



WHERE WE ARE ALL VIPS
VALUED, INSPIRED,
PROGRESSING, SECURE.

**Letter to parents of children at Batchley First School and Nursery from
the Chair of the school Governing Board**

July 2022

Dear Parents

On behalf of the members of the school Governing Board I want to thank you and everyone who is part of the Batchley First School and Nursery family and community for everything you have done to make this school year as successful as it has been. I'm sure that everyone in the Batchley family are ready for a rest and a break. I hope you and your family are able to enjoy some quality time together during the holiday, hopefully with pleasant warm sunshine but without the intense heat of recent days!

Here are a few reminders of some of the VIPS highlights of this past year:

VALUED

We've all valued the ability to have less restrictions and more freedom in school routines this year. It's been a delight to see the children mixing, working and playing happily together after such a long time of social distancing. As governors we have still held most of our meetings remotely on 'Teams' but some have been in person when we've enjoyed being in school and seeing the huge improvements to the inside and outside environments. On the playground at a recent lunchtime it was lovely to see one of the children proudly showing others the best way to successfully use a hoola-hoop – it reminded me of my own childhood games! I'm sure you've all been pleased that school educational visits have been able to happen again – they add such quality to the children's learning. And what great time we had at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration on the field around the beautifully wrapped tree – it was wonderful to see so many of you enjoying the children's displays and you were all so generous afterwards at the tombolas, raffles and the cake stall! Thank you.

INSPECTION

The school had an Ofsted inspection in November 2021 which involved the leadership team, the staff, pupils and governors in lots of conversations about the quality of learning and teaching in the school. Ofsted inspections are always challenging but at the feedback session with the registered inspector we were delighted to hear that we had retained our **GOOD** rating. Governors are grateful to everyone involved for all the dedication, attention to detail and sheer consistent work that has enabled the school to keep this Ofsted rating.

PEOPLE

The governors want to thank Mrs Downes and all the staff for the amazing hard work they have put in to make the year so successful. They have been so caring in the ways they have helped the children to begin to recover from the effects of the Covid-19 restrictions on school life. We have said sad farewells to some school people including Mrs Smith, the Deputy Head teacher, but we have welcomed others to the team, including Mr Reeves the new Deputy Head. Mrs Smith has come into school weekly as a volunteer to help the children with their art work. There are lots of examples around the school of the drawings and paintings that she has inspired the children to produce. We are very grateful to her. Other visitors have been able this year to come into school to talk with the children to inspire their thinking and learning on a variety of subjects. Some governors really enjoyed being able to visit classes during Science Week to discuss the topic of Growth.

SCHOOL PRIORITIES

The Governing Board started the school year last September with a list of school priorities that were set to support the leadership team and staff to achieve them. They were:

- 1. To establish/re-establish consistently high quality pedagogy so that children receive high quality teaching which ensures they learn more and remember more.*
- 2. To further develop and enhance the curriculum offered so that it is enriched, appropriate and well sequenced enabling children to learn more and remember more including addressing gaps arising from Covid19.*
- 3. To develop a physical learning environment which supports pupils' learning, promotes the school vision and shows our pupils that their learning is valued.*
- 4. To develop our understanding of the mental health and wellbeing (including the impact of Covid19) of our pupils so that they are happy, feel safe and are ready to learn.*
- 5. To introduce and embed effectively the new EYFS curriculum to improve outcomes at age 5, particularly in language and literacy.*

We have kept these and the Ofsted priorities on the agendas of all our meetings during the year. Along with us there have been other people from the Local Authority who have been supporting the school in a variety of ways and it has been encouraging to attend meetings in which complimentary comments have been made about the excellent progress that the school is making to achieve these goals.

On a personal note, I am retiring from my role on the Governing Board this summer. It has been a total pleasure to be involved in the life of this wonderful school for twelve years. I wish you a happy holiday and know you will continue to enhance the school community in the future, because that's what you have always done in the past. Thank you!

Mercia Lee