

ST MICHAEL'S C of E VA PRIMARY SCHOOL



October 2015

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to welcome you all to a new school year at St Michael's; one which I believe will prove to be innovative and exciting. At the beginning of September we were joined by our new head teacher Mrs Alison Rafferty. She was selected by the governing body, from a very strong field of candidates, for her infectious enthusiasm, inspiring ideas and deep religious love for the school. She is, I am sure, the most perfect person to lead us forward, with her strong work ethic, which has already seen her make such an impact on the school. She has brought in simple changes, such as each class leaving by a different door enabling parents to have a more discrete word with the class teacher if they need to do so, through to major changes such as the much heralded and very popular new behaviour structure. I know the children love collecting their stickers, encouraging them in all areas of their school life; I look forward to hearing that the first badges have been awarded.

The governing body consists of fourteen people, ranging from parent governors, foundation governors (representing the church and diocese) to staff governors. We are a voluntary body who give of our time to act as critical friends to the head teacher and her staff. A critical friend means that we are constantly challenging the staff and pupils to drive the school forwards, ensuring that the foundation of the school is sustained and developed. We expect all our staff, who are appointed by the governing body as we are a Voluntary Aided school, to give of their best at all times, nurturing the children in their care so that they may achieve their maximum potential.

We fully support the staff in their high expectations of the children, to uphold the Christian and British values of the school, while always challenging themselves to grow through their learning in order to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.

In order to undertake their roles effectively all governors complete a number of training courses ranging from 'Being an Effective Governor' and 'Safeguarding' (a compulsory course for all governors) through to 'Understanding the New Ofsted Structure', 'Pupil Premium' and 'Considering Life without Levels'. These courses help us to take a strategic view of the school, so enabling us to drive it forward more effectively. As a full governing body we meet five times a year, but every member of the body belongs to one of three committees, explained below, which meet a further five or six times a year, studying aspects of school life in greater detail.

The governors are holding a staff/governor training on e-safety on Oct 6th which will be followed by a parents' training on Oct 20th. I do hope as many of you as possible will attend in order to hear, from the County Advisor on e-safety, how to help your child to be safe on-line. I look forward to meeting you at that course.

With kind regards

Pauline Wiley
(chair of the governing body)

Meet the team:-

Pauline Wiley (Chair, Curriculum Committee, Personnel Committee, Safeguarding Governor, Foundation Governor, Diocesan appointed)

I have served as a governor for five and a half years, serving as vice chair of the governing body and chair of the Curriculum Committee before taking over as chair in April 2015. My background is in secondary mathematics teaching; I have worked at Townsend C of E School for 29 years and attended St Michael's church for 27 years, so being a governor links two important areas of my life. I am very much looking forward to supporting our new head teacher and her staff as we move forward to face the new challenges and changes in primary education.

Di Edworthy (Vice Chair, Chair of Curriculum Committee, RE Governor, Foundation Governor, PCC appointed)

Having two children at St Michael's, I felt that being a governor was a great opportunity to give something back to the school. My background is primarily in Product and Strategy based roles within the telecommunications sector, where I currently offer Consultancy services. Having spent a few years lecturing at the Business Faculty at the University of Hertfordshire, it seemed to fit that I was asked to join the Curriculum Committee, which I now chair. As RE Governor I was particularly delighted when we recently gained outstanding in SIAMS and the RE Gold quality mark, reflecting the hard work and excellent teaching throughout the school.

Kenneth Padley (Vicar, Chair of Personnel Committee, Foundation Governor, PCC appointed)

I have been Vicar of St Michael's since July 2012. My previous post was as a University Chaplain but school governance has been a new ball game for me. I have had to master the long list of acronyms which routinely circulate at meetings: SENCOs, JARVs, and - my personal favourite - G&T which, with a twinge of regret, I found out means 'Gifted and Talented'. In my first year I served on the Resources Committee. This played to my strengths because my previous job included the running of a 28-bed student hostel. Since mid-2013 I have been on the Personnel Committee, which I now chair. This builds on my people skills and has stretched my understanding of employment procedures. A major Personnel issue at the minute is the increased prominence of teacher performance target-setting.

Sian Summers (Chair of Resources Committee, Parent Governor) I have been a Parent Governor since October 2012 and have 2 children at St Michaels, Bronwyn in Bees and Oscar B in Eagles. Since becoming a governor, I have been amazed at the amount of work that goes into running a school behind the scenes, both by the staff and the governors. I am a qualified accountant and now work in Finance/Technology as a Project Manager for a large bank. I am passionate about the school and love the community feeling and self confidence that the school encourages and supports in all the children.

Piers Carlisle (Health and Safety Governor, Foundation Governor, PCC appointed) We have lived in St Michael's village since May 2009 and I work in London where I am an associate in an architectural practice, Haines Phillips. I was appointed governor in 2014 and serve on the Resources Committee. I hope that I shall be able to bring some of my professional expertise to bear to maximise the potential of the school's facilities. In addition to this, I have also taken on the role of Health & Safety Governor and, as such, will be working with the school to ensure that pupils (and other users of the school) continue to enjoy a safe environment in their various activities.

Andrew deCsillery (Foundation Governor, PCC appointed) I was appointed to the governing body in March 2015 and serve on the Personnel Committee. I live locally and worship regularly at St Michael's Church, where I am a member of the Church Choir. Together with my family I moved to St Albans in 2013, having lived for much of the previous 13 years outside of the UK in Singapore, New Zealand and France. We are very much enjoying the welcome and friendship of St Albans. I am at present self-employed.

Andy Howarth (Training Governor, Foundation Governor, PCC appointed)

I became a governor in March of this year, and have 2 children Nick who has just left St Michael's, and Josh who is in Eagles class. I work as a director of the IT company ATOS in London, so my special interests are in the IT curriculum, data and the school website. As Training Governor I keep records of and advise on suitable training courses, in order to maintain our up to date knowledge of all educational and governance matters.

Alison Learoyd (Finance Governor, Parent Governor)

I have three children at St. Michael's School (a Dolphin, a Bee and an Ant) and was appointed as a Parent Governor in March this year. As a member of the Resources Committee I have recently been given the role of Finance Governor. I look forward to working with the other governors to support Mrs Rafferty and the staff at the start of this new phase for the school. I work as an accountant at Hertfordshire University.

Flora Letanka (SEND and CLA governor, Foundation Governor, Diocesan appointed)

I am delighted to have been appointed a governor of St. Michael's Primary School in March 2015. I was brought up in the parish of St. Michael's and now work for the education charity, Teach First, in London. I will be moving into St. Michael's Street with my husband and baby son next year. I am a member of the Curriculum Committee which is my strength as I was working as a teacher prior to taking up my new position with Teach First.

Richard Pebody (Foundation Governor, PCC appointed)

I have a background in health-care, working for Public Health England and am a parent with a daughter in Dolphins and two children who have recently moved from St Michael's to secondary school. Being a governor has been a great opportunity to both work with an enthusiastic team and try and give a little bit back to the school. Besides sitting on the main committee, I am also a member of the Resource Committee.

In addition **Mrs Rafferty** is on the governing body plus being a member of all three committees. **Mrs Nichols** is also a governor, along with one other staff member to be appointed in the near future. Our team is completed by a governor representing the LEA (we are in the process of appointing one as I write this letter) and a fantastic clerk, **Mrs Jane Murray** (from county education)

None of our governors serve on any other governing bodies, so that they may devote their time exclusively to the work and support of St Michael's school. They have all declared that they do not have any conflict of interest, which could compromise their work.

The committees on which we serve are:-

Curriculum, led by Di, with Flora, Pauline, Mrs Nichols and the new staff governor.

We look at all aspects of the curriculum including scrutinising data such as the SATs results. We monitor the progress of all pupils, closely following pupil premium usage and outcomes. As with the other committees we have a number of policies which fall under our remit, such as behaviour, admissions and e-safety.

Personnel, led by Kenneth, with Andrew and Pauline.

Our role is to receive reports from the Head Teacher about changes in staffing and reflect on their impact on learning and teaching. We review a raft of school policies to do with employment, often based on advice from Hertfordshire County council and/or the Diocese of St Albans.

Resources, led by Sian, with Alison Learoyd, Piers, Richard, Andy and our new LEA governor.

As members of the Resources Committee we look closely at the school budget, the maintenance of the school premises, paddock and playground as well as the Health and Safety of all our pupils and staff, including all policies relating to these areas.