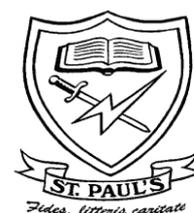


**“United through Jesus in Faith, Love and Learning”**

**ST PAUL'S GOVERNING BODY**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2018 - 19**



Dear Parents/Carers,

At the beginning of the new Academic year I wanted to take the opportunity to reflect briefly on last year - and what a year last year was. The Governors of your School sincerely hope that your children enjoyed their year at St Pauls and the many activities which we hope contributed to making their education more exciting and enjoyable.

Undoubtedly from the School's viewpoint the high point of the year was the outstanding result in our Section 48 Inspection, although focusing on the religious aspects of the School it reviewed all aspects of School life and after a gruelling day everyone was delighted when the School was awarded the grade of Outstanding! This really highlights what we are about as a Catholic School and provides confirmation that we are on the right track.

You will probably remember that the Section 48 Inspection followed quickly on from our Ofsted Inspection where the School was awarded an overall grading of Good. This Inspection touched on all aspects of school life and tested responses to situations and explored the involvement of Governors. We were pleased that the feedback indicated that much of the work of our School is Outstanding!

To cap things off we have another really excellent set of SATs results, the best yet, well done children and staff – how do we top it?

Early last year (and of course already this year) children in year 6 enjoyed their visit to an outdoor activity centre in Sussex where they had opportunities to develop their leadership and team building skills. This is a very useful development process for the children and allows staff to see how they respond and grow in a variety of challenging (but controlled) situations.

Last year pupils of the school also took part in numerous other off-site trips and activities including visits to Blenheim Palace, Amners Farm, Chessington, and Bucklebury Farm. Year 5 & 6 pupils went to the Hexagon in February where they had workshops with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Meanwhile in school we've held a drumming workshop, a poetry workshop and many other events. All these activities help our children, your children, to broaden their educational experiences.

Our Breakfast and After School Club continues to be successful and record numbers of pupils enjoy first class provision from a committed and enthusiastic team. We are very grateful to the Committee and Staff for everything they do.

Children have taken part in many different clubs and activities and the School has restarted its football team. (You may also have seen in the recent newsletter opportunities for our children to join Netball and Football teams.)

Our School Library has been refurbished and we've committed to the purchase of new books to encourage your children to discover the enjoyment of reading. Special days took place to encourage children to look at different, countries, peoples and cultures from different perspectives. These efforts seem to have paid off as evidenced by the SATs results.

We should mention our gratitude to the St Paul's Parents Association and to Breakfast and After School Club for their financial support of our school which has significantly improved the school life of all pupils. Many of you will have noticed the new equipment in the Junior playground, which I'm sure will be enjoyed by children for many years to come, just one example of this active support.

You cannot have failed to notice publicity about the importance for all of us to take part in regular exercise. Recognising this our School has also put renewed emphasis on regular daily exercise for all children – and staff, which I'm sure will help everyone to be happier and healthier and to progress better with their work. We are also planning workshops aimed at helping us all to understand, identify and to be better placed to combat mental health issues. Staff are also focusing on wellbeing and how we can better look after the wellbeing of everyone connected with our School.

## **GOVERNING BODY COMPOSITION**

### **Appointments and departures**

Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed a number of governors into the following positions:

|                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Fr Peter Glas      | Foundation Governor      |
| Mrs Kristina Kelly | Local Authority Governor |

Mrs Anne Dennerhy and Mrs Ann Epps have continued in their positions as Foundation Governors for a further four years which is fantastic news as both are a great asset to the Governing Board

Mrs Louise Sullivan has taken a year's sabbatical from the Governing Board in order to focus on her master's degree.

Our Governing Board is made up of 12 Governors; 2 Parent Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor, 1 Staff Governor, 1 Head Teacher and 7 Foundation Governors (appointed by the Diocese) The school currently have should have 11 governors in office with a Foundation Governor vacancy. We are actively working to fill this position and will keep you informed of our progress.

### **Structure and committees**

At our meeting in July 2018 we approved our Governing Body Structure and Committees for the academic year 2018 – 2019. We will hold four Full Governing Board meetings and also meet in three committees, with each committee operating under an agreed terms of reference:

|                                       |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Learning & Achievement Committee      | - | Chair Kristina Kelly (Local Authority Governor) |
| Admissions and Community Committee    | - | Ann Epps (Foundation Governor)                  |
| Resources, Pay and Premises Committee | - | Steven Bisoffi (Parent Governor)                |

We have also assigned designated roles to a number of governors to fulfil our statutory duties and also to ensure that we have particular focus on certain aspects of school life in the coming year.

|                          |                                    |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Chair of Governors       | Pat Prime (Foundation Governor)    |
| Vice Chair of Governors  | Bob Cooke (Foundation Governor)    |
| Safe Guarding Governor   | Ann Epps (Foundation Governor)     |
| Health & Safety Governor | Anne Dennehy (Foundation Governor) |

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| RE Governor                     | Fr Peter Glas (Foundation Governor)       |
| SEN / PPG Governor              | Elizabeth Stryjak (Foundation Governor)   |
| Equalities Governor             | Bob Cooke (Foundation Governor)           |
| BASC Governor                   | Steven Bisoffi (Parent Governor)          |
| Numeracy/Literacy/Data Governor | Kristina Kelly (Local Authority Governor) |

Members of school staff attend our meetings in "Leadership Link" roles and we are often supported by the Deputy Headteacher, School Business Manager, Assessment Co-Ordinator, Key Stage leaders who provide us with data and information to help us fulfil our roles.

### **The responsibilities and work of the Governing Body**

The Department for Education notes:

*"Governing bodies are the key strategic decision makers and vision setters in every school and academy. They are also a key part of the overall system for school accountability. Governing bodies have a vital role to play in driving up school and pupil performance and ensuring that resources are used well to give every child the best possible education. I want all governing bodies to focus ruthlessly on these core strategic functions, and avoid getting distracted by more peripheral matters."*

Operational matters at St Paul's are dealt with by the office staff, the class teacher or the senior leadership team (Key Stages leaders, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher). You should always feel able to raise queries with the relevant school staff and we hope that you continue to do so.

Over the course of this academic year we have continued to work with school leaders on the following key areas:

- ongoing assessment, pupil attainment and progress, including review of groups within our school such as Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs and English as an Additional Language
- monitoring progress against the School Development Plan
- meeting with School Improvement Advisor, Schools Accountancy and other professionals
- approval of budget for next financial year commencing
- approval of year-end figures for previous financial year
- termly Health and Safety review and checks
- safeguarding – ensuring all pupils are aware of the significance of red and green lanyards and what to do if they see a visitor without one
- checking that all pupils are aware of what to do if they feel unhappy, unsure or unsafe about any aspect of their time within our school
- in year applications for admission to all year groups
- staffing matters and recruitment
- ICT – to make sure the school can fully deliver the ICT curriculum. The appointment of the new IT technician at the commencement of the year

### **Pupil attainment and progress**

Please find below headline information on attainment and progress for each Key Stage this academic year. This is based on preliminary data received from West Berkshire Council and in-school information.

## SATS Results KS1

| KS2     | School | National |
|---------|--------|----------|
| Reading | 100%   | 75%      |
| Writing | 100%   | 78%      |
| GPS     | 100%   | 78%      |
| Maths   | 100%   | 76%      |

## SATs Results KS1

| KS1     | School | National |
|---------|--------|----------|
| Reading | 81%    | 75%      |
| Writing | 79%    | 69%      |
| Maths   | 81%    | 76%      |

## EYFS Results

|         | School | National          |
|---------|--------|-------------------|
| Reading | 86%    | Not available yet |
| Writing | 80%    | Not available yet |
| Maths   | 86%    | Not available yet |

## Impact and effectiveness of our work

It is vital that the Governing Body remains focused on its core strategic functions. Against each function, please see below our evaluation of our work this year and our plans for focus from September onwards:

| Strategic Function of Governance                          | Challenges and Achievements   | Review of our Effectiveness  |
|---|---|--|
| Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction | <p>We have;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supported our Headteacher in developing a School Development Plan to meet ensure the continued improvement in outcomes for our pupils.</li> <li>updated a number of key policies to ensure consistency, transparency and provide a framework within which the school will operate in the best interests of the children and community</li> <li>supported the school building stronger links with the parish and wider community</li> </ul> | <p>The School Development Plan has ensured that school leaders have had clarity this year on the direction and core objectives. We have continued to review our policies to ensure clarity and consistency in dealing with pupils, staff, parents and finances. This is key to promoting the ethos that we wish to foster within this school. We consider our overall effectiveness in this area to be GOOD.</p> <p>Next year we will continue to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support the school in developing a School Development Plan which builds on the work undertaken this year and further challenges the school to embed systems and processes which will help raise attainment and progress</li> <li>work with leaders to strengthen parish and wider community links, including those with other local primary and secondary schools</li> <li>engage more regularly with parents/carers to get your views on the strengths and areas for development within the school</li> </ul> |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils</p> | <p>We have;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conducted Curriculum and Standards meetings to discuss pupil progress and attainment;</li> <li>• conducted Head/Chair meetings where data on the 6 weekly pupil progress meetings that have been carried out this year has been discussed;</li> <li>• discussed Pupil Premium spending and assessment data to understand what interventions are in place to "close the gap" for disadvantaged pupils;</li> <li>• worked with the Headteacher to find an appropriate format for the Headteacher report to governors.</li> <li>• challenged the Headteacher and leadership team regarding the data that has been presented to us with regards to pupil performance, including discussions on Pupil Premium spending and its impact;</li> <li>• Discussed the performance management cycle with the Headteacher to make sure it continues to be rigorous and informative.</li> </ul> | <p>We have worked closely with the Headteacher in moving the school forwards in life after levels. The school is embedding the new monitoring system and governors have supported the school through this time of change.</p> <p>Next year we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to keep a close eye on the monitoring system to ensure that it reflects progress and attainment and helps the school to identify quickly any areas of concern. We will achieve this through rigorous Curriculum and Standards meetings;</li> <li>• focus on groups such as Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs through the appointment of a governor to the role of Assessment and Inclusion;</li> <li>• use governors skills and experience to ensure our challenge re data and assessment is strong and accurate</li> <li>• ensure that governors attend appropriate training.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent</p>       | <p>We have;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• managed the budget for the financial year to 31 March 2019, ensuring that the school financial policies are followed to secure best value and protect school monies;</li> <li>• discussed staffing structures with senior leaders to consider alternatives in the best interests of the children within the funds available;</li> <li>• carried out financial benchmarking and submitted information to West Berkshire Council via the Schools' Financial Value Standard (SFVS) to gain assurance that the school has secure financial management in place;</li> <li>• Support the School Business Manager and a Finance Assistant overseeing financial management and premises, health and safety and capital projects;</li> <li>• reviewed quotes for capital projects and supported the Headteacher through this process.</li> </ul>   | <p>We have a healthy main school budget which the Resources and Pay Committee has monitored closely this year to ensure that funds are spend as agreed and in accordance with school policies.</p> <p>We have taken necessary steps to ensure the financial viability of our School and that we continue to avoid a deficit budget, ensuring that we avoid the punitive that would result from a deficit budget.</p> <p>We consider our overall effectiveness in this area to be GOOD.</p> <p>Next year we will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to stringently monitor the in-year budget situation</li> <li>• consider staffing structures in light of the available budgets and resource;</li> <li>• carry out benchmarking and complete the SFVS to ensure the school finances are well-managed;</li> <li>• ensure that the Resources, Pay and Premises Committee members undertake relevant training and are familiar with school finance policies</li> </ul> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | to enable them to challenge in this area. |
|--|--|---|

**Finally.....**

Under separate cover I will also be writing to you regarding the Building Fund, your contributions are vital to the School and allow us to continue to improve the facilities for your children in ways which would just not be possible without your support.

Last year we also launched a revised maintenance programme to ensure the environment and equipment of the School is properly maintained. We are in the process of purchasing three new computer trolleys with the aid of a donation from the PTA so that more children can benefit from the opportunities that technology can bring to their education.

I hope you will join me in saying a big thank you to all our wonderful staff for the care and attention they give to your children and will share the pride we feel in the way that your children develop and grow through their time at St Pauls.

I'm sure you will all join me in wishing the very best to Annabelle Todd who left us at the end of the summer term after four years at St Pauls and of course got married. We also welcome Connor Hounsome who has taken on a permanent role at our School as a newly qualified member of staff and we look forward to his new ideas, drive and enthusiasm. We also say goodbye to Mrs Lovekin who is leaving her role in the School office after many years and we wish her well for the future.

Before ending this letter, I would like to take this opportunity to remind any parent that if they have any issues or concerns regarding their son/daughter please DO raise the matter with the class teacher. If you still have concerns, please do raise them with the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Head or Deputy Head Teacher or indeed if appropriate with the Chair of Governors. We don't want you to feel that you cannot approach us or to feel that you are not being listened to.

Last but by no means least we wish last year's Year 6 pupils all the very best in their new Schools and we hope that their time at St Pauls will stand them in good stead – they will always be welcome back to visit. For the current year 6 children we hope they will find their year challenging, rewarding and one which will equip them for their future lives.

We hope all children enjoy this year at St Paul's and will find it rewarding and full of new challenges.

Best regards,

Pat Prime, Chair of Governors