



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



John Gadd

Community Governor



Chris Young

Community Governor



Andrew Wilson
Vice Chair

Local Authority Governor



Helen Ashe

Headteacher



Nick Keefe

Staff Governor



Matt Bowe

Parent Governor



Jo Woodland

Foundation Governor

School Finances....see the next step and take that!

Everywhere we look in the national news recently there are stories about schools struggling in the face of budgetary pressures due to inflationary increases, rising fuel costs, and unfunded additional salary increases. We know we are not alone when it comes to balancing *'what we have to spend'* and *'what we need to spend'*. The continual juggling between these two considerations seems even more energetic over the last few months. In the story *'The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse'* by Charlie Mackesy *"I can't see a way through," said the boy, "Can you see the next step?"... "just take that" said the horse.* In terms of the school's finances, our way of navigating a route through the recent financial storms has been to take an approach like the one suggested by the horse... *'see the next step...and take that'*

Barrow's school finances are fortunately in a slightly better position than the school's featured in the main headline news. This is because historically we've always looked to create a little wiggle room by building up our financial reserves. Reserves, we have had to dig into again this year. In addition to paying for the increased running costs of the school, we have also remained focussed on spending on items that support improvements to the quality of the educational experience and teaching. We have therefore spent money on the following:

- **Broadening the range of teaching materials to support the quality of teaching** - materials that support and bolster the breadth and depth of the curriculum. For example the purchase of new musical equipment, and design and technology resources.
- **Targeted support**
- **Keeping everyone safe** - new systems that provide additional assurance surrounding safeguarding.

Our Latest School Data - Academic Year 2021/22

Feedback to parents on school data

Sometimes we aren't great at shouting about what goes well! I'm not sure if you saw how the school performed last year in the 2022 statutory assessments that must be completed but the results really are worth a bit of a shout!!
Read on.....

EYFS End of Year Outcomes (end of reception)

Children are assessed as having achieved a good level of development (GLD) or not. GLD is achieving expected age-related progress in personal and social, communication, physical skills, literacy and maths.

70% of Barrow pupils achieved a GLD. (The national average was 65%)

More Barrow pupils meet age expected development at the end of reception than the national average.

More Barrow pupils meet the phonics check threshold in year 1 than the national average.

Phonics check (in year 1)

Children must achieve a threshold score of 32.

97% of Barrow pupils achieved the threshold score. (The national average was 76%)

End of KS1 Outcomes (end of year 2)

End of Year 2 results – whole cohort (29 children)		2022	
		School	National
% working at expected level	Reading	76	67
	Writing	66	58
	Maths	79	68
% exceeding expected level	Reading	34	18
	Writing	24	8
	Maths	31	15

More Barrow pupils are working at expected level and exceeding expected level in all subjects at the end of year 2 than the national average.

End of KS2 Outcomes (end of year 6)

End of Year 6 results – whole cohort (15 children)		2022	
		School	National
% working at expected level	Reading	80	74
	Writing	73	69
	GPS	73	72
	Maths	87	71
% exceeding expected level	Reading	53	(no data)
	Writing	27	(no data)
	GPS	47	(no data)
	Maths	53	(no data)

More Barrow pupils are working at expected level in all subjects at the end of year 6 than the national average and a good % are exceeding expected level.

The Barrow ambition: Clearly our ambition is to have all children meeting the expected level at each check although this isn't always realistic. However, the Barrow staff are always striving to get as close to this as possible.

School Site Upgrades

Over the summer break the school saw some pretty big improvements being made. Over half of the roof on the old school building was stripped and re-slatted to ensure the school stays watertight for many years to come. The canopy outside of the reception classroom was fully rebuilt with seating and sides added to give our littlest ones a fabulous outdoor space. We must also thank Mr Keefe for giving up his time over the summer to refurbish the playhouse in the reception playground.

Unfortunately the work never stops and we are currently looking for a new air circulation system for the swimming pool and re-lining part of the ceiling. The downsides of having such a great facility to use is that it needs constant maintenance. Luckily the school has Mark Grovesmith as our Site Manager; his knowledge and ability to get things done means we all get to enjoy a safe, secure and reliable school.

Matt Bowe



Man
to

Snapshot of Governor Monitoring - Autumn Term

Pupil Wellbeing

In November I had the opportunity to talk to Year 6 about pupil well-being - how they felt in school, how they felt about school and their relationships with their peer group. This is a repeat of what I did with last year's year 6 before they moved up to Secondary school. It was encouraging to see the same things that I saw in June.

The two groups of pupils I met spoke with great confidence and were able to articulate their ideas and feelings very clearly. They clearly enjoy being in Barrow school and felt they were working in a secure and stimulating environment. They were not reticent in mentioning things they felt could be improved. One group raised some issues about playtime, especially if the conditions were wet outside, and put forward suggestions as to how the situation could be improved. The second group displayed a very strong sense of justice and were critical of any behaviour that they felt let their class down. They seemed to have taken on the idea that there is a correct way to behave in school and felt that all pupils should aspire to a high standard. I discussed their views with Mrs Ashe before I left. This was another visit where I came away with a very, very positive impression.

John Gadd

Maths Across the School

It was a pleasure to come in to school with my fellow governor Matt, to see maths across the school. We've talked in our meetings about the way maths is delivered so it was great to have the opportunity to see it in action! When we arrived, the children were returning from break refreshed and ready to talk numbers. Maths activities take place across the school at this time so we were able to see a range of different classes tackling the theme of multiplication in their age specific way. Year 1 were working on automaticity of numbers and subitising whilst Year 2 were looking at fractions and multiples of different numbers. Year 5 were doing some brilliant work using multiplication tables and Year 6 were looking at how multiplication questions may be asked in an assessment and exam technique to answer them successfully.

It was fantastic to see how embedded maths is in the school at this time of day. Being able to visit the different classes we could clearly see how the skills learnt in the lower years are developed over time to what we saw with year 5 and 6. We were blown away by the level of maths vocabulary and how comfortable and confident children were in using it. I feel very lucky to be able to come in and see the amazing learning environment and culture at Barrow School. Thank you for having us in your lessons and talking to us!

Chris Young

Parent Governor Election

Parent governors are elected for a 4 year term and as one of Barrow's parent governors my term is nearly up! This means that in January next year, Mrs Ashe will be writing to parents, giving more information on the role of a parent governor and inviting interested parents to put forward a nomination.

In all schools governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

And experience shows that there are certain attributes which are needed in a good governor:

- a strong commitment to the role and to improving outcomes for all children,
- the inquisitiveness to question and analyse, and
- the willingness to learn.

I am currently the chair of governors, having taken on this role in April 2018. I would love to continue! My daughter, Emily is currently in year 5 and, ideally, I would at least like to remain on the governing body until Emily leaves Barrow for secondary school. If parents would be happy for me to continue then fantastic. However, if parents feel that it is time for a change then please have a think about putting forward a nomination early next year. If anyone has any questions about what being a governor involves then please contact us through the School Office (admin@barrow.suffolk.sch.uk).

Sarah Wightman
Chair of Governors



Teaching School Update

Since becoming a Teaching School in 2012, Barrow CEVC Primary School has provided School to School Support to around 60 schools across the region. In most schools, the focus has been on improving the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, in order to improve educational experiences and outcomes for children. We are proud to have received recent feedback from a headteacher who said that the support they had received had had 'an amazingly positive impact'.

ConnectED has also provided a broad range of high-quality professional training. Since 2020, over 1000 teaching staff a year, from 270 schools across Suffolk and East Anglia, have booked onto our courses. Evaluation feedback has been consistently positive – last year, 98% of those who attended and completed a questionnaire said that the training would have a positive impact on their future practice.

Barrow CEVC Primary School ceased to be a designated teaching school when the larger Teaching School Hubs began operating at the start of the 2021/22 academic year. At this point, all funding from the DfE for ConnectED ceased. We continued operating last year under the name ConnectED@Barrow in the hope that some other sources of funding might be found, however, this has not proved to be the case. So, reluctantly, Barrow governors have taken the decision to 'close' ConnectED@Barrow at the end of December 2022.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the Barrow staff for their support for ConnectED over the years. Without the dedication, skills, knowledge and willingness to help others of the Barrow staff team this would not have been possible. And much of this support was given outside of the teacher's normal working hours. We are deeply grateful for, and appreciative of, the way in which they have given so generously of their time and expertise to help other teachers and schools to develop and improve.