



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

Parent Governor



Rev'd Lynda Sebbage

Foundation Governor



Annie Throssell

Foundation Governor



Annabelle Reid

Community Governor



Andrew Wilson
Vice Chair

Community Governor



Helen Ashe

Headteacher



Nick Keefe

Staff Governor



Matt Bowe

Parent Governor



Jo Woodland

Community Governor

Merry Christmas from the Governors

From all the Governors at Barrow we would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy start to 2022. I'm not sure where this year has gone!? 2021 has been pretty challenging for many people and I know the Christmas break from the normal routines will be welcomed by most.

Governance has continued at school this term with all our committee meetings, monitoring and other functions taking place as normal. We are able to confirm and evidence that teaching and learning continues apace at school. In the classrooms it really is business as usual. I think this is worth noting as many recent communications from school to parents have had to focus on guidelines etc and the usual school news has maybe taken a back seat. The updated curriculum is proving popular with children and teaching staff alike. There is an increased focus on a broad range of subjects with science, art, music, French, design technology, PSHE, history and geography all having dedicated time in the week alongside, daily maths, reading and writing. It has been truly delightful talking to both groups about their learning this term – their enthusiasm was contagious. Year 6 - who knew Linnaeus's classification system could be so exciting?!

Thank you to all our parents and carers for their continued support of school – it is genuinely valued and hugely important. And thank you to all our teaching and wider school staff – you are a truly dedicated and hardworking team. With everyone working together, I believe Barrow continues to be a very special primary school. Please look after one another over the holidays and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Sarah Wightman
Chair of Governors

Governor Recruitment

Following a vacancy arising on the school's governing board, we asked for expressions of interest from the local community. We were pleasantly surprised with both the number of people interested, their motivations to become a governor and the life skills that they all would bring to the role. Governors fulfil a crucial function for the school and we also realise that it's a commitment, which is much appreciated. Having spoken to all the people who said they were interested, we have decided to appoint Chris Young to replace Annabelle Compson.

Introducing Our New Governor

Chris Young - Community Governor



My family moved back to my wife's home town of Bury St Edmunds 3 years ago and my two daughters are currently in Reception and Year 1, we also have a third child on the way! They love coming to Barrow Primary and have quickly made lots of friends and got themselves involved in numerous opportunities that the school has to offer.

I work at King Edward VI School as a teacher of PE and also Science. I have an additional pastoral role as one of the Heads of College. Before we moved to Bury I worked in inner London secondary schools in middle and senior leadership positions. When not at work I enjoy playing tennis at Risbygate Tennis Club and having grown up in Wolverhampton, I follow the ups and downs of the city's football team - Wolves!

I have a strong belief that schools should be, and are, at the centre of the community they serve. I am excited to have the opportunity to help with this in some way through being on the governing board

A Deep Dive Into Reading

For this term's governor monitoring, I took an in-depth look at the school's approach to teaching reading. Matt Bowe and I spoke to the Mrs Dean, English Subject Lead (and the lady responsible for the awesome new school library) and Mrs Fairweather, as well as pupils from Years 1 and 5.

I always feel lucky to get a behind the scenes look at teaching strategies and to see how these approaches benefit the children. Whilst reading has always taken centre stage at Barrow, this year the school has taken a slightly new approach to the subject which is already proving itself to be successful with staff and pupils. A heavy focus on reading skills is present not only in the younger years but right up to Year 6. KS2's now daily reading and writing lessons put more focus on skills that help them with challenging reading concepts, such as inference and prediction. This allows them to tackle more sophisticated texts with confidence.

I was also happy to see that this reading approach is reducing barriers for children with additional needs, allowing them to access texts that may previously felt out of reach.

The children love their weekly visits to the library when they can choose whichever book they like, however weird or wonderful, to foster their love of turning the page. The only improvement they suggested was the addition of hot chocolate during their time there!

Annabelle Reid



Diversity Parent Forum

It was great to meet parents face to face last half term to discuss the impact of our recent work on diversity - thanks also to Mrs Crack for her wonderful cakes! It is so helpful for families to share their perspective on how we as a school communicate and teach around new areas. We were pleased to share the new tools and information that we are drawing upon as a school, and celebrate the world that has come from it. We have taken many helpful comments from our families, and are using them to shape our plans for 2022. This includes looking at using a new tool called 'Global Neighbours' from Christian Aid. There will be another parent forum in Spring 2022 to further develop plans and ideas together.

Curriculum Survey Dec 21 - Feedback from Parents



Thank you to all of our parents who took the time to respond to the recent curriculum survey on ParentMail. Your views are important to us and will help us to continue to improve our provision and information sharing with our families.

Summary of feedback:

- Parents who responded indicated that they are aware of the majority of different subjects included within our curriculum. There are, however, some subjects parents indicated that they are less aware were being taught; these included Design Technology, Modern Foreign Languages and Computing.
- The vast majority of respondents told us that their child/ren sometimes come home and talk enthusiastically about what they have learnt in school. **We were pleased that 65% of parents said that this happened most or all of the time.**
- We were delighted that parents responded in an overwhelmingly positive way to the question 'My child enjoys the majority of subjects being taught' - **93% agreed with this statement, with 43% strongly agreeing.**
- The majority of parents who responded were aware of the changes we have made to our curriculum to teach subject based units rather than themed topics. **We are pleased that 65% said that they are very aware of our recent curriculum re-organisation.**
- Parents told us that, as a result of the increased emphasis on teaching subject-specific vocabulary, **55% had noticed an increase in new words being used in everyday conversations with their child most or all of the time.** We are encouraged that a further 40% said that this happened some of the time.
- It was good to hear that **97% of parents who responded know where to access information about our curriculum.**



71 responses were received in total.