

July 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

*As this term draws to a close we complete the first year of Mrs Rafferty's headship of our school, which also marks the first full year of my position as chair of governors. I think you will all agree when I say it has been an incredible year for the school; the ambition, drive, innovation and pastoral care which Mrs Rafferty has brought to the school have seen us move from strength to strength. We can now all look forward to a very exciting future under her leadership.*

*We are all very sorry to say goodbye to Mrs Nichols, who has not only been a strong and very supportive acting deputy head, but has also served for five terms on the governing body and curriculum committee, making a huge contribution. We also wish Miss McCann all the very best as she leaves us for a while to have her first baby, an incredibly exciting time for her and her partner. I am delighted to say that, in September, we are welcoming three new staff, all of whom I can assure you are teachers of the highest quality.*

*This year saw us lose four members of the governing body, all for personal reasons or work pressures: Dr Richard Pebody, Mr Malcolm Donald, Mr Andrew de Csillery and Mr Andy Howarth. We thank them all most sincerely for their hard work whilst serving on the governing body. We have been very pleased to welcome Mr Roger Fisher-Payne and Mr Steve Roberts as new governors this year, both have made an excellent contribution to our work in their first terms in post. The remaining two positions will be filled next term. Governor information can be found in the governor section of the school website while photographs can be seen in the entrance to top school.*

*The aim of the governing body is to support the school in every aspect, striving towards an even better education for your children. In this role we scrutinise results, the school improvement plan, resources, performance management, strategy, ethos and vision. We attend a number of courses, conferences and meetings to train us to fulfil this role. We also have a complete overview of the school budget, including the use of the pupil premium and sports premium funding; here we are very fortunate to have an excellent finance governor, Mrs Alison Learoyd, who is able to explain to us the complexities of the balance sheets.*

*This year we have introduced link governors who are attached to the various subject areas of the school. They meet with the teacher in charge of the area, discuss syllabuses, progress, plans and targets, further ensuring that your children's education is being monitored and scrutinised as thoroughly as possible. We also have governors for the areas of safeguarding, admissions, health and safety, finance and SEND, closely monitoring all the government and county requirements in these areas.*

*The future is very exciting as we consider the possibility of expanding the school to a one class per year structure. This will require a lengthy discussion process with many hurdles to overcome but we will inform you as soon as there are any concrete results either way. Mrs Rafferty and I are attending a number of conferences and meetings to keep ourselves up to date with the government preference for academisation, but this is at least a few years away. We are also delighted that we have been able to offer additional places in reception for September, meeting in a very small way the demand for extra places in St Albans.*

*I have been asked by the governing body to approach you all for help; do any of you know of any corporate match funding or corporate community outreach which could support the school in our fundraising in the future? Also, do any of you feel you have any expertise which you could offer to the school or governing body? If you can help in any way please contact the school office.*

*I wish you all a very happy, healthy summer holiday; we look forward to seeing you again in September. Year six, we wish you every happiness and success in your future lives; we hope you will build on the work ethic and ethos which you have learned from your time at St Michael's.*

*Kind regards.*

*Pauline Wiley (chair of governors)*