

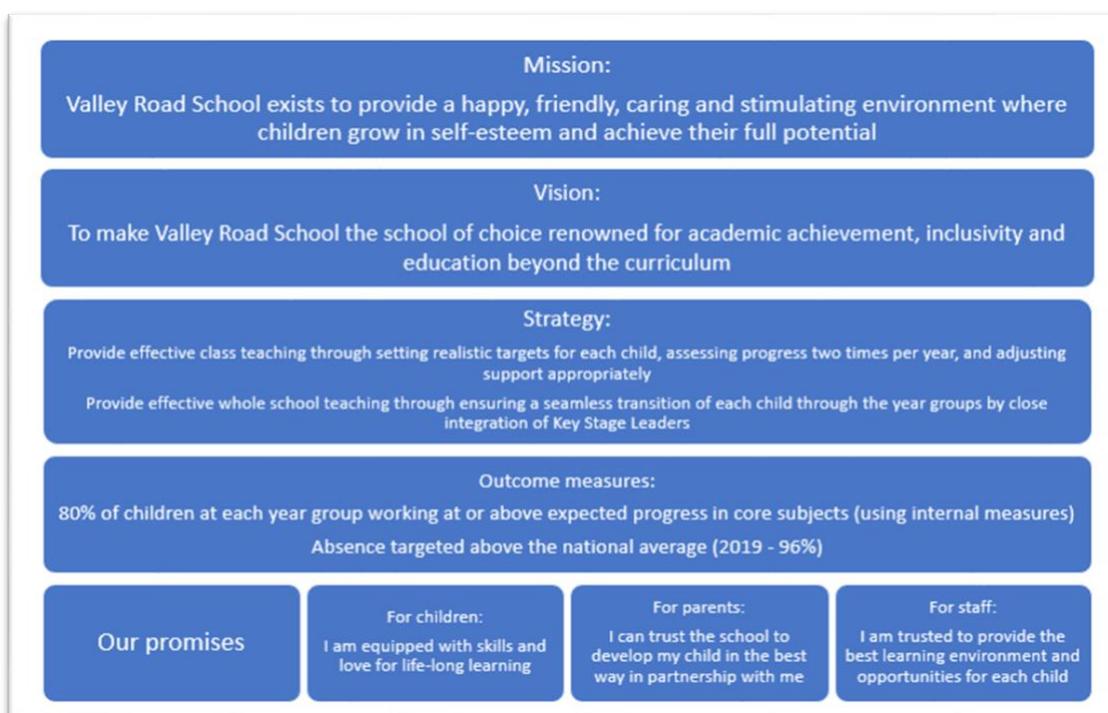
## Academic Year 2018-19

### September 2019

The work that schools do in providing our children with an education that the children can be fully engaged with and that parents, staff and governors can be proud of is incredibly difficult to summarise in a simple annual report. There is a constant creative tension that exists between providing a quality experience in the classroom and ensuring that the school as a whole remains attractive and is progressing. I am pleased to say that this balance is something that Valley Road School manages to achieve. Our role as governors is not to involve ourselves in the mechanics of school life but to act as critical friend to maintain smooth progress throughout the year and beyond.

The school started the year in a strong position with a full Reception class and, excitingly, the PTA helped us acquire a new minibus (well, it's nearly new but crucially it starts and doesn't have moss growing on it!) We also welcomed several new staff members who all settled in extremely well and became part of the Valley Road family very quickly – we seem able to recruit well from our local community, and attract new staff who understand, like and perpetuate the ethos of this school. This isn't easy, it's also not luck but it is something that has come about as result of doing the right things at the school over a period of years, and for the same reason we are also able to recruit passionate and capable governors from our local community who want to contribute to our school in a positive way.

This year governors initiated and carried out a review of the school strategy to help the school focus clearly on 'promises' to three key groups – children, parents and staff. Governors provided a clear restatement of the mission and vision of the school, both of which are designed to be in service of and provide clear line of sight to the promises:



This has been shared with and accepted by the staff as a way to encapsulate the essence of what the school is seeking to achieve.

Much of this year has been dominated by the lack of clarity over schools' funding, although what has been clear is that Valley Road will not be amongst the winners as the funding formula stands at the moment. Members of the school community have been active locally and have supported national campaigns to safeguard the long-term viability of educational institutions in England, and for that I believe we can all be very grateful, particularly as the tone coming from government does appear to be softening. The school will continue to adapt to any financial situation it finds itself confronted with, however for the school minimising or eliminating the impact on children continues to be of paramount concern in these matters.

As we all know, education is a results game and as a governing body there is much trepidation around the SATs results as this is ultimately how objective comparisons can be made by inspection bodies, current and prospective parents, and by the community we serve. The positive results from last academic year fill me with an enormous sense of pride that I and the rest of the governing body have played some small part in the continued success of Valley Road School, and for that we thank Mr Coulson and the staff for making the school a happy and thriving place to start our children's educational journey.