

St. John's School Governors Summer 2024

The most important lesson?

Year 6 pupils had some surprising answers to some of Rev. Dagmar's questions at the Leavers' Service this weekend. Football featured a lot but perhaps the most unsurprising answer came to the question 'What's been the most important lesson?' 'Swimming!' was the enthusiastic reply. There's no doubt it is a key skill and we are very proud of the fact that all our children leave school as confident swimmers, in fact most of them are good swimmers by the time they finish Key Stage 1. However, governors found ourselves unable to make our annual swimming payment to the school this year because of a shortfall in the Annual Contributions from parents and carers.

We ask that parents pay £168 per year for this - £100 goes towards that swimming payment which we are very confident this represents excellent value. We know one of our staff pays £360 for a year of 30 minute swimming lessons for her child for instance and our charge is less than one third of that.

The shortfall in the governor payment means the difference has to come from the school budget and this inevitably has an impact on other areas of spending. We urge you to consider making this payment now if you have not already done so for 23-24 and we thank those parents who are already supporting the Annual Contribution Scheme. We do not take your support for granted.

Thank you

Dates

Term ends on Wednesday July 24th.

There's a staff **INSET** day on Monday 2nd so we will welcome children back for the new academic year from Tuesday September 3rd.

INSET Friday 27th September

Half term holiday—October 28– November 1.

INSET Monday 4th November.

End of the Autumn Term—Friday 20th December.

News

We extended a warm welcome to **new governors who** joined the board last term.

Miss Hagan is now the staff representative. Mrs Horne has also joined the board as Deputy Headteacher. There will be elections for Chair and Vice chair when governors meet again in September.

Annual Contribution Part 2—So where does the remaining £68 go?

As a one-form entry Church of England primary, 'a school at the heart of its community' as our recent Ofsted inspection stated, St. John's is one of the most sought after schools in the borough. Parents often tell us on tours that this distinctive Christian ethos and character is one of the key reasons why they choose our school for their children. Our Christian character is supported by our connections with our parish church and with the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS). The LDBS supports schools in many ways but we want parents to understand particularly the infrastructure support we receive through the annual maintenance scheme. This means big projects are done for us at a fraction of the usual cost. For instance, last autumn term the roof above our hall and dining hall was replaced and there are plans to replace the doors and windows in the same space to double glazing next autumn term. This was expensive work but the LDBS covered 90% of that cost. Why? Because St. John's pays into the annual maintenance scheme and we can only do this because of the £68 per pupil per year we receive from parents through the Annual Contribution. Our payment to the LDBS is non-negotiable and any shortfall has to be offset again by the school's budget which means less money for curriculum resources.

We hope this has really clarified how important your Annual Contribution is to our school.

Of course we understand that some parents might not be able to support financially as much as they would like, but we want you to know any contribution is helpful. Please contact us via the office to discuss.

The Governors wrote to you recently so please see that letter for more details on this Voluntary contribution and ways to pay. Please also fill in a Gift Aid form so we can claim an extra 25% from HMRC.

How we are making our school more sustainable..

- We have applied to renew our Travel for Life Gold award for all the work we do on promoting sustainable travel. The results will be announced in September.
- The School Street is now in place - this is helping reduce air pollution and promoting safer travel for our families
- There is work proposed for the autumn term to replace the doors and windows in hall and dining hall with the aim to reduce our energy costs (carried out by LDBS)
- The proposed installation of air source heat pumps into our pool area (again LDBS)
- Investigation into solar panels being installed at school.
- There will be a meeting before the end of term with Charity Trees for Cities, the designers working with the school, about adding trees to improve the playground and reducing the risk of flooding. Funding for this has been secured via Barnet council.



Congratulations to our Chair of Governors Tony Vourou who was sworn in as the 60th Mayor of Barnet at a ceremony in the Town Hall in May. Tony, who has been a governor at St, John's for over 25 years is also a local councillor for the Brunswick Park Ward.

He'll be Mayor until May 2025 and will be attending events all over the borough so do keep an eye out for him in his robes. (We are told he won't be wearing them to Governing Body meetings though)



We wish you all a safe and happy summer holiday!



SIAMS Inspection

As a Church of England school we are on the list of schools to be inspected next year—this is called a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools—or SIAMS.

The inspection explores ways in which each school's theologically rooted Christian vision drives the work, and enables the school to live up to its foundation as a Church school.

SIAMS is the system of inspection employed by the National Society, on behalf of the Church of England and Methodist Church, to fulfil their legal obligations under section 48 of the 2005 Education Act. As such, it makes judgements on religious education, collective worship, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) education in Church of England and Methodist schools. of the 2005 Education Act.

Governors meet as a whole board five times a year and we have our final meeting of this year in July.

Why? What do we discuss? We always talk about any safeguarding issues, the Barnet Director of Education's Report and any governor training we have been to. This year we spent a lot of time planning for Mr Gunn's retirement and the process of appointing a new headteacher. We also covered test results, policies for review and we regularly look at School Development Plans to see how we are doing against them. Other topics have included the budget—very important in these challenging times - our school uniform, our pool and plans to improve our building. Please be assured that our first priority is always the safety, wellbeing and happiness of your children as well as our dedicated and brilliant staff team.

We also meet each term in our subcommittees:

Resources: looks at finance and staffing matters **Wellbeing:** responsible for safeguarding and our children's wellbeing

Standards: looks at areas of the curriculum and pupils' progress **Spiritual Life:** sets the Christian character of our school.