



Governors' Newsletter - Autumn 2022

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



Autumn term is always such a busy time in school and we'd like to start by thanking you for all the ways in which you have supported your children to settle in to their new classes and routines.

Thank you also to those of you who were able to join us at Church to celebrate our Harvest Festival. It's such an important time for our community to come together, not only to give our thanks for the harvest but to consider how we can share what we have in order to help one another through these challenging times, living out the Good Samaritan values on which our academy is built.

New Governors

Since our last newsletter, we have been delighted to welcome two new governors to our board; Mrs Melanie Allen, Foundation Governor and Mr Ben Hall, Parent Governor. Both bring a wealth of skills and experience which we know will be highly valuable to school.

We have also said goodbye to the Rev. Dr. Kathryn Goldsmith, who very much enjoyed her time as a governor with us. We wished her well as she moved on to pastures new in the Summer.



Back to Basics!

Nationally, it is recognised that following the disruption of the pandemic to children's learning, gaps in the 'basics' are some of the most significant barriers to pupils achieving their full potential.

This year in school, governors are continuing to support school in promoting the importance of these building blocks of learning; from times tables, spelling, punctuation and grammar to social skills such as good sharing, turn taking and always speaking respectfully to others.

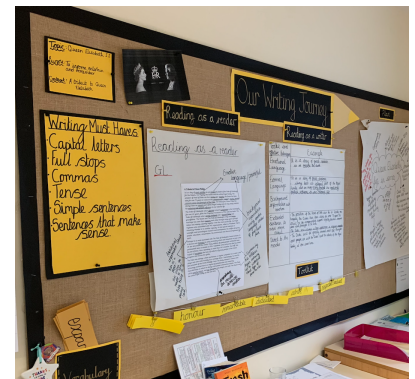
Please support children in practising the basics at home wherever possible - every little helps!

School Environment

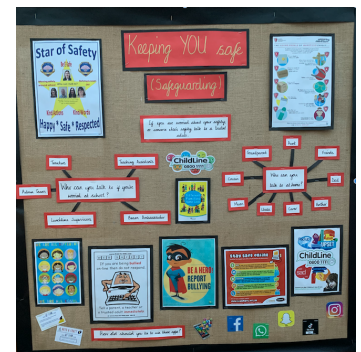
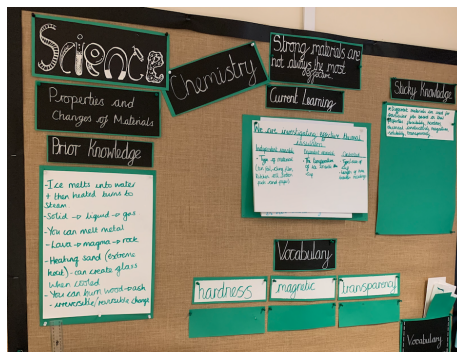
Last week, the governors undertook their first Learning Environment Walk of the year. School is looking fabulous!

We would like to extend our thanks to all staff, as we appreciate how much time and thought has gone in to making every corner of school so vibrant, inspiring and supportive of our pupils becoming curious and independent learners.

Whilst there is strong consistency between the classrooms in each phase of school, we also saw lots of examples of learning areas being tailored to meet the current needs of the children in each class.



More from Our Learning Environment Walk



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.