

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

St. Laurence Catholic Primary School Governor News March 2016



Are you interested in being a governor?

We shall be holding elections for a new parent governor in the Summer Term and shall send out further details in the first week back after Easter.

Being a governor is unpaid but immensely satisfying. The main requirement is enthusiasm and a commitment to the role. The governor's role includes:

- attending 2 Full Governing Body meetings per term (on Thursdays 4-6pm)
- joining a committee of governors which meets once or twice a term (either during the school day or immediately after school) to look in more detail at a particular area of the school's performance (eg children's learning & progress or premises management)
- taking part in the governors' programme of monitoring school improvement
- attend training provided by the Cambridgeshire County Governor Services Team

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

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

We are looking for a clerk....

Our longstanding Governing Body clerk retires at the end of March and we are looking for a replacement to work for a few hours a month. This is a paid administrative role which includes minute taking, managing our records and advising the Governing Body on procedure (training is available). If you are interested, please contact the school office for more details.

Parent Survey

Thank you to everyone who filled out a parent questionnaire. Below is a summary of your 142 responses. Your comments and some of our responses are overleaf.

	Question	Strongly Agree /Agree	Disagree /Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Left Blank	Total
1	My child is happy at this school	139	3	1	0	143
2	My child feels safe at this school	140	2	0	0	142
3	The school has a strong Catholic ethos based on Gospel values	140	0	2	0	142
4	My child makes good progress at this school	137	2	3	0	142
5	My child is well looked after at this school	138	1	3	0	142
6	My child is taught well at this school	135	2	5	0	142
7	My child receives appropriate homework for their age	118	18	6	0	142
8	The school ensures the pupils are well behaved	133	3	6	0	142
9	The school deals effectively with bullying	93	8	40	1	142
10	The school is well led and managed	137	1	4	0	142
11	The school responds well to any concern I raise	129	3	9	1	142
12	I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress	130	8	1	3	142
13	I would recommend this school to another parent	138	3	1	0	142

"Two stars and a Wish"

These are comments from the back page of our questionnaire. The comments listed here are those which 5 or more parents highlighted.

We have included responses from Senior Staff and Governors in italics.

Stars:

- Importance of RE and Catholic/Christian values
- Atmosphere: friendly, warm, caring, child focused, sense of community, like a family
- Staff: supportive, caring, helpful & approachable (office staff especially friendly & helpful)
- Teachers: fantastic, friendly, helpful & committed
- Children well looked after: they feel safe & are known as individuals, it's caring & loving
- Size of school: friendliness, sense of belonging, cultural mix
- Children are happy to come to school: they love school
- Improving academic standards: new topics are stimulating, encouraging natural curiosity

Wishes:

- Breakfast club: *We recognise that for some parents this would be very helpful, but have no immediate plans to set up a breakfast club; the main limiting factors are lack of a suitable space plus financial viability. However, governors will review this each year.*
- Homework: more appropriate to age/ability, more/less homework, more/less challenging. *Obviously the range of responses reflects the range of children's needs. We reviewed our homework policy in October and continue to try and get a balance that meets every child's needs; please talk to your child's class teacher if you have concerns.*
- More after school and lunchtime clubs, including PE clubs: *The range of clubs we offer is comparable to other similarly sized schools. For free clubs, we are reliant on volunteers or our staff giving up their own time, and so try to limit these to a maximum of 1 club per staff member. We also offer some clubs that you have to pay for: these run only if they're financially viable and are also aware of pressure on family budgets.*
- Communication: more feedback daily, engagement with parents, parent forum *Since last year we have introduced the weekly school newsletter & weekly class information sheets, launched our new website and introduced half-termly parent coffee mornings. We've also started giving out written information at parents' evenings. Please talk to your child's class teacher if you'd like more information about your child's progress.*
- Premises: Lighter classrooms, decorated a bit more, lunchtime play equipment, all-year outdoor surfaces (eg astro-turf), wider pavements outside classrooms *We have a 3 year programme of decoration and improvements which we review with our Diocesan Adviser. The Year 1/2 classrooms and shared areas have been painted in the last year; the Year 3/4 classrooms are due to re-decorated in the Summer holidays. Playground markings are planned for later this year (thanks to the PTFA whose fundraising is supporting this). Each year we prioritise which improvements we can make according to our budget limitations.*

Could you complete the survey online?

We value your comments: some of the comments from last year's survey have fed into changes that we've made over the past year (eg changes to the start of the school day, weekly newsletters and class information sheets). However, these results only get seen by us at school. The Ofsted parent view website can be seen by anyone and is monitored by Ofsted. So, please take a few minutes to answer the same questions online at <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>