

# St Francis Catholic Primary School

## Governor News

Issue Six

Summer 2016



This Governors' Newsletter marks the end of a year characterised by many changes and a strengthened collective voice. The promise of summer finds us inevitably bidding goodbye to the old but welcoming the new. May we take this opportunity to send all our Year 6 children very best wishes as they move onto their new schools, and wish all our families a safe, restful and joyous summer.

**Miss Sarah Whitbread**  
Chair of Governors

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## An Exciting Year

This year as a governor has been an eventful one. Mr Terry May has embarked on Curriculum Monitoring and strengthening links with St Simon Stock, and we were happy to welcome Mr Danny Mateer as a Parent Governor. We look forward to sharing their continued impact with you in future.

As you know this was the first year of a new curriculum method of assessment, in which your child is graded as 'Emerging,' 'Expecting' or 'Exceeding' standards. We are incredibly proud of the children's unfazed fortitude during this transitional year, the teachers' resourcefulness, and understand the challenges posed in the classroom as we ourselves have got to grips with the new changes.

## Section 48

It finally happened. At long last the phone call came. A year after our highly successful Ofsted visit Mrs Blanden learned that we were to receive our Section 48 RE inspection. (Ofsted does not inspect RE in faith schools.)

How did we do? I'm sure you have seen on the website that we were graded 'Outstanding in every area.' If you have not already done so, you really should follow the link and read the full report - it makes very pleasant reading.

The Catholic life of the school is a top priority for the governors. We are determined to ensure that St Francis pupils receive an education rooted in the Catholic faith. Since joining the governors three years ago it has been my privilege to see the commitment and skill of the staff who make this happen, with the constant guidance and encouragement of Canon Luke and Father Peter.

It is highly gratifying to receive this 'outstanding' accolade from the diocesan inspectors. However, we have never been in any doubt that the Catholic ethos of St Francis is one of its greatest strengths. Parents and governors alike, we owe a great debt of gratitude to the leadership team, to the RE subject leader, and to all those working day by day in the classroom to ensure your children receive a faith education of the highest quality.

- Richard Ashton, Religious Dimension Link Governor

## Governor Vacancies

It is with regret that I write that Mr Nigel Godden, Vice-Chair and Mrs Nathalie Manser, Curriculum Chair have tendered their resignations. Both played integral roles in the building of our governing body into the effective, efficient team that it is today, are extremely valued colleagues and will be greatly missed.

This of course, means that in September we will have vacancies for Foundation and one Parent Governor. I am casting the net wide to fulfill these roles, but would love to hear from you if you have an interest in governance. No previous experience is necessary, but it is essential that you have an open-minded attitude to acquire new skills, be willing to impact significantly, excitingly on the education of all our children; and the time, commitment and enthusiasm to devote to the role.

If you are interested, please drop me an email over the summer [[swhitbread@st-francis.kent.sch.uk](mailto:swhitbread@st-francis.kent.sch.uk)] I would be only too happy to discuss the role in more depth and answer any questions you may have.

I will pass you over to Mr Godden and Mrs Manser. I thank them for their unerring endeavours in improving standards and their exceptional loyalty to the welfare and education of our children.



*'After ten years as a Governor at St Francis School, sadly I have had to tender my resignation from the role due to a promotion and changing circumstances at work. I would like to share with you how rewarding I have found the role, which has been varied and at times extremely challenging. Undertaking the role with commitment brings rewards and personal achievements that are hugely satisfying. In my ten years I have seen the school go from strength to strength. I have watched the school flourish, and I know that it will continue to provide outstanding education to our pupils. My fellow Governors and all the staff are committed to providing the absolute best education and wellbeing for the children of St Francis School. It has been a pleasure to have been part of the team.'*

*'The role of Governor is an exciting one. It gives you the opportunity to experience the workings of the school and the day-to-day challenges that are faced. In my role as Chair of Finance & Premises committee I was able to challenge and provide strategic support across a number of school development projects. I was lucky enough to be involved in the school extension project, the provision of the mobile classrooms and also improvement works to the school playground. The school has some exciting developments ahead including some great ideas to improve the outdoor teaching spaces with new playground equipment and garden areas. Of course, the financial implications of these projects have to be carefully considered against the needs of the school.'*

*'As part of the leadership team of the school, there was nothing more rewarding than bringing the school out of special measures to achieve an Ofsted Good result last year. It was a huge team effort and very satisfying to know that the foundations are now laid to achieve Outstanding status.'*

*'I wish everyone at the school all the very best and look forward to hearing about all your future success.'*

*- Nigel Godden*



*'It has now been 3 years since I became a parent governor at St Francis Primary School. I can say that I thoroughly enjoyed the experience every step of the way! From working with the school coming out of Special Measures into 'good' to becoming Chair of Curriculum and appointing our Headteacher Mrs Blanden, I now come away a very different person with a whole range of skills and attributes I never thought I would be able to acquire in such a short period of time.*

*'It is with great sadness I am leaving the Governing Body due to new professional opportunities and I shall greatly miss the bond with the school. I am very proud and honoured to have been part of the school's journey over these last 3 years, having witnessed such an amazing development.*

*'I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Governing Body and especially Miss Whitbread who has been of most incredible support. I would also like to thank Mrs Blanden, Mrs Williams and all the staff at the school for being so easy to work with and making me feel always welcome in all circumstances. And most importantly, I would like to thank the children for always being their wonderful selves and making the school what it is today.*

*'I would like to wish all staff, parents and children a wonderful and restful summer break.'*

*- Nathalie Manser*

## Thank You

... To Ann Cripps who retires this year after more than twenty years in the service of our school. Mrs Cripps was also named Maidstone's Primary Teacher of the Year at The KM Charity awards in May, which could not be more deserved.

We also wish to thank:

All involved with The Friends of St Francis, Kylie Milne as Chair, and all the committee members for the various fundraising events throughout the year.

Reading volunteers - as governors we can see the positive impact this has on nurturing enquiring minds.

The staff and parents who have supported the first Communion Programme and other religious events.

All volunteers, walking bus volunteers and all parents who have helped out on school trips.

May we also take the opportunity to thank all families for all their unwavering support this year. All input, however seemingly small helps to create the cohesive whole of St. Francis Primary. This year has been resoundingly positive, but all of course would not be possible without the commitment of our families. We thank you for your continued faith in us.

Father in Heaven, source of all goodness and love, please look kindly upon us and receive our heartfelt gratitude in this time of giving thanks.

Thank you for all the graces and blessings you have bestowed upon us, spiritual and temporal; our faith and religious heritage, our food and shelter; our health, our school, children, colleagues and friends.

We ask you to bless our Year 6 pupils as they move on to the next stage of their education and for a restful, peaceful summer break for all our staff, pupils, governors and families.

Father, please grant us continued graces and blessings to come.

Amen.