

GOVERNORS' ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Thank you to every member of staff at St. Joseph's who have helped to make this yet another very successful year with outstanding progress achieved by the children. We continue to take steps to pursue our 5 to 10 year plan to re-build the school and make it a 2 form entry school. This would provide an additional 15 spaces per year which we could fill now if we had the space. The Diocese of Westminster supports us in this endeavour but money is the problem as usual. As we informed you during the year, we put in a bid for funding under PSBP2 and we passed the first hurdle. There has been an independent survey of the school building and we now wait to hear what we are going to be offered: funds to repair the building or a complete rebuild. We will keep you informed. Our detailed work is carried out in our Sub-Committees and by our individual Governors with specific responsibilities. We meet as a Full Governing Body twice per term to make decisions as a corporate group.

Premises, Finance, Health & Safety and Critical Incident Committee

The Committee continues to provide assurance and monitoring of the spending of the school with reviews of all contracts and insurances to maintain best value for money and potential savings for the school. The new 3 year Budget has been agreed and presented to Herts County Council. The most visible benefit this year is the management and completion of the new classroom, converted from the old resources room, which will be fully available in the new academic year. In addition, less visible elements will be the new boiler and window walling; improving energy emissions and efficiency; also ready for this September. The Committee is also involved in planning future works; pursuing opportunities to improve the school buildings and safety internally and externally. There is a continuous review of all issues to provide a safe school. It is the committee's role to be in contact with any external parties on issues which could potentially impact on safety, including road safety. In addition, the committee tries to control energy emissions by a variety of projects including energy conservation, collections of materials for re-cycling and reduction in the use of vehicular transport to and from school e.g. Walk to School plans.

Admissions Committee

The Committee reviews the School's Admission Policies in light of Diocese and Local Authority requirements. We administer the School's admissions criteria for applications for Nursery and for Reception. There are 45 places in each. Nursery and Reception places are considered separately because Nursery is not compulsory and some parents opt for a full time Nursery due to work commitments. Attendance at our nursery therefore never guarantees a place in our Reception. Whenever we use our oversubscription criteria the process is witnessed by an independent person who is not an employee or a Governor at the school. Minutes are taken by a paid Local Authority clerk. Legal requirements are followed strictly. We do not have any discretion to stray from the oversubscription criteria.

Personnel Committee

As a Voluntary Aided Church School, the Governors are the employers of every member of staff. We are responsible for appointing and performance management and pay of all staff, including our Headteacher. We wrote to you recently to tell you that we have agreed to Mr Coldwell helping another Catholic Primary for the autumn term. The Committee has ensured that all measures have been put in place for the continuing excellent leadership of the school on the days when Mr Coldwell is not here.

Curriculum Committee

Our main role is to review, challenge and support teaching and learning at school. Over a two year cycle, we review all subjects and the Special Educational Needs Disability (SEND) provision and policies such as Assessment and Children Looked After. To carry out a subject review, we examine the policy, results, development plan, reports on work sampling, differentiation, training and resources prior to the meeting; we question the subject leader; and interview another teacher about their experience of teaching this subject. We then speak to two children about the subject. We find this last part of the process particularly rewarding; it is always a joy to speak to our enthusiastic and engaged pupils about their learning. The subjects we have reviewed this year are History, Geography, Art, Music and PE.

Promotions & Publicity Committee

The Committee has overseen the completion and launch of the new website. Thank you to all who helped during the development of the site. We have also had a number of 'good news' items in the local press and in the St. Joseph's Church magazine and we hope to continue with this in the new school year.

Equality Duty Committee

The Committee has the responsibility to annually review the Inclusion Policy as well as the Equality & Accessibility Plan. As part of these plans the new school website which now has a dyslexia friendly font and Google translate. Changes have been made in the nursery to ensure that there is provision for children with special needs and classroom space has been increased by extending the resource room.