

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 and staff. Hearing directly from the children about their life at East Sheen Primary, as well as engaging with leaders about their areas of expertise, ensures that the decisions we take are pupil-driven, evidence-based and have the desired outcomes.

As part of our annual monitoring schedule, in the autumn term governors joined members of the Pupil Leadership Team (PLT) and the Headship Team on a Learning Walk. The focus of the walk was to see how Thinking Schools tools (Thinking Maps, Thinking Hats and Habits of Mind – for more information [click here](#)) are used to support children's learning. After the walk, we met to discuss what we had seen. The PLT were very articulate and spoke confidently about the methodologies we saw being used. It was clear that Thinking Schools pervades all aspects of life at ESPS. It was also wonderful to see lots of evidence of the school values of happiness and resilience, as well as outstanding behaviour in every classroom.

In the next couple of terms, governors from the Teaching and Learning Committee will be meeting with several subject leaders, as well as visiting classrooms to get a better idea of what it is like to be a pupil at ESPS. We're not there to judge the lessons, but to experience them – to see East Sheen Primary in action!

These are just a couple of examples of the monitoring activities undertaken by the governors. We are extremely well supported in our work by our Clerk to Governors, Alex Watson-Jones. Sadly, Alex will be moving out of London at the end of the academic year and we are currently recruiting for her replacement. Please [click here](#) if you would like to know more about the role.

On behalf of all the governors, I wish you an enjoyable half-term break.

Nathalie Townley



The benefits of being an inclusive school

We're very proud to describe ourselves as a truly inclusive school, but what does that actually mean and why is it so beneficial?

Inclusivity is more than just a buzzword; it's a guiding principle that makes our school a wonderful place for every child to learn and grow, and it lies at the very core of our values and beliefs.

Through ensuring that every child and family feels welcome, supported and believed in, we can secure excellent learning outcomes for all children, and foster a sense of moral responsibility in our young people as they learn to celebrate rich diversity around them. There are a few specific benefits we wanted to highlight here that come from being an inclusive school:

- High quality resourcing and expertise

Our school has the expertise and resources to support children who experience difficulties with learning, emotional regulation and social interaction. While these resources are particularly important for children with specific difficulties, we're able to further develop all children's learning skills, emotional intelligence and social skills through whole-school approaches such as Thinking Schools or Zones of Regulation. Through various events and activities, our students learn about different cultures, traditions and abilities, fostering a deep appreciation for the uniqueness of every individual.

- Higher rates of progress and high-quality teaching

The school is committed to delivering what is termed 'Quality First Education'. In practice, this means using Rosenshine's 'Principles of Instruction' to ensure new learning material is skilfully presented and that the curriculum is designed to deepen understanding and build lifelong knowledge. These principles support children of all learning dispositions, and our progress scores are above average for all pupil groups across the attainment spectrum, with all learners benefitting from the need for excellent teaching.

- Improved empathy skills

When we learn alongside classmates who are different from us, we learn to develop empathy. We put ourselves in their shoes and understand that everyone has unique strengths and challenges. This helps children to become kind, compassionate and ready to help others. It also helps children to develop their teamwork and problem-solving skills.

- Lifelong values and preparation for the future

By promoting inclusivity, we instil in our students essential values like respect, kindness and tolerance. These values stay with them throughout their lives, making them responsible, compassionate citizens of the world. The ability to work with people from all walks of life is a valuable skill and our inclusive school prepares students for the future by teaching them how to collaborate effectively with a range of peers.

- Empowering a supportive community through celebrating difference

Children make friends with classmates who share interests, but also discover amazing people who are different from them. These friendships open minds and hearts to the whole world. Inclusivity creates a strong support network that extends beyond the classroom.

Regardless of their background or abilities, every student can excel at our school. Our teachers work tirelessly to provide individualised support and extend, ensuring that each child reaches their full potential, and we thank you for being a part of our special community.



Harry Page

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Our open spaces at East Sheen

As you will have seen over the last few months, our refresh of the school's open spaces has been completed. This has been a real team effort. The school site is now looking incredible and is a brilliant asset for the school community. The new astroturf pitch has been a huge hit with the children and gives them a great resource. It's been wonderful to see the smiles on the children's faces at breaktime as they enjoy the new facilities.

Additionally, enhancements to the playgrounds and the reception area have improved the play spaces for everyone. On tours, prospective parents have been really impressed by all the facilities that the school has to offer. A huge thanks again to all involved.

Part of what sets East Sheen Primary School apart is our ability to offer such a wide and deep curriculum. Central to that is our children having the right space and facilities to explore the outside world and understand the importance that nature and climate will play in the decades ahead.



Emmet Regan

How we work with other schools

The Governors are always pleased to hear of the efforts ESPS makes to share our good practice with other schools. It reinforces our confidence that the school is at the leading edge of education. We've recently supported four local primary schools to enhance their writing provision and broader curriculum design. We've also worked widely with school leaders across SW London to improve standards, including sharing our experiences supporting children with additional needs. We were also proud last year to be asked to host 14 teachers from Lithuania to showcase the benefits of being a Thinking School.

Collaboration is a two-way street, of course, and ESPS can learn hugely from the experience of other schools too. Our Year 5 and 6 pupils have benefited from outreach from St Paul's School, while St Paul's Girls School has connected with ESPS through its bursary programme and in using AI to support primary education.

We're also proud of our work to support pupils in their transition to secondary school, so we are working more closely than ever with RPA as our biggest secondary destination school. From next academic year, ESPS will additionally host the ISEB exams for pupils applying to independent secondary schools.

Andrew Miller

English as an additional language

Lots of languages are spoken by East Sheen Primary School pupils - in fact, over 30 different languages! As of January 2024, 49% of children in the school speak a language in addition to English. The largest groups are Turkish, Spanish, Cantonese, Russian, Italian and Ukrainian. Other languages include Afrikaans, Albanian, Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese (other than Cantonese), Dutch/Flemish, Filipino, Finnish, French, Georgian, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, Pashto, Persian/Farsi, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, Swedish, Tamil, Urdu, Vietnamese and Arabic.

This makes East Sheen Primary School a rich and vibrant environment, where children's individual heritages and languages can be celebrated every day. Initiatives such as the ESPS Song Bank and the Diversity Ambassadors and special occasions like International Day in Reception reinforce our inclusive ethos.

Children join the school with different levels of English language fluency, so the staff are skilled in making sure that lessons are accessible to everyone. Our EAL lead, Laura Linter, is part of a support group within the local area and receives regular training which she shares. We use visual support (diagrams, grids, 'Colourful Semantics' and Widgeit), prior vocabulary teaching and dual language books to help children access learning. In addition, we pair new children up with a buddy, ideally one who speaks the same home language, who can help them learn from and with their peers.

We're delighted that our academic results show that children with English as an additional language make excellent progress and achieve extremely well in national tests.

Susannah Milligan

Safeguarding

Our pupils' welfare and happiness are paramount; allowing them to thrive and shine at school is our primary objective. The Governing Body works alongside the school to safeguard all pupils. In the autumn term, the Governing Board reviewed the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, available on the website or by clicking [here](#).

At the last full Governor meeting, the governing board sat two short tests to ensure that their knowledge of the updated Safeguarding Policy was current, and you'll be pleased to know that everyone passed with flying colours!

With more time spent in the online world, it's worth understanding how to keep your children safe online. The school has some valuable resources on the [Safeguarding page](#) for setting up devices safely and supporting your child's use of social media and online games



Jess Oliver

New Governor Information

We have welcomed two new governors to the board in recent months. Here they tell us a bit about what it means to be a governor at East Sheen.

Tristan Chapple: Although it's early days for me as governor, my first few months have helped me build a stronger connection to the place where our daughter has flourished for the last five years. I love the school's strong sense of fun and purpose, and now I'm starting to appreciate all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to make East Sheen Primary so special. The inspiring leadership team make a difficult job look easy, spinning all the plates needed to keep a school of our size running smoothly. But perhaps most importantly, this is a happy place. I was lucky enough to attend a Learning Walk through the school recently, accompanied by members of the Pupil Leadership Team. It was uplifting to see our incredible teachers in action and to get a better sense of the remarkable learning environment. This is an amazing school, and I'm delighted to be a small part of it.

Raef Jackson: Joining the Governing Body at ESPS has taught me that beyond academic excellence, the heart of this institution beats with a profound dedication echoed by its exceptional staff. In every interaction with these committed individuals, I've discovered a collective mission—to nurture children not merely as learners but as happy, curious, resilient and kind individuals. One of the best ways I have seen this exemplified is the school's wonderful Thinking Schools methodology, which is seamlessly integrated into the school's culture of excellence. ESPS's impact also extends far beyond the confines of the classroom, reaching into the community through robust connections

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with neighbouring schools, underrepresented communities and local charities. As I continue as a governor, the prospect of delving deeper into ESPS's methods and witnessing its enduring commitment to the success of every student fills me with excitement.

Welcoming our new Deputy Headteacher

At the start of the school year, we were lucky to welcome Mrs Jones as our new Deputy Headteacher. We caught up with her to understand what her first few months at East Sheen have been like.

Can you tell us a bit of background about yourself and your previous school?

I've been teaching for twenty years. I taught in inner London before moving to a school in Richmond where I taught and was part of the Headship Team. During this time, I also lectured at St Mary's University on their Primary Education (BA Hons) and PGCE courses. I'm particularly passionate about making education accessible for all our students and am dedicated to ensuring that all children fulfil their potential. I had always heard about East Sheen and its excellent reputation. When I saw the job for Deputy Headteacher being advertised, I leapt at the chance to be part of this amazing school.

How has your first term been at East Sheen Primary?

It's been busy! It's been wonderful to get to know so many new children and their families. It's always daunting starting a new job, but everyone has made me feel so welcome.

What has been the thing that you have enjoyed the most about East Sheen since you joined?

Finding out all about the Thinking Schools ethos and seeing it in practice. Also, being part of an all-through primary school. When training to be a teacher, I specialised in Early Years practice. So, after being in a junior school for the last ten years, it's wonderful to be back in a school with such an excellent Early Years and KS1 setting too.

Was there anything that surprised you about East Sheen when you joined?

How active the PTA is! I have been bowled over by how supportive the families are. We're very lucky to be part of such a strong community.

Describe East Sheen Primary in three words?

Welcoming
Inspiring
Fun

Tell us a fun fact about yourself?

My favourite animals are tigers. I also have a crazy, orange cat at home called Marley that I adopted from a rescue centre in Barnes.

What are you most looking forward to over the coming two terms?

Lots! I'm really looking forward to all the exciting events we have planned over the next two terms, including trips and the juice bike. I'm also looking forward to warmer days and enjoying the outdoor spaces in the sunshine!

Jess Zayouna



The Headship Team: (left to right) Victoria Strang, Assistant Headteacher; Harry Page, Headteacher; Polly Jones, Deputy Headteacher.

Governor Information

This year we have welcomed Silvia Martinez as an Associate to the Children, Families and Communities committee and Manik Fernando as an Associate to the Resources committee.

You can find out more about who we are and what we do by visiting the school website [here](#). We are always on the lookout for new governors and continue to work to diversify our board, welcoming interest from parents or carers from Black, Asian and other Global and Majority backgrounds. Please direct any enquiries to our clerk, Alex Watson Jones, at clerktogovernors@eastsheen.richmond.sch.uk