

Newsletter from the Chair of Governors**Spring Term 2017****Dear Parents and Carers,**

The spring term has been an exciting term in both schools. I hope your children enjoyed their learning and all the activities they took part in.

Latest News

This term we have welcomed three new governors, Charlotte Leigh, Ajantha Tennakoon and Biljana Elia. Many of you probably know Charlotte as she is a parent with a child in the Infant school and a child in the Junior school. Ajantha is an ex-parent whose two sons went to the Infant and Junior schools. Biljana Elia is the EYFS leader and the new Infant teacher governor.

We are very pleased to have them on board, they are both bringing new enthusiasm and skills to our Governing Body.

Mr Robert Wood, Assistant Head Teacher and class teacher in Year 4 is leaving us at the end of this term. Mr Wood is joining another school in Westminster as Deputy Head Teacher. Congratulations on his success and our best wishes.

The Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership team are aware that this class has already had changes over the year and that it may have left the children and parents/carers feeling slightly insecure. In order to ensure that the children receive the best quality teaching and care possible in the Summer Term, the school has recruited Mr Tim Warren to take over the role of Assistant Head Teacher and class teacher for 3 days per week for the duration of the Summer Term.

Many of you probably know Mr Warren as he was an Assistant Head Teacher in the Junior School a few years ago. He has already met and taught the children along with Mr Wood in the past few weeks and has met with parents during the consultation evenings. We are reassured that he will be an asset to the class and work well and sensitively with the children. Mrs Vajdics who is well known to the children will also be working with the class.

We have now recruited a new Assistant Head Teacher for next academic year, Mr Nikhil Glazelle.

It is with great sadness that we inform you that Learning Support Assistant Mrs Selena Thompson, who had been on sick leave since April 2016, passed away over the weekend. Mrs Thompson worked at Garden Suburb Junior School for 12 years and was a valued member of the team. She also worked in 'Fun Time' the after school childcare club. Mrs Thompson will be greatly missed by everyone. Our most sincere condolences go to her husband and daughter.

Secondary Schools Admission

Thank you to Shivangi Smythe for all her work during the Archer Academy admission consultation! Thank you also to all parents/carers for being so active in this matter and responding to the consultation. It was a great success and GSS has secured 15 places over and above the normal admission process for the academic year 2018 -2019.

Last week you all received a letter from Christ College inviting you to a public meeting. This is their first step in consulting on their admission policy and the possibility of becoming Co-educational. Christ

College already admits girls in the Sixth Form. They are now exploring the possibility of becoming a mixed school. We will give you more information next term.

Junior school update

The Junior School has continued to focus on

- Delivering quality teaching and learning;
- Developing writing at greater depth;
- Developing children's behaviour for learning by focussing on the following Learning Powers: Resilience; Reflectiveness; Resourcefulness; Respectfulness;
- Developing PE teaching & learning across the school to increase physical activity.

All through the term, children have worked hard, supported by quality teaching to reflect on their writing and focus on re-drafting to make their work better by using a richer vocabulary and applying their spelling and grammar.

Although, as part of the schools ethos, behaviour for learning has always been part of the teaching, the school is developing children's learning powers. You may have seen the various displays in school aimed at the children so that they understand what qualities, working attitudes and skills to develop to become effective learners. These qualities are explored in all lessons. It is important that you talk about these with your children at home and encourage them to use these attitudes when doing their homework and any other activities that demand effort and persistence in order to progress.

The physical education (PE) curriculum has been reviewed and a comprehensive programme of training for teachers has taken place to develop the quality of teaching and learning in PE. In addition, through the Travel Plan there has been an increased focus on cycling. A grant was awarded to fund cycle training for all of the Year 3 pupils, which has been a great success. We have also taken part in the 'Big Pedal', an initiative to encourage scooting and cycling to school. Look out for cycling lessons for parents next term too!

Children's progress data per year group to date show that all year groups are doing well and are on target.

As part of the broader curriculum, the school organised a series of events including a fun and lively World Book Day. It was a pleasure to see children and teachers alike in very imaginative costumes. Science week was also a great success and children were very taken by the hatching of the ducklings.

Finally, the beautiful displays around the school are a testimony to the quality of the children's work and the breadth of the curriculum.

Infant school update

All in the Infant school have been working hard on developing their priorities for this year, mainly: better assessment for learning to support children; better progress in writing; better use of support staff in class; improve the consistency of quality teaching across year groups; develop child-Led learning in Reception; focus on behaviour for learning.

All leaders on the senior and middle management team are now working with their new responsibilities, ensuring good assessment of pupils' progress and attainment and working closely with class teachers, class assistants and children to secure best teaching and learning practice across the school.

Most children in Year 1 and Year 2 are making good progress.

Children in Reception have made good progress and are benefitting from a focus on continuous provision which develops qualities for becoming a more independent learner.

Learning behaviour is also a focus for the Infant School. Staff have had training on this and the behaviours, together with their animal characters, will be introduced to children next term. This approach focuses on the essential qualities, which are necessary for the children to engage with their learning and persevere. It encourages children to reflect on their work, take responsibility for improving it and understand that “making mistakes” is part of learning. Parents and carers will hear more about how they can support the school in developing children’s learning behaviours next term.

As part of the broader curriculum, the infant children have also participated in World Book Day, celebrated Passover and Easter festivals in assemblies and of course worked and created beautiful art work and pieces of writing relating to Kenwood House. The children’s displays around the school are truly beautiful and evidence of the quality of children’s work.

E-Safety & Computer Games

Head Teachers, staff and the Governing Body take E-safety for our pupils very seriously. Head Teachers remind parents/carers on a regular basis of the importance of supervising your children when they are using/playing on electronic devices at home. Yet, staff are still made aware of instances involving children playing age inappropriate games or using social media.

We cannot stress enough how important it is for parents/carers to be vigilant in this matter. Inappropriate games are often violent and have a detrimental impact on young children. Use of social media, unsupervised, can lead to dangerous situations. **So, please do have regular conversations about this with your child and supervise them.** You can talk to your child’s teacher or the Head Teacher if you need support or have any concern in this matter.

Governing Body Impact

Named governors have visited both schools regularly to see evidence of progress related to the Schools Improvement Plans. It is an opportunity for schools’ management, staff and governors to work closely together and ensure that all children make good progress and that both schools work to their best standards.

Governors have also been involved in recruitment, working on premises issues and of course working with the children in the gardens.

At the beginning of next term we will be running Parents/Carers, Pupils and Staff surveys as well as evaluating the work of the Governing Body and both schools progress.

Thank you to both schools staff for collaborating with us and for all the work done this term.

We wish all our parents, carers, children and schools’ staff a very good Easter Holiday.

Best Wishes,

Chair of Governors
Françoise Wagneur

Vice-Chair
Jane Harris