



# 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

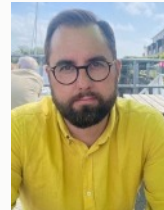
Local Authority Governor



Helen Ashe  
Headteacher



Nick Keefe  
Staff Governor



Sam Cheetham  
Parent Governor



Jo Woodland  
Foundation Governor

## Farewell from Reverend Lynda

Dear friends

It is with a very sad heart that I will be saying goodbye to everyone in October. I am heading off over the border to Essex where I am taking up a new role as a Team Vicar in the Saffron Walden area, and in particular the two delightful villages of Debden and Wimbish. The change has been necessary as I need to be closer to my now elderly parents who live close by, and who now need extra support and help; so for me, life is going round in full circle as I head back to the environment where I grew up as a child. I am pleased that I have a Church of England school in one of my villages – this is particularly important as I thoroughly enjoy working alongside children and have found that to have been one of the key highlights during my time in the Barrow Benefice. Seeing the children thrive and learn, and joining in with them in the various activities we undertake as a church, has been immensely rewarding and I do pray that they will all go on to achieve their dreams and ambitions.

Not only will I miss the communities in our benefice, and the support I have been given, but I shall also miss the teachers, governors and all the parents I have had the privilege to come to know over the last 4 ½ years. I have been so impressed by the way in which we all pulled together in those early days when we were struggling through the challenges of Covid and how well the children have turned out to be, despite those difficult times – proof of what a resilient community the school and our villages are.

I shall remember you all in my prayers and Barrow School will forever remain in my heart as a very special and joyous place that I was blessed to be part of.

With every blessing,

Rev'd Lynda

## Message from the Chair of Governors

Another school year has flown by! As Governors we see the school continue to strive for the very best for all of its pupils. Improvement is continuously under way - sometimes only small things are being tweaked but we see all the changes adding up to impact positively on pupils' development and growth. An Ofsted visit has loomed over the school all year, which has been hugely stressful for staff. However, with my positive hat on, as each week passes I just see that there will be more and more to show off to the inspectors when they finally come.

There are unfortunately some goodbyes this Summer: sadly Reverend Lynda is moving out of the Parish and the school will therefore lose her both as our local vicar and as a governor. Reverend Lynda has made an enormous contribution to the school over the last few years and has helped to strengthen the school's links with both the church and the local community. We thank her for her time and the energy she brought to the Parish and wish her all the very best in her new location and role. We look forward to welcoming a new vicar in the next few months and will endeavour to continue the great work that Lynda has been doing. We also echo Mrs Ashe's farewells and thank you to both Mrs Pearce and Ms Al-Aride and wish them well in their new roles.

Our youngest child also leaves Barrow this year, moving on with her classmates to start her secondary education. She's well-prepared and ready for this next step and I am hugely grateful that she has had such a wonderful, rich start to her schooling in such a warm and caring village primary school. Thank you Barrow!

Finally I would like to thank you all: the parents, carers and the wider school community. With parental and community support a school will always be able to achieve more and we are hugely grateful for the support you give and the contributions you make to Barrow school. This genuinely does have a noticeable, positive impact on the work of the school.

On behalf of the governors I would like to wish you all a lovely Summer break. We look forward to seeing you all in September.

**Sarah Wightman**  
**Chair of Governors**

## Personal Development Pupil Perceptions

I met with a group of Yr 5 and 6 pupils to discuss the topic of personal development. It was fantastic to hear the pupils talk so enthusiastically about how the school has supported their personal development and growth. The group highlighted how each year group is provided with different opportunities to take on responsibility for a task e.g. Job Squads, running the tuck shop and subject ambassadors.

The highlight of the visit for me, was hearing from the pupils about how they are supported for progression through the school years. The year 5 pupils were excited to become the oldest children in school and are very much looking forward to becoming Reception Buddies to new pupils in September! For the year 6 pupils, they all spoke so confidently about being ready for the step up to high school, and how so many of the Barrow team had supported them in preparing for the next phase of their education.

**Sam Cheetham**

## Outdoor Play Provision

During the course of the academic year significant changes were made to the lunchtime arrangements. Based on the belief that "play is not what children do between learning," more guided activities were introduced. The outdoor space has been zoned for different activities, new equipment purchased with support from FOBS and money raised by the pupils' Snack Shack. The staff even created Barrow beach. On my visit the pupils were all busily engaged in a variety of activities, playing and working purposefully together. The benefits have been focused play, calmer pupils in the afternoon, fewer incidents for the lunchtime supervisors to deal with and happier pupils. The idea originated from an observation at another school. As usual the Barrow staff took it on, sought advice, adapted it to meet their needs and requirements and put it into operation. It is an excellent, successful innovation and the staff are to be congratulated on its introduction.

**John Gadd**

## Faster, Higher, Stronger.....Together

As we approach the start of the Paris Olympics later this month, the Olympic motto—"Faster, Higher, Stronger—Together"—feels most apt. It has been 12 months since we, as a governing body, decided to invest in a sports specialist for our school, and the positive impact on our students and their overall school experience has been remarkable.

The presence of our sports specialist has transformed our approach to physical education. According to a recent survey by Sport England published in December 2023, children and young people who have a positive attitude towards sports and physical activity are more likely to remain physically active. This reinforces the importance of fostering a love for physical activity.

If a picture is worth a thousand words; these images vividly capture the tremendous impact that the enhanced programme is making.

### The benefits for the children

- o **Expert Guidance and Instruction:** Helping each child develop their skills and reach their potential.
- o **Discovering Activities for Everyone:** Ensuring every student finds an activity they enjoy.
- o **Fun and Physical Health:** Promoting physical health and well-being, developing healthy habits that can last a lifetime. A Women In Sport survey in 2022 found that over 1 million girls in the UK lose interest in sports as teenagers—our program aims to reverse this trend.
- o **Enhancing Social Skills and Teamwork:** These experiences not only enhance social development but also prepare students for future success in diverse group settings.
- o **Celebrating Diversity:** Fostering an environment where differences are celebrated, and every student feels welcomed, respected, supported, and valued.



In addition to the positive impact for the children, the presence of a PE specialist has significantly enhanced the overall quality of learning at Barrow. These changes have freed up valuable time for subject leads, allowing them to focus more on monitoring and tracking subject development plans. It has also increased opportunities for 'pupil voice' through subject ambassadors, who actively support the subject leads.

The decision to invest in a sports specialist has proven to be 'money well spent' from both the teachers and children's perspectives. We hope you have also noticed the difference in your child's enthusiasm for physical activities and their broader interest in an expansive range of sports.

### Final thoughts!

A memorable moment from the last Olympics occurred when high jumpers Gianmarco Tamberi and Mutaz Barshim, tied at the same height, realised they could share the gold medal rather than compete in a 'jump-off.' Their decision to share the victory is a powerful example of sportsmanship and camaraderie. If you've yet to see it, it's definitely worth watching.

Having a PE specialist within our school feels like a shared 'gold' for our children and their overall learning experiences.

**Andrew Wilson**  
Vice Chair of Governors

