

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been another great year at the school and I would like to thank Kate and her team for making Eleanor Palmer the inspirational and happy school that it is.

I'd like to inform you of some amazing statistics just in: we have just received the SATs results – and in Key Stage 2 they are the *best ever* results for the school; we also have the best pupil and staff attendance in the borough. All of these are clear indicators of the excellence, commitment and professionalism that our school is recognised for.

And it is not just the statistics that make Eleanor Palmer a wonderful school; it is the range of activities and events we organise and participate in. A few highlights include: the recent music concert; our Africa Evening that raised significant funds so that our relationship with Planting Promise (the school in Freetown) can continue into next year; three successful residential trips; a myriad of inclusive and vibrant PTA events; over 100 parents taking the opportunity to watch teachers teaching in our 'Open Classroom' week; two parties to welcome new parents to our school; we have won medals in two national maths competitions; won a grant award for 'Excellence in Teaching Maths' and put on three wonderful drama productions.

Our sporting success is not to be grumbled at either: 3rd in the borough's swimming gala and 8th in the cross country – and with the arrival of Coach Martin this year we expect the sporting success to continue!

I attach to this letter the results of the parent questionnaire that was sent out last month and much of this energy, success and achievement is recognised in your comments – I hope you will find the results and accompanying governor comments of interest; we are always open to the views of parents if you have any further comments.

The school continues to challenge itself to further improve and next year we will be continuing our focus on ensuring all pupils in the school are able to excel whatever their background or needs. We will be focusing on pupil awareness of their targets and next steps in learning and embarking on becoming a 'Rights Respecting' school, a focus that develops children's awareness of local and global citizenship. We welcome new staff from September and of course a key part of the school's work will be their induction.

We will continue to undertake strategic financial planning so that the school is prepared for tighter budgets and lower public spending over the next few years. As part of this planning we are contributing to Camden's consultations on how Nursery provision will be changed across the Borough (moving from centrally funded full time places to part-time only, thus creating the need for a charging structure for our Nursery) and how a school-based play service can be continued.

With great sadness, we say goodbye to Eileen Dargan this year who will be retiring. Eileen is a long serving member of our teaching staff and will be greatly missed. We wish her all the best for the future. We are also sadly losing Zoe Greenwood and James Boulton - we

wish them all the best for their pastures new. And of course, Louise Wykes will be off on maternity leave, so it is a temporary goodbye to her and again, best wishes to her and her family.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PTA, all parents and carers for their support in making the school a great community to be part of and to wish you all a wonderful summer break!

Sarah Hodgetts
Chair of Governors

Eleanor Palmer Primary School – Parent Questionnaire 2011 Results

There were 72 completed returns this year compared with 79 in 2010.

The table below summarises the results of the closed questions, as percentages of the completed returns for the relevant year. The questions are the same as last year and are those that are recommended by OFSTED as part of a school's self-assessment.

The results are overwhelmingly positive – parents continue to be very pleased with the way the school is led and managed and with the quality of the teaching. This was also reflected in the comments made by parents on the back of the questionnaire. The key themes within the free comments also continue to focus on the importance of the community feel of the school and its friendly and supportive environment. A few examples include:

- The energy of staff
- Teaching good and staff really care
- Staff and pupil's pride in the school
- Dedication of staff
- A successful buddying system
- Well mannered pupils
- The utterly inclusive nature of the school
- Everyone's opinions/inputs matter
- Great trips
- Day to day involvement of our Head is incredibly impressive
- Friendly atmosphere
- Community spirit
- Children exceed their potential
- Great range of activities
- Great PTA
- Great school values
- Excellent communications with parents
- Supportive of children's creativity
- The school is a clean and well used space

These comments are really heartening and demonstrate our achievements against our core objectives which are:

- To ensure all our children benefit from quality teaching and learning;
- To demonstrate that good relationships amongst all of our school community, both adults and children, is central to our pupils' success
- To respect and value our wider community, its people and physical environment;
- To provide a secure and happy environment where every child has an equal opportunity to take part and succeed in the life and work of our school;

There were a few general themes of areas we could improve from parents. These are summarized below with a response and commentary (*in italics*) from the Governing Body which parents may wish to note or comment further upon.

- Improve the range of before and after school clubs

We face increasing budgetary pressure in this area both as a school and through Camden's offer. The Government's focus has moved away from the previous 'Extended Services' agenda and funding sources are drying up. We continue to run a breakfast club and play centre both of which will continue for at least another year alongside morning football clubs that are run by volunteer parents. We are, however, also very lucky that our teaching staff also offer 4-5 clubs between them over the year taking these on voluntarily and above and beyond their workload and other responsibilities in the school which are extensive. As a Governing Body we have committed to looking at the whole clubs agenda next year but we must ensure we balance teachers' needs and financial constraints with parent and children's expectations.

- More updates on pupil progress and greater communication with parents

Last year improving parental involvement and understanding of learning was one of our five priorities in our development plan for 2010-11. One of the new things we successfully tried was an 'open classroom' event where parents came and experienced a lesson (and the teacher in action!) This was really successful with over 100 parents in attendance. As a result of this year's parents' comments, we are going to re-instate one to one parents' evenings at the start of the school year, thus giving parents three opportunities for guaranteed focused time with the teacher. To have one to one meetings each term remains unusual across schools in the borough. We will also retain the brief 'Meet the Teacher' evenings early in September. We plan to start a weekly class newsletter integrated with the weekly homework letter. Our aim is greater consistency with homework and tone. Kate Frod also plans to answer frequently asked parent questions' every so often in the weekly newsletter – further enhancing our open communication with you. In addition our school is very open and teachers very willing to talk and work closely with parents. I can only urge you to approach your child's teacher directly if you would like more information about progress. Teachers are always available and open to parents 'popping in' the classroom.

- Behaviour/discipline

The parental comments on behaviour and discipline were limited and counter balanced with significant comments on the good behaviour and happiness of our children. The school expects appropriate behaviour from all of our children. Discipline in the classroom is paramount to successful learning and a happy school. As part of the work of the governor committees we regularly review all of the school-wide policies and both the school policies on bullying and complaints will be reviewed in the upcoming year. If you are concerned about any disciplinary matters they should be addressed to the class teacher in the first instance, or the Head if appropriate, where the issue will be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

Results of the Parents Questionnaire 2011 – all numbers in %

	2011			2010		
	AGREE	DISAGREE	N/A	AGREE	DISAGREE	NA
My child enjoys school	99	1	0	97	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	100	0	0	100	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	86	10	4	95	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	92	8	0	97	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	99	1	0	97	1	2
The school helps me support my child's learning	92	8	0	94	6	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	93	7	0	91	5	4
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future(for example changing year group, changing school, experience of life beyond school	85	7	8	82	4	14
The school meets my child's particular needs	85	14	1	92	1	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	78	14	8	83	11	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	85	9	6	85	6	9
The school takes account of pupil views	88	3	9	88	5	8
The range of extra curricular activities is good	81	18	1	87	9	4
The school is led and managed effectively	98	1	1	99	1	0
Overall I am happy with my child's experience	94	6		Not in 2010 questionnaire		