

*The*Governor

July 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

I last wrote to you in July 2015, having recently taken on the role of Chair of Governors at Muswell Hill Primary, and I wanted to take this opportunity to write to you again as this academic year draws to a close. It has been a hugely rewarding year for me, and on behalf of all the governors, I'd like to take this opportunity to say a few 'Thank You's'.

Thank you one, is to James, and all members of staff, who continue to show Herculean levels of dedication and commitment to teaching our children. This year has been especially challenging for them with a huge raft of significant changes as a result of Department for Education reforms. Some of you may be aware from newspaper comment that these changes from Government have been pushed through with such speed that they have been a little incoherent at times. The staff have shown remarkable resilience, empathy and good humour, keeping their focus on teaching and teaching well. In the case of the Y6 students particularly, staff created a pre-SATS environment of calm and tranquillity that I cannot imagine was surpassed in any school in the country. I certainly don't recall croissants and yoga before any of my exams! I'm proud that ours is a school that values child welfare ahead of exam results; a school that encourages the fantastic art, sporting achievements and creative dynamism that our children display.

Thank you two, is to all the unsung heroes of the school; those people without whom the children would not eat hot lunch, or enjoy safe playtimes and clean playgrounds. The work they do is crucial to the day to day running of our school, and we appreciate greatly all the effort and care that goes in to this.

Thank you three, is to my fellow governors, who have given freely of their time and expertise over this year, and whose efforts have resulted in some significant success. Following on from our meetings on proposed expansion last year, we continued to highlight the condition issues that we face, and, as a direct result, the school has secured substantial investment over the next 12 - 18 months. The improvements will have a direct positive impact on the teaching and learning environment for staff and pupils alike and we are looking forward to sharing details of these plans at the start of the autumn term. Special mention must go to Iain Kennedy, who leaves the governing body following his year as an associate governor. Iain continues to be a tremendous friend to the school, and his contribution cannot be overstated. We express our deepest gratitude and sincere thanks to him for his tireless work over the past 9 years.

Finally, the biggest 'thank you' goes to the children at Muswell Hill Primary. Ours is a community school, genuinely rooted in the notions of joy, discovery and diversity, and I remain immensely proud to be part of it. The children embrace life at the school, contributing to the entire spectrum of primary education, from sharing assemblies to school shows; excelling at sports and demonstrating extraordinary creativity in their response to the 'Head and Chair's challenges'. I am constantly surprised by them; they are individually and collectively amazing.

It has, however, not been a year without its challenges, perhaps the greatest of which relates to the school budget. Our school is suffering from substantial budget cuts. We are fortunate to have expertise in the school that allows us to keep tight control over the financial management. James and Gary (our school finance manager) meet weekly to formulate workable allocation of funds; however, increasingly difficult compromises will need to be made. With this in mind, it is the intention of governors to write to parents with suggestions on how the school may be supported in the future - more on that next year.

On behalf of the governors, I wish all of our Y6 leavers the best of luck in their onward journey, and would like to extend a warm welcome to our new intake in September, together with their parents and carers.

I wish you all a wonderful summer break and look forward to seeing you in the autumn.

Simon Wantman
Chair of Governors, Muswell Hill Primary School