

6th October 2017

Dear parents, carers and children

In this newsletter, I would like to present my vision for the school for the coming school year and beyond. You will have noticed a lot of the physical changes to the school – the playground resurfaces and the new nursery are the most striking examples – but we have also been doing a huge amount to improve teaching and learning.

My top priority is to support every child to enjoy learning and do their very best. We need our children to be leaving Stroud Green with the confidence and ability to succeed in secondary school and later life. With that in mind, we have been putting together a brilliant team to make sure all of our children get the excellent education they deserve.

If you would like to discuss any of the changes below, my door is always open. I can be reached by email on head@stroudgreenprimary.com, in person in the playground or via an appointment booked at the school office.

Kind regards

Cal Shaw
Head Teacher, Stroud Green Primary School

Improvements to the school

Here are some of the biggest changes, which will start to have an immediate impact over the next term:

- In July, Beth Stickland joined the school as a new Deputy Head. Her focus is on teaching and learning. She is working with teachers across the school but is based upstairs where she can work intensively with our children and teachers in Key Stage Two.
- Having Beth in place means that longstanding Deputy Head, Jo Bartlett, is freed up to build on her brilliant work in pastoral care. Her focus is the social and emotional health of the school and she now has overall responsibility for our children who have special educational needs.
- Marianna Slovackova joined the school this term and her work is to make sure children who have English as an additional language are being supported so they can thrive.
- We have had a restructure so that we now have three phase leaders – Angelique White, Carol Amonsingh and Pauline McLoughlin- who each have responsibility for particular Key Stages. These leaders provide an important overview for each stage and means any difficulties are picked up quickly, and good teaching practice is shared more easily.
- Professional development is a huge focus this year, with each teacher having their own training plan, with workshops, drop-in sessions around particular topics and visits to other schools. We are also running a well-being workshop for staff. Teaching is a big job and we want to give our staff the support they need to give your children a happy, safe and stimulating environment.

National Key Level Tests

We now have our results from the national tests and assessments for the last school year and it was a mixed picture for the school. The raw data will be published publicly, but if you're not familiar with all the charts and tables, they can be hard to make sense of. Here are some of the main points:

- **Early Years and Reception** – Stroud Green children last year did better than children of the same age nationally. 76% of our children attained 'Good Levels of Development' compared to 71% nationally.
- **Year One Phonics** – again this was very strong for our children with 85% of children passing their phonics test. This percentage is again above the national level at 81%.
- **Year Two SATs** – our children's combined results in reading, writing and maths were up from the previous year and again above national averages. 69% of our children attained expected standards compared with 64% nationally – and an impressive 14% of children exceeded a good level of development compared to 11% nationally.
- **Year Six SATs** – combined results for reading, writing and maths were below national averages and this is clearly an area for focus.

These national results get a lot of attention and do give a useful snapshot of where children are at a particular stage, but we want to make sure we aren't only working to these results. We want to get to the point where children have excellent learning experiences in all years, so when they get to one of these flashpoints, they are prepared and neither the students or teachers are overwhelmed.

I want learning at Stroud Green to be irresistible and infectious! Children loving to come to school, talking about their exciting lessons at home and most of all learning in line with or better than other children nationally. I want parents/carers to know what we are teaching your children and for them to be actively involved. Teaching is a partnership between home and school, so keeping you all involved and engaged is massively important to my vision.

Ofsted isn't ever my real focus, but in four/five years' time when they return to Stroud Green, I want to be able to demonstrate that children have outstanding learning opportunities, know how to make their learning better and most of all have outstanding outcomes which fully prepare them academically, socially and emotionally for later life.

When will families see the impact in changes to teaching and learning?

Families will start to see how all of these improvements and changes will work in practice in the coming term. At parents' evening teachers will be sharing information specific to your child. They will be sharing what your child will be learning over the school year. Across the year the teacher will track their progress sharing this information with you identifying quickly any gaps in learning. This will also help you understand how to help your child at home.

Additional changes to the school

I have concentrated on classroom teaching and learning in this newsletter, but here are some other areas we have been working on in the school:

- **Improvements to communication** – introduction of weekly newsletters, curriculum newsletters, teacher emails and planned curriculum workshops for parents.
- **Improvements to the general learning environment** – resurfacing of both playgrounds to ensure children have safe play areas. Some classrooms have been re-decorated and all now have interactive whiteboards.

- **Parents' ability to pay the school easily** – I have introduced an online payment system and have streamlined methods of payment to make it easier to find out how much you owe and how to pay us.
- **Opening new Nursery/pre-school provision** – we have completely remodelled the old Hideaway building into a brand-new Nursery offering all year-round childcare for one, two and three-year olds.
- **Enrichment trips and activities** – children will be taken out on trips linked to topics and visitors have been booked to come into school. Learning is getting exciting.
- **Reviewed and improved school meals** – after consulting with families, I have reviewed all menus and have made them healthier. We have also introduced family service for younger children.
- **New and improved staff room** – we have moved the staff room into a bright new space, which is easier to access for all staff.
- **Changes to the behaviour policy** – we have had a training day for all staff focused on behaviour and this is already having an impact on the atmosphere in the school.
- **Playtime** – the playgrounds look a bit stark now they have been resurfaced but we are working with the Friends on plans for equipment and seating. We're also putting training in place, so that lunch-time staff know how to engage children in more traditional games. As well as that, we now have rainy day boxes in classrooms so wet days are something to look forward to.
- **Flexi-schooling** – children in infant years can now have a learning-day with their family once a week (providing they enter into a co-schooling contract with the school every half term).
- **Work on the school entrance** – we are working to make the entrance and school reception easier to access, as well as enabling families with children in infant and junior years to get into school at pick up and drop off. This is a work in progress but should make the school more welcoming and make the move from infants to juniors easier (both day to day for families but also for children as they move through the school).

Our new School Council

We have recently launched the 2017/18 School Council. Made up of elected representatives from each class, the council meets on a weekly basis to discuss issues that affect students. The group then reports back to me once a fortnight with their findings.

Through the council, our children have a say in the everyday running of the school and are enabled to influence decisions regarding their curriculum, the learning styles of the teachers and the overall environment in which they are taught.

Our first big topic for discussion is the playgrounds which will involve members of school council going to see playgrounds in other local schools. We are also talking about wet play activities and how to improve our rainy day provision. We want children to start having more of a say in the running of the school. They need to be enabled to influence decisions about their curriculum, learning styles, learning environment and fun community activities. Myself and the teachers need to start listening to their views and using the information they give to make the school better.

Head Teacher's coffee and consultation on the next steps:

Thursday 12th October at 9am

Stroud Green News

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 11th October at 5pm – Meeting Parents of Year Six children going to Pendarren

Thursday 12th October at 9am – Head Teacher’s Coffee and Consultation Meeting

Thursday 12th October – 5.30pm International Evening (tickets on sale now)

Monday 16th October at 3.30pm – Year Six Cake Sale

Wednesday 18th October at 9.10am – Year One Phonics Workshop for parents

Wednesday 18th October between 3.40 and 6.30pm – Parents Evening

Thursday 19th October – School Photographs – Individual Portraits

Thursday 19th October between 3.40 and 6.30pm – Parents Evening

Friday 20th October at 3.20pm – Reception Self Portrait Exhibition (Lower Hall)

HALF TERM

Back to school Monday 30th October 2017

International Evening

Thursday 12th October 2017

5.30-8pm

Come and join us for an evening of food,

Holiday Play Scheme

Places are filling fast! To book your place please email Tara on

finance@stroudgreenprimary.com