

GOVERNOR newsletter



Issue 7 May 2017

Chair's word – Clare Farrow

It has been a busy term for the Governing Body. Following Mr Toner's decision to retire in July 2017 we have spent a lot of time since December planning and preparing to recruit a New Head Teacher. We were well supported by the Director for Schools and Colleges at the Diocese and an advisor from the LA who is both well known, liked and respected by the school and Governing body.

Following two intensive days of interviews, we were delighted to appoint Mrs Tracey Sessions and she will take up her post in September 2017. We extend a warm welcome to Mrs Sessions and look forward to her becoming an integral part of our school community.

At this time, we would also like to congratulate and thank everyone at school for their hard work and commitment to the children attending St John's. The recent OFSTED inspection report was a joy to read and we are delighted that the inspection team recognise there is a whole school culture of continuous improvement where staff are actively encouraged to share their expertise.



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Appointment of New OFSTED Inspection Head

As already mentioned above by our Chair, with Mr. Toner retiring in July, we are pleased to announce that the recruitment process for our new Head has been completed. As you can imagine, changing a school's Head is of huge importance to everyone in the school community including the Governors, the pupils and the parish.

The Head drives the development of the school and must inspire & lead both its staff and pupils. It is also the most important decision a Governing Body must make for a school. (Remembering that Governors in turn act to support the Head and work as their "critical friend").

The Governing Body had the help of both Wiltshire Council and the Diocese in the recruitment process, which included putting our advertisement and person specification together along with assisting us with shortlisting and interviewing prospective candidates.

We would again like to thank the staff and pupils for their involvement & all the candidates in their diligent preparation for the process.

Another important event in a school is its inspection by OFSTED to judge how well the school is performing. Under the new inspection framework the school was due a 'Short inspection' (usually one day) since its previous inspection rated the school as "Good, with Outstanding features" just over 3 years ago.

The school is only informed the day before with the HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectors) arriving first thing the following morning.

The Inspectors primarily check that the school is still performing at a high level and can decide on the day whether (a) the school is under performing and requires further investigation to possibly downgrade its rating, (b) has significantly improved and will require a more detailed inspection to see if the rating should be upgraded or (c) the school is continuing to work well and maintaining its "Good, with outstanding features" rating but is not yet at "Outstanding".

On completion the Inspectors provide a report (available through the school website or through OFSTED's website) with clear indicators on what the school is doing well and what areas there are for improvement.

We would like to thank all staff and of course all the pupils, for their hard work both on the day itself and the continuing efforts in maintaining improvements.

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Curriculum Teams

The Governors are very pleased to support the new Curriculum teams that have evolved from the School Council with all pupils from Foundation stage through to Year 6.

There are currently several teams each with their own notice board situated throughout the school.

The teams include

- ECO Council
- Humanities
- Prayer Council
- Sports
- Digital Leaders
- Writing Warriors
- Maths Magicians

The teams regularly meet in the year and allow pupils of all ages to participate.

The teams will swap around at the start of each new academic year.

Parking



There has been a definite improvement in parking outside the school and we thank parents for this.

Please continue to avoid parking on the double yellow lines outside the school emergency entrance or on the school junction where the single yellow lines are.

Occasionally the traffic warden will come down and check the parking situation at drop off and pick up times.

School Absence

One of the areas highlighted by the OFSTED inspection and already being looked at by the school is that of pupil absence especially either side of school holidays / half terms.

Children who regularly miss out on lessons will often struggle to catch up with

their peers and this can have a cumulative effect over time.

All schools accurately record children's attendance figures, including those who arrive late in the morning. The school (and the Governors) monitor this throughout the year.

Absence can be categorised as either Authorised or Unauthorised.

Authorised is where the school has been notified by a parent or carer prior to the child being away for a legitimate reason.

Examples of this are where a child is sick, doctor / dentist appointments or when agreed in advance for family bereavements / weddings etc.

Note that only the school can authorise any absence.

Unauthorised is any absence from school where either the school has not been notified that the child will be away, or where the school has not approved the absence e.g. for an extended holiday.

The school will strongly discourage any such absences due to the lasting effects this can have on the progress of their child.

Late Collection

Please could we remind all parents and carers to pick up their children at either 3pm or 3:15pm.

There have been several occasions where children have had to be looked after in the school office long after 3:15pm.

This ties up both teachers and office staff who often have meetings to attend after the children have finished lessons for the day.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Governor Profile



Richard Woods

I was elected as a Parent Governor in November 2016. My wife Sue works in the school and we have a daughter at St. John's.

We all enjoy being part of the school and parish community. In the last 6 years I have been a Governor in 2 other local Primary Schools, with responsibility for Health & Safety, Finance, Resources, SEN, Pupil Premium, Well-being and I have chaired committees as well. I have also represented the Governing Body on an OFSTED inspection in 2016.

Professionally I work for a Local Authority and deal with schools regularly as part of this role. I am an Insurance Officer and as part of the role my colleagues and I insure over 150 schools, their staff, pupils and activities and providing cover for all Local Authority staff, properties, vehicles and services.

This makes the role very varied and I enjoy learning about all the different functions we provide to the residents in our communities.

Outside of work I enjoy attending live sporting events, mainly rugby and football.

As a family we enjoy spending time together at weekends and visiting National Trust properties or the theatre.

I am looking forward to learning more and sharing my knowledge to ensure all the pupils at St. John's achieve their full potential.
