

Dear Parents and Staff,

HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS: 2018-19

A hub of educational excellence and innovation, supporting and valuing everyone.

We have continued to work hard to deliver our vision statement through our six strategic pillars:

- 1. Provide our children with outstanding education with an inspiring, broad and relevant knowledge and skills-based curriculum, encouraging a life-long love of learning.**

I am pleased to report that academic standards remain high across the school with most results being significantly above national and LA across the school. Data is often well beyond targets. Staff and pupils have to be congratulated for all their hard work and achievements.

Early Years

- **Good Level of Development** 90% (up 3%)
- **Literacy** – expected 90% (up 3%)
- **Maths** – expected 95% (up 5%)

Year 1 Phonics

- 95% pass (up 5%)

End of Key Stage 1

- **Reading** - expected 77 %; exceeding 37% (up 2%)
- **Writing** - expected 75%; exceeding 25% (up 7%)
- **Maths** - expected 78%; exceeding 28% (up 8%)

End of Key Stage 2

- **Combined Reading, Writing, Maths** – Expected 90% (up 8%); significantly above national 65%; Higher standard 21%
- **Reading** - Expected 93%: significantly above national (78%); Exceeding 48% (up 5%)
- **Writing** - Expected 96%: significantly above national (78%); Exceeding 43%
- **Maths** – Expected 93% (up 8%); significantly above national (79%); Exceeding 42% (up 2%)
- **Grammar Punctuation Spelling** – Expected 96% (up 6%); significantly above national (78%); GDS 55%

Although the data highlights our success as a school overall, having just written every child's report, it is always important to remember that it represents every child as a unique person with individual strengths, abilities and hopes.

The main drive to this year has been introducing our new curriculum. Our aims have been to 'do less, but do it better' and therefore we have returned to a three term year rather than the six term year for our curriculum. The three terms have been split into three areas, Discover, Explore and Create, each with a big question. Through this we have promoted curriculum characteristics as follows:

- Be adaptable, interested and work as a team

- Make links to the community and the wider world
- Ask questions
- Be critical and analyse what you see
- Seek challenge, take risks, have fun and give things a go.

Thank you to all the staff who have embraced, researched and taught the new curriculum and thank you also to all our parents and grandparents who have supported us with your expertise.

We have continued to have an emphasis on outdoor learning, fully utilising our fabulous grounds and year 3 have again had chess lessons from a grandmaster adding a further rich learning experience to children. Added to that, numerous school educational visits have also enhanced learning. Our extensive PE programme, outdoor learning, mile run and extra-curricular sports activities encourages pupils' health and fitness levels. The National Child Measurement Programme highlights that when pupils start school the proportion of children who are overweight or obese is statistically similar to other schools across England and in Kent. However, the proportion of year 6 children who are overweight or obese is lower than in most schools across England and in Kent. Thank you everyone for your support with this.

Again, the level of sports participation has been high with us competing in many areas at county level. Congratulations must go to the year 3s and 4s who won three Kent finals. At the recent district awards it was a pleasure to see a number of nominations for Claremont, with us being awarded the team of the year, Sportsman of the Year and School of the Year.

We are delighted again that we are holding an art exhibition at Royal Victoria Place shopping centre throughout the whole summer. Please could I encourage you to view it as well as write a comment in the visitors' book.

Throughout the year various concerts and productions, Claremont's Got Talent, and our class singing competition have demonstrated a love of music throughout the school.

In November we were delighted that the school achieved the British Dyslexia Association Quality Mark for Dyslexia Friendly Schools.

2. Develop a stimulating, exciting learning environment in a safe, happy and caring school.

During this academic year there has been a focus on our new school values throughout the school:

- Determination with self-belief
- Respect and kindness
- Joy in well-being
- Imagination through curiosity

Each value has been introduced at whole school level at a special assembly attended by all members of staff, including admin staff. Rewards have been based around the values, including the Governor Awards.

We have continued to work hard in improving our learning environment. The front entrance has had a different theme every term which has been led by our strategic leaders. Added to that they have produced displays across the hall. Around the classrooms, teachers have displayed the projects from the term before.

Within classrooms, working walls, values displays and new curriculum themes are prominent. I hope that as parents have visited the school they have noticed the difference.

Many visitors remark that Claremont is a happy place to visit.

3. Support, empower, stimulate and invest in our staff.

I am pleased that staff make the decision to stay as I know many schools have difficulties with retention and recruitment. Several staff have completed high level training courses, including leadership training. All staff have access to weekly Learning Bytes and courses outside school, and in addition visits to other schools are encouraged. These courses are important for supporting staff in keeping up to date and with succession planning. I believe that we have staff who lead their areas well and I am grateful to all the staff, whatever their role, for their hard work and commitment to our vision and values.

As a Teaching School, there are many additional opportunities for staff development as Specialist Leaders of Education and trainee teacher mentors.

The Local Authority noted that:

- *As a result of leaders' actions to build capacity and develop staff career progression, the school has strong capacity for improvement, effective distributed leadership and succession planning*

4. Work efficiently and effectively to make the most of our resources.

Our School Business Manager and the Senior Leadership Team continue to work closely together to ensure efficiency across all areas. The focus on every decision is what is best for pupil outcomes, wellbeing and safety and the Strategic School Plan. We have presented another well balanced three-year budget. Governor monitoring of health and safety and finances shows that good practice is well established. Again, careful planning has ensured that jobs have been secure, despite us losing another class at the end of this year.

The window project is now completed across the whole of the school and the difference is remarkable. The hall floor is now back to the original 1960s spec and looks like new. The new cycle pods have brightened up our front entrance too.

We are grateful that the partnership with the PTA supports our budget and they currently pay for our 5 year ICT rolling programme and many other initiatives.

5. Collaborate and share expertise with others, and lead educational practice.

Our collaborative work has been extensive this year.

Claremont is the primary teaching school which is part of Altius Teaching School Alliance. The TSA has three areas to address:

1. Initial Teacher Training: This has been our second year working with Teach Kent and Sussex. All primary trainees have passed with at least good. Emily Downs, who has trained at Claremont has passed with 'outstanding'; we have managed to retain her for next year. As part of Teach Kent and

Sussex, we had a visit from Ofsted, including the Chair of Ofsted, Professor Weinberg. We were delighted to receive very positive feedback from the visit.

2. School to School Support: As well as supporting several smaller projects, Mrs Roberts and I have led on the first year of a £400,000 DfE SSIF project for maths at KeyStage 2. The Department for Education monitors the outcomes and the finances of the project and we have remained as a 'Green' RAG rating throughout this year. It is good to note too that our own maths results at Keystage 2 were our best ever!
3. The CPD offer of Altius is extensive – this was also recognised by Ofsted during their visit. The offer includes from supporting Newly Qualified Teachers up to the qualification for Executive Headteachers.

I continue to represent Claremont and Altius Teaching School on different boards, including chairing the West Kent School Improvement Group. In addition, I support some other schools in my role as a National Leader of Education. Other members of staff support local schools, sharing their expertise.

It is a pleasure to continue to work closely with the other Tunbridge Wells schools, both secondary and primary.

6. Engage with and involve all our stakeholders.

It has been a pleasure to meet with parents at different occasions across the year, whether a formal organised meeting, informally at the school gate or over a glass of wine at a PTA function. Thank you to the PTA, Governors and parent volunteers for volunteering your time to support the school – we could not have such a happy, well-resourced and inspirational school without you.

Our weekly newsletter and school website remain the key communication vehicles and I appreciate the time parents take to read it every week. The electronic payments and booking systems continue to make life easier for parents and the school office team.

And finally –

This has been the year we have celebrated our 50th anniversary, culminating in our Claremont 'family' picnic and festival of the decades. We look forward to presenting you with the finished article of our celebration film too in the near future.

It has been a privilege to have been the headteacher of Claremont for the past 4 years; an exciting end to a teaching career that has spanned 37 years. However, I feel now is the time to take a step back to be able to enjoy some time to be with my family and to have time for myself away from the increasing pressures of the job of headteacher. As I move towards my final 4 months as your headteacher, I know that I will be leaving the school in a very good position with strong leadership at all levels, an exciting curriculum, robust academic results, but in particular, pupils and staff who embody our school values.

It is everyone – the pupils, the staff, the governors and the parents that make Claremont the special school that it is. Thank you everyone for your contribution to another successful and happy year. I wish you all a good summer and our leavers all the very best for the future.

SYLVIA CROCKETT
HEADTEACHER
JULY 2019