



Barnes Farm
Junior School

GOVERNOR NEWS

Issue 4, Autumn 2016

As we near the end of 2016 the Governors would like to again share our perspective on the progress made by the school and all the staff through the whole year

The Single Plan – The Single Plan has been updated since the start of term and is proving valuable in focusing the priorities and allowing the Governors to challenge the school more effectively through understanding the expected impact of any changes being made.

This term the Governors have made several visits to the school to judge the progress being made and also look at some aspects that haven't been topics for visits previously. The areas covered were:

- Maths
- Safeguarding
- Single Plan: Improving Marking and Feedback
- ICT (first time)
- Lunchtime/Playground including the new Arena (first time)
- Pupil Premium

After each visit we provide a report to the school covering observations made and any recommendations. Governors are not allowed to judge teachers teaching but this doesn't mean we can't make valuable commentary on many aspects of the school.

In the last Governor Newsletter we reported on the successful attainment results. At the time we couldn't report on progress as the data wasn't out but we have now seen this. The SATs data is difficult to analyse due to the significant changes made by the Government from last year to this year. In summary, levels of attainment were significantly above the local and national average. The progress made by pupils from Y2 to Y6 was average in Reading and below average in Writing and Maths under these new measures. Nationally, progress has seen a very wide spread so really it will only be sensible to draw any conclusions from the data next year, assuming the Government doesn't change things again!

On Tuesday 6th December, Steve Mellors (Mid Essex Schools Excellence Commissioner) conducted a morning 'learning walk' with the Head where the



provision in Y4-Y6 (Y3 were having their PPA) was observed. Steve relayed how, in his view, the teaching profile in the school continues to be on an upward trajectory with an increasing number of outstanding aspects. Provision is increasingly consistent across the year groups. His observations this term have been very positive with lessons demonstrating a far greater linking with what has previously occurred or where pupils are heading.

LA Review – We reached a significant milestone with the LA during this term. The Primary Improvement Board, which was established on the following the OFSTED inspection, held its final meeting and was formally closed.

This was on the back of both improvements observed by Steve Mellors and the evidence that the Governors were taking better control and challenging the school more effectively.

The future of Barnes Farm Schools (update) – following the March Governor newsletter the Government reversed the decision to force all schools to become academies by 2020. It is clear, however, that the underlying principle in the original decision is still strongly held. To this end the Governors agreed that the best course of action was for us to gain more knowledge of what becoming an academy would mean. As such we have attended training and continue to engage in productive dialogue with our local schools.

Governing Body Membership – We are at full strength with a wide variety of expertise and experience to augment our existing skillset. We also welcomed Kerry Wood as the new parent Governor to our last Full Governing Body meeting.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and offer our continued thanks to the staff, governors and parents for their ongoing support and commitment to driving our school forwards.

Steven Wade – Vice Chair