



St Barnabas C of E Primary School
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"Barnabas, the Encourager"

17th March 2020

Letter from the Governing Body

Dear Families

As Governors, we wanted to contact you to keep you informed about our roles and responsibilities and to share some of the good elements that we have seen in St Barnabas Primary School as we attend meetings and come into School in our Link Governor capacity.

The role of the Governing Body is a strategic one, ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, looking at educational performance to ensure continual School improvement and overseeing financial performance, making sure money is well spent.

The members of the School's Governing Body are committed and enthusiastic and want the best for the School's staff, pupils and families. We have recently undergone a self review with Local Authority representatives and put an Action Plan in place as a part of the overall School Improvement Plan to be as effective as possible, empowering all pupils and staff to excel.

Each Governor is a member of at least one of the committees that review different aspects of the School, eg. Teaching and Learning, Resources. Governors are also linked to subject areas and classes. Each of these links provide us with an opportunity to challenge, ask questions, look at data, discuss aspects of teaching and learning across the School and get to know the pupils.

We are invited, and attend where possible, INSET days throughout the School year and have our own specifically tailored Governor training through the Local Authority and York Diocese in order to remain up to date with issues affecting education.

As Governors we want to share with you some of the positive and wonderful things we saw on a recent Governor Monitoring morning, (February 2020) where we spent time in different classes, talking to the pupils and observing teaching and learning and thinking about the question, "What difference will this make to the children?" We then indulged in a tasty lunch as we sat with the pupils and had some informative conversations with them!

Emerging from the Governor reports following the Monitoring Morning, were comments such as...

"The teacher and teaching assistant worked well together in providing a caring, relaxed calm environment for the children to learn. The children were all happy, relaxed and focused during the lesson."

"The pupils are engaged and challenged and there is a love of learning in the class."

“With improving data around children with additional needs, it is obvious that a massive amount of work has been done in this area throughout the school. Targeted behaviour support plans with personalised interventions are beginning to have good effects.”

“I was pleased to see all the children happily & quietly engaged in their learning.”

The Governors see how hard the staff in School work to provide a caring environment and high quality teaching and would like to thank them. We know that they are dedicated to develop further professionally, contribute to developing an inspiring curriculum and evaluating outcomes.

As Governors and Staff, we want St Barnabas School to be inclusive, and for all pupils and families to feel supported and feel that they belong to a thriving community, working together. We want you as families, to be a positive part of that, too.

This year we have spent time looking at new Vision and Values for the St Barnabas School community – thank you for your contributions towards this. Our new Vision and Values Statement is attached and over the coming months we will be working to embed this in our daily routines and ensuring that this informs our decision making. We hope that all members of our school community can ‘sign up’ to this vision and these values.

We have streamlined our Behaviour Policy and School rules, which are now: Ready, Respectful, and Safe.

Each day is a new start and we want the children to feel welcomed and safe and be in a loving and caring environment underpinned by mutual respect, which is what we are observing as Governors.

However, our inclusivity does mean that we have some children in our School community with additional needs who might need a differentiated curriculum, a package of support for a challenging behaviour, or particular strategies to be employed (not to be confused with a reward system).

Outside Agencies are always asked for advice when this is seen to be a need for a child or the family. Families will be kept informed of this.

All the children with additional needs (SEN) now have an Individual Learning Passport (ILP) and parents/carers are encouraged to be a part of the strategies employed to assist the child to reach their full potential. This can only happen when we all work in partnership to make the child's experience as good as it can be, encouraging consistent attendance, consistent practice across the School and consistent routines, in all of which we need you as parents/carers to be a part.

I would encourage any parent/carers who has any concerns, questions around particular behaviours or packages of support either for their own child or another child, to come into School to discuss this with the class teacher, Miss Boardman or the Chair of Governors.

As Governors, we are presented with data for the pupils in School, where we are seeing an improving picture in most subjects. However, for us, it is also about having a knowledge of the child behind the data.

We would like to think that childhood is the happiest time, but all children, like adults, have difficulties in their life at some point. It isn't always easy for staff to know what has happened which might impact on your child's learning, but again, please let staff know so they can be supportive of your child if difficulties arise.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the recent Parents' Survey. Governors will be looking at this in more detail but I am pleased that the positive responses have increased since the previous survey in February 2019. The vast majority of parents state that their child is happy, feels safe and does well at St Barnabas. An increased number of parents agree that the 'school makes sure its pupils are well behaved' and feel that if any bullying has taken place, the school dealt with it quickly and effectively.

We hope to send out a Governor letter twice a year to keep you informed of our plans and tell you more about the School from our perspective.

As I finish, I want to share with you how well each class (and the staff) has done in conducting a time of Collective Worship in Church each half term. They always rise to the occasion and give of their best. It is great to welcome parents and chat with them over a cuppa after the worship time. If you have yet to come to one of the services, I would urge you to come and see!

With warmest wishes to you

Anne Williamson (Chair of Governors) on behalf of the Governing Body

New Vision and Values Statement - March 2020

'Our vision is to ignite curiosity and delight in learning so we are ready for an ever changing, challenging world.

We will build each other up to be unique individuals in a diverse community - showing resilience and working positively together to make every day count.'

Our core values of **creativity, **courage** and **compassion** underpin our vision.**

It is rooted theologically in ` 1 Thessalonians 5:11

' So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind. '

The link with **Saint Barnabas 'the Encourager'** is at the heart of our vision.