

Through God's grace, a community growing in knowledge and understanding

St. Laurence Catholic Primary School

Governor News



December 2015

Welcome

For those of you who are new this term, welcome to St Laurence School from your school governors. Our school has fourteen governors; we are a mixture of school staff, parents and parishioners. At the moment, seven of our governors are parents and another four of us have children who used to attend St. Laurence. There's a list of our names overleaf.

We work as a team; no individual governor has the authority to make decisions alone. The Full Governing Body meets twice a term and we post the minutes of our meetings on the Governors' page of the school website.

As governors, our main responsibilities are:

- supporting the school leadership team,
- setting a clear vision for the school,
- holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of all the children, and
- ensuring that the school's money is used wisely.

We do all this by having regular meetings, asking the headteacher lots of questions, visiting the school to see things for ourselves, attending training sessions and keeping up to date with new government directives.

Are you interested in being a governor?

We are sorry to see Paul Robertson leaving the governing body at the end of December. We are very grateful to Paul for all his hard work over the last few years. There will be an election for a new parent governor in January – more details will be sent out when we return after the Christmas holiday. Would you be interested in joining us?

Being a governor is unpaid but immensely satisfying. We are looking for someone with energy and commitment who is able to bring their knowledge and experience to the governance of our school. We would especially welcome nominations from people with Health & Safety and/or premises management experience. However, the main requirement is enthusiasm and a commitment to the role. All our governors attend training with the Cambridgeshire County Governor Services Team. The governor's role includes:

- attending 2 Full Governing Body meetings per term (on Thursdays 4-6pm)
- being a member of a committee which meets once or twice a term (either during the school day or immediately after school)
- taking part in governor monitoring activities. Examples of these are overleaf.

To find out more about what being a governor involves, you can:

- talk to any of the current governors. Do ask at the school office to be put in touch with one of us, or look at our photos on the "Governing Body" page of the school website.
- read minutes of our Full Governing Body meetings (on the "Governing Body" page of the school website)
- browse the SGOSS website <http://www.sgo.org.uk/> SGOSS is a national charity that helps recruit school governors and their website gives more information about being a governor.

What have governors been doing this term?

Some (but not all) of the things we've been doing this term include:

- At the Finance & Personnel committee meeting, we reviewed a summary of the school budget. We looked at how money has been spent to improve learning; this year there has been a focus on improving the classroom environments. We also monitored the performance management arrangements for staff.
- At the Learning & Achievement committee, we reviewed this term's plan for raising attainment across the school, discussed the new arrangements for 'assessment without levels' and the use of sports funding and pupil premium money.
- At the Premises, Health, Safety & Wellbeing committee meeting we reviewed the school's recent Health & Safety Audit and looked at the new staff wellbeing policy. Committee members took part in a Health & Safety walk around the school.
- At our Full Governing Body meeting in October Mrs Clark presented a report on progress and achievement across the school (including last year's SATs results) plus an overview of the plans in place to maintain and improve our standards of teaching and learning across the school.
- In October, we finalised our governor monitoring plan for the 2015/16 school year and each governor was asked to commit to one or two monitoring activities. Examples of what governors are doing this year include:
 - being on the Equality Working Group (working towards achieving the Equalities Award),
 - meeting with senior teachers to discuss priorities on the School Improvement Plan. This involves receiving information about groups of children (not discussing individuals) and asking focused questions about what the school is doing and how effective it is,
 - visiting during the school day to observe small group interventions with children,
 - holding pupil perception interviews
 - having lunch with children in school and observing how the new Behaviour Policy is used.
 - visiting school assemblies and experiencing the Catholic Ethos of the school in action.

St. Laurence School Governors are:

Foundation Governors

(appointed by the Diocese; parishioners)

Mary Jane O'Sullivan (Chair)

Janet Scally (Vice Chair)

Father Pat Cleary

Harry Roberts

Charlotte Woodford

Terry Taylor-Crush

Nick Fraser

Claire Southgate

Parent Governors:

Paul Robertson (until 31.12.15)

Rebecca Imhagwe

Staff Governors:

Phyllis Maynard

Clare Clark

Local Authority Governor

Sonali Kumarakulasinghe

Co-opted Governor:

Shauna DeWolf

Associate Members

Joan Brierley

Veronica Harvey

Lizzy Bennett