



**Board of Governors
St James' C. of E. Primary School**

July 2016

Dear Staff, Parents and Carers,

We are approaching the end of another summer term and it has been a tremendously busy year. A year that has required us all to demonstrate the Christian values on which our school is built. In these politically uncertain times it is not just values that I feel we have needed to display. A characteristic that is becoming a fundamental part of our skill set is the ability to accept change and, if appropriate, adapt to it.

Change has become a feature of schools policy nationally over the past few years and as you know the subject of academy conversion has been occupying our minds for many months. The Regional Schools Commissioner advocates us joining the Diocesan Multi Academy Trust. Such a decision must be taken carefully and involves due diligence, trust, a shared ethos and a clear need to establish what practices could be shared and whether the organisations are a good fit. Joining a trust is much more than looking for economies of scale. It is about finding a strong relationship that can work for the long term. As a Church of England School it is also imperative that we protect our religious ethos.

The Governors continue to follow due process and are very grateful for the feedback received during the recent consultation process. It was also encouraging to see so many at the Open Evening. I will of course keep you fully informed as we get closer to making a decision on the vision and strategic direction of our school.

Throughout this period of political change the staff at St James' Primary School have continued to work tirelessly both inside and outside the classroom for the benefit of our children. Performance tables, while vitally important, do not always reflect the passion that we see on a daily basis from the staff. We continue to have our challenges and this year has presented many but stand out performances on the stage, sports field and in the classroom abound. One area that deserves particular praise is phonics. Phonics testing has proved to be a challenge in the past two years but tenacity, clear leadership and sheer hard work has paid off. The Governors and I are delighted by the step change in this year's data.

Shakespeare declared all the world to be a stage and this certainly seems to hold true at our school. The children at St James' proved that they know their exits and entrances. I was lucky enough to watch the year six leavers as they took the audience through the life of the bard himself.

Only a few days before I had watched a stunning adaptation of A Midsummer Night's Dream performed by the Drama Group. As always the performances outside

the classroom are very special, the memories often stay with us for ever and I hope that this is the case for our leavers.

As I complete my second year as Chair, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mrs. Harford who also celebrates the end of her second year at St James' Primary School. It is our inspirational staff and the dedicated band of volunteers, who continue to make this school such a special place.

The 2015/16 academic year will of course always be remembered by those associated with St James' Primary School. The tragic death of Elizabeth will never be forgotten by those who knew her or shared space and time with her. Our school will always feel that loss and The Big Saturday emphasized the depth of that feeling. The work that went into staging this event was enormous and our thanks go to Mrs. Hughes and Mrs. Harford in particular. Many others were instrumental in bringing the plans to life, not least the thriving membership of the PTA. The Big Saturday brought joy to those that attended. Bringing light from the darkness that we all experienced at the end of last year is important and the event encapsulated all that is great about our school. Thank you again to all involved.

Our thoughts are also with those about to join our school and of course our current Year Six as they prepare to leave. They will always be children of St James' Primary School and I wish them the very best of luck in the coming years.

On behalf of the Governors I wish you all a very well deserved summer holiday break and look forward to seeing you again in the autumn.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Brock', written in a cursive style.

Tim Brock

Chairman of Governors