

# The Governors News

Federation of St Mary's and St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary Schools



## Governing Body Members

### FOUNDATION GOVERNORS:

Chair- Katrina Rigby

Vice Chair St Mary's –Dominic Coughlin

Vice Chair St Thomas' - Harry Hare

Fr Emmanuel Odoemene

Fr Anthony Glaysher

Elizabeth Shore

Jocelyn Galsworthy

Paul Severn -(pending appt)

### PARENT GOVERNORS:

Iain Robertson

Lynsey Stanton

STAFF GOVERNOR- Janey Chadwick

CO-OPTED GOVERNOR- Melanie Underhay

LA GOVERNOR- Vacant seat

ASSOCIATE GOVERNOR - Maggie Sanderson

## Governance

School Governors go largely unnoticed and most parents if asked don't know who we are or what we do, so in an attempt to be more transparent we have pledged to write a newsletter after each half term to keep you informed of how we are supporting our schools, which will be emailed and published on the website.

### Meetings this term - Key areas of discussion

#### 27<sup>th</sup> September

House keeping, Election of Officers

Pay Policy, Mission & Values

#### 18<sup>th</sup> October

School Development Plans

Section 48 Validation

Finance

#### 29<sup>th</sup> November

Raise online data

Strategy meeting, LLP & Section 48 Feedback

Performance related pay

Mid Year budget review



## A Warm Welcome to our new Families

We would like to welcome all the new families that have joined St Mary's and St Thomas of Canterbury's this term. We hope that your children have settled in well and that you have all the information you need to feel engaged in their education.

## What Do Governors Do?

Ofsted, classes Governors as being a part of the Leadership and Management team of a school. Our job therefore is to support and challenge the Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to ensure that they are driving school improvement forward, with a focus on the attainment and progress of all groups of children within the school.

We have three core duties;

Ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategy for the schools are clearly defined.

Ensuring that the Executive Headteacher fulfils her responsibilities for the educational performance of the schools.

Ensuring the proper and effective use of the schools' budgets.

This year we are trialling what is known as governing without committee, meaning all business is carried out by the full board. We meet at least three times a term at alternate schools.

## Attendance

We have noticed an increase in requests for term time holidays following the outcome of the recent court case. We ask that you please think twice before making such a decision, as research has proved that high attendance and high attainment are linked. PUNCTUALITY has the biggest impact on attendance data. If your child is just five minutes late for school and the register has been taken, they have to be marked as absent for the whole session. Just a few late mornings a month and an unexpected sickness bug, and your child's attendance statistics can be below national average very quickly. Lateness is disruptive for your child, the teacher and the whole class so please do your best to be on time. Good attendance figures for the whole school play a part of Ofsted's overall school judgement at inspection.



## Vision and Values

This school year started with an Inset Day for staff and governors with a brief to take a fresh look at who we are and what we stand for. As stakeholders what do parents, teachers, governors and the community want for our children? Success is not all about the Yr 6 results on which we are judged but in providing an exciting journey of discovery for the children, about faith, making relationships, our environment and how to care for it, learning about diversity and equality and how to be resilient and resourceful learners so that they can be the very best they can be and of course making age related expectations where possible!

Our current Mission Statement is a jigsaw of ideals which flows from “God is at the heart of our school and in the heart of each of us”. A development from this which you will see at the schools is “Create, Inspire and Aspire” linked to the Holy Trinity. This enables the children to identify in three ways how the Mission is lived and seen in our lives.

This theme will be developed as time allows over the school year, but the important thing is that whatever wording we collectively agree to, is that there is substance behind the statement in our actions, and that we are all aiming for the same high goals.

## A Governor's Prayer

*God of wisdom and might, we praise you for the wonder of our being, for mind, body and spirit.*

*Be with our children in this new school year,*

*Bless them and all members of our school community.*

*Give the pupils of our school strength and grace as their bodies grow; wisdom and knowledge to their minds as they search for understanding; and peace and joy to their hearts.*

*Give us insight and good judgement as we seek to develop our school for the benefit of our pupils and the glory of your name.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*



## Section 48 Validation

You have probably all heard of Ofsted Inspections but as a Catholic Federation we also answer to the Diocese of Portsmouth and every four years or so the Bishop sends his “Inspectors” to Validate the schools’ self analysis on how it is performing; as a Catholic Community, its Curriculum for religious education, and Pupils’ spiritual and moral development. This validation is due to take place this month at St Marys’ and as with an Ofsted Inspection a questionnaire has been sent out to parents, asking them to return their views. Can we please encourage as many of you as possible to complete the questionnaire and return to school by the due date for a broad spectrum of opinions. St Thomas’s Section 48 validation will be in the new year.



## Academy Conversion

The Bishop and his trustees have set out a wish that all the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Portsmouth become Academies in the form of four Multi Academy Trusts. The four Island Catholic primary schools are requested to join a cluster of Portsmouth schools in MAT 4. As governors we are looking at ways that this process can be most beneficial to the pupils, parents and staff of our Federation and as yet have not committed to a date for conversion other than “not before Feb 2018.” We will keep you informed as this process unfolds.

## Pastoral letter on Education

In all Parishes on the weekend of 2<sup>nd</sup> October the Bishop's Pastoral letter on Education was read out and circulated. You can see the bishop talking of his Vision for the Catholic schools within the Portsmouth Diocese at <https://vimeo.com/184384875>



## Building Fund

For the benefit of new parents, the responsibility for any capital (building) work to Voluntary Aided school premises is shared between the Diocese and the Governing Body. As a Voluntary Aided school, the Governing Body has to contribute 10% towards any capital expenditure and it is expected that this is raised by parental contributions/donations and can not be taken from the main school budget. We ask therefore that all financially able parents support us with regular payments of at least £10 a term for one child or £15 if you have more than one child in the school. THANK YOU

# And Finally-

Thank you to all our hardworking staff, who as a team have helped to move St Thomas of Canterbury out of Special Measures in a record 12 month period. We are delighted that this school is now well on the path to GOOD.



The Governors

