

Governors of Ss Alban & Stephen RC Infant School

Welcome and Thanks

Welcome to the Governors' newsletter for the Winter term. Our aim is to keep you informed on governing issues, what we have been working on, and up to date on the school's performance.

First, we must thank all the staff for their committed hard work and dedication to the school. They always put the welfare of the children first, and the safe and welcoming environment is evident to all who enter the school.

Secondly, thank you to all the members of the PTA for their hard work this term and in particular to the outgoing chair, Celia Roberts. Celia's tireless efforts with the PTA and all the parents who volunteer their time for each event have meant that we have benefited from resources that otherwise would not have been affordable to the school.

Finally, we thank Mrs Dempsey and her deputy Miss Cannon for their great leadership and absolute commitment to continuous improvement of the school.

Governor Changes

We welcome Louise Forbes who joined in the Summer term and Manuel Lopez, Deepa George and Niall O'Brien who have joined as new governors and associate governors this term.

Also, we say thank you and goodbye to Dr Marie Lyons who stepped down at the end of last term and to Catherine Reeves, for all the hard work and time they have dedicated to their roles as governors over the years.

From our Chair of Governors

The November Full Governors meeting began with the election of governors to various roles. These included chair, vice chair and treasurer and the allocating of governors to the various link roles for the forthcoming academic year overseeing such diverse topics as English, Maths and RE. Details of all governors can be found on the school website under 'About Us' and then click on the Governors link. Part of the reason the pictures are shown is so you can recognise us and approach any of us about topics which you are happy or have concerns about. Please avail yourself of this opportunity.

In both November and December meetings, two of the main parts of the meeting were taken up discussing any proposed move to academisation. Our school remains open minded about any such move and will keep it under constant review. There is a further meeting with representatives from Westminster on this topic on 15 January 2018 and I will update you further. I can assure you that any proposed change will need full consultation with parents. The other main topic of the meeting was Safeguarding, where we review our rules and procedures to ensure your children at the school are kept in a safe, fun and learning environment.

From our Head Teacher

Thank you to everyone for your contributions; reading in class, PTA support, model building, Green day volunteers, attending masses and assemblies – we appreciate it all. I'm very grateful for the support of governors and the time they volunteer for evening meetings, emails, calls and visits. We have welcomed new Foundation governors and said goodbye to some valued friends of the school, Dr. Ted Tarelli and Dr. Marie Lyons, whose work for the pupils of the school was very valuable. As 2017 draws to a close, we can feel very proud of our school community.

Our Reception and Nursery children have settled well and it has been lovely getting to know all our new families. Mrs Smith and Miss Ketley led a successful Early Years Assessment project in 2017 which will continue. We have a whole school focus on maths fluency and confidence with number to improve pupil outcomes further in 2018. In January, we will be working on developing pupil confidence and improving attitudes to learning. It's very exciting and we will hold a workshop for parents early in the term.

Feedback has been very positive on KS1 'open classrooms' each half-term (an opportunity to come into school and share your child's books with them) and a more flexible, 'menu' of home learning activities in Year 2. Reception parents told me that they would value more frequent progress updates, especially in those important early weeks of school, so we will be launching a communication system in the Spring term.

We welcomed Mrs Adams to our teaching team in September and Miss Cannon is growing into her new role as Deputy Head. Mrs Smith and Mrs Watters did an outstanding job as acting Deputy Heads and I thank them from the bottom of my heart for all their dedication and energy.

We have supported many worthy causes this term including £330 for STEPS (lower limb conditions), £250 for Catholic Children's Society, almost 200 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and a fantastic harvest response of food and toiletries for St Albans Women's Refuge. What a generous community we have!

On behalf of all the staff, thank you for all your support this term. Thank you for entrusting your children to our care. We wish you and your families a peaceful Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year. God Bless you.

Committee News

We have two committees that meet every term in addition to our Full Governing Body meetings six times per year. All committees have met twice during the Autumn term and been engaged in many aspects of school business. All governors have individual responsibilities, conduct governor visits to key subject areas and year groups and work on specialisms and individual projects that support school. Both committees are involved in reviewing policies that require updating and renewing.

Resources Committee

This deals with all aspects of Finance, Health and Safety, physical infrastructure and works to it. Responsibility for HR has recently transferred to the Learning and Community committee.

Key areas of work this term:

- Supporting school in planning the financing and completion of a number of remedial and major works including: nursery roof replacement, drainage works
- Works to gates and access points.
- Review of Health and Safety policy

The Governors on this committee are:

Mark Bettley (joint Chair), Laura Robertson (joint Chair), Francesca Hammond (Treasurer), David Miveld, Bernadette Dempsey, Manuel Lopez

Learning and Community Committee

This deals with the school development and travel plans, curriculum, Special Educational Needs, admission, staffing, community relationships and communication. The committee met twice this term.

Key areas of work this term:

- Admissions – policy and consultation for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Review and ratification of key policies
- Curriculum plans
- Communication with parents

The Governors on this committee are:

Masimo Frederici (Chair), Father TJ Plower, Louise Forbes, Marianne McMahon, Bernadette Dempsey, Bernie Murphy, Niall O'Brien

Attendance Data (to 30/11/2017)

Infant School	%
Morning Nursery	80.3
Afternoon Nursery	80.5
Class 1	97.0
Class 2	97.1
Class 3	97.2
Class 4	96.1
Class 5	97.0
Class 6	97.5

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!