



Governor News

**Welcome to the Summer 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



John Gadd

Community Governor



Chris Young

Community Governor



Andrew Wilson
Vice Chair

Community Governor



Helen Ashe

Headteacher



Nick Keefe

Staff Governor



Matt Bowe

Parent Governor



Jo Woodland

Foundation Governor

Thank You from the Governing Body

Recently 'Retired' Governor - Annie Throssell

We would like to take this opportunity to say a warm 'thank you', on behalf of the governing body and the whole school community, for the support Annie Throssell has given to the school over the past eight years. Having served two four-year terms as governor, Annie has decided that it's time to focus on other things, and we wish her well. She has brought, wisdom, a passion for the school...and an infectious sense of fun to all our Governor activities and she'll be very much missed. If you have had the chance to spend some time with her, you'll know how quick witted and funny she is, lightening any activity or challenge. Whilst Annie has resigned as a school Governor, she will still be very much involved in the life of the school life.

Friends of Barrow School

The governors would like to say a huge thank you to the wonderful volunteers who make up our **Friends of Barrow School (FOBS) committee**. It has been difficult over the last couple of years for them to organise their fundraising activities and events but they are back now with a vengeance! All of these events raise very welcome funds to be spent in school on 'extras' to enhance the provision that we offer to the children. FOBS members help school decide how this money should be spent: most recently funds have been spend on additional library books and musical instruments. Also, of course, a heartfelt thank you to parents and carers who support the FOBS events – your contributions really are valued!

Governor Recruitment

We are delighted to welcome 2 new governors to our governing body. Chris Young and John Gadd have both recently joined us as Community Governors. Chris lives locally and teaches at King Edwards school in Bury St Edmunds and has 2 daughters at Barrow. John lives in the village and is a retired secondary school modern languages teacher. We have been impressed with Chris and John's enthusiasm and motivation to work on governance with us at school.

Welcome to them both!

Introducing Our New Governor



John Gadd - Community Governor



My name is John Gadd and I am one of the new governors at Barrow school. I worked in secondary schools for over 30 years in Greater Manchester, teaching modern foreign languages, mostly German, to GCSE and A Level. As a member of the school's leadership team, I was involved with staff welfare, development and training and worked with Manchester Metropolitan and Huddersfield Universities in the mentoring of trainee teachers. I can bring an awareness of the elements that go towards making the school a successful and enjoyable learning environment for the pupils at Barrow. I have not been in the area long, but love the contrast between this and the Yorkshire hills where I used to live. It make exploring the villages by bike a lot easier!

Governor Monitoring - Spring Term 2022

It was fantastic to be able to get back into school to complete our governor monitoring last term. We looked at a range of areas – I monitored the teaching of Science on a Learning Walk and Book Study with our Science Lead, Mr Hale, Andrew & John spoke with pupils to get their thoughts and opinions on their PSHE lessons and Chris reviewed some of the provision offered by school for pupils with Special Educational Needs.



We were also joined by pupils from year 6, including the Head Boy, Girl and Deputy Head Girl, at our Full Governing Body meeting. These senior pupils had undertaken some pupils perceptions around behaviour with younger pupils in the school and they shared their finding with us. It was very interesting to hear what they had found out! We feel our 'in-school' monitoring is much more effective and enjoyable - thank you to staff and pupils alike for making us feel so welcome.

Sarah Wightman - Chair of School Improvement Committee

School Places at Barrow



We are delighted that the school remains a popular choice amongst parents locally. It is anticipated that we will be at capacity in most year groups from September 2022, with upwards of 205 children on roll. Places for our Reception in September 2022 intake were heavily oversubscribed and there is now a waiting list. The majority of the children offered a place for September 2022 live within the village or the school's catchment area. All admissions to Barrow Primary School are dealt with via Suffolk Local Authority Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. Further information can be found at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-places/>

Update on the School's Finances

In the Charlie Mackesy book 'The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse' there's a quote that seems apt in terms of the school's finances.

"What's the best thing you've learned about storms?"

"That they end" said the Horse.

As things start to return to the familiar, the school's finances are also looking a little healthier than they looked this time last year. One reason being that during 2020 and 2021 the school had faced the double whammy of additional costs associated with the pandemic and reduced income.

It's therefore pleasing to report that the school has received additional income from a variety of sources, one being additional Local Authority (LA) funding. This was because the school was able to make the case that following the school's expansion (years 5 and 6) and the decision to close local middle schools, the school's actual pupil numbers was greater than had been original projected.

One of the key questions we are always asking ourselves is "How effectively are we spending the school's money?". The approach we take in trying to answer this question is to look at a range of techniques that include: evidence of 'what works', a tiered approach to spending...where can we make the biggest impact, and recruitment and retention of employees.

Having a healthier financial position has given the school slightly more wiggle room to bolster its spending in the areas that will have the greatest impact.

These have included:

- **Quality of education** - materials that support and bolster the breadth and depth of the curriculum.
- **Targeted support**
- **Creating safe and positive learning spaces** - physical environment improvements (for example, improved lighting and a new dedicated library space)
- **Keeping everyone safe** - new systems that provide additional assurance surrounding safeguarding.

If I was to continue with the storm analogy, whilst all the above are the warming rays of sunshine, the greyer clouds that have appeared on the horizon as the ones facing most households at the moment, those of spiralling energy costs and things costing more due to inflationary pressures. In our budgeting discussions that took place a couple of months ago (March 2022), for the year ahead, we have tried as far as we are able to factor these in to our financial planning.

Andrew Wilson - Chair of Resources Committee