



Governors Newsletter Summer 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the summer break rapidly approaches, we would like to take this opportunity to update you on the work that the Board of Governors has been doing since Easter.

Secondment

As detailed in our separate letter on the subject, we have spent time reviewing the secondment of Mr Sweetingham and Mrs Mitri and have agreed to continue to support St Mary's and St John's on a reduced and more strategic basis for one term. Please read the letter for more information on this.

Future planning

We are very much aware that we are one of many single-form entry schools in Barnet facing a large budget deficit in the coming three years. Unfortunately there is no indication from the Government that the educational funding crisis will be addressed and we are now starting to see the predicted fall in numbers of pupils impact our school. As a governing body, we are doing everything we can to ensure that our school is in a financially sustainable position. This includes considering options for our future, for example, federation with another school. In the autumn term, we will be creating a strategic plan for our future and will be inviting parents to a discussion forum to hear your views. Please do come along.

The work of our sub-committees

Our **Finance & Premises** Committee met this term to confirm our position at the end of the most recent financial year, 2018/19. Due to the careful decision making in terms of expenses, and the income from the secondment, we were able to balance the budget this year and to carry over some money into the current financial year (2019/20). This is a significant improvement on where the school was a number of years ago. With continued careful budgeting and no huge unpredicted costs, we should finish this financial year with a balanced budget but nothing to carry into the next year. From 2020/21 our forecast is that our budget will move into deficit.

As a board we are now keeping a detailed list of all the decisions we are making to reduce the deficit (this includes all discussions about how we can raise our income as well as anything we can reduce expenditure on). We believe that this will help us when it comes to discussions about the future of our school with the Local Authority and the LDBS.

In terms of our premises, our chair met with Steve White of the LDBS, who controls LDBS premises spend, to discuss our needs in terms of our premises. We continue to monitor our priority list closely and we are lucky that we have received a considerable amount of funding from the LDBS over the last few years, including a new boiler and about £80,000 of work about to be spent on our roof. There continues to be a large number of renovations required for our premises. As parents and carers, your ongoing contribution to the Maintenance Fund (which raises around £8,000 per year) really helps in this regard.

The **Teaching & Learning Standards Committee** continues to work hard monitoring the learning of our children. This term, the focus was on Pupil Premium so the governors walk, pupil voice and subject lead sessions all focused on this area - which continues to be a challenging one. As governors, we have a duty to ensure that the Pupil Premium funding is having the desired impact - to help disadvantaged pupils make better progress than their non-

Nurture Encourage Challenge through Christ



disadvantaged peers. We are pleased to report that this has been very successful this year but it continues to be a key focus for us.

Another key area of focus is our ongoing commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum. It has been a pleasure this year to support the school's involvement in the Erasmus project and to see how much the entire school, and especially our Year Five children, benefited from the Spanish experience.

The focus on computing has also been fantastic to see this year and we are very lucky that the fund-raising of the SJA this year has been able to support essential ICT equipment and infrastructure to allow the children to really develop these key skills.

Our **Admissions Committee** did not meet this term but the chair of that committee, Jaime Goumal, has continued to work hard dealing with requests for information about Reception places and clarifying the streets which are now in the parish.

The main focus of the **Personnel Committee** this term has been the review and extension of the secondment, which is detailed elsewhere. The Committee also signed-off the recruitment of an additional Teaching Assistant as a result of a successful ECHP application for a pupil with additional support needs. A sub-section of this committee held Mr Sweetingham's mid-year appraisal to check in on his progress towards his objectives and to discuss the ever important work-life balance.

Monitoring School Life

As well as the TLS governors attending the afternoon in school, which is the key way we monitor school life, governors have been active in terms of attending assemblies, church services, supporting the Production and Music Evening. We also held our termly drop-in with parents, which is always a good opportunity to hear from parents about how they feel the school is doing. Other sources of information are the surveys from staff, parents and pupils and these have been analysed and discussed by the Board.

Changes on our governing body

This summer term we have accepted the resignations of Rachel Adams-Constantine (PCC-nominated governor) and Loretta Okpokiri (LDBS governor). We thank them both for all their hard work and their useful guidance and input over the time of their tenures. As a result, we are now looking for two PCC-nominated governors and two LDBS governors. The key requirement for these governors is that they uphold our Christian values so, if you are interested in being involved in the strategic running of our school and believe you are a suitable candidate, please do get in touch with us.

We have welcomed two new members to our Governing Body: Jeremy Brough has joined us as a Parent Governor and Lynne Evans is now our professional Clerk. We welcome them both.

Keep in touch

As always please do get in touch with us via governors@stjohnsn20.barnetmail.net and come along to our next Governor Drop-in on Friday 6th December at 8.40am.

We wish you all a wonderful summer break and look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Imogen Hall
Chair

On behalf of the Board of Governors

Nurture Encourage Challenge through Christ