

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Autumn term is always a busy period for the Trust Board, with two Full Trust Board Meetings, meetings of all our core committees, training in Safeguarding, Cyber Security, and Data Protection to ensure we are able to fulfil our statutory duties, and monitoring visits to the school.

During October, a number of Trustees were able to spend a whole day in school; visiting the on-site Explorers Wraparound Care, spending time in the classrooms on both sites and talking to pupils, meeting with subject leaders and other staff to gain a deeper understanding of various elements of the curriculum and recent initiatives that have been put in place to improve teaching and learning. These monitoring visits play an important role for the Trust Board, helping us to learn more about the school and observe in person the progress that is being made against the school's development plan. As always, the children were very keen to share their ideas, show us their work and were very polite, articulate and friendly, and the staff were confidently able to share their knowledge with us. The monitoring days are one of the highlights of the year for the Trustees and the incredible amount of hard work that goes into their organisation is much appreciated.

We recently held the second Full Trust Board Meeting of the Autumn Term, and in addition to our "routine" agenda items, we discussed the survey outcomes and reviewed all the individual comments submitted, in response to the consultation regarding the length of the October Half Term. Thank you very much to all of you who took the time to provide feedback. The overwhelming majority of respondents were supportive of a two week half term, and this is what we have approved for 2026/27. We are pleased that Mrs Robinson has been able to work with a partner organisation to provide a subsidised camp with extended hours, to help address some of the concerns some respondents had raised.

However, it was with sadness that at our recent meeting we said "farewell" to two of our Trustees, Laura Irvin and Steve Lague. Both had served as Parent Trustees; Laura for four years, and Steve for eight, including five as Chair. Both made significant contributions over their time on the Trust Board and were instrumental in making the amalgamation into a primary school the success it has been. We thank them both for their commitment to the school and wish them well in their future endeavours. During the Autumn Term we have been pleased to re-appoint Pippa Branch, Helena Chiappe, Aaron Mears and Nick Webb to another term of office on the Trust Board, ensuring we retain key skills to fulfil our duties.

As the term comes to an end, we also say goodbye to Julie Coombs, our EYFS leader, who is leaving us to take up a Deputy Head Teacher role in Burnham on Crouch. Julie has worked incredibly hard to improve the standard of provision in Reception, so we wish her well in her new role.

We also give our heartfelt thanks to the Friends' Association for all the events and support they offer the school in raising funds to support and improve our children's educational experience. Thank you to all our parents, carers, staff and volunteers whose combined efforts raised the staggering amount of over £10,000 from the Christmas Bazaar and other Christmas events – and thank you to everyone who attended to show their support.

Buttsbury truly is a special place - it provides an exceptional environment for the children who are fortunate enough to attend it. As a Trust Board we are endlessly impressed and proud of the matters that we have oversight of. The tremendous effort of each and every member of the Buttsbury team supports our children to achieve great things – and for this, we must be grateful.

As we approach the last few days of the term, all that remains is to wish everyone in our school community a very happy and restful festive period.

With best wishes to you all,

Andrew Fry
Chair of the Board of Trustees