

# Oliver's Battery Parish Council

## **Community Initiative Update - October 2024**

This month I have spent time at Oliver's Battery Primary School.

Many of our newer residents are choosing to send their children to school within the parish. This had been the custom, but over time, a wider choice of schools were selected, and OBPC's numbers suffered accordingly. The past two Headteachers worked hard and successfully to turn things round.

Now, we have a new Headteacher, Miss Sarah Vittel, who has come from Ropley Primary School. The school of some 211 children is nearly full and this past Friday's Open Afternoon saw a good number of parents intending to choose OBPC.

I met Sara on Wednesday and we have agreed to meet again to continue our discussion. She is most interested and supportive of community links and interested in learning more about Parish Council, to develop those links. Interested in any possible PC grant funding. I also suggested talking to WCC/HCC Councillors about their grant pots if anything comes up that might have a community link.

I also suggested a chat to Jan Warwick as she highlighted that the the Zebra crossing outside the school needs repainting, as does all the other stuff on the roads, around the school entrance.

She has been planning a major project that we could link in with her possibly - a proper running track around the whole of the school grounds. It is at very early stages, but she suggested that it could possibly be a community asset in the future and something that we could perhaps link up with ...

She has also started up a Choir (always a good thing). She is keen on intergenerational link ups, so I suggested she get in touch with Marianne, to see whether the new Choir could come and sing for the ReVive café. They could also come and sing at the Christmas Event. I will talk to Amy, Colin and Marianne.

I spoke about the current Community Initiative, to gather in newer residents. She was most interested and wants to talk further. I wanted to talk to someone from the PTA, but at the moment they do not have a link person. I might go to one of their meetings.

We agreed to send electronic copies of our respective Newsletters to one another. I mentioned that our Newsletter Editor, was keen to get copy from the school, both staff and students. I can follow this up.

At the Open Afternoon, I spoke to one of the Governors. We spoke again about engaging newer residents. She suggested a toddler event at St Mark's with games, and picnic. I thought that could be a good start up event for New(ish) Residents. I might even go to talk to the governors at some stage.

I went to the Open Afternoon. I was most impressed by the student guides who took me round. The overall impression was very positive. There were so many lively and interesting activities going on in all the classrooms. I saw lots of creative opportunities being built in to the learning. For a Friday afternoon at the end of the week, I was seriously impressed with the sense of focus, engagement and general 'on task' behaviour that was demonstrated by the children. Altogether a very useful first contact with the school. I will visit again soon to continue my conversation with the Headteacher.

C M Leach 29 September 2024