

# Governor Newsletter

## SIR JOHN BARROW SCHOOL

April 2017

### New Governor

As we approach the end of the Spring term, we would like to thank all the SJB team for their continuing commitment to the school. At this term's Full Governing Body meeting a new co-opted Governor was appointed and we would like to welcome Ms Dulcie Campbell to this role.



### School Cuts

Many of you may have recently heard the press coverage concerning future funding to schools. At SJB by 2019 it is estimated that in real terms we will be hit by an 11% decrease in funding under current Government policy. As Governors we are deeply concerned about the impact that these cuts in funding will have upon our pupils. We will work our hardest to mitigate the effect of any cuts we are forced to make, but funding shortfalls of this amount are impossible to address without serious measures.

We are proud of our school, our community and the work we do together to ensure a first class education for our pupils. We are therefore extremely anxious to maintain these standards without losing teachers or support staff and without reducing the opportunities for children or damaging enrichment.

As a school community we are seeking your support in raising awareness of the urgent situation facing our school. We urge you to consider joining the campaign to help keep the

investment we need in our schools and to ensure our young people continue to get the opportunities they need and deserve.

You can get involved by contacting your MP to let them know what's happening to our school and ask them to take action.

### Impact of Budget Changes at SJB by 2019



### Pupil Premium – Are you registered?

The Government provides funding to schools to help support children from lower income families do their very best. This funding is known as *Pupil Premium*. Our school is able to claim significant funding for each registered pupil. At SJB we have a very clear and focused strategy for improving outcomes for children eligible for free school meals, so please contact office staff to make sure your child is registered and can benefit from this extra funding.

### Governor Coffee and Chat

Our termly Governor Coffee and Chat will be held **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April from 2:30 – 3:15**. All are welcome to come along. We hope you find these sessions useful – we certainly do, and we regularly use the feedback we get.

### Vacancy for Parent Governor

Last term we advertised a vacancy on the Governing Body for a new parent governor. This position has not yet been filled. Details for how to apply can be found on the school website under the 'School letters' section.

## Policy Review

One of the Governing Body's key tasks is to ensure that the School's Policies reflect its ethos, describe current practice and are compliant with legislation. This is a big job, and we follow a programme of policy review. This term, we updated the following policies with the changes listed below:

**Child Protection and Behaviour Management Policies:** these were given a major overhaul; practice in school has not changed materially but we have updated the policy in response to publication of new guidance and legislation. We have also increased the amount of detail given in the policies so that we are more explicit about what we do.

**Gifted and Talented Policy:** we clarified how staff identify children who are particularly gifted in sport, music or art to make sure that these pupils can be given the opportunity to explore their talents.

**Online safety (e-safety) Policy:** this has been an area of particular activity recently in school, responding to a parental need identified at Governor Coffee and Chat, and to the constantly evolving issue of keeping children safe online (see Governor Spotlight in this newsletter). We checked that the school's expectations on parents are clearly expressed in the Home-School Agreement and that we have an effective system in place for monitoring that the policy is complied with in school.

Visit our school web site to see current versions of these and other school policies.

## National Governors' Association Award

Our Governing Body has been shortlisted for the NGA Outstanding Governance Award 2017. The judges visited the school earlier this month and met with school governors and Miss Pemberton to discuss the nomination. Results for the awards will be announced shortly!

## Governor Spotlight: Cyber Safety

This term SJB has been highlighting the issue of our children staying safe on-line. Parents and Carers should have received two guides this term; '**Your child's online world**', a guide prepared by the NSPCC, and '**Sir John Barrow School – A guide to staying safe online**'. These are comprehensive and excellent guides providing sound practical advice.

On 28th February the NSPCC took part in our assembly and provided workshops for our year 5 and 6 children on the topic of staying safe online. One of our local PCSOs also came into school recently to talk about this topic.

The Governors are pleased with the school approach towards pupil safety in this area because as the NSPCC guidance states, "Children are going online earlier, sometimes at a very young age. They love using new technology and see the online world as creative, fun and exciting". However as we are all aware, the internet also raises some challenging concerns and can impact on several of the policies and procedures in place at SJB, which are designed to protect our children.

E-security is a relatively new, key and sometimes difficult topic for our children. The Governing Body are delighted with the way that the staff have tackled this issue this term, as it is a vital part of ensuring the welfare of our children here at SJB. The Governors wish to thank all staff for their hard work, and especially Mr Emms for co-ordinating the school's approach to this topic.

Should any parent or carer have any concerns about e-safety please discuss these with a member of the teaching staff. The School also has some spare copies of the documentary guidance recently handed out.

**Ramsey Barker, Governor and Chair of the Inclusion Committee**

