



Governor Newsletter

SIR JOHN BARROW SCHOOL

December 2018

Merry Christmas

The Governing Body would like to thank everyone in the SJB team for their continued support and involvement in the school's successes over this last term leading up to the holidays. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Merry
Christmas*

Wider Curriculum

In recent months the Evaluation and Curriculum Committee has been monitoring how SJB are developing their delivery of the wider curriculum to ensure sufficient time is given, in all year groups, to the full range of foundation subjects (e.g. PE, art, history, music etc). This area is currently a particular focus for Ofsted nationally and was identified as a 'next step' for SJB during the Ofsted inspection in November 2017.

Staff have implemented changes in their planning to maximise the opportunities to make links between subjects. In the classroom this might mean using a historical novel in English to provide a context for looking at the art, design, music and culture of that same period through topic work. As children progress now, the wider curriculum has an increased focus of the development of specific skills appropriate to each year group that are built upon year on year.

Visiting 'experts' and off site trips and visits will continue to enhance and inspire the wider curriculum at SJB.

Learning will remain centred around what is relevant and important to children growing up in Ulverston in 2018. Alongside this, staff will be working to develop an awareness and understanding, within our children, of the wider world and their place in it providing a global perspective as we move into the future.



New Parent Governor

Sarah Branton finished her 4 year term of office as Parent Governor last month, triggering the process for electing a new Parent Governor to fill the vacancy. We had one nomination for this place, and therefore there is no need for an election.

We are delighted to welcome **Louise Slee** as our new Parent Governor with immediate effect. We have five places for parents on the board and the other roles are filled by Helen O'Neill, Angela Gregg, Amy Bleasdale and Hannah Clark. Thank you to Sarah Branton for all her hard work over the last 4 years!

Goodbye & Good Luck!

Miss Stuart will leave us at the end of this term. We thank her for her commitment and invaluable contributions as Year One teacher for the last 4 years and leading Arts across the school, we wish her the very best of luck in her new role.

Governors at the Christmas Fayre

The 'Penny for your thoughts' table at the SJB Christmas Fayre proved again this year to be a valuable way of gathering the opinions of parents/carers and children. We asked people to comment on the wider curriculum at SJB:

- What does SJB do well?
- What could SJB improve?

Everyone who submitted a response (anonymously) earned a chocolate coin! We got some very positive feedback and some useful suggestions which have been passed on to staff.

Many thanks to everyone who took the time to contribute, your views are important and do help SJB to move forward. If anyone missed it it's never too late to offer an opinion, governors are keen to hear your thoughts either at our termly Coffee & Chat sessions, on the playground at the beginning or end of the day or in writing (the office will always ensure things get to us).

SJB Finances

We hope that these newsletters have been successful in keeping parents and carers updated about the financial situation facing all schools currently. Budgets are being eroded as the cost of overheads and services rise faster than any increases that schools may see to their income. We have to keep a very close eye on our outgoings and are having to be increasingly imaginative about how to secure funds for activities that are no longer funded through our core budget. Here are some of the things that have been happening on this front:

Meeting with MP Along with a number of other local schools, we wrote to our MP John Woodcock last summer to draw attention to our financial plight. We were invited to a meeting at his office where we were able to give more detail about the impact that a lack of funds is having in our classrooms. We were assured that this information will be fed to an Education Select Committee, to help to paint a fuller picture of schools finances.

School Fundraiser We have taken on a paid fundraiser to organise grant applications for significant projects in school which could not go ahead without external financial aid. This has already proved successful in securing funding for the Missing Link project working closer with families to support pupils.

PTA Activities We would like to thank our wonderful PTA for the huge effort that they put into fundraising for the school - the great success of the Co-op scheme which has raised £7587 for bike shed and playground development; the annual and popular Christmas shopping trip; and school fayres and discos. Please continue to support the PTA by joining them, helping out at events or just by coming along and supporting!



Current Priorities in School

We are a term into another busy year at SJB! Here are our four main priorities for this year:

Wider Curriculum. See earlier in this newsletter!

Improving standards and progress for SEND and Pupil Progress children. This mostly takes the form of tightening classroom practice, but we are also introducing mindfulness across the school, and the Missing Link project.

Better use of data and ICT in school. We want to make sure that we are making the most of opportunities offered by state of the art IT, so that staff and governors are really well informed about how the school is performing.

To increase children's Global, national and local knowledge and understanding. This feeds into many areas of the curriculum. We are trying to set up links with other schools which represent different pupils from different communities - if anyone has personal links with overseas schools or other UK schools which might fit this then we would like to hear from you!