

Dear Parents and Carers

As the school year ends, we are writing to you with a brief reflection, including some highlights, together with comments from four Governors relating to the areas that they have been particularly involved with.

There have been many successful milestones to celebrate over the year including the very positive Ofsted inspection recognising the School's many strengths; highlighting personal development of pupils as outstanding. This term's successful results in the national tests including the SATs results have underlined the hard work and effort that has been provided by the whole School team.

Curriculum enrichment opportunities provided across the school including numerous trips, the outdoor area, forest school, visits to various scientific establishments at Granta Park, swimming, sports, our partnership with the Leys School to name but a few have been outstanding in terms of the range and diversity of provision, not to say enjoyed and valued by pupils and the school community.

The Outdoor Area in its second year has become an established part of School life with an active gardening club of pupils and community volunteers well led by Mrs Karen Johnson. Garden plants and produce are produced for the school kitchen and for sale. The STEAM area has been further developed and the mounds provide an additional area for pupil activity.

Forest School - comments from Neil Larkin, a parent governor: "I have had the pleasure of accompanying Class 4 on their Forest School trips to Abington Woods this term. The class has been on 5 occasions each for around 3 hours. I can report that the pupils have enjoyed themselves immensely and learnt a lot. Staff are well trained and highly skilled, activities include den-building, whittling, jewellery making, cooking over the fire, collaborative games and singing. On one occasion with the rain beating down remorselessly and the forest floor turning into a boggy mush pupils made the most of the elements by diving headfirst into the puddles, making mudslides and giving each other muddy facemasks, their clothing was saturated, but their laughter was infectious. Being in a different space with a different set of expectations is a fantastic way to let off steam and improve wellbeing. I have enjoyed watching their confidence and collaborative skills develop over the term."

Teaching and Learning - Comments from Will Earl, a community governor and Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Standards Committee: "Over the course of the academic year I have been fortunate to visit and observe a range of educational opportunities and attainment at Great Abington. In November, the primary focus of my visit was on provision in Maths. Through my conversation with Jess Robinson, it was clear that a number of initiatives are in place to support the pupils, including a successful times-table club and the availability of TT rockstars for all children in years 2-6. Morning Maths boosters and regular testing, with appropriate support in place, enables progressions to be made. It was apparent that there is a clear strategy for the future development of Maths provision, reflecting the individual needs of the children, teachers, and parents. A visit towards the end of the Spring Term highlighted real strength with the English provision. Long term planning and strategic planning, linked to the topic, was a key feature while the year 6 writing on Beowulf demonstrated a real strength of provision, ability, and progress. There are high expectations of pupils for their writing and individual targets alongside monitoring provide a foundation for progress and success. Moreover, the value of reading and choosing appropriate books to use within the curriculum is accounted for. In both these areas, the time, commitment, and expertise of the Great Abington staff was palpable. Finally, I have observed three visits of Great Abington children to The Leys throughout the year. Through their trip to watch a school production of Oliver, participating in a sports activity programme and spending an afternoon developing their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding, I saw children enjoying themselves, engaged and benefitting from an all-round education."

Phonics and Early reading - Comments from Kate Brown, a parent governor: "As a parent governor, I have been responsible for observing progress in Early years phonics and reading. It has been a joy to watch a number of children in Class 2 achieve fluency in their reading, they are now happy reading chapter books independently. Mrs Beal and the team have worked hard to bring in and use the 1 new books purchased in December to support the new phonics programme. The classroom walls are covered with phonics posters and learning opportunities. Teaching phonics within year groups rather than whole classes has helped consolidate skills. Support from home is always impactful and appreciated. The summer reading challenge is also a great way to keep reading.

Science – Comments from Alan Cooke, a community governor: "Science teaching continues to make good progress in the school under the careful guidance of Mrs Barker. The school is on track with its science learning and all the required documentation is in place. The School has reapplied to renew the PSQM and CREST awards. The outreach science programme has resulted in more parental involvement and visits to local businesses. Extra science lessons after school are being reintroduced and this group recently enjoyed a visit to Illumina where the discussion ranged from the structure of DNA to whether Jaffa Cakes were a biscuit or a cake (presented by Adrian Granger Brown). Visits to ARCC are also a highpoint in this area."

Sports - Congratulations to Mr Waterson and the pupils for another excellent year of sport. We once again achieved a Platinum rating for the Schools Games Mark (highest possible) for our extensive provision for all children. We also competed very well in all competitions and given our size of school delivered many outstanding performances.

PTFA - Governors are grateful to the PTFA for its hard work and commitment to the School in running fundraising and social events. Please continue to support the PTFA and also its Festival of Running which will be held on 6 October 2024.

Finally

Thank you for your support for the School. If you ever have any queries, please feel free to contact us.

We would also like to thank Guy and all the Staff for their enthusiasm and hard work during the year.

Best wishes to you all for an enjoyable summer holiday.

July 2024

Mark Carter and Rachel Clay
Co-Chairs of Governors