**Newsletter from the Governors – May 2025**

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Hello Everyone

I hope you are all well and have had some opportunities to take advantage of the recent spell of sunny weather – long may it continue (although I think the gardeners amongst us would definitely welcome some rain!). It’s hard to believe that we are already over two thirds through the school year and before long we will be heading into the summer holidays. It’s also 5 months since I took on the role of chairing the governing board at Grange, taking over from John who had done so much to transform how the Board works – we continue to owe him a big thank you for his hard work.

I’m sure I will get to meet more of you over the coming months at school events. However, just as a little background in the meantime, I became a governor in January 2023, having retired from a career in manufacturing a couple of years earlier. I have a granddaughter at Grange (and a couple more grandchildren likely to appear there in due course!) so when the opportunity to join the governors there arose it seemed a great chance to get involved in something new and worthwhile. Becoming Chair wasn’t really in the plan, and not having a background in education can make it feel a bit daunting at times, but everyone in school and on the governing board have been so supportive and helpful, so thank you for that 😊.

There have been one or two other changes on the governing board just to mention. Since retiring at the end of last year (although there does appear to be an invisible string keep pulling her back!) Mrs Way has kindly agreed to stay on as a co-opted member and Vice Chair – we are really happy to keep her experience and common-sense approach. To fill the staff vacancy left by Mrs Way, Mrs Riley has now joined us as staff governor so welcome to her and the invaluable SEND experience she will bring. There will always be opportunities arising over the coming months and years to become a governor as vacancies arise so when they do, please give some thought to applying – it’s a great opportunity to make a difference.

I have had the opportunity to visit school a few times since becoming Chair and it never fails to hit me what a warm and welcoming environment it is – a testament to pupils, staff and parents and one of which everyone should be proud. Last week I was at school to watch the administration of the Year 6 SATS – we wish everyone the best of luck with their results in due course. On the day the organisation and behaviour were exemplary – not only from the pupils and staff involved in the tests but also the rest of the school who covered for those involved in the tests. A well-deserved thank you all for that! On a lighter (and definitely more entertaining note) I was lucky enough to be in school in March to see the finals of “Grangeton Has Got Talent” – I was absolutely amazed by the confidence, presence and sheer bravery of all of the finalists, way beyond their years. There were definitely some budding stars for the future – whilst there was a worthy winning act voted for by the pupils, all those who took part showed great talent and deserve a shout out – not to mention the supporting acts from a few brave staff (who knew there were such footballing skills!) and the school choir.

As a reminder the main responsibilities of the Governing Board are

* Setting the strategic direction of Grange along with the Head Teacher, agreeing the school’s aims and objectives around how the school will develop and improve.
* To support and challenge the school’s senior leadership team, Securing the best possible outcomes for pupils by challenging key decisions and asking pertinent questions about the school’s performance data.
* Ensuring sound financial management of the school. Agreeing financial priorities through the school development plan, 3-year financial plan and the annual budget.

The work of the Governing Board to achieve this has continued this year following the programme that John has shared with you in previous newsletters. We monitor how the school is progressing using a number of reports and plans. These include a Headteachers report prepared for us by Mrs Buxton which details how the school is performing in a number of key areas each term, the School Improvement plan which is a longer-term strategic plan for the next three years with some bigger actions to enhance the school’s performance and a Pupil Premium plan which tracks how additional funding from Government is being used to improve outcomes for the children. We look at these over the course of the year at one of our six planned meetings as well as periodically visiting the school during the school day to see for ourselves how initiatives are progressing. So far this year a governor has visited to look in more depth at English provision, Maths provision, EYFS and SEND. There is a lot of great work going on and we look forward to seeing this making Grange an even better place over the coming months and years.

That is all for now. I will write to you again in the autumn term but, in the meantime, if you have any questions please get in touch with any of the governors via the school office. As ever a big thank you to all the staff at Grange who make it such a special place for the pupils. Wishing you a great summer!

Best regards

Steve

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