

Governor Newsletter

SIR JOHN BARROW SCHOOL

Summer 2021

What a year it has been!

Here we all are again at the end of another school year, which has proved to be another year of challenges and problem solving. Governors would like first and foremost to thank everyone in the SJB team - pupils, parents and carers, staff, and members of the wider community who have worked so hard to get us through this year, and helped us to face the hurdles that we encountered along the way. There have certainly been difficult times but there are also many achievements to celebrate too, and we would like to talk about those in this newsletter now.



Working hard to keep up learning standards and progress

There has been much discussion in the news about the impact of covid restrictions on pupil learning, about "Covid recovery" and "catch up". At SJB we have been monitoring pupil learning very closely to make sure that teachers have been aware of any gaps in learning due to time out of the classroom, or any other reason. This has meant that we have been able to target pupil support very quickly in the right places, and at the end of this year, our feedback on pupil learning suggests that on the whole, SJB pupils have not suffered a particular setback in their learning in the last year. This is very encouraging, and is due to the hard work of all our pupils, and our dedicated teaching staff who have stayed focused on keeping our children engaged and making progress throughout the year.



How you can help at home

We know that the biggest single thing that families can do to support their children's learning is to **read regularly with them at home**. Our staff stress the importance of making a habit of reading at home, and the huge impact that this has on all aspects of learning. So thank you for your support with this, and - keep it up!

One of the pieces of positive feedback we have had had been from parents and carers who appreciated the better understanding of teaching and learning that developed under remote learning. We are hoping to build on this to keep parents and carers involved in their children's education. Let us know what you would like to see and how we can keep you best informed and involved.

Innovating how we deliver the Wider Curriculum

It's been a busy year of staff training and development to prepare for a new way of delivering the wider curriculum. The package now in use at SJB called 'Unity', uses subject modules in blocks, the learning in the blocks is built upon year on year so a clear path of progression can be seen from year 1 to 6. Vocabulary plays an important part of the knowledge pupils are given along with knowledge maps and knowledge notes to start each module. We know that Ofsted will want to clearly see our Intention, Implementation and Impact with this new package. Governors have been part of this development journey, from the initial briefing on the Unity package to now seeing the work in pupils books. A robust monitoring process is in place for governors to monitor progress, through learning walks and pupil voice. During a learning walk, a group of governors ask questions of the subject lead, see evidence in pupils' books and displays, and follow this up by talking to class teachers and pupils.

At SJB we encourage our pupils to be confident speakers and monitoring progress through pupil conversations gives opportunities to practice these skills. Our learning walks have taken place virtually this year and we are looking forward to being able to talk to pupils in person when it's safe to do so.

Early Years curriculum changes

Curriculum changes are coming to Early Years too. From September, the government requires all Reception age children to receive a baseline assessment which will be used to track their progress against further assessment in year 6. The assessments will be done by their teacher in school during the wider school assessment week. Also from this September the new Development Matters framework becomes statutory, with 17 new Early Learning Goals. Overall the framework focuses on learning through play, building confidence and stimulating interests.



Goodbye and good Luck!

We would like to wish a fond farewell and best of luck to the following people:

- Firstly and most significantly, our **Year 6 pupils**, who will move to their next stage of schooling. The traditional farewell activities for our leavers have been imaginatively tweaked this year as necessary. We hope that the Year 6s have felt their send off to be an appropriate celebration of this turning of a significant page. Thank you Year 6 for all your many contributions to the school over the years you have been at SJB, and very best of luck in your next steps!
- We lose two valued members of our Teaching Assistant team; **Mrs Cowsill** who is the longest standing member of the school staff, who will retire, and **Mrs Barber**, moving on to new pastures. Thank you both for all your hard work with our pupils over the years!
- Finally, thank you to two of our Governing Body members who have finished their terms of office, namely, **Cllr Mark Wilson** who has been a governor for the last 8 years, and **CSO Izzy Roberts** who is moving to take up a WPC position. Both have been valuable members of the governing body giving us key links into the Ulverston community.

Have a good summer holiday

We wish everyone a safe and relaxing summer - have fun, and we are looking forward to the next school year!

The SJB Governing Body