



## St Mary's RC Primary School

### Governors' Annual Statement to Parents December 2015

*Guidance from the Department for Education recommends that Governing Bodies make an annual statement to parents and publish it on the school website. Our first governors' statement is below and we look forward to feedback, particularly from parents, about the content and format of the statement and whether the statement is clear and informative. Suggestions are welcome at any time via the school.*

#### **Introduction**

The Governing Body, supported by the Diocese and the Local Authority, aims to fulfil its responsibilities for the benefit of the children, staff, parents and community of St Mary's RC Primary School including the Parishes of St Mary's, Clapham, St Vincent de Paul, Battersea and St Francis de Sales, Stockwell.

#### **The Role of the Governing Body and the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is responsible for the management of the staff and the curriculum. In addition she is responsible for the day to day operational running of the school. The Governors' role is strategic and the governors act as a "critical friend" to the Head Teacher.

#### **Governing Body Membership**

The Governing Body has a membership of twelve and the governors are representatives of the body or group who appoint them, which includes the Diocese, the Parents, the Local Authority or the Staff of the school. They do not represent the views of those who appoint or elect them.

The current governors are as follows:

Five Foundation Governors appointed by the Diocese:

Annabelle Colairo, Marie Jessel, Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer, Phil Stokes & the Parish Priest, Father Richard Reid CSsR

Two Parent Foundation Governors appointed by the Diocese:

Tim Kirwan & Chris Lo.

Two Parent Governors elected by Parent ballot:

Fiona Mushrafi & Michele Reilly.

One Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority:

John Watson.

One Staff Governor elected by staff ballot:

Jennifer Price.

The Head Teacher, Karen Pluckrose, is appointed as an ex-officio member of the Governing Body.

#### **The Structure of the Governing Body**

To fulfil their strategic role all governors serve on one or more of the governing body's committees. The committees undertake and manage the detailed work of governance, in accordance with the committee's terms of reference and report to the full Governing Body, which meets once a term.

The five main committees are:

##### **The Mission, Ethos and Engagement Committee:**

Makes certain that the Catholic faith is at the centre of all the work of the school and ensures engagement with the school community, the Parish and the local community

##### **The Curriculum and Achievement Committee:**

Considers not only the academic progress and achievement of the children but also the clubs and other activities such as musical evenings and sports events

##### **The Finance and Premises Committee :**

Makes sure that the school is financially sound and accountable by complying with the financial arrangements and requirements of the Local Authority. The committee also ensures that the school premises are safe and fit for purpose

**The Safeguarding and Equalities Committee:**

Monitors the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements and policies which, in turn, protect the children from harm while they are at school or on authorised activities and trips outside the school. The committee also ensures equality of opportunity for all children in the school regardless of ability, ethnicity or gender

**The Staffing and Personnel Committee**

Supports the Head Teacher in recruiting and appointing new staff , succession planning and internal appointments, determining the pay and conditions of all staff, Staff Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and any staff related personnel issues.

Serving on committees and attendance at meetings is, however, only part of the governors' role. As governors we also spend time in the school to inform ourselves about the school and see the school in action. To do this each governor undertakes the role of Link Governor for an aspect of the school's work usually related to the terms of reference of the particular committee on which they serve. In addition, governors are also required to attend governor training each term which is arranged by the Governing Body, the Diocese or the Local Authority. The training, also known as Continuous Professional Development (CPD), is arranged to meet the training needs of the Governing Body as a whole and also ensures that the governors are fully briefed about any changes in legislation or guidance from the Diocese, the Department for Education (DfE), Ofsted or the Local Authority (LA).

The governors work as a team and each governor brings with them a range of different skills and experience. Clearly not all of the governors are educational specialists and the membership of the governing body includes not only our Parish Priest but governors with a wide range of experience and skills including parenting, education, finance, the media and information technology. It is this combination of skills and experience which helps us to form an effective Governing Body and fulfil the requirements and responsibilities needed to support and govern the school.

**Achievements 2014/15**

Throughout the academic year 2014/15 our school continued to be a successful learning environment where everyone, including the governors, worked hard to fulfil our mission to *'provide the best possible education for all children and to develop each child's full potential'* and where *'the teachings of Christ inform all our efforts and the way in which we treat one another.'*

One notable achievement during the year was the outcome of the Ofsted inspection in November 2014. The school was inspected under the new Ofsted framework and the inspectors looked very carefully at all aspects of the school's work. They spoke to governors, school leaders, staff, pupils and parents during the two days of the inspection. A range of documents were provided for the inspectors including the school's evaluation of its own performance, data about pupils' progress, minutes of the Governing Body meetings and documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding. A total of twenty-two lessons were observed, some of which were observed with the Headteacher. We as governors are very proud that our school was judged to be outstanding in every area, including governance.

The Ofsted report, posted on the school's website, endorses the very high quality work undertaken by teachers, support staff and all members of the school community and the dedication of the school governors. In particular, the report mentions that the children deserve enormous credit for the way they engage with their learning and their families for supporting them in doing this.

The governors are very proud that the excellent end of year results provided a clear indication that the school is continuing to move forward and achieve even greater outcomes for the children in its care.

A key achievement by the staff during the year was the introduction and implementation of the new National Curriculum produced by the Department for Education. During this change the Head Teacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team kept governors briefed through reports and attendance at meetings, and individual Link Governors monitored aspects of the curriculum that were their particular responsibility. This complex and difficult task was achieved with optimum professionalism and has been an impressive achievement.

Governors also regularly monitored and contributed to the school's own self-evaluation procedures ensuring that teaching and learning was of a consistently high quality throughout the year. The ongoing monitoring by governors ensured that we had clear knowledge of how the school was progressing against the key priorities in its School Development Plan and the school's previous results. The results data for the year showed excellent progress in English and Maths across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and pupils' attainment in phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage was also excellent.

The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team impressed the governors by the work they undertook to establish a system to assess children's work when the levels that had been previously used were abolished. Governors were aware of the implications of this for the staff and were well informed of developments and they continue to monitor the new system in 2015/16.

Another landmark achievement by staff was implementation of the new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) procedures across the school. The extension of the Inclusion Manager's role was a very positive development and governors were impressed by the school's work related to the early assessment of the needs of the most vulnerable children.

The values that underpin our work as a school community are supported through our links with the local church and the Diocese. This was specifically demonstrated during the school's annual Art Week which focused on the theme of 'St Mary's Church', including its art and architecture, and the children's work was displayed in the monastery for the parish community to see.

Finally, we also want to record the generosity of the Parent Staff Association (PSA), as well as the generosity of individual children and their parents. Their donations have not only enabled the school community to benefit directly but by giving considerable amounts of money to a variety of charities through the course of the year. These include CAFOD, a Redemptorist school in Albania and our local Ace of Clubs and all the charities have benefitted from their kindness.

## **Plans for 2015/16**

In the coming year we will continue to look at how best we can fulfil our mission and ensure the very best provision for every child attending St Mary's. As governors we will continue to work closely with the Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team to determine what is necessary to ensure that our vision to provide high quality education for every child can be realised.

Like governors in all primary schools during 2015/2016 we will also continue to meet the challenges of changes to the curriculum and assessment introduced by the government. We will do this by monitoring the ways in which the Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team plan for and implement these changes. This work will include SEND, the extension of the implementation of the National Curriculum to Year 2 and 6, the introduction of 'assessment without levels' for children throughout the school and the use of the Pupil Premium and Sports Grants. All aspects of the current and future work of the school are key to maintaining the outstanding success of our school and ensure that rapid and sustained pupil progress is realised as a priority. As part of their strategic role the governors will review the school's self evaluation judgments against the new Ofsted framework 2016 and keep abreast of any changes to the school's view of its own provision.

Finally, as governors, we aim to improve our communication, through the school's website and newsletter so that the parents, the Parish and the community are better informed about the role and the work of the governing body.

*In conclusion the governors would like to record that the school would not be the outstanding school it is today without the hard work and wonderful talents of all the children, the dedication and professional expertise of the school's gifted staff, the exceptional and unstinting day-to-day management of the school by the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team and the commitment and support of our parents and our Priests.*

December 2015