



St. Laurence Catholic Primary School

Governor News

July 2017

We hope your children have had a good year at St. Laurence. It has been a successful time for our Year 6s who achieved to a high level in their recent SATs and are ready to move on to their secondary schools. We would like to express our gratitude to the members of staff we are saying goodbye to at the end of this term. They have worked so hard and contributed so much to our school – we wish them all the very best for the future.

We are very pleased with the teaching staff appointed for the new school year. We're confident that we have in place an excellent mix of new and experienced staff throughout the school, who are all looking forward to getting to know your children in their new classes from September. All children have had the opportunity to meet and spend the day with their new class teacher for September. Parents were also able to meet briefly with all staff at the recent Open Evening.

On 6th July, the school governors had our last Full Governing Body meeting of the year. Below is a summary of some of the main points we discussed.

Pupil Voice at St Laurence

We heard about the various ways that staff ensure children have a chance to contribute to how the school is run. We were impressed by the range of opportunities that are now available to children across the school and how hard they have worked this year, including:

- The **School Council**, who are elected by the children in each class (Year 1-6)
- **Peer Mediators**: this year, ten Year 5 children were trained by Mrs Sharman to be Peer Mediators. Two peer mediators are on duty in the playground each lunchtime. They can be readily identified by their yellow sashes and their role is to support their fellow pupils to find a resolution to difficulties that arise when they're playing
- **E-cadets** have received training and highlighted e-safety issues to all children in the school
- **Headteacher Conferences**: every week Mrs Clark invites six children to join her in her office to show her some of their work and tell her what they think about their learning in school (all with a drink of squash and a biscuit). The children's comments have helped her in planning how the school offers a range of curriculum activities for the coming year
- **Mini Vinnies** were set up in school this year as the first junior branch in the Diocese of the St Vincent de Paul Society and has proved incredibly popular. Their activities have included raising money for Children In Need and the parish Cafod 'Connect2Peru' project, as well as inviting older parishioners to tea and to enjoy the KS1 nativity play
- **Junior Travel Ambassadors** in Year 5 have promoted road safety to all pupils, including through a poster-designing competition, and are looking forward to helping the next group carry on their work in the next academic year

Building Plans

Some people have asked about what will happen to the school caretaker's house now that we no longer have a caretaker living on site. A representative from the Diocesan Schools Service attended our meeting. The house belongs to the Diocese which has had an initial survey done on the house. It's not suitable for sale or rent on the open market as it needs a lot of work doing to it and is also accessible only through the school grounds. We discussed the cost of refurbishing and developing the house so that it can be an asset to the school. We shall continue to explore options and let you know when there is a more definite plan.

Breakfast Club survey

Thank you to all of you who returned the breakfast club survey in June. In total,

- 58 parents returned the survey
- 42 parents (with 52 children between them) said they would be prepared to pay to use a breakfast club
- 19 parents (with 23 children) would want to use a breakfast club 5 days/week
- Others would use a breakfast club part time or on an ad hoc basis

The governors reviewed these numbers and considered options. As we mentioned in the survey, any breakfast club needs to make enough money to cover its costs (eg staff, food, equipment, cleaning, and administration of bookings). We'd also need to identify a suitable space in which to base a breakfast club, which we currently do not have. There have been plans to build a new community room alongside the school hall; however due to funding difficulties, these plans are now on hold.

Governors have asked Mrs Clark to do some costings based on the above survey results and feed back to us next term. Based on these costings, and on the availability of space, we'll make a decision on whether or not to proceed. Whilst we realise how valuable a breakfast club would be for many parents, we need to be confident that it will be financially viable since the school does not have money in its budget to subsidise a club and we need to find a space that is not already in use.

Longer Term Planning

Two groups of schools in the Diocese have already joined forces to form Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts to support each other and share resources. It is expected that at some point, all the Catholic schools in the Diocese will be part of a Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. We continue to have regular discussions with the Diocesan Schools Service and other local Catholic schools about what the best way forward is for the children of our school.

PTA

We would like to extend our thanks to the PTA whose hard work has raised over £5,000 this year, including an amazing £2,874 at the Summer Fayre in June. As always, we are incredibly grateful for all that the PTA does to raise money and run events for our school.

Do you want to know more about what our school's governors do?

To find out more about us, go to the "School Governors" pages of the school website (under the "Community" tab). Here you can see profiles of the governors, information about our responsibilities, and the minutes of our Full Governing Body meetings.