

# Governors' Newsletter



## Message from the Chair

East Sheen Primary School is a wonderful and inclusive learning community with pupils at its heart. This term, governors have taken great pleasure in seeing pupils at work and at play - they are Happy, Curious, Resilient and Kind. We are very proud of them and celebrate their many achievements and successes.

Congratulations to our year 6 students and their teachers who, in spite of disrupted learning due to COVID-19, have made great progress and achieved a really impressive set of SATs results. We have loved seeing them enjoy every corner of the curriculum and hope they continue to develop a love of learning at their new schools. We wish them all future happiness and success.

At the other end of the school, it was a pleasure to meet next year's Reception parents at the recent new parents' evening and look forward to warmly welcoming their children into school in September.

Our fantastic parent and carer community support ESPS to be the very best that it can be. Thank you to all those who have been involved this year - whether helping out with reading, swimming, enrichment activities, repping or manning a stall at the Summer festival - it all contributes to creating a very special and successful learning environment. An especially big thank you to the PTA committee and to Laura and Vicki, who orchestrated the fabulous Summer Festival. If you would like to find out more about the different ways you can support ESPS, please click [here](#).

A multitude of exciting trips have taken place this year. These trips enrich the curriculum, help bring learning to life and provide new experiences for pupils. A huge thank you to the teachers who supported this year's residential trips. We appreciate that a significant amount of work goes on behind the scenes to enable them and teachers give up much of their own spare time to take part. The residential experience builds confidence, broadens horizons and gives pupils a chance to acquire new skills; it is a valuable opportunity for personal development.



*Having fun on the trim trail*



This is my final newsletter as Chair of Governors. It has been such a privilege to work so closely with our brilliant Headship team and fellow governors over the last four years. I look forward to continuing on the governing body in support of ESPS and our new Chair of Governors, Nathalie Townley.

I wish everyone a fantastic summer break and look forward to the September 2022 term!

Helen Wrigglesworth

# Delivering an Inspiring Curriculum



*Romans - whole school assembly*

Delivering a broad and balanced curriculum has always been a priority at ESPS – we have never narrowed the wider curriculum to focus on English and Maths. However, in our drive for continual improvement, governors on the Teaching and Learning Committee have paid particular attention to the wider curriculum over the last few years.

Every subject taught at ESPS has a designated subject leader who is responsible for ensuring that their subject is effectively taught from Reception to Year 6. Subject leaders monitor their subject by carrying out classroom visits, book looks, seeking pupil voice and analysing progress data. They also provide support to other class teachers through lesson planning and sharing feedback from subject specific training.

Governors have held 1:1 meetings with subject leaders to monitor the intent, implementation and impact of their subject and have been enormously impressed with the leaders' passion for their specialism and all the hard work they dedicate to the role, in addition to their classroom teaching.

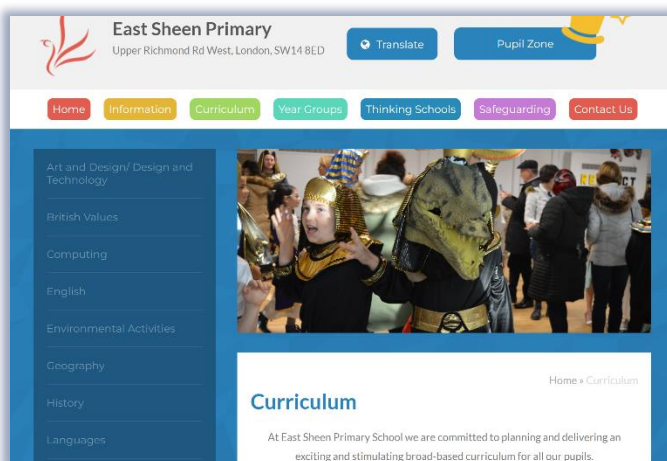
## Safeguarding

Safeguarding continues to be a top priority here at ESPS. In the Autumn term, the Safeguarding Link Governors participate in a major audit with the school's Safeguarding Leads, Debbie Canner and Harry Page. As part of this and other mini-audits throughout the year, we gather evidence by talking to staff, children, and parents/carers. We are especially impressed with the confidence and maturity the children display, particularly when talking about how to make an anonymous disclosure using our 'Time to Talk' box system.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. If a child tells you something that worries you, if you have any concerns about the health, wellbeing or safety of a pupil, or if you feel that something may be troubling them, you should share this information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) straightaway. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, DSL, is: Deborah Canner. Deputy DSLs are: Harry Page and Donna Connor. More information is available in the ESPS child protection and safeguarding policy [here](#). Governors feel confident that everything is being done to ensure that children are thriving in a safe and happy environment.

*Jess Oliver*

Our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and builds on the diverse experiences of our pupils. Through Quality First Teaching, effective adaptations, the use of Thinking Schools tools, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, visual displays in the classroom and other teaching strategies, teachers ensure that all children are able to access the broader curriculum. Teachers from every year group have worked together to map out the curriculum in every subject and ensure that the learning is progressive and clearly sequenced from Reception to Year 6, both in terms of knowledge and skills – using the 'Why this? Why now? What next?' approach. To learn more about the Intent, Implementation and Impact of a particular subject or to see the curriculum grid/map of the subject, click [here](#).



*ESPS website curriculum pages*

Learning in the classroom is reinforced through workshops, school trips (often making the most of what our local area has to offer) and themed days/assemblies where pupils celebrate their learning. [Nathalie Townley](#)

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# An Environmentally Intelligent School

The governors have been pleased to see the school build on its strategic objective to become an 'environmentally intelligent' school. This complements our vision and values and has at its core the twin aims of getting children to think deeply about complex environmental issues, and to look for possible ways to combat those issues. In particular, we are keen to make sure that children do not become unduly anxious about the environmental challenges that are faced, either locally or globally and to understand that they can become agents of change – even through relatively minor changes to normal life and routines.

It is also an excellent tool for teaching and complements the school's 'Thinking School' approach. It helps the children learn critical thinking, to question what they read and what they hear, to develop their own views on both problems and solutions and to robustly debate those views with their teachers and peers.

There are practical benefits too. Through the pupil-led 'Green Team', the school is recycling more than ever before (we were pleased to see that the school recycled 12.7 kgs of pens this year) and finding ways to save more energy with the Green Team actively checking that lighting and smartboards are switched off when no longer required. The school has just signed up to 'Let's Go Zero' and following an evaluation activity will be seeking 'Eco-School' accreditation in 2022/23. The school is also looking to develop further opportunities for parental engagement on sustainability projects over the next year.

The school continues to monitor levels of air pollution – a clear focus area given our location on the busy Upper Richmond Road – and to find creative ways to use the resulting dataset to teach other themes. For example, we've seen an excellent Year 6 maths lesson where children were asked to plot and interpret NOx levels over time, questioning why there might be spikes at certain times (rush hour) and on certain dates (Bonfire Night and Diwali).

We've also seen Year 2 using the plight of penguins as inspiration for their creative writing. The school is finding ever more creative ways to weave environmental themes through the curriculum, a good example being the Art and DT Week which had a green theme and incorporated the principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Governors look forward to seeing more examples as they are developed!



Chris Styles



*Sheen playground*

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## Ofsted

Since our last newsletter, more schools have been inspected under the new Ofsted framework and it is evident that it is an exacting process which sees very few schools awarded the top Outstanding grade. This corroborates Amanda Spielman's, OFSTED's chief inspector, expectations that the number of schools rated as Outstanding will roughly halve – so that 1 in 10, rather than the current 1 in 5, schools will attain the top grade.

Helen Wrigglesworth

At ESPS, while mindful of the new targets, we'll continue to offer an excellent all-round education and strive to find improvement, wherever possible. We're relentlessly ambitious to do what is best for each and every one of our pupils and to deliver a beyond outstanding, nurturing and inclusive education.



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# Monitoring Pupil Progress and Achievement

Here at ESPS we are ambitious for every child, and we are lucky to have teachers who clearly embrace this philosophy such that all children, whatever their talents and challenges, are able to achieve their full potential.

Despite the disruption caused by the pandemic, both last year and this, we have seen some great academic progress this year. In some cases, the amount of progress is less than might have been expected had such disruption not happened. This is in-line with the experience at other local schools (with which ESPS is in regular contact) and indeed reflects the position nationally. Children belong in the classroom, benefiting from the personal face-to-face interaction with their teachers

and classmates, and it is no surprise that some gaps can be seen in some subjects – particularly writing. The school is very aware of this and has been working extremely hard to close those gaps through targeted interventions. On the whole, though, children are very clearly relishing being back in the classroom – it is wonderful to see.

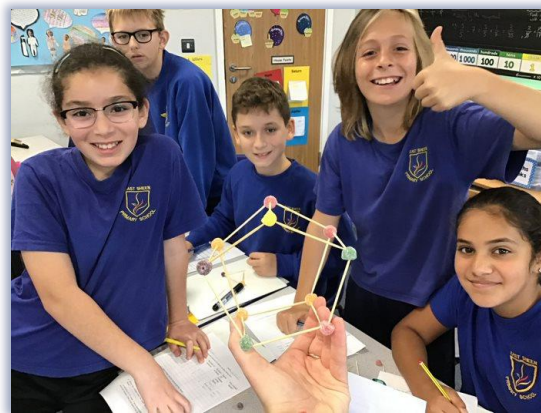
As part of our responsibility to ensure we continue to have excellent teaching and learning at ESPS, the Governors have been working with the School to look at curriculum sequencing. This is the way that lessons are planned throughout the school year, and indeed across

school years, to ensure that children build on prior learning and retain the maximum amount of knowledge and skills. There is a lot of scientific evidence of the benefit of careful sequencing, with frequent recalling and recapping of knowledge and vocabulary to embed the long-term memory. We have spent time with subject leaders across the curriculum and seen lots of evidence of thoughtful sequencing, where the curriculum has been tweaked to help children to ‘know more and remember more’.

We are helped enormously here by our ‘Thinking School’ approach to teaching and learning that East Sheen Primary has embraced for a number of years. Part of this approach is

that children are encouraged with any new topic to ‘brainstorm’ what they already know – rather than focusing on what they do not – to structure their thoughts and to share knowledge with each other. Governors continue to see considerable evidence, both in our visits to the school and in books, of the benefits of this approach. We believe it is a large part of what makes ESPS stand out as a school that seeks to maximise the achievement of all its children.

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



*Y6 teamwork*

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## Attendance

Attendance at school remains a focus for staff and governors, as the link between progress and regular attendance is well known. We’re pleased to say that overall attendance has improved since our last newsletter, but has been impacted by outbreaks of chickenpox, scarlet fever and (once again) Covid. We ask as always that you do not take your children out of school for holidays in term time so that they do not miss vital learning. The Educational Welfare Officer continues to support families wherever necessary.  
Susannah Milligan

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## Governor Visits and Quality Assurance

Part of the governors’ role is to assure ourselves that the school is meeting the educational needs of every child. We seek that assurance in a number of ways. Some examples of how we achieve first-hand assurance are classroom visits, teacher conferencing (where we interrogate the curriculum of a specific subject, how it is sequenced over the school years and made accessible to all) and learning walks. More data-based activities include reviewing the School Improvement Plan, overseeing the financial performance of the school, and analysing the school dashboard. In this way we can ensure that the school is meeting its objectives and nurturing kind, happy and caring children. [Emily Maltby](#)

# Wishing Our Departing Teachers Well

Our teachers are of course central in creating the community at ESPS. We'd like to give our warmest thanks to those who are leaving us this year. Assistant Head/SENDCo Donna Connor is leaving to explore new opportunities, Laura Fernandez is returning to her homeland, Spain, and Hannah Robinson is moving to Oxford with her family. Thank you for everything!

A very special mention goes to Dawn Clacher who leaves East Sheen after 24 years. We caught up with her to learn a bit about her time at ESPS and what she's most looking forward to in the future.

What are your reflections and memories of ESPS?

*Oh, that's a hard one! Here are a few:*

- *Having appendicitis in the middle of teaching a reception class in my first year*
- *My first trip to the Science Museum instructing a child that he must be able to see me at all times and I him, turning round to find him missing and then seeing him going up to the next floor in a glass lift! Apparently he could see me!*
- *Favourite school trips: Y1 - London Zoo, Y3 - Living Rainforest, Reception - farm trip*
- *And of course the staff parties!*

What will you miss most about ESPS?

*That's an easy one - the children! And of course, my friends and colleagues and the parents.*

What are you looking forward to next?

*Being able to travel outside school holidays, having time to spend with and worrying about my own family rather than everyone else's, time to myself and to think about what I want to do next, and never having reports to write again!*

Jess Zayouna



Mrs Clacher

## Community at ESPS

The school community is intrinsic to helping to create the warm environment in which we support children and encourage them to thrive. Every year we love hearing community feedback via the vitally important Parent Satisfaction Survey. The survey offers all parents and carers the opportunity to have their voice heard and give us their honest opinions. So thank you to all of you who took the time to complete the survey and share your views with governors and the school leadership team.

The Governing Board would also like to thank the PTA for their community and fundraising efforts this year. 2021 -2022 has seen the first in person events since before the pandemic, including the first ever Christmas quiz and the first Summer Fair in three years. These events give everyone an opportunity to socialize and also help the school to raise money for much needed projects.

Jess Zayouna



Litter picking

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# Finance

Schools funding for each financial year is dependent, amongst other things, on the number of pupils in school on census day in October. 11% of our places are currently unfilled, driven partly by Brexit and Covid related factors which are being felt in schools across Richmond. However, 85% of the school's costs, including payroll and infrastructure, remain fixed, irrespective of the number of pupils in school.

As a result of the lower numbers on roll, our financial year outturn in March showed a deficit which has meant dipping into our reserves. We're forecasting a similar budget deficit for the current year. The good news is that next year's Reception classes are currently fully

subscribed, which should have a positive effect on our income going forward.

For those who are interested to read more about the sources of the school's funding there is an informative government blog, which can be found [here](#).

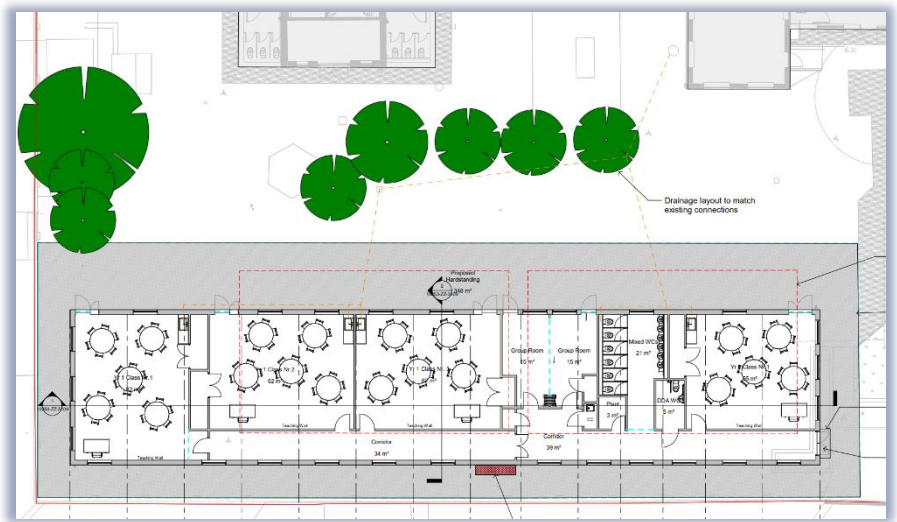
The school's past financial information is available to parents to review and compare. East Sheen Primary School's financial information and other data can be viewed, and even compared to other schools, on the government's Schools' Financial Benchmarking page, which can be found [here](#).  
**Graham Dyer**

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# Cedar block replacement update

At East Sheen Primary, we are committed to providing a first-rate environment that provides safe and stimulating learning spaces for our pupils. In recent years, the cedar block classrooms, currently occupied by year 1 and 3C, have experienced a rapid decline in the fabric of their construction and become cost-prohibitive to maintain.

The school has been working with the LA and it's appointed officers to realise a solution to this issue and governors are pleased that funding has now been approved for the construction of a new block of classrooms. The purpose-built block will sit on the site of the existing cedar blocks and will provide four brilliant new classrooms, toilet facilities and versatile small group working spaces.



*New build layout*

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Building activities commence after the end of this term and the modular nature of the build will promote swift construction. It is inevitable that there will be some disruption to normal routines and working, but the school will work hard to keep this to a minimum - it will not negatively impact on learning or fun! Thank-you in advance for your support and understanding.

The school has recent experience of navigating the far more significant build process that afforded us our lovely large hall, expansive new Y2 and Y3 classrooms and the superb Y5 and Y6 wing. We are very excited about how these new classrooms will further enhance the learning experience and environment for pupils at ESPS. **Helen Wrigglesworth**

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# 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 who we are and what we do on the school website, [here](#). You can also get in contact with us via our clerk, Alex Watson Jones, at: [clerktogovernors@eastsheen.richmond.sch.uk](mailto:clerktogovernors@eastsheen.richmond.sch.uk).

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