



## Governor's Newsletter. Summer Term 2016

### Your governors

We will be losing one of our governors at the end of term. Ms. Jo Goldsmith, whom many of you will know as the Ark Children's Centre Manager, will be leaving her position as co-opted governor. We wish Jo well in her role as Children's Centre Manager and thank her for the vital input she has made as an active and committed governor of St. Catherine's School. I will keep you informed regarding a replacement co-opted governor.

The Rev. Rachel Pennant, Vicar at St. Catherine's & St. Paul's, has joined the governing body and provided additional impetus to developing and strengthening our links with St. Catherine's & St. Paul's Church. Rachel is already well-known in school. She has led assemblies, met with the Heads, had an informal tea and cake gathering with staff and spent time in classes getting to know teachers and children, as well as describing her role as vicar to some of our younger children. Many of you will have seen Rachel in the school playground. If you have not said hello to Rachel yet, please do so?

### SIAMS Inspection

Since my last newsletter the school has had a SIAMS inspection. A SIAMS or 'Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools', is like an Ofsted Inspection, but focusses primarily on the School's Christian Ethos and Values. The inspection was extremely positive and commented on the School's nurturing environment and promotion of Christian values;

- *"This is a nurturing family community, underpinned by Christian values. This ensures everyone feels welcomed and accepted".*
- *"The supportive Christian environment enables positive attitudes amongst its pupils to life and learning. As a result, they become confident individuals and are well prepared for life".*

Overall, we were judged to be **GOOD** in all areas. Staff and governors were extremely encouraged by the reports clear and positive endorsement of the School's impact on the development of your children's social and

spiritual wellbeing; preparing them for the many challenges they will face as young people. If you would like to read the SIAMS report in detail you can find a copy on the web site

Whenever I visit school I am always impressed how the children embrace a difference Christian Value each half term. For the second half of the summer term the children have been thinking about 'Courage'. They have been considering the courage it takes to stand out from the crowd, whether that is because their views or beliefs are different from others or because they have to make a stand for what is right when others seem to be doing the opposite.

### Monitoring the School's Progress

As you know, part of our role as governors is to monitor how well the school is doing in terms of providing a good education and environment for your children. You may be surprised to know, however, that the school is also constantly being monitored by Herts County Council and national government as well. In April the School had a Joint Annual Review by Herts for Learning; where pupil attainment and progress, teaching and learning, and leadership and management were scrutinised to ensure your children were receiving the best deal possible as far as their education was concerned. You will be pleased to know that the Joint Annual Review graded the School as **GOOD** in all areas. In May Herts for Learning monitored the specific provision for Early Years children and concluded that *"Practitioner judgements are accurate; in line with exemplification"*. In June Herts for Learning also audited the School's Safeguarding and Health & Safety practices; concluding we had **effective safeguarding** procedures and **outstanding Health & Safety systems**. Finally, also in June, Herts for Learning moderated the School's judgements on the progress of KS1 pupils and concluded our judgements were **sound and accurate**. Governors have expressed the appreciation to the Head Teachers and staff for their hard work in ensuring the school received good results in all of these key areas. I hope, as parents, you can also appreciate how conscientious staff are in ensuring external moderators find the School performing to the highest possible standards.

## Staffing

The summer term is usually a time when we say goodbye to staff and welcome new staff for September. Following the departure of Mrs Watson at Easter, Mr Davies joined the school to teach Ludo class. Miss Pandya left the school shortly after half term and Mr Hunt has been teaching her class since she left and will be joining us, permanently, in September.

Also joining us in September is Mr Harvey, known to many of you as a governor at our school for several years. Mr Fitch, who will be leading science and Mrs Jaggs, who will be job-sharing a class with Mrs Waring will also be joining the school, permanently, in September. Mrs Devonshire will be taking maternity leave from the beginning of September and Ms Maud will be taking maternity leave from the end of September 2016. Mr Jones and Ms Militaru will be leaving the school at the end of term. Ms Harvey will also be leaving to take up a teacher-training course in September. Governors welcome new staff extend their best wishes to those moving on to new positions or taking maternity leave.

## Attendance

1 <sup>st</sup> Sep '14 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June '15	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep '15 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June '16
94.80%	95.56%

Although there has been a slight improvement in overall attendance over the last year (see table) this is still an area causing concern. We are currently below the recommended 96% attendance figure (Hertfordshire), although we are broadly in line with national figures (95%). Can I encourage you to continue supporting the School in its efforts to raise overall attendance? Thank you for your positive response to the School's emphasis on not applying for holidays during term time. The number of days of unauthorised family holiday taken by children from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 was 313 compared to 176 in the same period for this academic year.

## Activities and outings

There was a tremendous response to Mr Wallis' marathon run on behalf of Leukaemia Care, with children wearing sports clothes and joining him in 'training' on the field prior to the event. Many parents were kind enough to make additional donations via the 'Just Giving' web page. In addition to this, a group of Y5 girls approached the head teachers requesting to run a cake stall to raise money for the

charity. They led an assembly, advertised the event, baked and bought cakes and sold them at break time and after school, raising an impressive £230.

In May Year 6 participated in team building and resilience skills when they went to the Young Mariners' Base in Cheshunt. Years 5 & 6 participated in a Graffiti workshop led by a visiting artist. Year 2 had a drumming workshop to support their Beat Band Boogie topic this term. In June Years 3 & 4 visited the RSPB reserve at Rye Meads and early Years children went in July. Year 1 had a very exciting visit to the Olympic Park at Stratford this week.

## New Parents' Evening

Thanks to all those who attended the new parents' evening. It was well organised and I hope you felt supported as new parents and more certain about what to expect when your children start at St Catherine's in September, as well as the support that is offered to the whole family.

Thanks also to all parents who participated in the transition survey. The information gathered was very useful, and helped the school to create the year group leaflets you have received.

## Have a great summer break!

Having completed my first year as Chair of Governors I feel very much part of the St. Catherine's family. I have enjoyed meeting parents, staff and pupils at many different events and activities. I am always struck by the caring and supportive atmosphere here in St. Catherine's and know it is a school which prides itself on caring for the whole child. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the new academic year. Can I wish you all a very enjoyable summer holiday!

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