

Autumn term 2023

# Governor update



Welcome to the autumn term update from the Governors. We hope that everyone enjoyed the summer holidays and found time to spend with family and friends.

This is an especially exciting time for the school as we start this year with a full suite of staff. The last academic year was all about planning, and setting some of our foundations - ready for success in the long term.

## Welcome and thanks

We welcome our new Deputy Head and Year 6 teacher, Miss Holly Bishop to the staffing team. We're looking forward to working alongside her.

We also wanted to welcome all new pupils, parents and carers in our new reception year, and where we have new starters in other years.

Thanks also to Jennifer Slater who has volunteered to Chair the PTA, we look forward to hearing all about what the 'new look' PTA team get up to!

We also extend a big thanks to the team of volunteers that have helped us improve our grounds. We hope everyone has noticed how tidy the grounds are looking. The outside of the building, facing the playground, has also been treated for mould.

## School Development Plan

Our School Development Plan outlines the school's priorities and strategies for achieving them. Key priorities are to continue to develop a cohesive curriculum that builds upon prior learning and to increase the impact of middle leaders - especially for the 'foundation subjects' like humanities. Together we have defined our curriculum driver words - 'creative', 'memorable', 'inclusive' and 'ambitious' - these values underpin everything we do.

## Technology and solar panels

The school continues to work with Governor, Simon Gale to upgrade its information technology infrastructure, making the network even safer for children to use. We also plan to invest in new laptops and tablets this year to replace outdated stock.

We've secured £15,000 in grants, along with funds from West Sussex County Council, that will enable us to install solar panels on the school roof during the upcoming half term. Utilising renewable energy will reduce our electricity expenses, freeing up resources for children and supporting our eco-friendly goal of moving closer to a carbon-neutral status. Thanks to Dawn Martin for leading this, and the generosity of our donors and sponsors.

## Staff well-being and engagement

We've implemented new processes that will help us to better understand how staff are feeling, and how we can better support them.

Our new annual staff engagement survey will take place after the October half term, and we're hosting a staff well-being workshop at the second October inset day.

We'll use this new data and insight to develop a well-being and engagement action plan, that we'll monitor and evolve as required. We'll consider staff well-being at every Full Governing Body (FGB) meeting moving forward, and have appointed two staff engagement and well-being Governor representatives; Victoria Baxter and Tom Bouet.

## Changes to the Board of Governors

In the last newsletter we wrote about Peter Bird's departure, after 13 years of service. Alex Nicholson is standing down as Chair after four years in the role. Both of his children have left the school but Alex will remain on the Board and help onboard our new Chair.

Thank you to Alex for all the fantastic work he has done in his time as Chair. Alex has successfully navigated us through unusually challenging times; including Covid and significant leadership changes.

We're pleased to announce that Tom Plowman will be our new Chair of Governors and Rob MacDonald will continue to be Vice-Chair. Thank you to Tom and Rob for stepping into these roles and continuing to support the school.

At the first FGB meeting of the year we reviewed and updated the Governors roles. All details can be found on the [school website](#).

## Website improvements

Towards the end of last term our Link and Website Governor, Victoria Baxter spent time updating and tidying the [school website](#).

Victoria worked with Dawn Martin and Tracey Newbold to tidy the page structure and main menu, as well as simplify and update some of the pages.

This is an ongoing piece of work, with the objectives of :

- making the site easier to use and more 'useful' for parents and carers
- providing all relevant information for external organisations (including Ofsted) in an easy to access and appropriate format
- ensuring the website better reflects our culture and becomes an instrument for showcasing the school to the outside world, specifically potential parents/carers and the local community

These changes are being carried out on a voluntary basis, as we don't currently have budget available to pay for a professional overhaul of the website. So please bear with us while these improvements are implemented.

We welcome any ideas and feedback you may have. These can be sent directly to: [vbaxter@barnsgreen.org.uk](mailto:vbaxter@barnsgreen.org.uk).

*Don't forget that you can contact any of the Governors, at any time if you have any questions or feedback.*

*Our details are on the [website](#) and displayed on the notice board opposite reception.*

You can also email:

[clerk@barnsgreen.org.uk](mailto:clerk@barnsgreen.org.uk) or  
[tplowman@barnsgreen.org.uk](mailto:tplowman@barnsgreen.org.uk)