

23 January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

News from the Governors

Very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

I am writing on behalf of the Governors to share key information about your school and its governance. First and foremost, the Governors once again publicly praise the Headteacher, Joolz Scarlett, for her excellent and innovative leadership of the school.

The Governors are:

Parent Governors	Tabitha Marsh Fiona ODonnell
Staff Governor	Lesley Jewitt
Co-opted Governors	Simon Calvert Ash Patel Richard Pelly Peter Thorn Vacancy
Local Authority Governor	Amy Crowle
Ex-Officio Governor	Joolz Scarlett, Headteacher
Clerk to the Governors	Sharon Glover

The Governors responsibilities are:

- a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b) Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
- c) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

For further information about Governors, please visit the school website and explore the 'Governing Board' page within the 'About our school' option.

We would always be keen to hear from anybody who might be interested in becoming a governor. If this could be you, please do contact me or the Headteacher to discuss what this would involve.

Governors have agreed that their main strategic priorities for this academic year are:

1. Improve attendance to 90%
2. Establish and develop the new initiatives underway
3. Developing options for a viable three-year financial plan

We are in year 2 of our 3-year School Development Plan for 2022 to 2025. You can view it on the school website by going to the 'About our School' option, and then clicking on 'School Development'.

Reflecting on the last academic year, we are especially pleased to highlight some features:

1. Good Ofsted assessment where our innovative curriculum was highlighted as a strength
2. Successful development and Ofsted review of our Apprenticeship provider initiative
3. Our Nurture approach has improved our children's ability to regulate their behaviour, leading to a dramatic reduction of physical interventions.
4. Pupil Premium students make as good progress as our other groups of students, which is considerably better than national trends
5. We have improved the flow of traffic on site and widened our vocational offer for students

Although we are predicting a small financial surplus on 31 March 2024, we expect significant challenges balancing the longer-term budget in the years ahead. Staff costs, which absorb most of our budget, are increasing more rapidly than the corresponding grants and income. For example, the latest pay rise granted nationally for teachers and support staff was not fully matched by an equivalent increase in funding. More financial information is at the Annex.

It is promising that staff retention has slightly improved over the last year, however recruitment remains a challenge. You may be able to help. If you know anybody thinking about their employment, please encourage them to look at the list of job vacancies on our website <https://www.manorgreenschool.co.uk/jobs/vacancies>. There's a range of opportunities and most offer good career development prospects.

On a personal note, I have now been the Chair of Governors for nearly seven years. I am continually impressed by the cheerfulness and commitment of the staff, and their impressive impact on the students. I am proud to be the Chair of Governors.

Finally, we are very grateful for the partnership working between parents and the school that helps our students do their best. We look forward to seeing our dedicated staff and the good outcomes for students continuing to enhance the reputation of Manor Green School as the Centre of Excellence for Inclusion, and one of the most successful special schools in the country.

Yours sincerely



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ANNEX: Financial Information

This Annex provides more information about the financial situation.

Summary Table	1 Apr 18 - 31 Mar 19 Actual	1 Apr 19 - 31 Mar 20 Actual	1 Apr 20 – 31 Mar 21 Actual	1 Apr 21 – 31 Mar 22 Actual	1 Apr 22 – 31 Mar 23 Actual	1 Apr 23 - 31 Mar 24 Forecast
Total income: £k	7,590	8,428	9,132	9,763	10,119	11,513
Total expenditure: £k	7,508	7,895	8,548	9,495	10,704	11,689
Carry forward: £k	-552	-19	565	833	-248	-72
Student numbers (Full time equivalent)	263 September 18 intake	263 September 19 intake	270.5 September 20 intake	283.5 October 21 census	294 October 22 census	289 October 23 census

Notes:

Our careful stewardship of finances and the implementation of various initiatives freed us of debt from 1 April 2021. We maintain robust control of the forecasting and monitoring of our finances, all endorsed by a recent independent audit in December 2022.

We thank the Headteacher for her hard work and thank the school leadership team and cost centre managers for their support. We were delighted that Didem Allen returned to be our Head of Finance in May 2023.

Our challenge for the years ahead will undoubtedly be that expenditure will rise faster than income as costs increase and Local Authorities' budgets come under increasing pressure. The figures above exclude finances and student numbers for The Link.

Some of our students do not attend full-time, particularly if they are not of statutory school age. 'Full Time Equivalent' student numbers is the number of students' attendance hours all added together and then divided by a standard full time school hour week.