

OLIVER GOLDSMITH PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Inspiring a love of learning"

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Oliver Goldsmith Primary School Board of Governors Letter to Parents - Summer 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Governors in our annual letter to parents and carers to keep you informed on the important issues the Board have been addressing over this school year.

Whilst the Board has remained focused on our statutory responsibilities to ensure the school's finances are well spent and to ensure the safeguarding of your children (more on these below), the Board has also been looking closely at the curriculum to ensure it is being delivered in a way which means your children make good progress in their learning and are inspired to learn. In doing so, Governors visited the school many times this year not only for formal meetings with teachers and the senior leadership team but also to conduct reviews and see performances and other school activities in person.

Most recently, Governors were able to see the inspiring curriculum in action during the learning journey and saw "Forest School" in action. Both events demonstrated to **Governors the real importance of continuing to work with the school to ensure that a diverse curriculum is delivered in a way which encourages children to learn in different ways.**

We were also privileged to see the arts curriculum in action in the annual Performing Arts concert and in the Aladdin Kids musical. Both events underlined the school's commitment to a well-rounded curriculum, something Governors are keen to preserve to **ensure that the school supports the**



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shared vision to inspire a love of learning in the children. We remain immensely grateful to the teaching staff for the efforts they have put in to deliver a vivid, diverse and exciting curriculum for the children and are incredibly proud of the way in which the children have embraced each and every challenge this year.

The delivery of the curriculum and extra, targeted, interventions the school have put in place have had a positive impact on the school's data helping to **evidence that children make great progress and that standards continue to rise.** For example, following the Ofsted inspection last year, 77% of children were achieving the required standards in their phonics tests - just below the national average. However, this year the school is set to achieve an 86% pass rate - well above both the local authority and national average. Governors congratulate the school on these achievements and were also delighted to see that the Mayor of London has recently recommended that Oliver Goldsmith becomes part of his "Schools for Success" programme, in recognition of the excellent progress children have made. Whilst we already know that Oliver Goldsmith is a fantastic school which sees children make excellent progress in their learning, it is wonderful that it has also been recognised in this way.

Governors have also seen the children achieving great things in other ways, not just through the school data. We were particularly struck by the talent of two children who were recognised by the Premier League in their national Writing Stars poetry competition and have now become published writers - a truly excellent achievement.

As ever, ensuring the safeguarding of your children remains of utmost importance for the school and the Board have **closely monitored the implementation of Oliver Goldsmith's safeguarding policies** including through ensuring central records are well maintained and any safeguarding issues are escalated appropriately.

Whilst the Board continues to monitor activities that help keep your child safe in school, we are also concerned about **keeping your children in the vicinity of the school.** Governors have noted, with disappointment, that the Headteacher has found it necessary to issue several communications to parents about road safety and remain concerned that some parents continue to put your children in danger.



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We continue to liaise with Brent Council to consider road safety measures around the school and the Junior Travel Ambassadors continue to a great job in raising awareness of issues around road safety, traffic and parking. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of all parents to consider the safety of all children, not just those they are bringing to school.

In terms of **ensuring the financial stability** of the school through our oversight of the school's budget, Governors remain conscious of the financial situation common to all schools. The school's budget for next year remains almost the same as this year. However, our costs continue to rise. The Board's Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee works closely with the Headteacher and School Business Manager to ensure savings are made wherever possible. The Board will continue to work through its scrutiny of the school's budgets and plans to enable the school to continue to make good progress.

Some parents have commented that the number of school trips has fallen this year. Unfortunately, this is because, in the past, where parents have not made a voluntary contribution, the school has met the shortfall to avoid cancelling such trips. This amounted to around £17,000 last year which was unsustainable. As a result, the school, supported by the Board, took the decision to look closely at the number and type of trips that could be offered this year, balancing the school's tradition of offering a range of trips to support your children's learning against the very real financial constraints. The Board continue to work with the school to minimise the financial impact on the children's learning.

If you would like to discuss anything covered in this letter or any other issue with a school Governor, please contact the school. More information on the Board and its work is available on the [Governors page](#) of the school's website.



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In signing off, Governors have asked me to express our thanks to the parents' association - the Friends and Family of Goldsmith - for all their efforts this year in organising some great and well-attended events. In total, they raised £3800, - that will go towards ensuring that your children have a great environment in which to play and learn.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to Brenda White, Sarah Mesgian & Varsha Chauhan who are leaving the school at the end of the year after many years and to David Williams who has stepped in to the Senior Leadership Team during Mrs Dean's maternity leave. We are grateful to them for their passion and commitment to learning at Oliver Goldsmith and know the children will miss them very much. We wish them very long and happy retirements.

I wish you all relaxing summer break.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Panayiotou

Chair, Board of Governors, Oliver Goldsmith



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