



24<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

After returning from the first half-term break of the academic year I take this opportunity as Chair of Governors to welcome all new families to the school. From my time spent in school recently I have observed settled and happy classes throughout the school, and as always, exemplary behaviour.

The role of the governing body at school is to work with the school to ensure it delivers good quality education. Together with the head teacher, who is responsible for all day-to-day management, we set the school aims and policies. The children and their outcomes are at the centre of all that we do as a governing body, alongside ensuring that resources are spent appropriately and positively affect pupil outcomes. We do this through regular full governing body meetings, committees, learning walks, ongoing training, objective setting and data analysis throughout the year. I take this opportunity to update you on some recent findings and actions.

#### Mathematics Attainment

Over the past two academic years and at the recommendation of Mrs Wightman, the governing body approved significant spending to introduce Singapore Maths to the school. The purpose of this was to improve maths attainment and the spending included text books, work books, practical resources and staff training. Through the hard work and dedication of the staff, pupils are able to speak confidently about the subject and enjoy their learning. Beyond the reassuring pupil voices we now have data to analyse the impact of this on the pupils. We are absolutely delighted to report a significant increase in attainment and my sincere thanks extend to all members of staff for their commitment to this initiative and to the pupils:

- In 2016 75% of all pupils achieved Age Related Expectation (ARE) in maths compared to 70% nationally. This has improved in 2017 to 93% of pupils attaining ARE which is above the Local Authority average and significantly above the national average of 75%.
- In 2016 25% of all pupils achieved a higher level in maths compared to 17% nationally. In 2017 44% of all pupils achieved a higher level in maths compared to 23% nationally.

As a governing body we are delighted with the impact on pupils outcomes and the pupils and staff should be very proud of this achievement.

#### Special Education Needs (SEN)

With the retirement of Mrs Pritchard - the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in July, a recruitment process took place, and as a member of the interviewing panel I am pleased to announce the appointment of two SENCOs to maintain the highest standards of provision in what is a still growing school. My congratulations extend to Miss Ashton and Mrs Lydon, covering infants and juniors respectively. This has allowed the formation of an Inclusion Team, a refreshed and cohesive approach to SEN provision, with a continual CPD and training commitment. A Local Authority SEN peer to peer review has stated in their report "It is the view of the review team that St Philips CofE Primary School provides excellently for the SEN pupils currently in their care and that their provision for SEN is very well managed".

### Mental Health Awareness

In a time of heightened awareness of mental health within education I am pleased to inform you that Mrs Wightman has recently undertaken training and become an accredited mental health first aider. In addition, school's use of Tootoot, the award winning platform and app for schools, has been well received by pupils and staff alike. For those unfamiliar with Tootoot, pupils can use it to report anything that concerns them, from bullying to homework worries, that they may feel unable to discuss in person or in class.

### Sports Funding

A team of governors have undertaken learning walks, myself included, to continue their monitoring of the Sports Funding spending and its impact. A governor reported that the children spoke articulately about their learning and were able to use technical sports terms such as "invasion sports". All children were involved in the activities, using good quality, well-maintained equipment and children said they "enjoyed being more competitive" whilst year 6 pupils said they "enjoyed sports more now". A positive impact evident from the sports funding strategy on sports coaching provision.

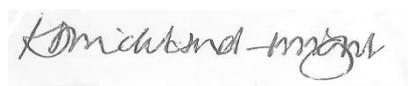
### Library

Towards the end of the last academic year the governors approved a scheme of spending to furnish and equip the atrium area at school to form a good quality, welcoming school library. This installation has now been completed and is now ready for books, and I hope you were able to see this area during the recent Book Fair.

Moving towards Christmas I look forward to attending some of the performances. I have heard some of the children practising their songs and I am sure they are going to wow us all. All details of performances are in the newsletters.

Please do check the excellent and informative school website which is constantly being updated with class news and resources to support your child's learning journey at the school. A school that is going from strength to strength, with the children, their wellbeing and their outcomes at its heart.

With best wishes,



Kate Strickland-Wright  
Chair of Governors