have vacancies for new Governors and would welcome hearing from anyone interested in joining the Governors and making a difference to the school.

Governors are elected either by parents, staff, the Local Authority or can be appointed by the Governing Body as representing the community.  The Governing Body is made up of parents, staff, Local Authority representatives and members of the community.

The School needs enthusiastic and committed people to volunteer to become Governors. Being a Governor gives you the opportunity to express your views, to listen to the views of others representing the school and its community and to be involved in the strategic direction of our children's education.

Governors have to give up their time, usually a couple of evenings or mornings per half term to work in partnership with the school’s Senior Leadership Team and staff to shape the future of the school, to focus on continuous school improvement and to determine how the school will best spend its money to achieve these aims.

In the current climate of tight budgets, this is a particular challenge across all schools.

If you would like to contact a Governor, please leave a message with the school office or email us:

Governors@Charmouth.dorset.sch.uk

Please address all interest in becoming a Governor to Ray Dyer, Acting Chair of Governors.

Thank you for your support.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Charmouth Primary School Governing Body.**