

Through God's grace, a community growing



in knowledge and understanding

Governor News –

July 2019

Joining Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Earlier this term we held consultation meetings with parents and staff about our plan to convert to academy status and join Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust. We are on schedule to join the Trust on 1st September. The Trust currently consists of four other primary schools within our Diocese and one secondary school. We shall be the sixth school to join and we are looking forward to working more closely with the other Catholic schools in the Trust. You can find out more information about the Trust at <https://www.ourladyofwalsingham.co.uk/>.

When your children return to St Laurence in September, their daily experience of school life will be the same; the school uniform, school rules and times of the school day will not be changing.

Behind the scenes, teachers will continue to build links with teachers from other schools in the Trust to share good practice. Before the start of term in September, teachers will be attending a half day conference in Ipswich, starting with Mass, along with all the teachers from the other member schools.

The St Laurence governing body will continue to support the school, though our role will change slightly. We shall be known as the “Local Governing Body” (LGB) and shall slightly decrease in size from 14 to 12 governors. We shall still meet twice a term and support and challenge the senior staff to ensure that the school continues to thrive. As governors, we are extremely proud of the school’s Catholic Ethos, caring atmosphere and dedication to ensuring that all our children receive teaching that’s tailored to their individual needs. We shall continue to support the school to ensure this continues. The Trust Board of Directors will have overall responsibility for the standards and performance of all the schools in the Trust and we, along with other schools’ Local Governing Bodies, shall report to the Board of Directors each term.

Although joining the Trust involves some change for the school, we are pleased to see that we have a very stable team of staff, with no staff leaving the school this summer: all of our teachers and support staff will be the same familiar faces when we return in September.

Changes in Governing Body Membership

Hello to....

We are pleased to be welcoming two new Foundation Governors who officially take up post on 1st September (although they have already started attending meetings).

Dr Victoria Rataj-Worsnop is a former secondary school headteacher and an Education Consultant and also a keen netball & volleyball player.

Ursula Lowe is a lecturer at Cambridge Regional College and has been a member of St Laurence’s parish since 1988 where she is a regular at 6pm Mass.

Goodbye to.....

At the end of this term, we are saying goodbye to two of our governors.

Monica McDonald has been a parent governor for 3 years and is returning with her family to the USA later in July.

Shauna DeWolf has been a governor for an amazing 16 years, including 4 years as our Chair of Governors.

Would you like to join us?

Shortly after we return in September, we shall be holding an election for a new parent governor to replace Monica. Would you be interested in joining us? The majority of our governors are Foundation governors (Catholics, appointed by the Bishop); anyone who has a parental responsibility for a child at the school in September will be eligible to stand for election as a parent governor. We want our governing body to be a group which reflects the diversity of our school. We ask non-Catholic governors to be committed to supporting the school's Catholic Ethos. As part of our school's commitment to safeguarding our children, we expect all governors (and other regular volunteers) to undertake a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.

What we ask of governors is:

- Time and interest in the school: typically governors spend 5 to 10 hours per month on governor duties. Most governors visit the school during the day at least once a year,
- Attending 2 Local Governing Body meetings per term; coming to meetings with questions about the reports which are provided in advance,
- Joining a sub-committee of governors which meets once 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 finance & premises management),
- Attending training provided by Cambridgeshire School Governance Team; this involves a whole day induction training plus attending further training (daytime or evening) each year,
- Commitment to supporting the school to maintain its Catholic Ethos, academic standards and financial viability. Some governors bring professional expertise (financial, legal, human resources), some a willingness to develop their skills in the interests of the school.

Being a governor requires commitment but is immensely rewarding and interesting. So, do think whether you have the time, skills and enthusiasm to join us. New governors are buddied up with an experienced governor and receive an in-house induction. If you might be interested please ask at the school office or e-mail our clerk at Clerk@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk to arrange an informal conversation with one of our governors. You can find out more about our governing body on the school governors' page of the school website (in the community section). <https://www.stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk/page/?title=School+Governors&pid=26>

Thank You to.....

- All our staff for their relentless dedication and enthusiasm for helping our children get the most out of their time at school, both academically and socially.
- Miss Kelly and the school council for all their hard work this year. Year 5 & 6 school council representatives attended our July governing body meeting and told us about the work they've done this year such as the Buddy Bench and Bus Stop, the Volunteers' Thank You Tea, the Big Pedal, Anti-Bullying Week, and the Healthy Food Survey.
- The PTA who, with a new Chair, Treasurer and Secretary this year, have continued to raise much needed funds for the school including an amazing £2300 at the summer fayre. Funds raised by the PTA have contributed towards the cost of new interactive whiteboards in the classrooms and the Felixstowe trip.
- The staff who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to prepare for us joining the Trust, especially Mrs Clark and Mrs Taylor who have had several meetings and put in many hours to ensure this happens smoothly.
- Shauna DeWolf and Monica McDonald for their support of the school in their time as governors.