

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



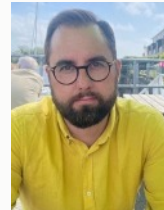
Helen Ashe

Headteacher



Nick Keefe

Staff Governor



Sam Cheetham

Parent Governor



Jo Woodland

Foundation Governor

Christmas Wishes

As another year comes to its close, we can look back over 2023 and be very proud of our children at Barrow School. They have worked so hard and have been such a joy to be amongst whether at school assemblies, Open the Book, church services and various school activities. In September our Creation Trail round the churchyard on a balmy autumn morning was one of those special occasions with lots of learning but also plenty of happy

laughter too. The bond between the school and church has really strengthened during this time and we have lots more exciting initiatives coming up for 2024 which we are really looking forward to.

For Christmas our Churches in Barrow and surrounding villages have plenty to offer in the way of services that are designed for families – from tree decorating to crib services. And on 6th January we have an Epiphany Party in Barrow Village Hall in the afternoon. You are all very warmly invited to come along and join in the fun!

So as we approach this special time of Christmas when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, may I wish you his peace and his joy, and may Christ's love and blessings surround and protect you and all whom you love.

Happy Christmas!

Rev'd Lynda

Church School Inspection

As a church school Barrow is periodically inspected not only by Ofsted but also by the Church of England under their SIAMS inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). We last had a SIAMS inspection in 2016 and we received an Outstanding inspection grade. Barrow is due to be inspected again during this school year under a new 2023 SIAMS inspection framework. The inspection will look to evaluate whether or not Barrow is living up to its foundation as a Church school, and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Inspectors now only make one of two judgements, which are effectively a pass or a 'needs to do better'.

Barrow's Beliefs and Value subject leader is Mrs Bush who works closely with Reverend Lynda and our supportive local Church team. Mrs Bush is working hard to ensure that any visiting inspectors will be able to clearly see that a Christian vision and Christian values are embedded in our school ethos and curriculum and can be seen throughout school in the activities that we do. The governors would like to thank Mrs Bush for all her commitment and hard work to Barrow Primary - Mrs Bush only works 1 day a week, but manages to contribute immensely to the work of the school.

You can find out more about SIAMs inspections here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/siams-inspections>

Sarah Wightman
Chair of Governors



Our New Governor - Sam Cheetham

I feel very privileged to have been elected to the position of Parent Governor in July 2023. I have two children at Barrow Primary, Evangeline in Year 3, and Solomon in Reception. I'm a Chartered Engineering Manager within the food manufacturing industry. In addition to my direct role, I take great pride in the work I do to support the business, and all those within it, as an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion advocate and mental health first-aider.

In my professional life I am responsible for the safety of my colleagues and the food we produce, major capital infrastructure projects, and regional strategic developments.

I hope to combine my professional competence and passion for STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), with the commitment of my time and energy to ensure that I can support the governing board in the ongoing excellence of Barrow Primary School.

Sam Cheetham

Snapshot of Governor Monitoring - Autumn Term

In November Sam and I came in to school to see the exciting changes in PE following Mr Daniels joining us in September. It was clear to see the huge impact that having a PE specialist delivering lessons, extra curricular activities and competitions is having in raising the profile and provision of the subject in the school.

It was lovely to see Mr Daniels' passion for the PE and how much students are benefitting from this. We watched students thoroughly enjoying a gymnastics lesson and using high level subject specific vocabulary very comfortably. We met with a group of students from different classes who spoke of their enjoyment of PE lessons, how they have increased their participation in the expanded extra curricular PE offer and how much they have got from taking part in sporting competitions against other local schools.

Thank you to those who we watched and spoke to!

Chris Young

Amplifying Student Voices: the role that 'pupil voice' plays within school

As we head towards Christmas, some of the traditions that we associate with the festive period come to the fore. Stories, films, pantomimes, and family traditions old and new. For me, Charles Dickens' timeless classic, 'A Christmas Carol,' always manages to find its way into my festive moments. Towards the story's conclusion, Tiny Tim finds his voice, expressing a shift in his and the Cratchits' fortunes, as well as a change of hearts in others.

A 'voice heard', as with Tiny Tim's, is central to 'Pupils' voice' which is a phrase used within schools whereby the children in the school can have their say on broader school issues and be influential when it comes to decisions that are being made. As governors, we use the feedback from the children to monitor progress, to test our understanding and to improve life within the school more generally.

There have been several examples recently where we've explored with the children (and involving the senior pupils), what they've found is working particularly well, what's frustrating, and what changes could be made to improve their experiences within school. A recent pupil survey delved into lunch enjoyment, preferred lunch locations, two words to describe their lunch experience and suggestions for improvement. Of all the questions, the answers to these last two questions proved to be the most insightful and impactful in influencing changes.

Out of the 91 survey responses, I've selected three random but representative answers to the 'two words' question:

Fun and noisy Busy and loud Loud and fun

These responses reflect a prevailing theme among all surveyed students around the quality of the spaces. I think you'll see a recurrence of sentiments.

In response to the feedback, discussed during our recent Governor's meeting, the school are currently trialling several changes, these are:

- **More dining options** – for Years Two to Six, lunch can now be eaten in their classroom.
- **Making best use of the Hall** – the hall is now dedicated to Reception and Year One
- **Creating comfortable spaces** - background music is now played within many of the classrooms.
- **Following up...are the changes working?** – Senior pupils have been conducting informal check-ins to gauge progress and assess student satisfaction with the new changes.

It's gratifying to share that the feedback regarding the changes has been overwhelmingly positive. Tiny Tim was pivotal in the story 'A Christmas Carol' and we intend for the children at Barrow to continually play a valued and influential role in shaping their own school story.

Andrew Wilson
Vice Chair of Governors

Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are both vital to the smooth running of a school. Attendance at Barrow is good, above local and national averages. So a warm thank you to you, the parents, for achieving these figures. Regular attendance ensures a smooth learning process with no gaps, allowing children to build on their previous knowledge and progress to new skills. Poor attendance disrupts learning for the individual, the class and the teacher. So well done! Even lateness is disruptive, causing problems for the office, the class that's disturbed and of course, the individual child. So thanks again to the parents who get their children to school on time. It's not always an easy task but your continued effort is appreciated. Well done. Keep it up.

John Gadd