

Committee(s)	Dated:
Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School	11 June 2021
Subject: Report from Head of Junior School	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1(d); 3(c); 9(a)
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/AN
Report of: Roland Martin, Headmaster	For information
Report author: Matt Robinson, Head of Junior School	

Summary

This report details what has happened in the Junior School at Freeman's since the last Governors' report of January 2021. It lists staff news, pupil activity and achievement, both during and since the second lockdown.

Main Report

School Roll

1. The current Junior School roll remains at 405. Two children left the Junior school in March, but two joiners after Easter (one a younger brother of an existing pupil) mean that the roll has not changed. We continue to receive regular enquiries as to whether there are places to join within the academic year.
2. We continue to assess children to start in September, and have good numbers in all year groups except for, disappointingly, Upper 3. We are unsure as to why so few of the children to whom we offered places in January accepted, but the Admissions Department is investigating. On Saturday 15th May, two Junior School teaching colleagues and I were in School, further assessing five children to join in September; of those assessed, four are coming to us.
3. A virtual Freeman's Fun event took place on 28th April. Colleagues and I set fun tasks for the watching Year 1 children to try, and there was a Question and Answer session for prospective parents to find out more about Freeman's and the Junior School in particular. Tours have restarted and we are confident

that numbers will be strong again in the near future. The Virtual Open Evening on the 5th May received favourable reviews.

Colleagues

4. Much thought and preparation has gone into staffing for next year. A new KS2 teacher has been appointed; an old-Free, she will start in Lower 3 in September. A colleague responsible for two Junior School middle management roles has been promoted to an SLT position at another school, and we have addressed that departure by appointing externally to the Head of Junior Sport role and internally to the Head of an Upper Junior Year group post. We now need a Head of Junior Hale to ensure responsibilities have been covered.

Academic

5. Five Junior School children secured 11+ and 13+ Academic and Music Scholarships, and all five joined me for celebratory hot chocolates at the start of the first full week of the Summer term.
6. The Upper 3 iPad trial continues to be successful, in that the children and teachers' use of the devices has developed. It is used more creatively, utilising different apps in different subjects, but also it is less of a novelty, and so is used more sparingly. We have confirmed that all students in Upper 3 and Lower 4 will receive iPads at the start of the new academic year. Training for staff is regular and ongoing.
7. Throughout last term and this, children have continued to receive assemblies on the themes of tolerance and diversity, anti-bullying, the census, the Mars Rover exploration, and HS2. On 12th of May, and from a languages teacher, we received a superb assembly on Ramadan, which featured 15 Muslim students from across the School. On Fridays, the KS2 children were taught the Lord's Prayer, line by line, and prepared for Easter. Since our return the pupils have received messages from our Chaplain based on the Psalms. I am proud of the way the Junior community has embraced the importance of inclusion, democracy and kindness.
8. The anti-bullying assembly from earlier in the academic year was followed up with anti-bullying ambassador training from the Diana Award organisation. Twenty Junior School children and 11 from the Senior School have attended (or soon will attend) online workshops to help them develop their skills and awareness.
9. Mental Health Awareness week (10th – 14th May) led to discussions around its theme of Connecting with Nature. This was timely as, just a week before, we had opened the new outdoor classroom in the woods. The Woodland Grotto has been used by children and students of all ages for meetings, Science lessons, art, creative writing and more. An area just above the top pitch was cleared, and logs for seating and to lean on were moved into position. Some sort of roofing has been mooted (not by me, but by a very excited Head of Grounds who has thrown his and his team's energies into the project). I hope Governors have seen pictures of our newest learning facility.

10. Lower 3, Upper 3 and Lower 4 children have had “Girls on Board” sessions, which help girls and boys to understand and navigate girls’ friendship problems, which can often be quite treacherous at this stage of their lives. Led by the three Heads of Year, the sessions were very successful in encouraging the children to think empathetically.
11. At the time of writing, we are hoping to arrange specific training for the boys in the same year groups with regards understanding how to become a tolerant, considerate man. It is hoped an organisation called “Beyond Equality” will provide this (once the Good Lad Initiative).
12. In the second week of the Summer term Upper 2 and Upper 3 children worked through study skills sessions presented by an external speaker, who offered interesting strategies and tricks for the children to enhance their own learning.

Charity

13. Four children have raised money for charities that have affected their families. A boy in Upper 2 raised over £4000 for the British Asian Trust, providing Oxygen for India. A boy in Lower 2 raised money for the Junior School Charity Momentum which supports children with cancer by making sweets and cakes and selling them door-to-door. And two sisters in Upper 2 and Lower 4 joined the Royal Marsden March to raise funds for the new cancer treatment Oak centre. All were celebrated in a recent assembly.

Arts

14. Over the lockdown the foyer had an arboreal flavour, hosting large boards showing photos of parents and their children up trees.
15. Rehearsals have started for Junior School performances, to be shared with parents (virtually) by the end of term. Choirs have restarted, too. We have just engaged with Shakespeare Schools’ Festival for next year’s production. The Virtual Dance show incorporated several Junior school artistes ... disappointingly, no boys this time.
16. Various Junior School children contributed to the recorded concerts, some with peers from other local schools as part of our outreach work. All showcased some of the fantastic musicianship in the youngest section of the School.
17. A boy in Lower 3 has secured the part of “young” Moses in the West End production of *Prince of Egypt*. Rehearsals start very soon.

Sports

18. The Games Department is back in full flow, and matches are occurring against other schools. By the time Governors read these papers, over 300 of

our 405 girls and boys will have represented the School in cricket, tennis and athletics ... assuming the rain has stopped!

Conclusion

19. It is glorious to be back on site properly, with all the children and staff. Although things are not quite right yet, we are starting to play sports matches, run after-school activities, and re-engage as a community. We will be heading off on residential trips after half term but sadly not coming up to the Square Mile for City Day. Prize day will not be the same, but life is returning to a sort of normal.
20. I look forward to the next report ... in which I will have much more to report!

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