



Governors' Newsletter - Summer 2023

On behalf of the Governing Body of Crigglestone St James', a warm welcome to all of our families and community friends



School in Summer term is filled with the exciting events that memories are made of; sports days, festivals and fayres in the sunshine. We celebrate all that our children have achieved across the academic year, not just in their learning but morally, socially and spiritually, driven by our school's values and vision to be Ready for the Future. Our thoughts turn to the changes ahead, particularly for our Year 6 pupils and their families who are in their final term at Crigglestone St. James'. We wish them every success for the adventures ahead.

Behaviour & Wellbeing

Our Behaviour Policy is central to the high expectations we have of **all** pupils to conduct themselves in ways which are respectful of themselves and of others.



Please continue to promote positive behaviour choices at home by praising children when you see these, even if the good behaviour is what you'd expect.

This positive reinforcement will help pupils to also make the right choices when they are in school with us. Likewise, where unwanted behaviour is not picked up and discussed at home, it is likely to be brought into school and may be a barrier to pupils achieving their full potential.

School recently held a session for parents focusing on children's use of social media. If you missed this session but would like any support, as we know this can be an area of concern (particularly for parents of our older pupils), please speak to staff in school who will be happy to help.

The wellbeing page on our website provides lots of links to resources which you may find useful in supporting your child's health and wellbeing.

Governor Open Days

In June, all of our governors spent a full day in school, observing lessons, speaking with the children and staff and seeing the curriculum in action.

A key focus of our Summer open day was Learning Environments; not only looking closely at classroom resources and displays but also at the shared areas around school and how these are used to inspire and engage children in their learning..

We were pleased to see lots of clear, simple displays to help children to focus on their current curriculum topics. These included displays of children's prior learning, key vocabulary for their new top, provocative statements and 'sticky knowledge' that all children should aim to know by the end of their unit of work.

Children were able to talk to us about where to look in their classrooms for support when writing, completing maths challenges or honing their reading skills.

In each classroom, we found a dedicated Collective Worship area and it was uplifting for governors to see the range of conversations and reflections that children and staff have enjoyed collectively across the year around Christian values and teachings and what they really mean to us in the modern world..



What do governors do and how do they actively support and challenge our school?

Governors support school by:

- Ensuring close links are maintained with St James' Church, understanding and promoting the distinctive Christian character of our Church school;
- Holding regular discussions, meetings and reviews with subject/area leaders to understand their intentions for the academic year and beyond and how these link with the academy's agreed priorities, review progress against these objectives and evaluate their impact to inform future planning. Meetings are held termly, half termly or more regularly, as appropriate to a governor's area(s) of responsibility and outcomes of such meetings are reported back to the full governing body through written and verbal reports;
- Conducting regular learning walks to assess the school environment and triangulate observations with information provided by the Senior Leadership Team and external advisors who work with our school - *Can we see in practice what we are told is happening across school? Do the wider team reflect the vision set by school leaders? Do pupils have our school vision at the heart of their conduct?*
- Valuing pupil voice and taking all opportunities to speak with pupils / gather evidence of pupil experience across all phases of school;
- Supporting staff wellbeing and professional development, within formal structures but also through encouragement, empathy and kindness;
- Communicating effectively with parents and carers, as appropriate, understanding the vital role of family within our school community;
- Supporting partnerships, such as the All Saints Partnership and others, recognising the value that partners bring to our own school development and our ethos of sharing best practice;
- Ensuring that committee members have relevant skills and experience in their areas of focus and that they can effectively communicate strengths or areas for development with other governors;
- Working with the findings of external inspections such as SIAMS and OFSTED reports to continue to drive positive change and development in the best interests of our school and its stakeholders;
- Developing governor practice around the six features of effective governance set out in the Governance Handbook: strategic leadership, accountability, people, structures, compliance and evaluation;
- Furthering their own knowledge and understanding through regular training opportunities so that their challenge of leadership and school development is effective, timely and relevant;
- Being ambassadors for our school, recognising the important role it plays both in our local community and global community as we prepare our pupils to be 'Ready for The Future'. The School Vision is at the heart of all governor activity.

Governor & SLT Away Day

The Governing Body and the academy's Senior Leadership Team met in early July to review our progress across this academic year and to determine new objectives for the coming year.

This annual meeting is part of our continued drive to promote aspirational standards for our pupils and find new ways to enhance their learning journey with us.

These planning days are an important opportunity to pause and reflect on just how much staff and children have achieved throughout the year.

We would like to thank you for your continued support and have thoroughly enjoyed opportunities to share the children's learning with you this year in school after the restrictions that affected us following the pandemic. We look forward to welcoming families into school again next year, knowing that children learn best when school and home are working well together. We are very grateful for our school community!

Have a wonderful summer!

