



Governors' Newsletter

Message from the Chair

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a governor is the time we spend in school with pupils, hearing directly from them about their learning experiences and about life at East Sheen Primary. It's a key part of what enables us to ensure that the decisions and strategic direction we take are pupil driven, evidence based and having the desired results. Most of all, we enjoy seeing children happy at work and at play.

I was recently asked by a prospective parent, “What makes East Sheen Primary School special?” It’s a good question - one which governors asked all pupils last year. The Word Art below illustrates their responses, which were clear, considered, enthusiastic and a great reflection of our own observations.



ESPS is a happy and vibrant school with excellent academic credentials and a long history of community engagement and partnership. We are passionate about learning and our core values - Happy, Curious, Resilient, Kind - are at the heart of all we do. Each and every child is valued, included and respected. At a governor level, this is evidenced, in part, by past and present strategic objectives: becoming a Thinking School, achieving the Wellbeing Award and becoming Environmentally Intelligent, all of which are directly relevant to and of benefit to every pupil at ESPS.



Helen Wrigglesworth

Another feature of ESPS is that there is never a dull moment! Plans to replace the Cedar Block with a permanent, purpose-built learning space were recently communicated

Y6 Egyptian Day

to parents and carers. This is an exciting opportunity to further improve and enhance the site for the school community for many, many years to come.

Whilst COVID-19 continues to frustrate plans for parents and carers to fully re-engage with school life, there has been plenty of creative “green-hat-thinking” in responding to these challenges. Governors thank parents/carers for their support with regard to recent outbreaks and hope they will soon be a thing of the past. We especially thank the Headship Team, teachers and staff for their unwavering dedication and enthusiasm.

Wellbeing

Over the course of the COVID-19 Pandemic, wellbeing has continued to be at the centre of everything we do at ESPS. We actively encourage physical and emotional health and aim to equip pupils with the understanding and skills they need to make informed decisions about



Y1 pupils

their wellbeing, both now and in the future. We're conscious of the immense sacrifices that students, teachers, parents and the wider community have made over the last two years. As a governing body, we constantly focus on wellbeing, monitoring staff and pupil surveys to make sure we understand how people are feeling. Over recent months, feedback has been positive, acknowledging the work everyone has done to 'keep the show on the road'. As we continue on the journey to our new normal, more and more focus will be placed making sure we can sustain both physical and mental wellbeing long term across the community. Let's hope it doesn't go as far as making all the governors run the Phoenix Mile!

Emmett Regan



2019-2022

After several years of exemption from the OFSTED inspection schedule, schools that were previously judged as Outstanding are now set to be inspected again. East Sheen Primary School was last inspected in 2008, which means that we fully expect to be visited by an OFSTED team in the near future. OFSTED issued a new framework in September 2019 which has made it much harder for schools to achieve an Outstanding judgement. Indeed, Amanda Spielman, OFSTED's chief inspector, recently

Susannah Milligan

said that she expects the number of schools rated as Outstanding to roughly halve – so that 1 in 10, rather than the current 1 in 5, schools will attain the top grade. At ESPS, while mindful of the new targets, we'll continue to offer the excellent all-round education that we always have. We're relentlessly ambitious to do what is best for all our pupils and to deliver a beyond outstanding, nurturing and inclusive education.



COVID-19 - Thank you!

It's been a challenging start to the year for the ESPS community as the new restrictions have placed additional demands on us all. The Governing Board is grateful for everyone's resilience and commitment, especially when ESPS entered amber measures last term and now this. We'd like to thank you for your continued support in working with the school.

Jess Oliver

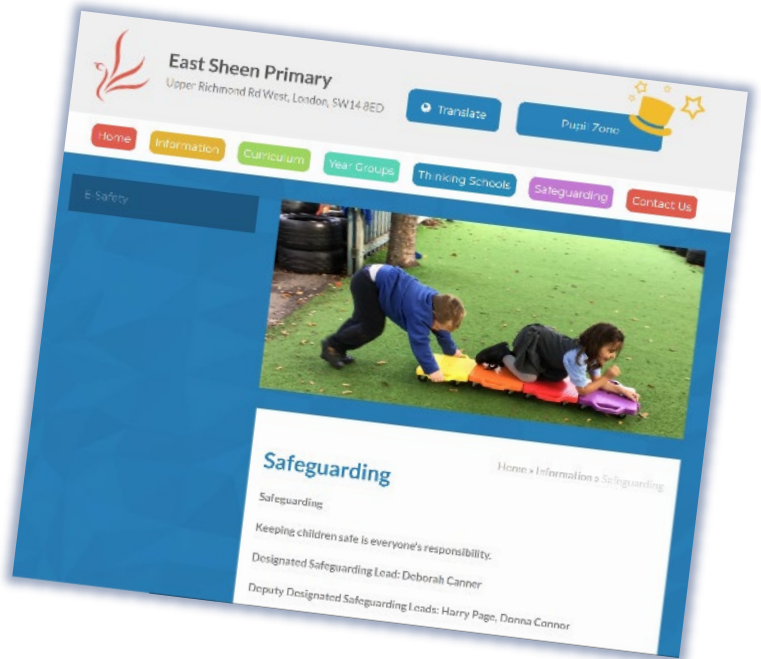
Happy | Curious | Resilient | Kind

Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of all children at ESPS is our highest priority and an integral part of school life. Every Autumn Term, the Governing Body reviews the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which is available to read [here](#).

This policy is one of a range of documents which set out the school's safeguarding responsibilities. Safeguarding information is available throughout the school and all children know who they can talk to and how they can make an anonymous disclosure using our Time-To-Talk box system.

Internet safety continues to be a key issue for schools and parents/carers. Despite its many benefits, the internet can be used to bully or abuse others, or to spread terrorist and other illegal or harmful content. Children may be exposed to content that relates, for example, to self-harm or suicide and can experience serious psychological and emotional impacts. We **all** share a responsibility to keep them safe.



ESPS website safeguarding pages

Peter Cowley from Achieving for Children recently gave an excellent virtual presentation about online safety, covering some of these risks and the ways parents/carers can help to protect their children. Peter shared brilliant resources about how to use popular apps and games like WhatsApp, Yubo, Fortnite and TikTok safely. Another thought-provoking resource that Peter shared was a TedX talk by Jim Gamble, titled *Online Safety - It's Not About The Internet*, which you can view [here](#).

You may have heard of the recent Everyone's Invited movement, which has a mission to expose and eradicate rape culture with empathy and compassion. ESPS believes it's beneficial to begin a conversation around this important subject sooner rather than later. We have a culture of education and prevention in order to raise responsible, caring adults.

Jess Oliver

An Environmentally Intelligent School

A key strategic objective of the school, which the governors enthusiastically support, is to help children to become environmentally intelligent. This goes beyond merely encouraging reuse and recycling – although those are, of course, very important. The aim is for children to think deeply and critically about environmental issues, to understand the size of the environmental challenge and the case for action, and to learn how they really can make a difference – both by taking action now and as leaders of the future. Our curriculum is accordingly being evaluated to seek opportunities to weave environmental themes into a wide range of subjects. A good recent example is a maths lesson where Year 6 were asked to interpret trends in local air quality data to question whether spikes in particulate levels might be attributable to Bonfire Night and Divali celebrations, or to other climatic conditions. Governors are encouraged by the progress of this strategy and look forward to seeing further examples of it in action!

Andrew Miller



Monitoring Pupil Progress

At ESPS we aim for all children to make excellent progress from their starting points. The governors work closely with the Headship Team to ensure effective monitoring of pupil progress.

Monitoring takes account of: the range and impact of the curriculum; the quality and impact of the school's assessment system; the performance of different groups, subjects and key stages in comparison to local and national data; the effectiveness of interventions; implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ("SEND") policy and the impact of grants such as the Pupil Premium Grant, Sports Premium Grant and Covid Catch Up funding. Covid Catch Up funding is used to design and deliver targeted intervention programmes to address attainment gaps resulting from school closures linked to the pandemic. The report on how this grant was used in 2020-21 can be found [here](#).

The governors monitor and track progress in a number of ways. Papers are presented for discussion in governor meetings. These include items such as the termly Head's Report, SEND Report and subject leader reports. The governors are involved in the on-going review of School Development Plan (SDP) targets. The SDP details the priorities for school improvement during the year and the actions required. Each term the school is visited by the School Improvement Partner (SIP) who may join the Headship Team in lesson observations and learning walks around the school. The SIP works with the school to evaluate judgements and set targets in line with the School Development Plan. Governors have access to the termly SIP report and this includes guidance on governor questions. Rigorous scrutiny of pupil progress data, including results and plans to address 'gaps' or underachievement, is subject to on-going review by governors.

For governors, it is always a privilege to be able to see the work of the school in person. School visits allow us to observe policies and strategies working in practice. Visits



Y5 pupils hard at work

form part of a pre-planned monitoring programme and these may involve learning walks, classroom visits with a specific focus and subject leader conferencing to discuss developments in a particular subject.

If you'd like to know more about the school's assessment procedures and progress measures, information can be accessed [here](#).

Carol Hawkins

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is vitally important if children are to make the best progress they can. East Sheen has a target of 97% attendance. Of course, Covid has had a significant effect on attendance at our school, just like every other school in the country, and we know that children can't come to school if they're sick. We ask as always that you do not take your children out of school for holidays in term time. If your child is struggling for any reason to attend school regularly, the school will support you together with the local Educational Welfare Officer.

Susannah Milligan

New Faces

ESPS was delighted to welcome two new teachers to the school in September 2021, Sophie Crawley, Year 1 (SC) and Felicity Saunders, year 5 (FS). Here's a bit about them to get to know them!

Can you tell us a bit of background about yourself?

SC: Apart from going away to University, I have lived in East Sheen all my life. I studied Education and Psychology at Durham University and then went to the University of Cambridge for my teacher training.

FS: I grew up down the road from East Sheen in Wandsworth. I completed my undergraduate degree at Durham University, where I studied Education Studies and Geography. I then completed my Primary PGCE at the University of Cambridge.

How has your first term been at East Sheen Primary?

SC: I have absolutely loved my first term. The children's excitement and enthusiasm for learning never fails to amaze me.

FS: I loved my first term. Staff, children and parents have been so kind, supportive and welcoming. The children have all got such wonderful



Ms Crawley



Ms Saunders

personalities and a keen desire to learn, which makes teaching them a pleasure!

What have you enjoyed the most about working at East Sheen Primary?

SC: Working with all the staff, children and parents has been fantastic. I love being a part of such a supportive and inspirational team.

FS: How friendly and supportive the staff team are and how passionate the children are about their learning!

Describe East Sheen Primary in three words?

SC: Welcoming, happy and caring.

FS: Heart-warming, happy, fun.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself?

SC: I performed in Billy Elliot at Richmond Theatre when I was 9!

FS: I can play the Bassoon!

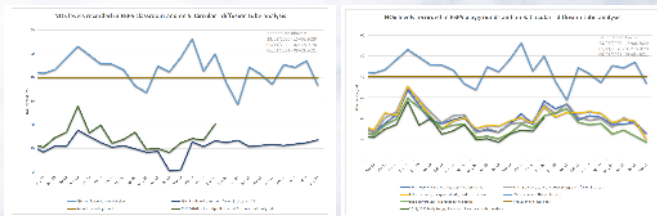
Jess Zayouna

Governor Learning Walk: Behaviour and Attitudes

As part of the governors' role to monitor and evaluate the quality of education at ESPS, we conduct regular Learning Walks alongside the Headship Team and the Pupil Leadership Team. Our most recent walk focused on the behaviour and attitudes of children both inside and outside the classroom. We were very impressed with what we saw across all age groups. Children were extremely attentive in their studies, whether in whole-class groups or smaller sessions, and were clearly enjoying the inventive range of activities that facilitated their learning. What was particularly encouraging was how well the children worked together and supported each other. Thanks in particular to the PLT for showing us around and being so welcoming and polite! [Andrew Miller](#)

Air Quality

The school continues to work in conjunction with the LBRuT to monitor the levels of Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) present in the air in and around the school. More information, including our NOx monitoring data, can be found on the school's website [here](#).



We reiterate the following advice when travelling to and from school:

- *When walking, cycling or scooting: use a route that avoids busy roads*
- *Walk, cycle or scoot to school. Exposure to air pollution can be higher inside cars*
- *Don't idle*
- *Enter/leave school by the closest entrance and keep off the road as long as possible*
- *Keep away from the kerbside. It's safer too!*

Helen Wrigglesworth

Finance

This has been a challenging year for school finances, which have been heavily impacted by Covid. Despite employing short term staff replacements, increased cleaning requirements and the need to provide additional resources to enable pupils to catch up on missed learning, we are pleased to report that our forecast for the school's finances for the year to the end of March remains in line with the deficit budget that was set last year.



To help schools recover from the effects of the pandemic, central government has provided some additional funding. For East Sheen this amounts to two grants, Covid Catch-

Up Funding and Recovery Funding. The first is a specific grant that will help pupils catch up on missed learning and the second is extra funding that has been added to the normal Pupil Premium Grant.

Full details of these grants, how they are being spent and the benefits they will deliver, can be found on the school website in the Covid Catch-up Funding and Pupil Premium sections [here](#) and [here](#).

Graham Dyer

Governor Information

We're always happy to talk about and share the work of the governing body, so please get in touch! You can find out more about the work of the governing body on the school website, [here](#). You can also get in contact us via our clerk at: clerktogovernors@eastsheen.richmond.sch.uk.