

St Matthew's C of E Primary School
Governors Annual Statement
(January 2021)



'It's always darkest before the dawn' they say. Indeed 2020 has been a tough year for everyone and we hope and pray that we will see 'light at the end of this tunnel' in 2021.

We were thrilled in September 2020 when Mrs Walton joined as our new Deputy Head, completing our **permanent** leadership team. Our children came back to school too. But unfortunately Covid19 accelerated, affecting many families including staff and our leadership alike. Some children were off, many isolating. Then a new lockdown, most children were at home and staff were asked to teach and children learn remotely. A new Challenge!

May I thank you all for the amazing support you have given during this crisis. Personally I'm looking forward to 2021, with some trepidation but a great deal of excitement as we look forward to our building program. I pray we will all grow stronger and together we **will** come through this year and be able to say we have been **Blessed by God** in new ways in 2021.

You will see in my '2020 Welcome' page how the whole governing team operates. During lockdown our Governing Board and the 3 Main Committees have continued to meet on-line. These committees are focussed on the three core functions of governance:-

- **Ensuring a clear strategic vision for school.** Through the months of the pandemic we have shared the compassion and commitment of our school family with the local community distributing hundreds of food parcels bringing help to vulnerable families. **Vision & Ethos Committee** have played a key part and have continued to review our Christian identity in preparation for future inspection visits. Our family liaison team have taken a high profile through this pandemic ensuring the welfare of vulnerable families.
- **Holding leaders to account for the educational performance is our key focus.** Teaching and learning has been a massive challenge for everyone during the pandemic with a low number of vulnerable and keyworker children in-school and the majority of children at home remote learning. A virtual visit by OFSTED in November 2020 made the inspectors aware of many of our specific challenges. New methods of teaching, never used before such as ClassDojo have been introduced. The **Curriculum and Standards Committee** consider the engagement, impact and effectiveness for all children.
- **The Resources Committee continue to monitor our Financial Performance.** Reviewing spend through the Covid pandemic and have now secured capital funding for a major upgrade of our building facilities. Detailed discussions with architects and designers are on-going; some disruption will be inevitable with construction planned to commence in summer 2021.

During lockdown the governors have missed visiting school, meeting children and teachers. We have appreciated new ways of keeping in touch with school and learnt new ways of operating our committees, challenging and supporting school leadership. The Governors remain committed to see all our children grow and develop their educational and social skills to move on confidently to secondary education, becoming rounded adult members of society.

If you have any contributions you feel will help us, please don't hesitate to contact me through the school office.

We look forward to a safe & happy 2021, and 'light at the end of this tunnel'.

James Atkinson

19 January 2021

"Be blessed by God, be happy and aspire to be..."