



End of School Year (July 2018) Message from the Chair of the Interim Academy Board (IAB)



Judith Johnson

Independent Chair of the Interim Academy Board (IAB)
St. Margaret Clitherow Primary School

Well, we have reached the end of term and the end of a year that has been a mixture of highs and lows for the school. Thankfully we are finishing on a series of highs due to the hard work and commitment of all the staff and children. At our July meeting we received two reports for members of the IAB as part of our Portfolio monitoring visit programme. One on English and one on Early Years – both reported progress since previous visits and a pleasing degree of consistency. There was clear evidence of children enjoying their learning and being confident to talk about what they were doing, why they were doing it and what they needed to do next. We have included below a couple of extracts from both reports.

'It was clear that the teacher had a good understanding of the children's varying abilities and how to move the children forward in their writing purposeful activities to develop fine motor skills, handwriting, number and colour mixing'

'Children were able to talk with confidence about how to write lists, the use of the colon and syllables... the practice of sounding out words and finding patterns is working well for those children who need it in their reading enjoyment of reading and reading with understanding and memory was evident'

Our 'deep dive' reports at the meeting were on the Sports Pupil Premium and the Pupil Premium initiative and how that funding is being used to help accelerate the learning for all children to reach their potential. We are responsible to the Department for Education for that grant funding and need to ensure that it is being spent in the best possible way. One of the interesting parts of the Sports Pupil Premium was the Health Assessment wheel which has 9 areas that the school is judged on as part of the grant funding. In January, the school was showing Green/Good in just two of those nine areas with a focus on increasing the amount of daily activity for the children, In March, it was showing Green/Good in four of the nine areas with good progress made on the range of enrichment opportunities the school offers. Now, in July we are showing 8 out of the nine areas as Green/Good with positive progress in swimming and competitive sport. If you want to help the school, please come in and volunteer for helping us with Sport – we always need extra hands on Sports days, in competitions and during our Healthy Living week.

We have closed down the school action plan for 2017-18 and a new plan for next year is well in hand. We have a new Education Standards Manager – Matthew Barnes – from our Trust (CAST) who works with the school on a regular basis in a support and progress checking way. Matthew replaces Mary Cox who had worked with the school previously and we want to thank her for all her support over the last year or so.

The June 2018 Parental survey on the Catholic ethos revealed much more positive support for the school. The return rate was only 21 parents and we would like a greater response at the next one we do please. 91% felt that they were welcome in the school and that the leadership provided a Christian model of leadership; 95% felt that the school 'went the extra mile' for the children and 90% felt that our school has a caring atmosphere with relationships based on Gospel Values. Our hope is to further increase those percentages during 2018-19. We will be starting the recruitment process for the permanent governors in the autumn term – watch out for the adverts locally and in the press and let us know if you want to apply to become a parent governor.

We hope you enjoy the summer with your children. Please keep them focused on learning through the fun activities and holiday opportunities we hope you will all be able to have. Learning slippage is always a risk over the summer and we want to make sure that we are in the best possible place for a flying start in September – so keep up the reading practice, practising the handwriting (even if it's only the shopping list or what to pack to go away with!). Challenge your children with some counting and maths work when shopping and help them think about the geography and history of the places you may visit over the summer – and keep them active!

Finally, a thank you to those who have taken the time to send in positive comments about how you value the school and the staff and the ways in which they have worked with your son or daughter. I cannot emphasise enough how much those comments mean to the staff and make all their efforts worthwhile. As governors, we love to hear them, and we know the staff do too - so if you do have something positive to share please take the time to jot it down for us in a note or by email.