



ST. OSWALD'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chair's Report
To
Parents & Staff
(Autumn Term 2022-23)

Dr. A. J. Wilkinson

December 2022

ST. OSWALD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Three Core Functions of Governance:

- 1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction*
- 2. Hold executive leaders to account for educational performance and performance management of staff*
- 3. Oversee financial performance and ensure money is well spent*

The governing body encompasses a variety of work / life backgrounds and we are appointed as governors through various routes. At the present time we have ten governors, and we meet regularly as a board in order to act as a critical friend in both supporting and challenging the teaching staff on any aspect of school life. In addition to the reports we receive from the teaching staff, we are always very happy to hear about the experiences of parents and pupils, and can be contacted via the school office. In order to help us to be effective as governors, we ensure our meetings centre around the three key areas of governance listed above.

This term we have had three meetings of the governing body: in September, November and December. In November, we had our first face-to-face meeting in nearly three years, and we have also continued to hold some meetings virtually via Microsoft Teams. In these meetings we have discussed the following issues:-

- Governor training and development – we held a training session in school on OFSTED preparedness, which included an element of reflection as well as an understanding of the OFSTED process and how governance is assessed as part of this. It transpired that this was very timely as OFSTED visited the school at the beginning of November, and governors were rigorously interviewed as part of the inspection process. We have also completed a self-assessment exercise and a Chair appraisal, which we will analyse early in the Spring term in order to identify any areas for further development
- Monitoring the school's spending in relation to the budget – we have moved away from using the services of a peripatetic Local Authority bursar, and now our school business manager undertakes this role. As governors we have direct oversight and scrutiny of this, and at meetings of the board we have and will continue to question the school business manager during the budget monitoring we undertake
- Pupil premium spending, and how this has an impact on children

- Progress and attainment of pupils
- Discussion of the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan
- PTA report – we have introduced a regular item whereby governors receive a report from the PTA detailing their work

Governor Visits to School

We have continued to undertake governor visits as per our “link roles”. We have had the following visits this term:-

- Chris Beaney – Key Stage 2
- Katy Callan – Art

After each visit, governors have presented reports to the rest of the governing body on their findings. Having a working understanding of the school is a vital part of being a governor, and we look forward to having more such visits in the Spring term.

Governing Body Membership Changes

We have had several changes in personnel over the past term:-

- **EXPIRATION OF TERM** – Mr. Neil Holding
- **NEW GOVERNORS** – Mrs. Katy Callan (Elected Parent Governor), Councillor Jenny Bullen (LA Governor)

We have recently welcomed Mrs. Katy Callan to the governing body as an elected parent governor, but we now have another parent governor vacancy owing to the expiration in Mr. Neil Holding's term of office. We have passed on our thanks to Mr. Holding for his four years of service to the school. We will be opening the process for nominations to the vacant parent governor role in the Spring term. We would be immensely grateful if parents could consider putting their names forward for this. If anyone would like to know more about the role then I would be happy to make myself available to discuss this further, and I can be contacted by emailing the school office. It would be great to have a number of candidates to allow parents as broad a choice as possible during the election process. We will also issue some guidance as to the areas of expertise we would ideally like to fill in due course.

Our Local Authority governor role has been filled by Cllr Jenny Bullen. She was nominated by Wigan Council and approved at our recent Full Governing Board meeting.

Final Thoughts

As always I would like to thank Mrs. Hassan and all of the staff at the school for their hard work and dedication, and all of our parents for their support. On behalf of the governing body, I would like to give everyone my best wishes for the Christmas period, and a Happy New Year.

Dr. A. J. Wilkinson