

Governors' End of Year Letter

2019 to 2020 has definitely been a year of what seems like two very different halves. We have all become so preoccupied and concerned with the coronavirus pandemic, that it would be all too easy to forget about the period before it all began. So, in this end of year newsletter, we focus first on all the school's achievements before the current crisis.

The return to school after last year's summer holiday seems a lifetime ago, but it's worth remembering that it came on the back of attaining the Wellbeing Award just before the holiday. The award epitomised the care and attitude of all the staff to each other and the whole school community – something that has shone through again recently. Early in the new academic year, the school won the Summer Reading Challenge for the TENTH consecutive year in a row. It was a fantastic testament to the commitment of all our children, and to you as their parents and carers. Your support has also been greatly appreciated as we introduced Weduc and ParentPay. We know these systems have had teething problems, but they have helped move the school forward and improved day to day operations.

As always, the children (backed by you) have shown a terrific sense of community in their charitable efforts during the year, supporting the Poppy Appeal, Children in Need and Cancer Research. That spirit was also evident in the annual Christmas Tree Festival, organised by the Rotary Club of Shepshed, at St. Botolph's Church. It was wonderful for the children's entry to win first place and it was thoroughly deserved. There have been many accomplishments and successes in our extra-curricular clubs and school visits during the year too – Young Voices, Cross Country, the Year 6 University Experience to name just a few. Our increasingly popular RotaKids Club were awarded the prestigious "Rotary Presidential Citation" – a national award – for their phenomenal efforts throughout the year. The Friends of St. Botolph's (FOSB) once again continued their incredible fundraising efforts on behalf of the school, from which we benefitted greatly.

All of these achievements were combined with continuing excellent attendance results, and glowing reports from the Be Skilled Group on their visit. It seemed that the children embraced not just the words of the Christian underpinning to our school vision that we chose during the year, but the ethos of it too: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Who amongst us could have predicted the events of March this year, and the ensuing lockdown? School life turned completely upon its head and we entered a totally different, at times surreal state of affairs. I never cease to be genuinely 'wowed' by the commitment of the St. Botolph's team. In all my years as a school governor, they have however truly surpassed themselves on this occasion. The staff dedication to the continuing provision of education for children, whether it be face to face or through remote means, has been beyond the call of duty, and far in excess of that provided by many primary school establishments. I am sure you will join me in thanking them personally and acknowledging their brilliantly selfless work, despite complex and constantly changing circumstances.

We all look forward to some genuine recovery time over the summer, and to the opportunity to welcome ALL children back to the school in the new academic year. Thank you for your support during the most unusual of times. I hope you stay safe and well and have a relaxing summer break.

Phil Marriott, Chair of Governors

On behalf of St. Botolph's CE Primary School Board of Governors