

OLIVER GOLDSMITH PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Inspiring a love of learning"

Celebrating 80 years 1938-2018

Tel: 0208 205 6038/7693

020 8205 6800 (Nursery)

Fax: 0208 205 4987

admin@olivergoldsmith.brent.sch.uk

www.olivergoldsmith.brent.sch.uk

Twitter: @OGPSinspired



Coniston Gardens
Kingsbury
London
NW9 0BD

Tuesday 17th July 2018

Oliver Goldsmith Primary School Board of Governors Letter to Parents- Summer Term 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Governors in this annual letter to parents and carers to keep you informed on the important issues the Board have been considering over this school year and to set out the impact our decisions have had on your child's year at Oliver Goldsmith.

I would like to start by congratulating the school for achieving a "good" rating from OFSTED following the short inspection in June. The Board are extremely proud of the professionalism of the staff and the excellent behaviour of the children during the day long visit. Myself and two other Governors met with the inspector who was challenging in her questioning but very complimentary about the school. Indeed, in her final report she found *"governors, leaders, staff, parents, carers and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the school, and this creates a calm, purposeful learning environment. There is an ethos of mutual trust, which permeates the school. You, your senior leaders and governors have a very clear vision for the school."*

Aside from visiting the school for OFSTED, the Board of Governors has met five times this year and its sub-committees have met on six other occasions. We have been preparing for Ofsted inspection since Sept 2017 and held specific meetings and training for governors over the year. In addition to this, governors have made numerous visits the school to meet with teachers and the senior leadership team and at other times to see some of the performances and other school activities that the children have been involved in. For example, a governor supported the school's monitoring of homework during a visit to the school which allowed us to understand how the school is applying the homework policy. Other governors have seen the wonderful performances and assemblies that the children have been involved with which has helped us to understand the impact of the arts curriculum is having. This monitoring has reassured us that the school **supports a shared vision to inspire the children to love learning and is targeting its efforts to ensure the best outcomes for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities**. We feel immensely proud of the children and the teaching staff and feel that the school, with oversight from the Board, has made good progress in some important areas this year.

First, and in an area of great importance, we have supported the school's activities to ensure that the school's **safeguarding** policies and practices are followed. Three governors attended a full day's "learning walk" where independent advice was offered on the school's safeguarding practices. We also now have an additional governor safeguarding lead and the entire board underwent bespoke safeguarding training all of which has enabled us to more effectively challenge the school to ensure its safeguarding approach is robust and that the board is appropriately fulfilling its duties to safeguard the children.



We have been extremely pleased to be able to support the school in achieving an **Inclusion Quality Mark** following the visit of an independent assessor to the school. Governors were interviewed as part of the assessment and the final report (which you can find on the school website) found Oliver Goldsmith to provide **“a warm, positive environment where pupils develop into successful learners and model citizens”**. Governors wholeheartedly agree with the report’s findings and the details of the report have helped us shape our work with the school to ensure children continue to feel inspired. This view was also underlined by our recent Ofsted inspection.

In terms of the **curriculum**, Governors have supported the school as they focus on helping children to make **progress in their reading** which was an issue which we needed greater focus on. The board spends a great deal of time looking at the school’s data, specifically the formal and informal assessments conducted throughout the year. We have challenged the school to ensure that the areas where we could improve are targeted effectively and monitored closely. We are confident that the senior leadership team have really focussed on making effective use of the data to ensure that all children of all abilities make good progress throughout their time in the school.

We are very pleased to report that in all areas from EYFS to Y2 and Y6, our pupil outcomes are good compared to national standards.

Early Years Foundation Stage in Reception	
Percentage of pupils achieving GLD (Good Level of Development) OGPS 2018	Percentage of pupils achieving GLD (Good Level of Development) National 2017
75%	71%

KS1 Outcomes in Year 2		
Subjects	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard: OGPS (2018)	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard: Nationally (2017)
English reading	81%	76%
English writing	74%	68%
Mathematics	89%	75%

KS2 Outcomes In Year 6				
Subject	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard: OGPS	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard: nationally	Average scaled score: OGPS	Average scaled score: Nationally
English reading	77%	75%	105	105
English grammar, punctuation & spelling	80%	78%	108	106
Mathematics	89%	76%	107	104
English writing (teacher assessment)	80%	78%	N/A	N/A

There are also areas that the Board will need to focus on more sharply in the coming weeks and months. Whilst we have worked hard with the school to **ensure the financial stability** of the school through our oversight of the school budget, we want to use this opportunity to highlight to you the school’s financial situation, which is becoming an area of increasing concern for us. The school income for the next



financial year remains almost the same as this year, however, our costs (including gas, electric, and staffing costs) are rising more sharply than inflation causing great pressure to the already stretched budget. Across Brent, schools have seen cuts which will reach £15m since 2015. In a school where staffing costs makes up around 85% of the total budget, we are working hard to mitigate the risks of cuts directly affecting teaching and learning. This work has already started and the Board's finance committee works to ensure savings can be made wherever possible. For example, we have reviewed all our contracts and utilities costs to ensure we are getting value for money.

However, as a board we want to make clear to parents and carers that it is likely that **tough decisions will need to be made** in the coming year. At present, where parental voluntary contributions have not covered the full cost of visits or workshops, to avoid cancelling such events the school has made up the difference. The school supports visits and trips to a cost of around £20,000 a year. Moving forwards, we may need to support the school in making decisions, which would see trips cancelled where the full cost of events is not raised through voluntary contributions. I want to reassure you however, that we are committed to ensuring the board will make these tough decisions in the best interests of preserving the teaching and learning ethos of the school. If you would like to help raise the school's financial challenges with the Government, do feel free to write to the Education Secretary, Damian Hinds MP, at damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk.

We continue to work closely with the school on improving the learning environment and have been prioritising our resources to ensure areas such as the toilets. This summer we are investing a much needed £85,000 in new toilet provision for our pupils.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter with a school governor, please contact the school or visit the governor pages on the school's website for further information.

In closing, I know governors would like me to express our **thanks to the staff and senior leadership team** who have worked so hard to create an inspirational leaning environment for the children, something governors know is given so much thought. Governors would also like to thank those who have supported school events this year, in particular, to the parents' association, the **Friends and Family of Goldsmith**, for all their efforts in organising some great and well attended events. In total, £4267 was raised this year, with £1526 coming from the recent summer fair. The board hopes that many more parents and carers can support the **FFG** next year. All proceeds help develop a supportive learning environment and ensure the children have great places to learn and play.

Finally, it was such a fantastic experience for many of us to be able to experience the school's **80th birthday celebrations**. I personally felt it was a real privilege to share in the great spirit of the school on such a wonderful day and it was great to see so many former pupils and teachers. It really underlined the great school community that we have and how important it is for the Board to continue to work hard to preserve it.

I wish you all restful summer.

Yours sincerely
Hannah Panayiotou
Chair of the Board of Governors, Oliver Goldsmith Primary School