



## Governor's Newsletter. Spring Term 2016

### Your governors

I am pleased to announce that we now have a full compliment of governors. Your governors are:-

Peter Falconbridge	Chair/Co-opted governor
Cathy Irons	Vice Chair/Co-opted governor
Jo Goldsmith	Co-opted governor
Mrs Staiano	Co-opted governor
Julia Thurlow	Co-opted governor
Meyrem Flint	LA governor
Mrs Wallis	Head teacher governor
Vicky Burt	Staff governor
Denise Barrows	Parent governor
Jay Raynam	Parent governor
Gemma Wilkinson	Parent governor
Ray Butler	Foundation governor
James Harvey	Foundation governor
Mike Marsh	Foundation governor

I am also very pleased to inform you that St. Catherine's and St. Paul's Church has now appointed a new Vicar to replace the Rev. Paul Parks who left in the summer. Rev. Rachel Pennant will be the new Vicar at St. Catherine's & St. Paul's and we are hoping she will be able to start after Easter. When she does start as Vicar she will also join our governing body. We are very excited about what this will mean in strengthening the links between our School and Church.

### Leading Parent Partnership Award

In my autumn term newsletter, I introduced the Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA). As you know, Julia Thurlow, one of our parents and a governor, is on the LPPA Committee and provides a direct link between the governors and parents. The committee has now met to set priorities and work on the action plan. Currently a questionnaire has been completed on communication and a group of parents have 'walked the site' and made suggestions for improvements. As governors we are really excited about developing stronger links with our parents and look forward to the LPPA initiative providing the framework for doing just that! I hope to include an LPPA item in each newsletter so you can see how your

suggestions and input are being used. In the meantime, if you want to find out more about LPPA, or even get involved, please speak to Julia Thurlow.

### Our Christian Ethos and Values

In my summer term 2015 newsletter I mentioned the special role some governors have where they link up with staff in school to monitor progress in key areas. These are known as 'link governor' roles. For example, Julia Thurlow is our link governor for LPPA. One of my link governor roles involves monitoring how well the School presents its Christian ethos and values. In January I did a learning walk to see if there was clear evidence of the School's Mission Statement and Christian Values and how they were represented in visual displays; e.g. School Motto, 'British Values' and the Golden Rules which underpin the School's Behaviour Policy. I was really impressed to see the quality of display work available. The Golden Rules appeared in all classrooms, halls and reception spaces. The specific Christian Value focus for the first half of the Spring Term was 'Compassion' and that was also evident in all classrooms, halls and reception spaces. All classrooms had a dedicated 'reflection' area where children could think about compassion. In the Early Years and Key Stage 1 classrooms the reflection space had a foot print box where children could take a blank foot-print and write down what it would be like to be in someone else's shoes. In the Key Stage 2 classrooms there were prayer boxes where children could write down a specific *compassion* prayer for someone. Each week one prayer was chosen to be posted on the compassion board. It was obvious that all children were given opportunities to think through what compassion really looked like in terms of action and relationships with others. The School Foyer and Reception area had an impressive wall display of the parable of the Good Samaritan, to help focus children's thoughts on compassion in action. The display invited you to think about what it is like to show compassion. I was really proud to see the School takes seriously its responsibility to give your children a good grounding in Christian values.

### Trips and visits

The School is always looking for ways to enrich the curriculum for your children. This is often done by arranging trips and visits to

underpin some of the learning in the classroom. As examples, during this term the following visits have taken place. Year 1 visited the Royal Gunpowder Mills for activities linked to their topic on 'Superheroes'. Years 3&4 participated in an archery workshop linked to their topic on the Normans and prepared a Norman banquet featuring 'Stone Soup'. Our Early Years children had a visit from a storyteller providing a variety of traditional tales.

Governors also recognise the excellent efforts made by your children in joining Church activities. If you attended the Remembrance Day Service in November, you will have appreciated the beautiful and dignified presentation of the poppy wreath by the children. In the Christmas service they sang beautifully and presented their own prayers. Since that service the children's worship team have made a brilliant contribution to school events and activities. This term a group of children attended the Mothering Sunday Service at St, Catherine's & St. Paul's. Also, a group of Year 6 children were asked to participate in the Holocaust Memorial Event at Lowewood Museum where they laid flowers as part of the service. As governors we are always delighted when we get feedback from the people of Hoddesdon who recognise St. Catherine's children and praise their courteous and responsible behaviour.

### **Curriculum Evening**

Thanks to those parents who attended this year's curriculum evening, which focussed on e-safety and was followed by a session where teachers shared online resources that can help children with their learning at home. There were also samples of food provided by Herts Catering to raise awareness of the sorts of food on offer for children taking up school meals and there was a crèche available. Although only 9 parents attended they were enthusiastically positive about the event and how useful it was. Could I encourage parents, where possible, to make more use of the curriculum evenings and other events organised by the School? We recognise the demands on parents' time, particularly for events which take place in the evening, but want to encourage as many parents as possible to use the time and resources the school has to offer.

### **Attendance**

I am pleased to say that following my reminder about good attendance in the last newsletter, there has been a slight improvement. Comparative attendance figures for attendance in 2015 and 2016 are shown below: -

1st Sep – 4th March 2015: 95.12%

1st Sep – 4th March 2016: 95.35%

This shows an improving picture. Children continue to enjoy receiving the weekly attendance cup and the School have re-introduced the 100% attendance rewards as well as a reward system for improved punctuality. These are encouraging children to think more positively about their attendance. I would like to thank parents too for responding to requests not to apply for holidays during term time. The number of days of unauthorised family holiday taken by children from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015 was 137 compared to 73 in the same period for this academic year. Thank for that and can I encourage you to continue supporting the School in it's efforts to raise overall attendance.

Finally, can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Easter.

Mr P Falconbridge,

**Chair of Governors**

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