

THERFIELD SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS 2005

Would parents kindly note that questions and discussion must only relate to the past academic year (the subject of this report).

Matters raised should be of general interest. We are unable to discuss individual students or parental concerns that are not of a general interest.

Governors and senior staff are on hand to confidentially talk about individual concerns, which can be followed up with a private meeting if required.

AGENDA:

1. Report from the Chair

2. Reports from sub-committee Chairs

3. Open discussion.

Please note that we will only be able to discuss matters of general interest to parents. We cannot deal with individual parent or pupil issues. It may also be helpful if you give advance notice of questions to the Clerk of the Governors.

4. Resolutions

These may be passed by a simple majority, providing parents of at least 20% of the registered Students of Therfield School are present. However, even in the event of too few parents being Present, the Governors will consider carefully all the views expressed at the meeting.

5. Any other business

If you have a written question for the Governors' AGM, please complete the slip below and return to Mrs Dawn Dodd, Clerk to the Governors Therfield School, Dilston Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7NZ by noon on Monday 3rd October 2005.

Written Question:

(For the attn. of Mrs Dawn Dodd - Clerk to the Governors, Therfield School)

QUESTION.....

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Parent's Name.....

Student's Name.....

THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL GOVERNORS' MEETING FOR THE PARENTS OF STUDENTS OF THERFIELD SCHOOL WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2005 AT 8.00 PM IN THE NEW DINING HALL IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF THERFIELD.

This meeting is organised to allow Governors to report directly to parents about the activities of the Governing Body for the preceding year. It is therefore part of the important process of increased accountability. It is also a chance for you, the parents, to express opinions about school policy and for you to hear the views of other parents and your Governors on issues that concern you.

Dear Parents,

The highlight of the school year has been the award of Specialist College status in Sport with partner subjects of Modern Foreign Languages. This follows nearly two years of deliberation and planning during which members of staff from the Leadership Team and faculties across the school have put in a tremendous amount of hard work and effort to secure the award. With this award and the large financial contribution that comes with it we hope to move Therfield from being a 'very good' school to one that is 'excellent' and put the school at the heart of the community.

Another accolade came in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for School's report. Therfield was named as being in the top 45 secondary schools in the country out of a total of 566 inspected. This result was based on the quality of the Ofsted inspection in March 2004. This was a very welcome recognition of the dedication and commitment of the staff at Therfield.

There have been challenges for the school and Governors in the last year. We have had to manage with a very tight budget with difficult choices to be made. This will be continuing in to next year and beyond.

Against this background of financial constraint the school has been very well supported by the Friends of Therfield and Therfield School Trust Fund. The money raised by organising events and from parental contributions has made a tremendous difference to the facilities and resources available to the students.

Best wishes to all staff who left Therfield at the end of the academic year, many leaving for well deserved promotions. In particular, two long serving teachers, Bob Geary and Rob Stewart, taking early retirement, must be thanked for their enormous contribution to Therfield over the years both within school and in their extra-curricular activities.

We have said goodbye to a number of experienced Governors whose contribution will be greatly missed. However, we have also welcomed several new Governors onto the Governing body and we are hoping for more this term.

The Governing body operates with four main sub-committees, Teaching and Learning, Facilities Development, Staffing and Finance and the work they do is included in the information which follows.

You are invited to hear more at the Governor Parent AGM on Wednesday 5th October 2005 and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

Paula Scriven
Chair of Governors.

**THERFIELD SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
2004/2005**

Retirement date

**GOVERNORS APPOINTED BY
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL (4)**

Two vacancies

Mrs Janet Yeates

04/05/2009

Mr Tim Reeder

07/12/2005

Mrs Shirley Lyon (End term office 30/08/2005)

Mrs Lynn Pendlebury (resigned 23/07/2005)

Mr Peter Bingham (End term office 09/05/2005)

PARENT GOVERNORS (7)

Two vacancies

Mr Gary Potter

16/10/2008

Mr Michael Smith

16/10/2008

Ms Kalpana Carruthers

16/10/2008

Mrs Barbara Walton

16/10/2008

Mr David Knoyle

16/10/2008

Mrs Debra Beer (resigned 9/8/2005)

Mrs Sandra Wake (resigned 21/01/2005)

Mr John Gough

16/12/2006

STAFF GOVERNORS (4)

Mr Graham Tuck

ex officio

Ms Lis Swingler

01/09/2009

Mr Les Horder

01/10/2006

Mrs Christine Harvey

31/08/2006

Miss Ros Allen (resigned 23/07/2005)

COMMUNITY GOVERNORS (5)

One vacancy

Mrs Sue Wall

28/02/2009

Mr Eric Skyte

15/05/2009

Mrs Paula Scriven

03/09/2006

Mr David Steel

06/07/2007

Mr David Crutchley (End of term of office 28/01/2005)

SPONSOR GOVERNORS (2)

Two Vacancies

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr D Christie

16/10/2005

Mrs S Reeves

16/10/2005

CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS

Mrs Dawn Dodd - Therfield School

Post Ofsted Action Plan

Following the very good Ofsted inspection in March 2004 (a full copy of the Ofsted report can be viewed on the Therfield website on www.therfield.surrey.sch.uk), the school produced an Action Plan to tackle highlighted areas of weakness in the school. This plan was then incorporated into the School Development plan which charts areas of work and actions to be undertaken both during the next school year and in subsequent years.

Below are areas highlighted in the report and work which has been undertaken over the past year;

1. Sixth Form private study area and access to ICT facilities: The new dining hall is being made available during the school day. This is an area for further development. More computers are available for private study.
2. Accommodation: This is still an issue for the school but plans are underway, with the support of the LEA, to go some way to improve accommodation for staff and students in the school.
3. Differing needs for pupils: The school has produced a Responding to Students Work policy – this is guidance about the way teachers give feedback and advice to students in writing or verbally. The school continues to develop its programme for Gifted and Talented students offering them the opportunity to enhance their learning and skills.
4. Homework: The school monitors the setting of homework through student planners as well as through the above policy and the Teaching and Learning policy.
5. Collective Act of Worship: This was an area of weakness in the school due to lack of suitable accommodation. The school is currently awaiting further guidance from the DfES and Ofsted as it is a common area of concern in most secondary schools.
6. Provision for 3D work in Art: Plans are being made to improve the accommodation in the Art Department. In the meantime 3D artwork will be incorporated, where practical, into curriculum schemes of work.

Teaching and Learning sub committee

The responsibilities of this group include assisting the Head teacher in ensuring effective delivery of the National Curriculum and related policies within a whole school context, as well as monitoring and reviewing all areas covered by the curriculum. Monitoring of the implementation of the Behaviour Policy within the school and the consideration of formal complaints by parents are also part of this group's remit.

Teaching and Learning have been following the application process for Sports Specialism status and governors were involved in the process and will continue to be involved in monitoring the impact of the specialism on the school and wider community.

In order for the governors to understand different areas in the school, staff from various faculties are invited to make presentations to governors. The Teaching and Learning committee had an excellent presentation from Julia Buckell on Modern Foreign Languages in the MFL ITC suite.

Another very informative presentation was given by Susan Willman on the Targeter system in the school which enables teachers to use up to date and relevant data on the students and obtain an accurate prediction of the students' grades. Using this system staff are also able to set targets for individual pupils which are then linked into academic tutoring.

There were again excellent A level results in 2004 and 2005 tabled below.

A-C grades		A-B grades	A-E grades
2004	70%	39%	98%
2005	77%	49%	98%

After pupils have completed their A levels a high percentage go on to further education. Students applied for places in Higher Education with many students being accepted into their first choice. Some students have chosen to take a gap year before going to university. Popular destinations for Therfield Sixth Formers are Exeter University, Southampton University, Sheffield University, Warwick University with four students going to either Oxford or Cambridge.

Our GCSE results continue to exceed national and county levels with 72.5% of students gaining five A* – C grades in 2004 and 65% in 2005 against the 70% target.

GCSE Targets and Results 2002 – 2006

GCSE	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Target
	2002	2002	2003	2003	2004	2004	2005	2006
5 A*-C	68	73	67	64	70	69	70	69
1A*-G	95	96	95	95	96*	95		
Average points score	45	49	47	46	46	48	47	47

This figure now relates to 5A– G including Maths and English as we are no longer required to set 1A* - G target.

The top 10% of students in Years 7 – 10 are given the opportunity to be challenged in groups of like-minded students. It culminates in students in Year 10 being given the opportunity to sit a GCSE in General Studies. The results are shown below.

2002 – 6 Year 10 students studied for two years and undertook the GCSE in 2003	A* - 2	A – 3	C – 1
2003 – 9 Year 10 students studied one year	A* - 6	A - 3	
2004 – 15 Year 10 students studied for one year	A* - 3	A - 10	B – 2
2005 19 Year 10 students Studied for one year	A* - 9	A -10	

Governors would like to thank all staff involved in teaching these groups and congratulate the staff involved.

Students in Year 9 were to be congratulated after last year's National Curriculum Tests (SATs) the percentage achieved at Level 5 or above in Maths, English and Science is shown below.

KS3	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target
Level 5+	2003	2003	2004	2004	2005	2005	2006
English	81	88	84	93	84	86%	80
Maths	77	82	84	85	82	82%	81
Science	77	84	86	88	84	82%	81
ICT	/	89	72	90	80	-	81

Over the past year the Teaching and Learning committee has updated the Visiting Policy which sets out guidelines for governors linked with faculty areas. It facilitates beneficial visits into the school enabling governors to fulfil their monitoring role as well as having a better understanding of how the school works on a day to day basis.

The committee has also reviewed the Sex Education Policy, the Drugs Policy and Behaviour Policy. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils was mentioned in the Ofsted report and governors monitor behaviour of pupils in the school by termly reports from the Head teacher.

Rates of pupils Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Authorised absences – 6.8%
Unauthorised absences – 2.1%

Staffing sub committee

Although budgetary constraints have been an issue, steady progress is being made in response to the Government's workforce remodelling policy, which will progressively ensure that teaching staff are freed from administrative tasks in order to concentrate on the teaching and learning agenda. The school is looking at imaginative ways in which support staff could be utilised in pastoral roles and a pilot will be undertaken of support staff taking small tutor groups.

As always the staffing sub committee reviewed statutory policies throughout the year and are able to monitor the policies in place both by reports from the Head teacher and also visits to the school.

The budgetary constraints were highlighted in the committee throughout the year but the school is able to have a full compliment of staff for September.

Staff Development

The staff development programme at Therfield plays a key role in the professional development of individual staff and in furthering the main objectives in the school development plan. Funds are made available for staff to access training outside the school; however there is also a considerable amount of staff development, which happens as a result of resources or expertise from within the school.

Staff development can take a variety of forms. Staff may attend courses and then feedback to other staff; speakers or trainers provide training on site; staff visit other schools or work with teachers from other schools.

Governors have also undertaken training, which enables them to carry out their roles and responsibilities with greater clarity and understanding. Governors attended 24 courses over the past financial year. Both the clerk to the governors and the Link Governor attend termly briefing meetings.

Sheena Reeves, our Link Governor has ensured that all governors are aware of the multitude of courses available and has updated governors on new and outstanding issues which they should be aware of.

Facilities Development sub committee

This sub-committee continues to take responsibility for monitoring matters relating to buildings and site maintenance and management, energy usage and effective control of energy costs, the asset management plan for the school, implementation of related matters contained in the School Development Plan and new legislation.

An important aspect of the committee are the health and safety inspections which cover the whole school in the course of a year. One example of this is that tree surgery has become a routine requirement with inspection and maintenance visits.

Some encouraging developments on accommodation matters have taken place over the past year. We received notification that the LEA is prepared to commit £2.8million to a capital project. Plans have been drawn up for a new Performing Arts centre incorporating eight general teaching rooms. The school is awaiting planning permission. David Christie, chair of the Facilities Development sub committee must be thanked for his hard work with the school on this project.

The continuing pressure on the school budget has influenced work which has been undertaken this year. However essential work following an inspection of the fire extinguishers and fire doors has been carried out with regard to the extinguishers and a planned programme will be put in place with regard to the replacement of fire doors.

The students appreciated the upgrade and refurbishment of the school kitchen and also the refurbishment of the main hall.

In response to legislation of the Disability Discrimination Act the school has in place an Accessibility Plan which requires provision of a ground floor disabled toilet and suitable access to the main building for students, carers, staff or visitors and both the toilet and disabled ramp are now available for use.

The security of the site, staff and students always features high on the Facilities Development agenda. A new CCTV system was installed which has reduced vandalism around the school grounds. Also brought in was a new system of security badges and staff, visitors and contractors all have to wear security badges when on school premises.

Finance Sub Committee

The financial situation within the school continues to cause governors and staff concern. The school has had insufficient funding to support both the curriculum and staffing levels required by a leading comprehensive school. This has had consequences on resources, some courses and class sizes. A robust financial management and recovery plan has been put in place, which over the next two years will ensure that Therfield is better placed to cope with funding difficulties.

The School will benefit financially from the award of Specialist status in Sport with partner subjects of Modern Foreign Languages; but the financial advantages are both prescribed and specific to the specialism. However, our students, staff and the local and wider community will all reap the benefits of the enhanced opportunities specialism brings to the curriculum of the school.

Arrangements for admission of pupils with disabilities

A disability is defined in the Disability Discrimination Act as a "physical or mental impairment, which has substantial and long-term adverse effects on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities". Whilst the Act does not apply to the provision of education at the school, the definition is useful as it emphasises the diversity of the potential disabilities which students could have. Typically, students with a disability have special educational needs and these are covered by the Education Act. If that is not the case, the school adopts a flexible approach to meet the needs of a pupil with a disability.

The governors monitor closely the Special Educational Needs policy in the school and Ofsted commented how successful the school is in ensuring all students are given the best possible pathway through school with as much support as necessary to ensure good learning takes place.

A selection of highlights of the school year

Outstanding exam results in both A level and GCSE – congratulations to both staff and students.

Students continue to do well in music exams with the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music with all levels of grades being undertaken.

Successful field trips including geography trips to Brighton are both stimulating and enlightening for students.

The Duke of Edinburgh scheme has been running successfully over the past two years and students have gained bronze, silver and gold awards. Congratulations to all who participate in the scheme.

Sailing is very popular at Therfield. Students take part in Surrey Schools' regattas as well as Therfield sailing holidays. They follow the RYA qualification scheme up to the level of sailing instructor.

Year 9 students visit the Belgium battlefields to see how life was like in the trenches during the first World War. Students attend the moving Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate and visit trenches and battlefields.

Ski Austria was, as usual, a resounding success. Students and staff alike enjoyed a great week of skiing, with fresh snow every day and memorable evening entertainment.

Forty sixth form students enjoyed a fantastic week in America in both New York and Washington DC. The trip included scaling the Empire State Building, exploring the city on foot, a ferry trip to see the Statue of Liberty, ice skating and visiting the grave of John F Kennedy.

Final Thanks

The Governing body wishes to thank members of both the Friends and the Trust Fund for all their hard work in raising funds to support the school.

We should like to acknowledge and thank parents and carers for their continued support of the school.

A special thank-you to all the dedicated Governors who have left us recently; Shirley Lyon, David Crutchley, Debra Beer, Lynn Pendlebury and Ros Allen. You will be sorely missed.

Finally the Governors would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank-you to Mr Tuck and the staff of the school for their continued dedication and commitment to the education of the students at Therfield.