

North Primary School and Nursery

A town centre school with a strong community ethos



September 2019

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the governors I welcome you back to what promises to be a very special year ahead as we celebrate our school's 125th anniversary. There are many exciting activities planned for throughout the year, and we look forward to you celebrating with us.

Last year proved to be a difficult one. We were all very sad when one of our year 5 girls, Abby tragically lost her life to a brain tumour. The whole school paid tribute to her and raised funds for the East Anglian Children's Hospice in her memory. A special bench was also purchased by Year 5 children for the school grounds.

This year a funding crisis has hit education hard, and we like many others have had to say goodbye to support staff and not replace them. Governors, teachers and parents from schools across Essex have been lobbying the Government, MP's and Essex and Colchester Borough Council calling for fairer funding. The campaign, led by our own governors Adele Jennings and Juliette Maxam, is supported by the Daily Gazette. Have you signed the petition yet? This is work we will continue on the year ahead in an effort to secure the increased funding schools need to be able to provide a full curriculum to all children, and especially those with additional learning needs.

Despite funding shortfalls, staff at North have continued to work their hardest in providing a broad and balanced curriculum to all our children, and there is much to celebrate. There were fabulous school productions at Christmas, and in the summer term, including the KS1 Sleeping Beauty, Year 6 A Quest for Arthur and the KS2 North Country Fair. Many trips occurred, most generously funded by the North School Association and our school fund, Free for All. These included visits to the Zoo, Colchester Castle, the Aerozone at Stansted and the Year 6 trip to Weymouth. Outside sponsorship was sought to enable our champion roboteers to make the trip of a lifetime to Kentucky USA to take part in the VEX Robot World Championships.

School clubs continue to flourish - football netball and rugby to name a few. Sports days were held both within the school and against other schools, and our athletes with the help of PE co-ordinator Lisa Eves, have helped us secure the Sports Mark Bronze Award. Lisa also has a role in organising the Children's University which has grown in popularity. Music played its part throughout the year, with many opportunities to learn an instrument and take place in various concerts, including singing at the O2 and the Colchester Music Festival. Again some of the music activities were funded by Free for All.

Our thanks go to the NSA for all their fundraising activities and to you the parents for your support of the different events. The smart new play equipment in the Nursery and Junior playgrounds are one result from all the fundraising efforts.

Good community links were maintained last year through things such as the Colchester Half Marathon, the Purple Pinky day, visits to a local care home, D day celebrations and public speaking at the Town Hall. Good collaboration with other local schools also took place. As well as EACH our community minded children also raised funds for Colchester Foodbank and care for others in the community will continue to feature highly within the school. We were very proud to be awarded the Unicef Rights Respecting School Silver Award.

This year will also see us keep our links with the Heritage Lottery Fund. Their support over the past four years in our WW1 history project came to a conclusion last November through the project Coming Home. An exhibition also took place at the Minories. This year they will be part funding the CXXV celebrations, with the children researching the history of the school, and speaking to former pupils.

We look forward to seeing and communicating with you through the open lessons, open afternoons and parents evenings as well as at the other celebratory events. We will also continue with the Governors Corner in Newsline which I hope you find informative.

I am sure the year ahead. Is going to be a very memorable one for us all.

Very Best Wishes
Jan Blackwell, Chair of Governors.

