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Dear Parents and Carers,

31st March 2023

School governing bodies have 3 core functions:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

In my letter to you in December I described some of what the governing body had done in relation to the second function. However, this term it has been the first of these which has been a focus for the governing body. Back in early February, we met to conduct a training session entitled “Setting the Strategic Direction”, following this, there have been multiple and on-going conversations on how to build on Newlands’ recent successes, whilst maintaining the community spirit that so many of the guests to Newlands comment upon.

In 2020, the National Governance Association identified a 4th core function for governing boards: Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard. Indeed, this is particularly important when determining the strategic direction for the school and the governing body are keen to hear the views of all stakeholders- With this in mind, we have compiled a survey to be sent to you after the Easter break for you to express your views on what is important for the school, and more importantly for your child/children. To those who attended parents evening in person and completed a sample questionnaire - thank you. The feedback has been useful and the format and questions have been changed to make it quicker and easier to complete.

This review of the school’s strategic direction is a work in progress and we will communicate to you later in the year the outcomes of this process.

If you are interested in finding out more about what a school governor does, or are interested in becoming a parent governor at Newlands, please make contact via the school office.

Finally, I wish you all a pleasant Easter break.

On behalf of the school governing body,

Callum Whittern
Chair of Governors