

# Governor News



**Welcome to the Autumn edition of  
Governor News.**

The purpose of our bi-annual newsletter is to share with you the work that the governors do, on your behalf, to ensure that the learning experiences and educational opportunities provided for your child are the best that they can be.

## The Governing Body



Sarah Wightman  
Chair



Annie Throssell



Annabelle Reid



Andrew Wilson  
Vice Chair

Parent Governor

Foundation Governor

Foundation Governor

Community Governor



Helen Ashe  
Headteacher



Nick Keefe  
Staff Governor



Matt Bowe  
Parent Governor



Jo Woodland  
Community Governor

## Welcome Back!

Welcome back to a new school year! For new parents, I hope you and your children are starting to settle into school life. For existing parents, I hope you and your children are getting used to new teachers and life further up the school. While we all had a break from school over the summer holidays, the teachers were busy putting final touches to a new curriculum that they have now started to teach this school year. The curriculum is at the heart of a school – it determines what is taught in the classrooms but also considers why, when and how lessons are taught.

Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills), the organisation that inspects schools, has this year introduced a new inspection framework that they will use when they visit and grade schools. Ofsted will now make graded judgements on the following four areas: *quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, leadership and management*. The focus of inspections has shifted considerably and a school's curriculum will very much be the emphasis in the 'quality of education' judgement. As governors, we have been impressed with the huge amount of work that the school has put into the curriculum redesign and feel that this work not only strengthens the school's provision for all pupils but is in line with Ofsted's increased expectations in this area.

Recent inspection judgements, along with our networking with other schools, indicate that maintaining an Ofsted 'outstanding' judgement is becoming increasingly more difficult. It is generally accepted that the new inspection schedule is much more robust and challenging for schools than previous ones, making it all the more difficult to achieve the highest grading. Nonetheless, we are proud of all that we do and achieve at Barrow School and are constantly aspiring to meet the top grading, whether an inspection is due or not. As governors, we are convinced that school is striving to ensure that Ofsted will be impressed, should they decide to visit anytime in the near future.

# School Expansion Update

Our plans to expand the school to a full primary continued to move forward over the summer. We are pleased to confirm that planning permission for the new building on our site was granted last week. The project will now go out to contractors for tender this week with a planned project start date of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

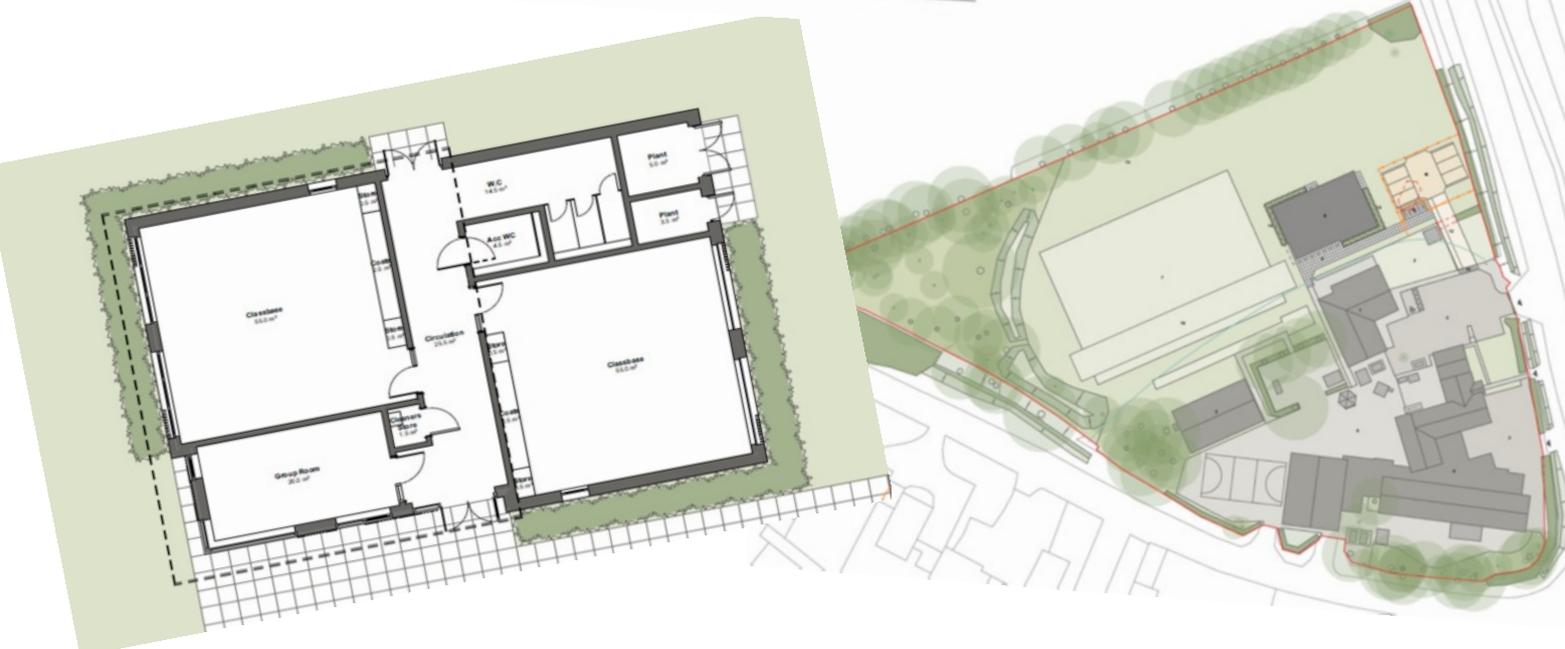
Following a 20 week construction period, work is due to complete week around the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. Handover to the school is scheduled to take place during the week of 29<sup>th</sup> June. This is to allow us time to equip and set up the building during the remainder of Summer Term in good time for welcoming Year 5 at the start of September 2020.

We have continued to work hard in school on our plans for phasing in Year 5 from September 2020; an enormous amount of work has already been done in readiness for extending our excellent provision. We shared details of this work at a recent Year 5 Curriculum Information Event for Year 4 parents. At this meeting, we were able to give a flavour of how the school may be re-organised in the light of our new facilities, an overview of our core curriculum for Upper KS2, along with some details of our intended enrichment programme for the older children. As our ideas develop over the coming months, firm plans will be shared with *all* parents in the new year.

We know parents will be able to appreciate that the process for expanding to a full primary school is quite a lengthy and complicated one! We will share updates with you on any developments, including the progress of planned building works, as and when it becomes available to us. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either a member of the Senior Leadership Team or one of the governors.



## Our Building Plans



# Our Priorities for the Year Ahead

Every year in support of the work of the school, governors set out what they wish to focus upon in terms of monitoring and proving supportive 'challenge' for the schools leadership team. This year in recognition of a number of key changes to both national education policy and school specific projects, we have agreed to concentrate on the following:

- **The newly adopted curriculum for the school and monitoring visits** - The new curriculum recently adopted by the school has a strong focus on building effective learning 'building blocks', carrying key themes throughout the various year groups, and creating memorable educational experiences. Monitoring visits are planned throughout the Autumn term in order to see how the new curriculum has been shaped and developed, and how effectively it is being delivered in the class room.
- **Preparing the school for an Ofsted school inspection** – notices for school inspections by Ofsted are deliberately given at short notice, usually just a few days. This is because they wish to see what is readily in place at the school on any ordinary day in school, and to reduce undue pressure in preparing for the inspection. Schools therefore need to be in constant readiness for an inspection; we will be continuing to support the school with these preparations.
- **Using your feedback to influence and shape how the school communicates with you** – We will shortly be carrying out a short survey asking you about the quality, method and usefulness of the various ways in which the school keeps you up to date with what is happening both in school and specifically how your child is doing at school. *(When you receive the survey we would really appreciate you taking the five minutes to complete it, we value the information you give back to us and will be looking to turn your comments into some positive improvements).*
- **School expansion plans** – increasing the schools provision to cover for a new year 5 group of pupils. As the expansion plans progress we will be supporting the school on getting everything in place to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible.



## Hellos, Goodbyes & Changes

We have sadly had to say goodbye to two of our Governors over the last few months. Greg de Mello and his family moved away over the summer holidays and Ian Smith has resigned his governor role. We would like to thank both Greg and Ian for the time and commitment that they gave. Both Ian and Greg contributed hugely to the governing body over the last few years and we will miss their input as critical friends and their attention to detail.

We welcome a new member to the Governing Body. Matt Bowe joins us as a Parent Governor. Matt lives in the village with his family. He is Dad to Millie in Year 2, James in Reception and baby Georgia, who is not quite yet school-ready. Matt will take over from Ian with responsibility for Health & Safety and will chair our Premises Committee. Welcome Matt!

With the recent changes, we have had to reorganise our roles and responsibilities within the governing body. A huge thank you to Andrew Wilson who has not only stepped up to be Vice-Chair but has also taken on the hugely important role of Safeguarding governor. He continues to chair the Finance Committee and has joined the Premises Committee. Annabelle Reid chairs the Ethos Committee and has governor responsibility for Tracked Groups (these include pupils on Pupil Premium and those who have special educational needs). She also forms part of the school's Wellbeing team.

As a Foundation Governor, Annie Throssell represents the Church's interests and has governor responsibility to monitor the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural) elements of the school's curriculum. Annie is also active in school as part of the Open the Book team. I have taken over as chair of our renamed Curriculum Committee (this was called Teaching & Learning) which is hugely exciting, given the huge focus on curriculum and the curriculum redesign that Barrow has recently undertaken. I continue to sit on the Finance Committee and chair our strategic group, Closing the Gap. If you are interested, there are further details of the governor's roles and responsibilities on the school's website here (<http://barrowcevcprimaryschool.co.uk/our-school/meet-the-governors/>)