



31 March 2017

Dear Parents

As we approach the Easter holiday we would like to take this opportunity to update you on the work your Governing Body has been doing over the term. After OFSTED visiting and our local authority review in the autumn we've continued our drive to deliver high standards.

APPROVING THE BUDGET

With the new financial year approaching the most recent job of the Governing Body has been to approve the budget for the next academic year. Given the significant deficit we were originally due to have for this upcoming financial year we are very pleased to report that this deficit has been significantly reduced, putting the school in a much better position than was predicted.

As you may be aware from the national press, funding for schools is facing significant changes in the coming year, with London schools suffering particular difficulties, so anything we can do to put our school into a stronger position to face these challenges is key. Some community schools nationally are asking parents to pay anything up to £250 per year to help bridge the gap on their shortfall, such is the dire situation of school funding!

We currently need to fund expensive but necessary repairs to many areas of the school: doors within the Foundation Unit, the pathway to the junior playground and to our perimeter fences to name but a few projects. Your contributions to the Maintenance Fund are vital in helping us with these. If we don't have the money, the work cannot be done.

Thank you to every parent that has contributed to our Maintenance Fund. Alas, on average only 68% of parents of children at the school have contributed. The Maintenance Fund is used to pay into a compulsory insurance premium, which is based on every single child who attends the school, regardless of whether or not we receive the voluntary donations.

If you have not paid and are able to do so, please do donate at the beginning of the Summer Term. If you are at all able to make additional donations, every penny counts and we would be extremely grateful!

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Since our Gift Aid form drive, we have been able to recuperate £2,500 from HMRC so this really is a fantastic bonus for the Maintenance Fund – and thank you once again if you returned a form. If you didn't, and are a taxpayer, please do grab a form from the office, complete and return at your earliest convenience.

We also now have a PayPal account for the Governor's Maintenance Fund so there are a variety of ways to pay. If online banking is preferable for you, please visit <https://www.paypal.me/STJN20MF>

MONITORING THE SCHOOL

As we've mentioned previously, monitoring the school is an important aspect of our role. On our Governor Action Plan for the year we had a goal of ensuring governors were fully integrated into school life and we hope we're well on the way to achieving this.

This term, we have:

- 1) Held our termly drop-in for parents where we discussed the OFSTED report
- 2) On a number of different occasions, attended collective worship in school so we can both join in with the children as they pray, listen and sing hymns, and also observe our collective worship policy in action
- 3) Taken part in a learning walk where we visited each class (except Y2 who were on a trip) and spent time with both the Learning Ambassadors and children from each class. As a school, we are really focussing on pupil voice which means listening and talking to the children to understand how the school and their learning works for them. We want to ensure the governors as well as the teaching staff were involved with this.
- 4) Increased the involvement of our class-link governors (where a governor has been assigned a class), who have attended class assemblies, visited children in class and even taken their class to visit their allotment!
- 5) Delivered an assembly to the children to explain what the governors do and who they are, which the children really enjoyed.
- 6) Continued our regular catch-ups between the Chair, Vice-Chair,

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Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

TRAINING & STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

This term Jeanette Burnett has attended a session on the Financial Management for Governors and Jaime Goumal has learnt about the Pupil Premium in his role as Pupil Premium Governor. Lynne Evans and Imogen Hall attended the termly chairs briefing from Barnet, where Lynne presented on our OFSTED experiences and received a very positive response. Both Lynne and Imogen have also been asked by the Local Authority and our National Lead of Governance to start reviewing other governing bodies, which is a reflection on the best practice now in place by our whole governing body, and have also contributed an article to the national governors magazine *Governing Matters* on the governors' contribution to turning around a challenging financial and academic situation in a school.

As a governing body, we also received training from Mrs Mitri on the RE policy in school and from our Safeguarding Governor Dr Helen Eracleous on what governors need to understand in terms of safeguarding.

GOODBYE & THANK YOU TO ANDREW REEVE

This term Andrew Reeve stepped down as Foundation Governor. We have really appreciated Andrew's contribution over the last couple of years and will miss his excellent questions. Thank you to Andrew for your work on the board.

COMING UP

Next term the school will receive a visit from a SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) Inspector, which is basically the equivalent of OFSTED delivered by the Church. As RE lead, Mrs Mitri has worked really hard to prepare the school for this and our RE Governor Mrs Adams-Constantine has supported her fully and is preparing for her part in the inspection. At the last inspection, the school was judged to be Outstanding but an area to improve upon was how the governors were evaluating the collective worship and religious education in school. We are confident that our robust monitoring of school life plus the active contribution of the RE Governor means we have improved significantly in this particular area and hopefully the inspector will agree!

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As always, please do get in touch via our email governors@stjohnsn20.barnetmail.net if you have queries.

We hope you all have a lovely break and wish you all a very happy Easter break with lots of extreme reading to celebrate when we are back at school on Wednesday 18th April.

The Board of Governors

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