

# Governing Board of Barleyhurst Park Primary School



Chair of Governors: James Armstrong Cert. Ed., BA (Hons), M.Ed., FCIEA.

Dear Parents or Carers

January 2019

I wish you all a belated Happy New Year.

The recent Ofsted Inspection Report, sent to you by Mrs Smith, was a well-deserved confirmation of the good education your children are receiving at Barleyhurst Park Primary.

As Chair of Governors I congratulate particularly the staff but also you for making this happen as well as the pupils who on the day of the inspection were, as always, excellent.

I said in my last letter to you that by the time of the next Ofsted visit I wanted this to be an outstanding school. Regrettably they inspected too soon! In some ways though it now gives all of us more time to achieve that status.

I need to pay tribute to my fellow governors who all but one found time in their busy schedules to drop everything and meet with the inspector. This is a rare thing to happen in inspections and I know that the inspector was impressed by the commitment of governors.

It is the Governing Board's intention to provide regular newsletters to you about our work including details of visits made to the school sometimes from me but hopefully more from my colleagues. I meet with the Head roughly every two weeks to discuss many areas of the school and then try to visit classrooms or talk to staff and pupils about particular subjects in the curriculum. My governor colleagues also visit, as able, to look at particular school aspects. Details of the visits are recorded and shared with the Head and the rest of the Board

I attach a report for your information made by a governor looking at the procedure around school trips as part of our governors' monitoring role.

I hope that regular information from governors as well as school is helpful to you. Feedback from you is valuable to governors so feel free to contact me via the school. I must stress however that any issues relating to the day to day operation of the school is a matter for the school and should be addressed to Mrs Smith.

Thank you for your time

James Armstrong

**Barleyhurst Park Primary School**

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# GOVERNOR VISIT RECORD

<b>Name</b> Redacted <b>Date</b> Redacted
<b>Purpose of visit:</b> To understand the procedures in place for school trips.
<b>Links with the School Plan</b>
<b>Questions to explore during the visit:</b> What systems and paperwork are completed when organising trips? What are the benefits of trips?
<b>Governor observations and comments:</b> I met with Redacted to discuss the systems and processes in place. The school uses an online system, Evolve, to book and risk assess all trips. This is a well-established, password protected system listing most venues that the school might want to visit. Whilst it may appear complicated, training is provided and it ensures that all stages of the process are completed before moving onto the next step so it offers a safeguard to the school in this respect. It was clear that each trip has learning objectives associated with it, listing primary and secondary purposes and objectives to ensure links with the curriculum for each class. Insurance and risk assessments are completed, although there are pre-populated templates, Amy explained that they never just replicate a template but always adjust for the specifics of the trips and any individual children, some of whom will also have their own personal risk assessment. The system can deal with ongoing trips (e.g. the weekly swimming lessons) and one-off trips. After each trip the school completes an evaluation thereby offering feedback to Evolve and the venue, If the school wants to attend a venue that isn't currently available through Evolve, this is submitted to the council for approval so pre-planning and early notification is vital. The school aims to offer one trip per class per term, both local and further afield. Parental approval and payment is now via ParentMail [parental perspective - this is a HUGE benefit to be able to do online/on your phone]. The benefit of electronic filing via the system is clear and I felt confident that data protection was in place as well as thoroughness in ensuring all risks are identified, assessed, mitigated and managed. I met with 6 children, across Years 2, 3, 5 and 6, The children were all articulate, confident and keen to discuss their experience of school trips. It was clear that each trip has both taught them a lot but also created memories that have stayed with them subsequently. They were able to explain which had been their favourite trip and why, to discuss some of the staff at venues and

what they had done to make them feel important, they understood the links to the curriculum and how it was improving their understanding. Trips that they referenced included Storybook Museum, Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, Woburn Safari Park, Holdenby House, Open Air Museum, Safety Centre, Space Centre, Dominos, British Museum, St Mary's Church, Pirate Golf and Tesco Express! The breadth was huge and it was hugely rewarding to hear how each of these trips had enriched their experience of school and how much they valued it. The older children understood the cost of such trips and the fact that the school has finite resources to support such opportunities which was refreshing to hear.

**Next steps:**

For me, I think it would be good to attend a trip and see this in action - I did once present to children from Barleyhurst at a trip to St Mary's so I have seen a small part of these area and as a parent I do get the insight from my own child but I think this understanding could be strengthened.

Further than that, it is clear that the school has tried and tested venues that work well for the children's learning and enable them to deepen understanding. I think the next step is for the school to consider something different, perhaps a residential trip. As a parent whose child was lucky enough to go to Germany with the school I know the huge value that such an opportunity provided and it would be great to see something like that again.

**Any key issues arising for the governing body:** this is a well-managed and well organised area of school activity. I have no concerns to raise and commend the school and staff for providing such fun opportunities that are clearly valued and appreciated by the children.

**Action following governing body meeting:**