

Dear All

This is a long newsletter, so before you start get yourself a drink and position yourself somewhere comfortable and quiet.

A quick reminder that Thursday is the last day of school. If you haven't emailed the office because you need childcare on Friday and you are a critical worker, this must be done by Thursday 11.am.



Dress Up Day tomorrow!

A reminder that we will be celebrating the German Carnival but having a dress up day in school and we ask the children to bring in a £1. This money will go toward buying bilingual books for our new library. I appreciate that the Year 2 has had a double request, for that we apologise. You may, if you wish, choose one or f'other.

Now onto the important stuff...

Governors - Recruitment Drive

Sadly, at the end of the year it will be time for Peter Johnson, our Chair of Governors and several other governors to step down. Later in the year, hopefully when the current restrictions are lifted, we will be able to celebrate Peter Johnson's tenure and thank him for his incredible, hard work in shaping and forming this school. In the meantime, we will have several vacancies to fill.

Dates	
Carnival Dress Up Day	Thursday 12 th February
School Closed	Friday 13 th February
Mid Term Break	Monday 16 th February
Year 6 Transition Meeting 5pm	Thursday March 4 th
Book Week	Starting March 4 th
Residential	12 th -15 th July

Some of you may be unaware of what our Local Governing Body (LGB) does, particularly in light of our status as a free school and how the relationship between our Multi Academy Trust (MAT), Anthem, and our governance works, please click on the following for more explanation

<https://www.anthemtrust.uk/governance>. The school is in its eighth year now; the LGB has gone through considerable growth in their role of shaping the school in its infancy, holding the school accountable to its intended ethos and been instrumental in laying a solid foundation for the school. In those years, the role of the LGB has also changed, from one that has shaped strategy and direction, to one that tracks the school's progress through providing support and challenge within the umbrella of our trust, Anthem.

We are seeking people who reflect our diverse community (we are mindful that historically this has not been the case and we would like to rectify this), who want to work with the school and help it on its journey of development and who are willing to be present ready to represent the school (forums, school fairs, productions etc).

We meet at least once a term to discuss the progress being made by the school on its school improvement journey, it is expected that you would have completed reading the necessary paperwork before each meeting. The meetings typically take place on Thursday evenings between 5-6:30 and have worked well virtually. The aim of local governance is to focus on the school's ethos, standards and relationship with the local community. They also aim to provide support and challenge to the school's leadership team.

A current area for development is to develop and foster our community links whether it be Safer Routes to School, liaising with Dulwich Estates or supporting with links with the German community and local schools. Personally, I would like the LGB to have a greater presence in the school community, so would

like more LGB who are parents with children currently at JKPS. Additionally, I feel strongly that this is a time for enhancing the way we work as a school, a time for us to consider our future and a time to help us shape that. We are not looking for people who want a new vision or ethos, but rather those who want to support us on our journey and ensure that the future of JKPS is secured with its best outcome at its heart. If you are interested or know of someone who you would recommend, please read the statement from Peter below, and please feel free to come and chat if you have any questions.

German Interns

As you may be aware, every 6 months, we have hosted a new batch of German 'interns'; these are student teachers who come to us from Germany for 4-6 months for a teaching place. They are an integral part of our teaching of the German language and culture. Even with Covid-19 and all the travel restrictions, we have received 7 brilliant interns this past year and are grateful for the bilingual benefits they bring to JKPS.

Unfortunately, with the U.K leaving the European union, we have struck a problem: they can no longer freely come or go. Sadly, we have had to postpone next term's cohort and we are seeking support from our parental community and guidance from our MAT on how to go forward with this. Currently the only way we can have interns is if they obtain a working visa (financially prohibitive and not reflective of what they are doing) and we are investigating how a student visa might work. If there are any parents out there who could support us with this, from a policy aspect, please can you contact Patrick or myself.

Nursery

Discussions with our trust are ongoing and it looks like there is a high possibility of having a nursery for 3-4 year olds in September 2021. Thank you to all those who filled in our nursery questionnaire and watch this space for more information.

Transition to Secondary School: calling those who have been through this and those going through it now

March 1st is soon approaching, and parents with children in Year 6 will find out which secondary school their child is going to. This can be a fraught time of the years for parents and children alike (I can totally empathise; I must be the only parent whose child went backwards on a waiting list!). So, we are calling out to parents who would like to share their experiences and words of wisdom to support those who feel the need to hear them on an online forum. The proposed date for a forum is March 4th at 5pm and login details will be forwarded closer to the time.

Free School Meals Vouchers

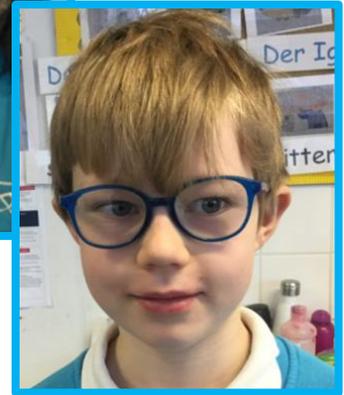
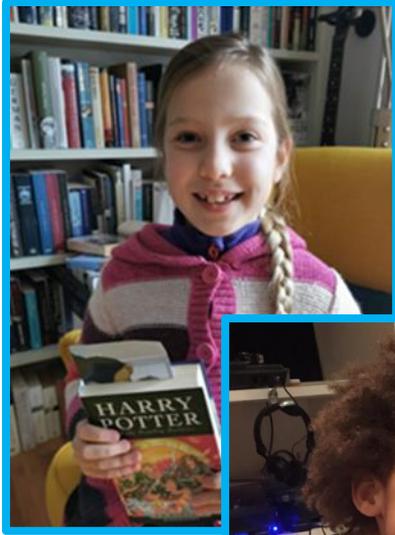
Thank you for all your donations! We have been able to send vouchers to all who need them and thanks to your generosity, we have a surplus of funds which we are going to keep to buy more vouchers in the Easter holidays.

Year 5 and 6 Residential Trip

This may be a hard sell in the middle of a pandemic and a lock down, but the letter for our annual school journey to Bushcraft is going out in the first week back. The plan is for from 12th -15th July to go to Knebworth Woods camping and partaking in lots of fun outdoor pursuits and survival activities.

100 Reads

Well done to Megan, Clara, Matilda, and Soren!



Here's hoping you all have a restful half term break and don't forget to scroll down for the message from Peter Johnson.

Jo.

Message from our chair, Peter Johnson:

The local governing body of JKPS is an important part of the school's local presence. Whilst it's been difficult to stay in the public light over the last year, this group supports Jo and the senior team in various ways. There is a monitoring and counselling role, in which we hear about and comment on topics such as the progress that our pupils make, the curriculum the school offers, safeguarding and welfare questions, and when necessary helping the Schools Trust with recruitment and staff matters. The LGB is an important bridge between the school community and the Trust. I believe the LGB also has a vital role in developing the school's mission - keeping the flame alive.

The local group also needs to be increasingly focused on developing the school's community, most importantly amongst current and prospective parents, and also more widely with local businesses, public bodies, and potential supporters or funders. The LGB has a very different responsibilities from the amazing Friends of JKPS, but we do want to work closely with the Friends to maximise the ability of the school to raise funds.

One of the strengths of JKPS since it opened back in 2013 was the passion of its founders and those who have volunteered to serve on the LGB. It has been a group with a very strong parent voice, applied - and this is crucial - in a strategic rather than personally interested manner. We have been lucky also to have some outstanding external members.

A number of our first governors, myself included, will soon have served for two four-year terms, which is the longest the Trust's rules permit, and will need to step down. So the LGB is looking to bring in new people, maybe 4, 5 or 6 over the next year or two.

This is a great opportunity for the school to refresh its local layer of governance and introduce new perspectives from the whole of our school and local community. I'd like to think that it's also an opportunity for those of you who would like to give some of your time, skills, energy, personality, and wisdom to making a difference for JKPS and all its pupils. There is plenty to do.

If you would like to find out more or put yourself forward, please get in touch with me by email on chair@judithkerr.anthemtrust.uk with a short supporting statement and we can take it from there.

There's no formal deadline, but so that we can make a start on this process, it would be good to collect a first batch of names over the coming few weeks. I'd be grateful, if you're interested, if you could get back to me by Friday 19 March.

There is no template for what a good local governor looks or sounds like - you will know if this is right for you.

If it is, don't hold back.

Peter Johnson

Chair of Governors, Judith Kerr Primary School