



Governor Newsletter

SIR JOHN BARROW SCHOOL

December 2016

Season's Greetings

As we draw to a close on what has been a full and energetic term at SJB, the Governing Body would like to thank everyone in the SJB team for their continued support and involvement in the school's successes. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Manchester Trip

Regular readers of the School Blog will be aware of the wide range of exciting trips that are part of our curriculum at SJB. These trips are carefully designed to be central to the children's learning and to bring alive their classroom experiences. We want school to be relevant and fun, so that our pupils are keen to come in and learn every day. Trips are an important part of making this happen.

The Year 3 and 4 Manchester trip is a great example of how the term's classroom learning can be given an extra dimension by a visit to the "outside world". Taking part in experiments in the Science Museum and working independently showed the pupils that science is not just a school activity but a real part of how the world works! The visit that followed, to the Lowry Museum, built on the children's previous learning and they were thrilled to recognise the original works of art that they had already studied. The day was finished off by the thrill of a West End musical

and our pupils were delighted by the Wind in the Willows.

A long day, but a very enjoyable and extremely worthwhile one. Big thanks to all of the staff and adult helpers who made this valuable experience possible.

Nativity & Candlelight Performances

It was lovely to see the culmination of such hard work, both by the children and the teachers, in the Nursery and KS1 Nativity performance at Ulverston Methodist Church on Tuesday evening. 'The Arts' have been a strategic focus recently at SJB, so from a governor perspective it was great to see clear evidence of this; watching the children enjoying themselves and putting on a superb performance. The array of costumes, enthusiastic dance moves, songs and live guitar (courtesy of Miss Sadler) really demonstrated the level of effort involved from all at SJB. In particular, the confidence and patience of the children really stood out. They obviously took great pride in their varied roles and in sharing this with their families. Many thanks to the Methodist Church for hosting the evening and to all the staff and children involved - it was fantastic!

KS2 children excelled themselves in their performance of 'Another Fine Festive Mess' at the Parish Church. This nativity story with a difference was written by Mr Emms and Mrs Fletcher with help from the children and involved Laurel & Hardy following the star, including a visit to SJB. The children performed with confidence and enthusiasm to the delight of the huge audience watching. Many thanks to all involved and to the Parish Church for allowing us to use their venue.

Goodbye & Good Luck!

Mrs Lindhofer will leave us at the end of this term. We thank her for her commitment and invaluable support to the school and wish her lots of happiness for the future. Mrs Sharples is also leaving at the end of this term. She has worked at SJB and previously Dale Street Infants for many years. We take the opportunity to thank her for all her work at both schools and wish her well in her new adventures. And finally a goodbye and good luck to Mrs Fisher our midday supervisor, who left us at the end of September.

Pupil Premium – Learning Walk

This term the Evaluation & Curriculum Committee have completed a 'learning walk' looking at the different ways Pupil Premium children are supported at SJB.

Pupil Premium is government funding provided to support the learning of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) or who have been eligible for FSM in the last 6 years (Ever 6). Pupil Premium is also provided to support children looked after and children whose parent works in the armed services.

A key priority for SJB is to ensure that all children including Pupil Premium children reach their full potential in school. Governors met with class teachers to discuss the range of ways that support for Pupil Premium children is provided both in

and outside the classroom.

The teachers we spoke to all demonstrated an in-depth knowledge and awareness of the differing needs of all the children in their class.

They were able to describe in detail the strategies in place to target these needs, which could involve helping children to 'catch up' or stretching and challenging more able pupils.

It was evident that Pupil Premium children have carefully thought out short and long term targets and the monitoring and reviewing of these is regular and robust. Discussion made it clearly apparent that the support for Pupil Premium children, and indeed all children, at SJB is driven competently and enthusiastically by both the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher, but that it also involves a large team of dedicated and equally enthusiastic staff. Well done and many thanks to the SJB staff for their hard work and continued commitment to the progress of the children at SJB.

The school website includes further details about Pupil Premium funding and support for any parents/carers interested in finding out more.

http://www.sjbarrow.cumbria.sch.uk/pupil_premium.html

SUCCESSING
ENJOYING
BELONGING

Spotlight on ICT Development

We have seen a big shift in how ICT (information and communication technology) is used at SJB. It is 3 years since we started implementing our long term plan for ICT development, and at that point provision was limited to a motley collection of aging PCs in the old ICT suite, plus one or two PCs in each classroom. Now, we have fast Wi-Fi throughout the school with all children making regular use of laptops (in Key Stage 2) or iPads (Key Stage 1) in their own classrooms. This provision means that use of this technology is not bottlenecked by limited access to the ICT suite, but that it can be used throughout the curriculum whenever it is appropriate for lessons.

We have also seen changes in how we communicate – our overhaul of the school website, complete with regular blog posts has seen a big increase in traffic, including access to information about school policies, subject information and how we use out school Sports and Pupil Premium money. Electronic communication and online lunch ordering have proved extremely popular with parents and carers and have also improved efficiency in the school office. We will be soon trialling a new online payment scheme for other school activities such as trips, so watch this space!

A big "thank you" to Mr Emms, our ICT leader and tech guru for overseeing all of these improvements, and for making sure that we are right up to date in delivering a 21st century education at SJB!