

Governor Newsletter

SIR JOHN BARROW SCHOOL

July 2019

Coffee and Chat Feedback

We really value the feedback that we get from parents and carers through our Coffee and Chat sessions. This term we ran a drop in session asking parents about voluntary contributions to school trips. These trips are carefully planned to enhance and bring to life the wider curriculum topics covered in classes and we feel that they are a very important part of our children's learning. As we have written about here before, funding across the school is extremely tight and our trips rely on funds from parental contributions as well as occasional external grant funding which we apply for. Feedback at the session confirmed that parents are very keen for the current programme of varied and exciting trips to continue, and that these trips are extremely popular with pupils and their families.

We discussed about the current levels of contributions, and while this was felt to be reasonable, parents also suggested a number of local sources of external funding to explore with the PTA so that we can try to minimise what we ask from families towards the trips. **You can help too...** please tell us if you know of any local funding streams or grant sources - perhaps a local business or employer which we could approach to sponsor a trip? Just pop in to the school office, or contact the PTA through the Facebook page.



Coffee & Chat

SEND

Governors recognise the importance of ensuring that the needs of children with special educational needs (SEND) are fully met in the school, whether they have an Education health and Care Plan or not. Regular meetings with the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) and other visits ensure that the governing body keep in touch with the provision made for this group.

The school has a detailed record of the progress children make and children with SEND are progressing well. Provision is reviewed regularly and staff obviously know what approach helps each child best. Although the progress of SEND children is good, if there are concerns action is taken rapidly to ensure children remain on track to achieve as much as they can. The progress of children with SEND is a priority for the school and governors.



Throughout the school, children with SEND are well supported and welcomed in an inclusive atmosphere.

Parent Views

Parent/carer views are very important to the governors and staff at SJB. Many thanks to those of you who took time out from the festivities of the Summer Fayre to chat about the trips and offsite activities on offer at SJB. Feedback on the topic was really positive, people are generally very happy with the variety of visits provided, the way they link with curriculum areas, the costs and the way visits are organised. SJB is currently working very hard on the development of the wider curriculum and offsite visits provide valuable experiences to support many aspects of this. In addition, they enhance the development of independence, social skills, team building skills, and health and well-being.

To hear that parents/carers recognise that these crucial elements are promoted at SJB through offsite education opportunities is encouraging and reassuring. Your thoughts on changes or improvements are also of value to us and have been passed on for staff to consider. If you would like to share your opinion on trips at SJB but didn't have the opportunity at the fayre then we are always interested. You are welcome to attend one of our termly coffee and chat sessions or put your thoughts in writing, address it to the Governors and hand it in at the office.

Thank you!

We are grateful to our SJB governor and local councillor Mark Wilson for helping us to secure an SLDC grant towards funding our school Mindfulness and Speech Therapy projects. We are delighted to be working in partnership, through this SLDC grant, with the wider Year of Youth Opportunity programme with Ulverston MIND and Ulverston Town Council to deliver our programme at SJB.



New Parent Governor Opportunities

In the autumn term we will have several vacancies arising for new parent governors as current governors are nearing the end of their terms of service. School governors play an important role in leading SJB. They set the strategic vision and direction, advise on important budget decisions and hold the senior leadership team to account.

The benefits of becoming a school governor are immense. It is an excellent way of supporting children and young people in your community; it can allow you to develop your own professional skills and experience in areas such as strategic planning, chairing, financial planning and team working, all of which are valued by employers and can assist your own career development; and enables you to build relationships and networks in your locality. All of our governors are well supported in their role and take away a great deal of satisfaction from volunteering in this way.



If this is something that interests you any one of our governors would be willing to have an informal discussion. Check out our video on the blog of Janet Heffernan, Chair of Governors, experiences and insights into her role. <https://sjbprimaryblog.com/2018/07/19/sjb-playtimes-meet-the-chair-of-governors/>

Goodbye & Good Luck

The end of the summer term leads us to saying goodbye to members of the SJB team who have all worked incredibly hard over their time with us. Mr Emms is taking a new teaching position and we can't thank him enough for his contributions to the school over the last few years. Ms Drake our school cook is also leaving us and we would like to take the opportunity to thank her and wish her well in the future. Mrs Bleasdale has been a valuable member of our governing body and is stepping down at the end of term, we thank her for all her valued contributions. **Finally goodbye and good luck to our current Year 6 class on their next chapter ahead!**