



ST. OSWALD'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chair's Report
To
Parents & Staff
(Summer Term 2021-22)

Dr. A. J. Wilkinson

July 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 nine 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 two meetings of the governing body: in May and July. We have continued to hold these meetings virtually via Microsoft Teams. In these meetings we have discussed the following issues:-

- Governor training and recruitment – we held a training session on “Mission and Ethos” with Pat Peel from the Archdiocese of Liverpool. This was well attended by the governing body and the teaching staff from school. This session has helped us to deepen our understanding of our life as a Catholic school, and we plan to use this understanding to look closely at how we ensure the Catholic faith and Catholic values are at the heart of the school’s mission
- Monitoring the school’s spending in relation to the budget
- Pupil premium spending, and how this has an impact on children
- Progress and attainment of pupils, including an update on SEND pupils – the standout for governors this term was the extra-ordinary success in the SATS results
- School Premises – including discussions of building work completed and areas where work will be required in the future

- Curriculum – we have had a continued focus on subject leadership and have again heard from teachers how work with the school improvement team has helped develop this. (Subject leadership involves teachers taking a subject area and leading the curriculum across the whole school for this area). We have had a focus on Art, DT and Science in the governing body meetings this term. It is worth noting that the curriculum plans are all viewable on the school website, and these outline everything the children are going to learn over the coming months and years
- Discussion of the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plan, in particular by looking at the feedback from the school improvement partner, who has reviewed these and offered feedback and appraisal. These are really helpful reports for the governors to be able hold the school leadership to account in how they plan to improve and develop the school
- OFSTED – we continue to reflect on our preparedness for an OFSTED visit, but our focus here is on ensuring the best possible standards for our children
- In terms of the Catholic life of the school our parish priest, Fr John Gorman, is no longer a member of the governing body and currently does not play any role in the governance of the school or in supporting the children’s education. He also now plays no role in nominating foundation governors. Deacon Paul Blinston is heavily involved in supporting the RE and Collective Worship aspects of school life, which enrich the curriculum and ensure the Catholic faith is woven into the school community. He is also a member of our governing body and provides that perspective in the scrutiny of the curriculum.

Governor Visits to School

We have continued to reintroduce governor visits as per our “link roles”. We are particularly interested in ensuring we maintain adequate scrutiny of the curriculum, and we plan to update our current list when we resume meetings in the Autumn term and set out our plans for the year ahead. We are required to have governors allocated to Safeguarding and SEND in particular, and in this term we have submitted the Safeguarding audit to the Local Authority. This looks at all aspects of Safeguarding work and is completed with the involvement of senior teaching staff and governors. We have also had the following visits this term:-

- Deacon Paul Blinston – RE & Collective Worship

- Andrew Wilkinson – Mathematics

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 Autumn term.

Governing Body Membership Changes

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

- **RESIGNATIONS** – Fr. John Gorman, Mrs. Christine Travis
- **NEW APPOINTMENTS** – Dr. Andrew Wilkinson (Foundation Governor)
- **NEW GOVERNORS** – none this term

We are still awaiting an appointment to the role of Local Authority Governor, and the nomination for this role will be received from Wigan Local Authority when a suitable candidate is available. We plan to run an election in the Autumn term for the parent governor vacancy, and 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.

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. As the SATS results have shown, we have a hugely resilient school community of which we can all be very proud, and everyone has played their role in achieving this success.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the children who received the Sacraments of Reconciliation (Confession) and Eucharist (Holy Communion) this year. These are for most children the only Sacraments they receive in their primary school years, and they require a huge commitment. As a parent who attended I can honestly say that the children were a credit to the school.

Finally, I hope that this report can give an idea of some of the work of the governing body. I really feel strongly that everyone knows about this aspect of school life, and I would be very happy to be contacted via the school office with any queries you may have about our role. I am happy to be contacted for an email query or can equally arrange to meet face to

face. On behalf of the governing body, I would like to give everyone my best wishes for the Summer break.

Dr. A. J. Wilkinson