

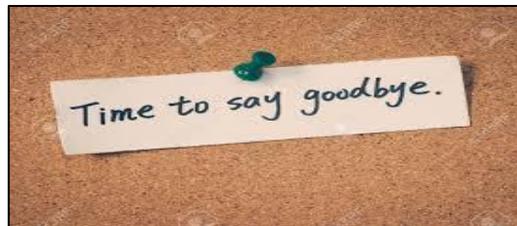


"Together we learn and grow through worship and celebration"

Governors' Newsletter – Autumn Term 2018

Here we are, another calendar year almost gone and the first term of this school year too and it seems that Christmas has crept up on us from nowhere. As always it has been a busy term and I hope that this newsletter will let you know what the governing body has been doing and how we have been working with school staff to continue to monitor the school's progress.

Firstly as you know we have said goodbye to Yemen Sangari, Annette Collins and Elizabeth Boylan. Hazel Taylor's term as a parent governor ended this term and she has agreed to fill one of our foundation governor vacancies. Bob King has also been filling one of the foundation governor positions but would very much like to step back as soon as a replacement can be found. This meant that we had two vacancies for new parent governors and two vacancies for foundation governors and as you will already know, Clare Jones and Louis Harrison were elected by you and attended their first governing body meeting on the 6th December. We still have vacancies for two new foundation governors – four people have applied for these roles and we will be holding interviews before the end of term in order to have the vacancies filled before the start of term in January and a full governing body. We are very grateful to all the people who have volunteered for these governor positions and count ourselves as very lucky – there are many governing bodies out there who really struggle to fill any vacancies and it is testament to our committed and dedicated community that people are willing to give up their time and work hard for the future of our school.



We say a huge thank you to Mrs Glover who has worked at St Edmund's for over 20 years as one of our reception class SMSA's. Kathy has seen many changes over the years but has remained dedicated to the children of St Edmund's ensuring they are well looked after during the lunch period. We will miss her calm ways and wish her every success as she gets to spend more quality time with her beautiful grandchild.

We also say thank you to Miss Underwood who joined us four and a half years ago as Inclusion Lead. She has worked with many families and has had a positive impact on the children and their learning. She is going to retire to Brighton but has promised to pop in next term to ensure Miss Meldon has a smooth transition into role. To enable Miss Meldon can carry out the Inclusion Lead role, we welcome Miss Aynie who will be working alongside 5T for two and a half days a week.

And of course we welcome back Mrs Hambling who is returning from maternity leave and will be teaching in the nursery alongside Mrs Preston. We are so lucky and blessed to have the staff we have.

There is a national teaching shortage at the moment and we have always had great success with recruiting high quality staff – this is absolutely because of the children at our school and the support we receive from you the parent body. Thank you.

Since the last newsletter we have been very lucky to have been able to completely replace all the school IT infrastructure and hardware. Reports from school staff are that this has had a huge impact on what the children and staff are now able to achieve in school. Governors will do some consultation and monitoring next term to find out the real impact of this investment on the children and their learning. The fact that school was able to make such a big investment was largely down to you, our parents and carers. The money raised at the auction last Easter went directly to this as did a large donation from the Parent's Association, and it will continue to be an investment each year, but it is most certainly an investment well worth making in terms of the effectiveness of school staff and the ability of the children to access a high-quality Computing curriculum and the hardware to match.



Committee Meetings

The **Curriculum & Achievement Committee** have had the opportunity to look at the results for each year group from the Summer Term 2017 as well as targets for this school year. The latest data and league table are now published and if you have been able to see any of these, I'm sure you will join us in congratulating school staff on the continued improvements in progress and attainment, especially when comparing St Edmund's to other local schools. The work that goes on in school every single day is being reflected in our very clear improvement, and while the focus is never on league tables, it is good to see that the hard work by everyone is being reflected in these tables and visible for all to see.

The **Resources Committee** met and continue to monitor the health & safety of our practices and school premises, as well as on-going budget challenges. We are very grateful to all the parents who contribute to the School Fund and would ask that all parents who have not yet contributed, either by monthly direct debit or by an annual contribution, see if it is something that they are able to do. Currently we are waiting to see if we have been successful in our bid to secure additional funding to resurface the whole playground area as it is deteriorating quite significantly. If we are able to secure this funding then as a voluntary aided school the governors have to pay 10% of any building work completed using this additional LCVAP funding so your generosity makes this possible.



By all accounts the school raffle this term has been the most successful yet with some very keen competition between the classes! The total raised by the raffle, children's Christmas Market, Cakes & Puddings and the silent auction was a fantastic £3,700 – this is a huge amount and we are also hoping to build on the success of last year's Easter auction with another auction before the end of the Spring term and we will let you know the date early in the new year. As we did last year, we will report back to you at the end of the summer term exactly how your generous donations have been used.

Governors have attended various training this term including a Governors Diocesan conference, School Financial Management and Revenue Funding Workshop, and e-learning for building an effective team, and 'Living your values, reaching your vision, managing risk'. Mrs Long has also attended a Chairs Development Course working with other schools and chairs all over London – this will improve her effectiveness as the current chair but also the effectiveness of the whole governing body.

Parking again!

You will have seen that new bollards were installed at the entrance to the parish car park in an attempt to control the use of the car park by parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as controlling the use of the car park until 4.30pm when our children are coming out of after school clubs. There were some teething issues with the bollards and then one of them came to an unfortunate end when it collided with a car. The bollards were having an impact except for the drivers that are now choosing to drive **IN AND OUT** of the car park exit as the entrance was blocked by the bollards. This is even more dangerous as there are cars reversing and negotiating in and out of the car park and causing even more danger than before.



So this is a reminder that the parish car park is not to be used by anyone who is dropping off or collecting a child or children **AT ANY TIME OF THE SCHOOL DAY AND UNTIL 4.30PM**. This includes those with a disabled badge as you can park more freely on the road. If you chose to disregard this, you will be choosing to endanger the adults and children who have to walk through the car park on their way to and from school. If other people (grandparents, childminders etc) drop off or collect children for you, please can you give them the above information.



So on to 2019 and the main focuses for the governing body will be:

- the continued improvement in the children's progress and attainment;
- the continuing financial challenges that all schools will be dealing with;
- a marketing strategy for St Edmund's School to deal with the changing picture of admissions

Historically St Edmund's has been oversubscribed with practising Catholics but this is a picture that is changing, not just locally but diocesan wide and nationally too. So the governors will have a working party that will be looking at a marketing strategy to communicate to our families of the future, all that is great about St Edmund's, our passion and drive to improve year on year, and all the while provide a nurturing environment and a broad range of extra-curricular activities.

We have maybe taken for granted that everyone knows this, but maybe the time has come when we need to go out and tell people and encourage people to come and look around our school and see it for themselves. You all know first-hand the amazing and wonderful place that St. Edmund's is, and you can help to promote us too - as carers, parents, grandparents and friends - by talking to neighbours, friends you meet at outside clubs etc. word of mouth is the best recommendation and anyone can apply to join St. Edmund's School.



Now with just a few days until Christmas we've all had the chance to attend the children's beautiful Christmas events in school, and the governors of St Edmund's wish all of our families a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and we look forward to a successful 2019.

On behalf of the governing body
Mrs Deb Long

“And there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them.”

– Luke 2:8-9

