The new year has been a time to reflect on the journey Wellington has been on to become an Outstanding School.

For some of us, including governors it has been a long journey. I was reminded by Brian Pope, who is now Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion, of a public meeting in July 2011 to discuss the proposed amalgamation of two schools to form a new Primary School. Brian reminded me of the challenges of both that meeting and the amalgamation process.

It is fair to say that there was resistance to the proposal, but it was seen to be the best option to provide the best possible outcomes for the children for the schools.

Governors from both schools worked together on the temporary governing body to set up the new school. Working with Hampshire and some additional experienced governors we were able to appoint David England and the headteacher, establish staffing structures and finding a name for the new school.

Wellington Community Primary School, opened in January 2013 with new branding and uniforms.

Since then we have seen the new key stage 1 block built including the community room to allow the school to move onto a single site and grow.

Governors are particularly proud of the way the school has developed into a resource for the community and other local schools.

Our ongoing policy of staff development has resulted in two members of the Staff team leaving to take up their first headship.

We have also been able to develop close working relationships with other local schools including the affiliation with Marlborough that has given staff from both schools to develop skills. Wellington plays a key role in the work done in the cluster of Aldershot Schools.

All the above has been part of our outstanding Ofsted judgement.

As recognition of the journey that the school has been on, Brian Pope has invited Councillor Reid who is the Hampshire County Council cabinet member for Education to visit Wellington in May.

All the governors are
incredibly proud of what has been achieved by the whole school community and are looking forward to continuing the journey.

Neil Bridger, Chair of Governors

Meet the Governors

Lee MacQuade

Role: Co-opted Governor, Member of the Finance and Personnel Committee, Safeguarding Governor

I’ve been a governor for nearly 2 years now. Not that long but long enough to share the pride and enthusiasm of the other Governors and the leadership team in the great progress that the school is making. This progress was confirmed by the Ofsted inspection during which the school received the best possible outcome.

I’m fortunate to have a son at the school but sometimes need to remind myself that I’m not there to represent him. It is sometimes hard to separate the interests that a parent might have - the day to day operational issues that are the concern of the leadership team and staff – with the more strategic, longer-term matters that are the mainstay of Governor meetings; setting strategic direction, overseeing financial performance and monitoring educational standards.

I’ve recently taken on the role of Safeguarding Governor. Schools have a duty to ensure that they safeguard and promote the welfare of children. That duty is enforced by law. My role is to ensure that the arrangements that the school has to safeguard its children are effective and adhere to all the guidance and legislation which exists.

There is more information on safeguarding on the school website -

http://www.wellingtonprimary.com/safeguarding/

The Wellington Wallet

Money, Money, Money

David England - Head Teacher

It’s no secret that we live in times of austerity. Budget cuts, increased outgoings, reduced services to schools and yet an increased expectation that schools will provide many front line services that were previously delivered by external agencies and organisations, specially trained in their fields to support the diverse needs of children, young people and their families with social demands, demographic shift and just the increasing strains of daily life and the pressures of living in an ever modern world.

The same can be said for meeting the individual needs of children in inclusive schools, where specialist provision in such things like speech and language have really dwindled away over the years and external ‘outreach’ provision is almost non-existent in some fields and even when available, can take a long time to access.

Then we throw in the increased expectations on schools to raise standards in what our children should be able to do by the time they leave in Year 6. How do we manage to meet children’s needs, support parents and families and realise our vision and values as a true community school while balancing the books? Our income each year is approximately £2M and it’s quite a responsibility to spend it wisely and effectively.

Well, here are some of the things that we consider very highly and key staff and governors spend a lot of time discussing with a range of evidence and documents.

- Staffing - our school staff are our biggest spend from the budget and the school’s biggest resource. This is said of any school. Therefore, as the most expensive resource, the staff at all levels need to be of the best quality. This means ‘growing our own’ based on the needs of the school and thinking about the best ways of recruiting, retaining, developing staff and then succession planning for the future. Some of the evidence of this in action is our affiliation with Marlborough Infant School.
(shared resources and staff also save money and share best practice) and with the Schools Direct Teacher Training Programme. Another innovative example is our shift in staffing structure to include a 52 week Family Support Worker. A direct and ‘forward thinking’ response to a changing social climate.

- **Stability** - This is in relation to staffing. A core stable staff cuts costs and people grow within the school and community and are developed over time, staying and putting those high quality skills to use. Some of this comes to retaining staff and some to succession plan. Strong performance management and training and development means that staff have plans for the future and as they work towards those plans, our school has the best of their time here. A steady ‘turnover’ of staff is always healthy in helping balance cost with new ideas and developments that new people can bring in.

- **The needs of our school** - our staff and governors have an excellent knowledge of how our school is made up, socially and culturally and how this has changed over the years and has an excellent overview of what the school’s strengths are and what it needs to do to improve. Having a precise knowledge means that money is well spent to meet the exact needs of pupils, families and the community. We spend money on where it will have the most impact, based on the needs.

- **Great buildings, facilities and resources** - we are really fortunate to have a modern building, well refurbished, excellent landscaped grounds and a good investment in learning resources.

- **Success and reputation** - yes these help the budget. A healthy and popular school is popular school and this attracts more of an income. Wellington is full and this means that we attract the most money that we can based on pupil numbers. Our budget does reflect the demographic make up of our school too. For example, more money is attracted for children who are eligible for free school meals (disadvantaged) and for those from service families. This is for schools to ‘diminish the difference’ between educational experiences and outcomes that children not from similar backgrounds benefit from.

- **The PTA** - did you know that the school’s PTA raised nearly £6000 last academic year? Thank you all very much. This will go a long way to providing learning resources that will benefit thousands of children over the coming years (more to come on that at a later date)

We have to plan our budget each year and we can forecast 5 years ahead of what our income and outgoings may be. It’s not an exact science but does mean that we can always plan ahead for the best interests and viability of the school. Schools have to budget well to avoid a deficit budget, where more money is spent than the school actually gets! We benchmark our income and outgoings against other schools too, taking into account outcomes and how successful the school is too, so that we can be sure that we provide good value for money.

Unfortunately for many schools, this has become unavoidable without having to cut staffing, shorten school days and stop many of the services that they had previously provided.

I am sure that many of you have read about, or seen in the news how some schools have had to move to a 4 day week, cut teaching and support staff and even locally and recently schools have
had to stop after school clubs altogether, unless led by an external provider and paid for by parents and relatives.

Yet, at Wellington, we have managed to maintain and even expand our provision in and out of school, even to the point of being able to serve our children and families 52 weeks a year. For now, while leaders and the governors can realistically forecast, our budget income and what we spend balances out well, so that we can continue to maintain the levels of staffing and provision across the school that our children really do benefit from at the moment.

Do have a look at our school website to see how our school is staffed, reports on how we spend funding for disadvantaged children and children from service families, along with the outcomes of such groups of pupils, along with the standards our children reach throughout the school.

How do I contact a Governor?

All Governors are contactable through the school office. You can either leave a message for them, or e-mail the school, who will pass it on to the relevant Governor or Governors.

You can see who the Governors are on the school website.