



**Barnes Farm  
Infant School**

**Building Futures  
Inspiring Success**

Henniker Gate, Chelmsford  
Essex CM2 6QH

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[www.barnesfarminfants.co.uk](http://www.barnesfarminfants.co.uk)

**Headteacher:** Mrs Z Farmer

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

We have reached the final day of our school year and it has certainly been a very different one to normal. I don't think that any of us could have predicted the events in March which caused us to have to close the school rapidly and start to implement plans with barely any notice. It is testament to our fantastic staffing team at Barnes Farm Infant School that we have managed to achieve so much between the full shut down and where we are today.

I would like to say on behalf of the Local Governing Body a thank you to all the staff who reacted admirably to the change in circumstance, and have worked tirelessly over the last four months to keep the school open to key worker children, to support the phased return to school and who have been tirelessly planning what a return to school in September will look like.

I would also like to thank yourselves as parents and carers who have had to cope with not only home-schooling, the gradual reopening of parts of the school and the practical considerations we have had to implement. We know that this has not been easy for you and your cooperation has been very much appreciated.

### Local Governing Body Work

As a Local Governing Body the lockdown has provided its own challenges, the most significant being that we have been unable to visit the school and review the practical working environment, teaching and interaction with the staff and pupils. We have however been able to maintain our Local Governing Body meetings using online applications and we have all now acquired a useful set of skills. As Chair, I have been in regular contact with Mrs Farmer and the Senior Leadership team helping to support and review the Covid-19 proposals and risk assessments that have been put in place and in addition attended Trustee / Chair meetings with the Academy Trust leadership team to ensure we have representation on trust-wide issues. We have also been reviewing the changes to the many policies that the staff have had to amend in light of the new circumstances and maintained an oversight, working with the Trust Finance Officer of the schools budget and the affect Covid-19 has had and will continue to have on the school.



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As always, the health and welfare of our pupils has been paramount, and we continue to monitor and review the school safeguarding policies and procedures which were enhanced during the lockdown. We very much appreciate the extra time and effort that this took our staff and have confidence that the school has its pupil's safety and wellbeing at the heart of its business.

Prior to lockdown Governors were busy completing monitoring visits in the areas of safeguarding, young carers, science, health and safety, PE, PSHE, SEND provision, mathematics development, literacy and phonics. We were represented at the introduction of the new Pabulum meals service and were able to attend the Christmas presentations. Regrettably our much-anticipated trip to Stansted Mountfitchet Castle was postponed.

### Multi Academy Trust Work

As Governors we have been able to access online learning and development via the Trusts training scheme to ensure we are able to be up to date in current practice and have had the opportunity to attend two-day long courses covering safeguarding and preparation for Ofsted. Both were invaluable and gave us another opportunity to meet with other governors within the Trust to exchange ideas and practices. We have also been subject to a Trust-wide review of our Governance by an external auditor, appointed by the Trust to help us with our ways of working and ensure we meet best practice. We look forward to a bespoke governance training day in the Autumn term that sadly had to be postponed this summer.

### Changes to the Governing Body

This year, we have welcomed Mrs K Corbett as our new parent governor representative and Mrs Y Spence as a community governor. Both bring a range of experience and knowledge to the role which we are sure will help the local governing body provide the best support it can to the school. Sadly, Mrs A Johnson stood down from her role at the end of her four-year tenure. Having been with us since the start of the Academy Trust Mrs G Box has stood down as our link trust governor to concentrate on centralised Trust work now that procedures and pathways have been firmly established between the school and Trust. Both will be greatly missed and have our thanks and gratitude.



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## Successes

We are grateful for the feedback from parents via the parent surveys and we would like to reiterate the positive things that have occurred such as the introduction of our Barnes Farm Pathways, Capes of Success, and improved communications. The provision of breakfast and after school club was going from strength to strength prior to lockdown and we are delighted the school has been able to work on the reintroduction of this from September (subject to government provisions) and to introduce EBNO care days within the school holiday. We look forward to seeing the school develop on these areas and continue to introduce new and exciting things to enrich the education and experience of the children.

## Farewells

The end of term also brings with it the departure of some of our staff members who are moving on to new roles and challenges. We are very sad to say goodbye and a huge thank you to:

Mrs Tully and Mrs Hayward from our amazing Tawny Owl teaching team.  
Mrs Barnett from our incredibly supportive office team.  
Mrs Farrell and Mrs O'Callaghan from our LSA team  
Mrs Finlay from our MDA team

We are very grateful for the support and dedication of all of you, we wish you well in your chosen futures and you will all be missed.

## Last Word

We appreciate the school has been through significant period of change and we wish to give reassurances that we will all be doing our best as a governing body to ensure that decisions made for the short and long-term future of the school will be made with consideration and care to what is best to comply with government advice and for the continuing development of the school and for the wellbeing and education of the children. We wish all our Year 2 children a fond farewell and good luck in their future and are looking forward to meeting the new cohort in our foundation classes in September.



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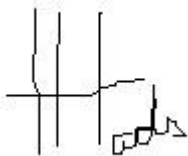
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All that remains is to thank ALL children for being utterly amazing, coping admirably and for continuing to make our school, in whatever form it may be, an exciting vibrant and wonderful place to be.

Enjoy the holidays!



Mrs H Hards  
Chair of Governors