

## **Mayor and other Councillors visit to the School**

“The Council were invited by the children of Years 1&2, Boroughbridge Primary School, to visit their school and see for ourselves all the changes that had been introduced over the last year or so. On Thursday afternoon several of us did just that. Chair of Governors, Mary Kelly, escorted us through the premises in the order that children progressed - from Early Years Foundation Stage, to Year 6. The logic of this became self-evident, but our physical route was tortuous as we navigated the soon to be completed renovations and inevitable temporary locations. From the playing in the sand pit, to writing a letter to their favourite celebrity on a computer word processor, the children were not only totally absorbed, indeed the intensity of their concentration made me not want to interrupt, but were all incredibly happy. They also asked us some challenging questions, no least being, “How did you get to be Mayor”. Something I am still pondering.

The children have a great deal of freedom to choose, and take risks, but with sufficient supervision to ensure they remained safe. Indeed, having been involved with young people’s sailing, it is music to my ears to hear teaching staff talking about children learning how to asses and come to terms with risk. Equally important, as reading and writing replaced play, the children were taught the importance of spelling and punctuation – there was ample evidence that this was working. We may at last have a generation that meets the high standards expected by prospective employers. One surprise was the presence of a swimming pool; out door, and not large, but with a qualified swimming coach on the staff, the children not only learned the basics of swimming and water safety, but had an easy reward for outstanding achievement.

The school set out some two years ago with the twin aims of achieving a “good” rating in the recent OFSTED inspection, and developing the structure and procedures to sustain this so that their temporary, part time, Executive Head could be replaced by an organic full time Headteacher. Despite the changing and ever greater demands of OFSTED, they achieved their target rating, and as the recruitment process for a new head teacher gets under way, their second aim is well within sight. Many congratulations – a school the community can be proud of.

Graham Archer  
Boroughbridge Mayor

Visit took place 27 February 2014.