



Harnham C. of E. Junior School
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Thursday 20th July 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians

State of the Nation

When I write this State of the Nation letter each year, I look back and wonder how quickly it's gone – even though there have been days which passed slowly – and consider how far we have come, despite life's attempts to get in the way.

Academic progress in each year group is at least Good overall, even against the new more rigorous expectations, with many elements which are Outstanding. Although the end of key-stage SATs results have not yet been officially validated, they look really good compared with those of our statistical neighbours (similar schools in a similar context).

In School it has been a year in which we have moved forward in provision; not only does academic work flourish – but the evident enjoyment of learning continues to grow as well. For example, the performance that we undertook in the Cathedral on 30th June (to which we were the only School invited by the English Speaking Union) built children's confidence and amazed the audience with the ease with which the children performed; one parent said the self-confidence and esteem shown gave them, as a parent, confidence in their child's abilities to integrate successfully into secondary school.

Whilst on every occasion, performances across the school have been inspiring, they have been very different and original – showing a breadth of talent and experience. Furthering experiences and making learning memorable is what we think benefits children the most – and this engagement of emotion is what comes across most clearly when Year 6 children are talking about their memories of School. Often this comes through learning from mistakes, whether their own or others', and the way in which we deal with them.

This year we have had a focus on children's involvement in sporting activities and this has benefited a great number of children with a range of sporting experiences beyond those for which we normally cater.

Although things are always improving, we continue to try out changes in process to make the children's experience better and their learning easier. We have noticed, for instance, that on wet days (when – to the tune of violins - I am standing outside in the deep end of the playground) the children go into class and settle very calmly, allowing them to start lessons efficiently and in a calm frame of mind. From September, we are going to allow the children to filter into class in the same way, even when it's not raining. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be on the Playground to pass on any messages to individual teachers.

Staffing Changes for Next Year

We say goodbye to Miss Holloway today, because she is moving to another local School. We also say goodbye to Miss Sprague, who (brave thing) is going to start training to be a teacher in the new academic year. We also say goodbye to Mrs Knight who has worked part-time in the Reception Office for the last 17 years, and is now going to work in the charity sector.

We look forward to welcoming some new faces – Mrs Martindale, who is coming to lead and teach in Year 6, Mr Blake who will work with Mrs Quartley in Juniper Class in Year 5 and Miss O'Connor-Marsh who is joining us to teach in Year 3. Early next year, we will be saying au revoir to both Mrs Agha & Mrs Connolly as they go off on maternity leave.

It is always our intention to maintain growth through working together – and again would like to thank all of those who have helped in so many ways – whether that be coming in to School to listen to readers; accompanying children on the many trips, raising much need funds with the H.S.A. or by helping children to prepare for specific events – or by helping with homework and leaning tables/spellings at home. On behalf of everyone here, thank you – it is that mutual support which makes the School a community – and benefits the children enormously.

Have a great break, we look forward to seeing you on Tuesday 5th September because we have two School Development Days at the beginning of term. Excitingly, Year 5 will go straight to their residential trip to New Barn on that day – what an opportunity to get to know their new classmates, and catch up with their present ones.

So that you can plan ahead, along with the Infant School, we have planned the following School Development Days for 2017-2018 (there is still one to allocate, we will let you know as soon as we can when it will be):

Friday 1st September 2017
Monday 4th September 2017
Thursday 4th January 2018
Friday 5th January 2018

If you are moving on, we all wish you the very best for your future; please don't forget us, but come back to visit, and let us know how you are getting on.

Yours sincerely



Mr L Coles – Headteacher