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18th July 2019

An end of year message from Saxon School Governors

Dear Parents and Carers

I write this letter fresh from lighting embers with a flint and steel in the forest school. The governor trip to the end of the field turned the clock back for a moment, as we remembered our own childhood love of the outdoors.

The purpose of a forest school is to offer children access to new experiences for learning, away from the screens and back to nature. Here they use their English and Maths skills in practical ways as well as discovering some of the wonders of the natural world on our very own doorstep.

This September, Ofsted is changing what it will be inspecting, meaning inspectors will be spending less time looking at exam results and test data, and more time looking at how good grades are achieved through a "broad, rich curriculum and real learning".

The forest school is a good example of this, and we've seen so many other ways this is happening at Saxon, on our numerous visits to look at the art, writing, reading, PSHE and STEM teaching this year.

It was rewarding to see this approach to learning being recognised by the Ofsted inspector last month too. Some parents have asked me why the grade did not change from good to outstanding. The purpose of a one-day inspection is to check safeguarding is effective and to see if the good grade should remain. This means we did not expect to get graded any higher, however if the inspector had raised any concerns, it could have resulted in a longer Ofsted inspection with the possibility of a downgrade.

You may have also read in the news recently that Ofsted has been inspecting many of the outstanding primary schools this year after concerns were raised about falling standards. Among the 305 outstanding schools inspected, 49 remained outstanding, 166 were judged to be good, 76 required improvement and 14 were rated inadequate.

So, Saxon's Ofsted inspection letter was very pleasing in so many ways, and a real credit to the staff who are ceaseless in their efforts to improve outcomes and constantly find ways to enthuse our young learners.

Of course, they could not do this without the support of the parents and carers. A wonderful example of this is the arrival of the beautiful school library bus, which has been paid for in part by parents and families via the SSA. We can't wait to see it in action next year.



This year's governing board underwent some further personnel changes. Daniel Prendergast has stepped down after serving as a Governor for 11 years. All his children attended Saxon and he's witnessed the transformation of Saxon from a struggling one form entry primary to the successful community school it is today. He has been a great support to the leadership team over the years, and we are very thankful for all the time he has given us.

This term we welcomed Stewart Crook to the board, who joins us fresh from St Nicholas School where he was a governor for the past eight years.

Finally, I'd like to wish you and your families a wonderful and well-deserved summer break. And to the pupils, teachers and parents leaving Saxon, we wish you all the very best for a happy and fulfilling future, wherever the next chapter of your lives is taking you.

Kind regards

Wendy Sedgwick
Chair of Governors
Saxon School