



St John's Green Primary School

Learn to Live, Live to Learn

Headteacher Mr Simon Billings
Deputy Headteacher Mrs Tina Bourne
Assistant Headteacher Mrs Fiona Bullivant
Assistant Headteacher Mrs Clare Skinner

We 
Maths



We are all
writers ... 

We are growing
our learning 

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Chair of Governors Annual Report to Parents 2018-2019 Summary

October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we settle into this academic year, I would like to welcome all new members to our St John's Green community; children, parents and staff, and say welcome back to everyone else. As Chair of Governors part of my role is to keep you all informed about what is going on with the school, and so I am writing you this letter to summarise the previous year, and to let you know some of the things coming this year.

I became Chair of Governors in 2017, and was re-elected this year at our Full Governors Meeting in September, where the Governors met, along with the senior management team and class teachers, to decide upon this year's school development priorities and plan the school's strategic direction for the year ahead. There are three main responsibilities for school governing bodies; to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, to hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and to oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent. We, as Governors, come in and visit the school and get involved in school life; attending assemblies, plays and other school functions, as well as checking on areas such as policies, safeguarding and expenditure. We are each linked to a different year group, visiting our classes regularly, and meeting with class teachers to discuss class performance data, where we look at different groups of children and discuss all the strategies being utilised to help all groups of children reach their potential. Our primary focus at St John's Green is to ensure that all children have a rich and varied educational experience. With this in mind, our focus for the curriculum for the 2019/2020 academic year will be to heighten the children's experiences across the foundation subjects, and to seek to ensure that children show at least a years progress for a years teaching.

Our successes

Last year was a very busy and successful year for St. John's Green School; our foundation, year 2 and year 6 children did incredibly well in the government assessments and our children benefitted from many wonderful, important, educational experiences, such as Forest School, swimming for key stage 2, residential trips away, subject theme weeks, visits from authors and the military band, to name but a few.

As well as obtaining good SATs and EYFS results, we are very proud to be a Rights Respecting School, and last year we obtained the silver standard of the UNICEF rights of the child. Research shows that children in Rights Respecting Schools feel happier, safe and confident. We have found this has had a very powerful effect on our children, and this year we are starting to work towards becoming a gold standard school, embedding these values through every aspect of school life.

We owe a lot of our academic successes to the visible learning program. Visible Learning is a professional development program that explores how evidence can be used to create innovation in the learning environment. It provides a coherent framework to up-skill a whole school, by using the largest ever evidence based research involving millions of students, focusing upon what actually works best in schools to improve learning. Last year we focused on integrating the learning dispositions with our learning powers, personified by our learning super heroes; these are now the focus of the awards assemblies and all the children are familiar with the characters and what they stand for. Work has already started to introduce these characters, and the insights to learning they encourage, to our new foundation children. Alongside this each class have created a Learning Pit in their classrooms and we will continue to host our child centric children's (parents) evenings.

Technology and communication

The school is very aware of the importance of modern technology and communication. We are moving forward, both with the way we communicate to parents (introducing a text messaging system and sending newsletters via email) and ensuring our

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5 Circular Road East
Colchester
CO2 7SZ



St John's Green Town Site (Years 2, 3, 4)
St John's Green
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CO2 7HE

children are safe online, having recently had the “2 Johns” in to talk to children and parents. We are very appreciative to all parents who signed up to eschools to receive communications from the school; in these money conscious times this allows us to effectively communicate with you without having to pay for SMS messages. We feel regular communication is key to keeping parents informed, and each year group now has their own newsletter focusing on letting you know what your children have been learning/will be learning each week.

Collaboration in education

In order to continue to provide the best quality education, a school cannot work in isolation. Parents play a pivotal role, and we would like to thank you all for the support you give your children and the whole school by attending events, fundraising, and helping in many other ways. We are very lucky to have a very active and enthusiastic PTA, who help to build and strengthen our school community, and raise money to enrich the opportunities the school can offer the children. Through their hard work and commitment the PTA achieved charity status this year, which means the school can now earn even more revenue from all money raised. Our PTA is very busy this term, with a bingo night for parents coming up on the 8th November, and the Christmas Fair just three weeks later on the 29th November. Please do come along and support them (I'll hopefully see you there) and if you would like to be kept more informed or perhaps become involved yourself, check out their Facebook page 'St John's Green PTA'.

St John's Green has been part of a consortium of primary schools in Colchester for many years. The benefit of this is that the schools all work together to support each other, sharing ideas and utilising and sharing skills within the group. This involves the head teachers meeting regularly, a school business managers group, Governors getting together from time to time, and teachers moderating work across schools. At times we can also save costs by working within the group, and, with a move away from central local authority oversight of schools, being part of a strong consortium helps us maintain high standards. Last year the consortium decided to start a new initiative of peer to peer reviews, where leaders from other schools come in to look at one area of education a school has identified as something they want to improve or adapt, and advise on how to improve practice. I am pleased to say we have found that we have benefitted from fresh ideas both from receiving a review, and by sending staff to help conduct these reviews in other schools.

Money matters

I can't finish this letter without mentioning the school funding crisis. Many of you are aware that schools are under increasing financial pressures, as in real terms the amount of funding available to us has decreased and costs have increased over the last few years. Our priority has always been to do what is best for the children in the school, and we keep quality and value for money at the front of our mind when we make any decisions on our spending, but unfortunately as time goes on we will have to make even more strategic choices.

We are also aware of the struggles facing our community at large; with changes to benefits, and the rising cost of living, many families are facing financial hardship. If these issues are effecting you, please do speak to the school as there may be ways we can help; examples include applying for free school meals for your children (which also results in increased funding for the school), or by pointing you in the direction of organisations that may be able to assist you. It is important for us to know about issues at home in order to effectively help the children in our care, and discretion, as always, is guaranteed.

Thank You

I want to thank all the staff at St John's Green, for their commitment to education and the children. Having worked closely with many of them for a number of years, I can't fault the community they have created; they put in huge efforts to help our children feel safe, happy, learn and enjoy their time in school. And I also want to thank the children for their continued support and respect for each other. Their enthusiasm for learning and seeing them utilising their learning powers is very inspiring!

Further information

You can find more information on the topics in this letter, and further details of the activities of the Governors, on the school's website. As ever, we welcome constructive comments; you can contact us by leaving a note addressed to me at the reception area of either school site.

Best wishes,

Nicola Roberts
Chair of Governors

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