

Ensuring an excellent, child-centred education, within a Christ centred philosophy

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WELCOME TO THE LATEST GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER.

May I wish a warm welcome to all the new families to our school community on behalf of the governing body.

By way of introduction, I was appointed to chair of governors in October 2015 after Martin O'Neill, who had fulfilled his role for over 15 years, stepped down.



Although we do not have the full SAT results of 2015/2016 pupil assessments the initial indications would suggest that the school has performed very well once again. These results, more of which will follow later in the year, are a result of the hard work and commitment of the children, teachers, staff, parents and carers, and all those involved in the school. There is no "magic bullet" to good results. They are the result of assessing each child individually, ensuring that continual progress is being made, changing styles and approaches if necessary and, finally, unwavering determination from the teaching staff for each child to fulfil his or her potential.

I want to stress though that the aim of the school is not to teach to exams nor to focus solely on the academically gifted; rather it is to ensure that "Children have skills and attitudes that inspire a thirst for lifelong learning and where all achieve their potential".

Please do visit the governors section of the school website for more information of the governing body and I trust you will find this newsletter informative.

GIFT AID

In February 2015 governors made the decision to introduce gift aid. This was a very difficult decision to make but faced with an ever decreasing budget and increased cost of maintenance we felt there was no other choice. The response so far has been absolutely brilliant and we do hope it will continue so.

Your valuable contributions will be put towards important work at the school and I am sure you will have seen the scaffolding in place at the school.

This major project, the re-roofing of the school and the removal of old asbestos soffits, was undertaken during the summer break. Unfortunately it is not yet completed due to a theft of lead from the flat roof section at the end of the holidays, resulting in water damage internally. This roof has now been repaired with an alternative material and everything will be completed very soon.

STAFF CHANGES

At the end of summer term we saw the departure of two members of the St Francis team. Mrs Jordan eventually made the big decision to retire after many years' service at the school. She will be missed, not just for her enthusiasm to all things education but for her valuable contribution to various school concerts.

Also retiring after many years' service was Mrs Carson, the school bursar, without whom the finances of the school might have looked very different. So it is just as well that we are pleased to welcome Mrs Lumsden to the fold, who brings with her a wealth of experience in financial matters.

Also leaving the team was Mrs Cotton. She had been with the school for some ten years working predominantly with KS2 helping them to improve reading, writing and maths. She could turn her hand to anything as seen in displays and costumes. Her wickedly infectious laugh will be sorely missed.

We delighted to say that Mrs O'Gorman is now a permanent member of staff and will be continuing in her role as teacher for year 1.

THE ROLE OF A GOVERNOR

We are often asked what contribution does a governor make to the school. Governors are one of the largest volunteer forces in this country and have an important role to play in raising school standards along with being key to the effectiveness of the school. In particular there are three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its

pupils;

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Apart from the termly meeting of the full governing body governors are allocated to various committees such as finance, admissions, premises and curriculum. In these roles they make an important contribution by such things as the appointment of staff, agreeing budgets and admission policies, to name but a few.

THE GOVERNING TEAM

At the moment there are 12 governors, some who have been on the governing body from several years whilst other are relatively new to the post. The majority are foundation governors appointed by the diocese, two are elected to represent the parents and one is appointed on behalf of the local authority.

- Ann Bevan – Foundation – Chair
- Pauline Tillet – LA - Vice Chair
- Chris Evans - Parent
- Catherine Hanley – Foundation
- Helen Long – Foundation
- Francesca Magner – Foundation
- Nicloa Reid-Smith - Parent
- Seamus Ryan – Foundation
- Karen Winward – Foundation
- Jason Yi– Foundation
- Caroline Hostein – head teacher & governor
- Catherine Hunt – deputy head teacher & associate governor
- Simon Groves – staff governor

The governing body meets termly.

SCHOOL TERMS AND DATES

Term 1: Wednesday 05/09/16 to Friday 21/10/16

Term 2: Monday 31/10/16 to Friday 16/12/16

Term 3: Monday 03/01/17 to Friday 10/02/17

Term 4: Monday 20/02/17 to Friday 07/04/17

Term 5: Monday 24/04/17 to Friday 26/05/17

Term 6: Monday 05/06/17 to Friday 21/07/17