

GOVERNOR'S REPORT TO PARENTS

EYES DOWN FOR LITERACY HOUR

By Jane Cambrook
Head Teacher

Just when you thought it was safe to dip your toe into the water, Literacy Hour rushes up behind you and taps you on the shoulder!

You may have read in the newspapers or seen on television how the government wants to raise national literacy standards so that, by 2002, 80 per cent of all 11-year-olds will be achieving at least average standard.

For the past year some schools have been piloting Literacy Hour which all schools were expected to introduce from this September.

That means every class, from year 1, will spend at least one hour each day on a English lesson. Half the time will be spent with the entire class working together on a shared text - either a big book or shared writing. The second half will contain group work and a review session.

So what will this mean to my to my child? Well, more time will be spent on whole class oral work, but much less time spend on individual reading to the teacher.

This has the advantage that children can learn from more discussion about a book, sharing ideas about the way words are written - phonics and spelling - and how sentences are structured, in other words grammar.

The pilot schools reported that children learned faster and many became more enthusiastic about their reading and writing.



Children reading together - the new Literacy Hour began in September

Group work is carefully structured so that each group has two 10 minute guided reading sessions with the teacher each week when the teacher assesses their individual progress.

Reading practice each night at home with parents will continue to be very important, so please don't give up the excellent support you are giving your children.

Our two new members of staff Kathryn Mahoney and Judy Johns, have both

worked in Literacy Project schools for the past year, so their experience will prove useful.

Also, the government have produced training materials - a total of 20 hours worth - which all teachers are expected to undertake.

We have planned an evening meeting to tell you about Literacy Hour and to answer your questions on Tuesday, September 22 at 7pm in the school hall.

Please come along to find out more.

Pamela Anderson and Tom Cruise.....

...will not be able to attend this year's governors' annual meeting for parents.

But what the heck, they don't know what they will be missing on Tuesday, September 29, starting at 7pm.

This is your chance to talk to the governors, an opportunity to hear what's happening in the school and plans for the

future. It is also a time when you can air your views and ask questions.

The meeting tends to last just an hour - no extra-time - and coffee will be available from 6.45pm with time to chat informally.

So set the video for Emmetdale and EastEnders and make a date for later this month.

Agenda for meeting

on Tuesday, September 29 at 7pm
in St John's School Hall

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of last year's annual meeting.
3. Matters arising.
4. Review of this year's annual report.
5. Any other business.