

Governor Newsletter – December 2016

These last six months have seen significant changes in the composition of the Governing Body at St Johns. As was reported in the Governor Summer Newsletter several experienced governors had to step down from their role or their term of office expired. However we have been fortunate that we have been able to fill the vacancies created and therefore welcome to the Governing Body as new Foundation Governors Rebecca Norman, Chris Crane and Hilary Hand. Replacing Rev David Curran as the Local Authority governor is Claire Rimmer who, due to her professional work, also becomes our Safeguarding Governor. We also have two new Parent Governors, Emma Rogers and Stewart Duffill. Finally the Rev Canon Steve Simcox, new minister in charge at St John's church joins as the ex officio member.

I would like to extend my thanks to all these new members for putting themselves forward and agreeing to serve the school in this respect and look forward to the contributions that they will make. It is a real and vital commitment that is made by everyone who becomes a governor to ensure that the school continues to enable all the children here at St John's achieve the very best they can.

As a Governing body we have also looked at the way we work and have made some changes in order to develop our effectiveness and broaden the work we do.

We have kept our Curriculum and Standards Committee but have decided that the work of two other committees could be combined. We therefore have a committee covering finance, personnel and premises, some schools would call this a resources committee. We have also restructured our section 48 committee, which is the committee charged with ensuring the Christian distinctiveness of a C of E school is maintained and are grateful to Ruth Townsend in taking on the role of Chairman of this committee and leading our work in this respect. We have also decided, because safeguarding is such an important issue, that it will feature as a standing item for each committee to consider it with relevance to the particular work that they undertake.

A further development in our work, so as to encourage better governor knowledge of and links with children and the day to day life of the school, has been the creation of Year Group Link Governors. Specific named governors have therefore been linked to each year group, (please see the Who are the School Governors section on the school website for further details). As part of the Governing Body governors are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the school. Governors can only do that by having a good understanding of how the school works. The role of the year group link governor therefore is to provide an opportunity for individual governors to develop ongoing contact with a school year group and to follow their journey through school. On the way the information governors gain will help us to ask relevant questions that will inform many of the decision we have to make.

Governors are also involved on individual basis with the monitoring of the School Improvement Plan (SIP). As directed and overseen by the Standards and Curriculum Committee individual governors have been assigned to specific action points in the plan. The SIP has played an important part in focussing effort and we were particularly pleased to see that the hard work and focus on the teaching of maths over the previous year to 18 months yielded very good results in the summer at both KS1 and 2. The SIP 2016 will continue to ensure that this area of improvement and development is maintained whilst focussing on other specific areas as well.

A further piece of work that governors have initiated and that will continue next term is a review of the school's vision and values. A short questionnaire was made available to parents at a recent parents evening and I would like to thank all parents who responded. It is important that we gain the views of everyone involved in the life of the school and we will seek to gain further views of parents as our work and review of this continues in the New Year.

In closing I would like on behalf of the governing body firstly to thank all the staff at the school, however involved, for all their hard work and efforts in ensuring the very best is done for the children at the school. Finally to wish everyone at St John's, children, parents, carers and staff, a very wonderful , joyous and peaceful Christmas.

Michael Moriaty, Chair of Governors