

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of another academic year, we're thrilled to update you on the progress we've made together. The partnership between home and school plays a crucial role in the experiences and achievements of our children, and we deeply value your continued support and involvement.

This newsletter is an opportunity to keep you informed about the work of the governing body, the progress of our school, and the initiatives we are pursuing to ensure every child thrives.

Thank you.

The Governors

Governor Changes

We are extremely sad to report that after seven years dedicated service, Sue Whittle has decided to step down from her role as Governor at Barns Green. As a retired teacher and educational adviser, Sue has brought an invaluable range of skills to the role, supporting the leadership team to raise standards in teaching and learning. Sue has overseen a number of key strategic changes at the school, always with professionalism and discretion, drawing on her wide experience to navigate challenges as they have arisen. She has taken a particular interest in those children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and has championed their cause at all levels. Sue will be much missed.

After two years, Jess Martin has also decided to step back from Governance, at least for now while her growing family is very young. As a GP, Jess was especially interested in staff and pupil wellbeing and has raised the profile of that within the school ensuring that all avenues of support are fully available. With her NHS background, she brought a different, fresh perspective to meetings – always very useful. We wish Jess well.

If you, or someone you know, would be interested in joining our lovely team, please leave your name at the office or email the Chair of Governors (Dawn) dmartin@barnsgreen.org.uk.

Solar Panels

We are very pleased to report that we have been successful in securing a match funding grant from Itchingfield Parish Council (IPC) to extend our solar panel array. The payback period is relatively short and this will enable us to divert more of our money into directly supporting children's learning instead of paying spiralling electricity costs. Furthermore, this will help to increase our sustainability rating, something we are very conscious of while teaching the citizens of tomorrow. The new panels will be installed during the last week of the Summer holidays.

Wraparound Care

Following the news that JAG/Pioneer before and after school care wished to default on their contract at the end of this term, Governors have supported the school to source an alternative. This has proved challenging due to the small numbers involved as many companies view the contract as unviable. However, we are delighted to announce that Premier Education is keen to work with us, running sports clubs and supporting PE in the curriculum as well as providing before and after school care. This is a really positive step as we understand how important this provision is to working parents. Please do support Premier Education in any way you can as we are faced with a 'use it or lose it' situation for the future.

School Dinners

Following concerns about the quality of school dinners, Governors explored alternatives. We were delighted to discover that the [Easy Lunch Company](#) is based about only eight minutes from school and will cook fresh meals every day and deliver them hot to school from September 2026. We hope that many of you took the opportunity to visit their taster session on 16th June and that many more parents will use the school lunch providers next year. These meals are **free** to all children in Reception, Y1 and Y2 and also to [families eligible for free school meals](#) in KS2. Other children in KS2 pay £3.20 per meal, vegetables, salad, pudding and drink, which is excellent value.

Free School Meals and Pupil Premium

The government is changing the free school meals (FSM) eligibility criteria and many families will become eligible for the first time under the expanded FSM criteria. [Registering for a free school meal eligibility check](#) could raise an extra grant of £1,320 per year, per child for our school, to fund valuable support like extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities, even if your child does not eat school meals – although, of course, we hope they will. The system is changing so to be eligible for free meals from September 2026, please do not delay if you think you may hit any of the triggers below.

- Universal Credit (with a new earned income of less than £7400 per year)
- Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income below £16190)
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit?

This additional money is available from the government for every child whose parent is receiving one of the state benefits listed above. It is therefore important to register for a free school meal eligibility check before the end of September, even if your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2, so that your child's school receives as much funding as possible.

The school also receives additional funding for children who have a parent serving in or retired from the forces, and for looked after children or previously looked after children. Please let the school office know if your family fits either of these criteria.

Run Barns Green

Would anyone who is intending to take part in Run Barns Green this year be willing to obtain sponsorship for the school? As well as the fundraising element, this raises the profile of the school at the event. Please give your name to the school office or contact dmartin@barnsgreen.org.uk if you would be willing to help.