



GOVERNORS' NEWS

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ANNUAL PARENTAL SURVEY 2015/16 – your responses

“The school seems to have very good discipline, alongside encouragement of warm relationships” (Year 3 parent)

“Great teaching: the teachers know and care about my child and are eager to help him reach his full potential. My child is also very motivated and enthusiastic about what he is taught, so lessons must be fun and engaging” (Year 4 parent)

Many thanks for your responses to the annual school survey. Apart from the importance of knowing what you think about the school, it is also interesting to see whether parental perceptions match those of the school leadership. It is very pleasing to note that this is the case.

Although only a few parents actually responded to the survey, many comments were given and these were overwhelmingly positive.

Amongst the school's strengths, parents cited: the quality of teaching, the breadth of the curriculum, the range of extra-curricular opportunities, the strong leadership, good communication and an encouraging, caring attitude towards the children.

It was difficult to find any common themes amongst aspects parents felt could be improved due to the small number of responses. These had to be interpreted more as an individual parent's perception on a particular issue rather than the general parental view. Greater consistency with the class blogs, and more clarification on the system for learning the times tables were two areas mentioned. Steps have already been taken within school to address both of these.

OFSTED PARENT VIEW

Thank you also to the parents who completed the “Parent View” questionnaire. Just over 40 views have been registered for 2015/16, and these too are overwhelmingly positive. Ofsted reviews the results regularly when considering whether an inspection may be required. The results also provide useful information for parents of prospective pupils, so the more responses given, the more accurate the overview of the school. You can complete the questionnaire at any time, so please take just a moment to register your views if you have not done so already. Many thanks.

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

or via the link on the school website under Statutory Information or Information for parents.

SCHOOL PRIORITIES

Early in the summer term, governors, teachers and school leaders come together to review progress towards meeting the 3 main priorities in this year's School Improvement Plan, and also to start identifying the priorities for the coming year. So far this year:

- **The New Primary Curriculum** (introduced in September 2014): Teaching staff, in their dual roles of subject leaders and members of year group teams, have been continuing to review, enrich and embed the new curriculum such that it reflects the school's track record of providing an outstanding education for all children and across all subjects.
- **Assessment – Age Related Expectations:** Nationally, the Assessment Agenda is in a period of transition. At BHJS, we have adopted the Herts for Learning 'Next Steps' pupil tracking system, which will need to change and adapt yet further as the National Agenda becomes clearer. The school's priority is to ensure that teachers, children and parents understand the next steps in learning that children need to make in order to meet or exceed Age Related Expectations (ARE). A further letter will be sent to all parents during the summer term to clarify what is meant by age related expectations.
- **School Ethos, Vision and Values:** the school's Vision and Values Statement has been comprehensively reviewed. The new Statement, in the form of a bold and eye-catching poster, is now widely displayed around school and has been published on the school website. It is being used as a 'living and working' document which plays an integral part in everyday life at the school.

The 'ACADEMISATION AGENDA': what is the position at BHJS?

For some years now, the Government has been encouraging schools to convert to academy status; a step which the majority of secondary schools have indeed taken. This means that they receive their funding directly from central Government and are no longer maintained by the Local Authority. To date, very few primary schools have become academies.

At BHJS, we have been fully aware of the Academy Agenda seeking the advice of an expert as far back as March 2012 to find out the pros and cons of converting, what the process involved, and what the impact would be for our school. To take this major and irreversible step we would need to be certain of the benefits and improvements it would bring to the quality of education we can offer. This is not something we can see at present. We shall, however, need to make the 'academisation agenda' a priority in coming months following the publication of the Government's March 2016 Education White Paper.

The Government now expects that "**by 2020, all schools will either have already converted to academy status, or be in the process of doing so**". BHJS, along with the majority of other primary schools in Hertfordshire, is currently maintained by the Local Authority. The Government envisages that "**the role of local authorities in maintaining schools will cease entirely by the end of 2022**". Hence, we have no option now other than to take this 'academisation agenda' very seriously, whether we feel it is in the best interests of our school, or not. At the present time, there are far more questions than answers about a viable way forward; for instance, we would not be able to convert as a standalone academy, but would need to do so as part of a group of other schools under the umbrella of a Multi-Academy Trust. We shall seek to keep fully informed as this agenda evolves and consider all appropriate options as these become clearer.