

# St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School Governors' Newsletter



Issue 4

Christmas 2015

## Looking Forward.....

### Special points of interest:

- New parent governor now elected!
- Protecting children from radicalisation
- The real meaning of Christmas

Our governing body has been reconstituted this term; that means we are smaller, working more 'smartly' and we meet all the new legal requirements for governing bodies. We welcome two new governors onto our

board. One is Mr Gordon Couper, who has two boys in the school; Cameron and Logan. Gordon works in the health service as a pharmacist and bring many skills to us. The second new governor is Mrs Cathy Warren, a retired

educationalist; and specialist in Early Years. Cathy is very skilled and has been recommended by Fr Niall, as a Foundation Governor.

## Report from Children's Achievement & Premises Committee

### Safeguarding and Child Protection

Over the last few months, there has been an ongoing campaign by the government towards protecting our young people from various forms of harm including radicalisation. Our recent meeting focussed on how we can ensure that we are keeping our children from harm's way and also meeting the government's 'Prevent' strategy. All staff and governors have carried out some training in relation to this. It is about preventing radicalisation in our schools. We also talked about how we support British values at St Mary Of The Angels Catholic Primary School by ensuring that everyone is respectful and tolerant of each other. We talked about having democracy e.g. our school council; and the rule of law, such as class rules.

### Curriculum & Premises

During our last meeting, we discussed how the new curriculum is taking shape. Mr Hughes gave us an update on how well all our pupils having been performing since it was introduced and we discussed various ways in which we could ensure that our pupils are making excellent progress going forward. We have had the window at school reception replaced, with a better and safer one; and we are also just about to install an outdoor canopy, with shutters, creating dry outdoor play, across the front of our Early Years Foundation Stage. This will enable them to have more outdoor activities in the winter months when it rains.

### Pupil Progress

In the summer, we wrote to all of you suggesting a change in our school start times and we are really pleased with the support you have all shown. The extra ten minutes that the children have means that they can catch up on things such as their reading, maths etc and this is working really well. Thank you all once again for an amazing attendance record. Our pupils continue to make really good progress in all areas including KS2 Spanish; and once again, a really successful visit this year from our Spanish friends. They created some fantastic art pieces following their visit - and these are displayed in the hall.

Following my last report, the results of the survey we carried out in relation to school holidays showed most parents being in favour of us having the same holiday dates as all the other schools. The holiday dates until 2019 are now available for you, on the "Parents" page of the school website. Hopefully this will enable parents to plan holidays in advance and for parents who have other children in high schools, hopefully this will cause less disruption for you. They are virtually the same holidays as Ellesmere Port Catholic High School, until 2019.

**Francis Kwateng, Chair .**

## **THE HOLY SEASONS OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS**

Well, the Season of Advent is upon us and Christmas is near at hand. During these four weeks of Advent, we are invited by the Church to prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth through prayer and reflection. And amid the flurry of Christmas preparations, we must contemplate the First Coming of Jesus as Saviour. Hopefully we will look for practical ways to observe the holiness of the season in our everyday lives. Also we must remember, that to our increasingly secular world, Christmas lasts but one day – December 25<sup>th</sup>. After this date the shops will remove all trace of Christmas from their displays and the January Sales will become all consuming!! The truth for Christians is that this Holy Day marks but the start of the Season of Christmas, which concludes on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January - the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. So, just as we have time to prepare through the Season of Advent, we also have plenty of time to celebrate and reflect during the Holy Season of Christmas.

It is always great to meet our families in the school but again I urge us all to the practice of our Catholic Faith by coming to meet and receive the Lord in the sacraments. As parents and grandparents we seek to pass on all

good things to our children, let us not neglect the passing on of our faith, the greatest gift that we can give. Like everything else this faith can only truly be passed to our families through word and example.

During 2015, it has been once again my experience that our school is truly representative of everything that a Catholic School should be. It reminds us on a daily basis of the presence of the Lord Jesus, both in our community and in each and every one of us. As 2016 approaches, together with Fr Louis, we look forward to continuing to serve the 'school family,' in my case, once again as a deacon and as a governor. I repeat my intention to remain always available and open to every member of this special family.



Please speak to me, particularly if I can be of any support.

Be assured that as we journey through Advent and into the Holy Season of Christmas, you and your families will be very much in my thoughts & prayers.

Wishing you all every joy & blessing of the season.

**Deacon Tony, Foundation Governor**



### **CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES AT ST MARY OF THE ANGELS CHURCH, HOOTON**

#### **Christmas Eve: 24th December 2015**

Carols at 7.00pm followed by Vigil Mass of Christmas at 7.30pm

#### **Christmas Day: 25th December 2015**

Christmas Day Masses at 9.00am and 11.00am

### **DATA, PROGRESS AND ASSESSMENT.**

Once again, the autumn term has flown at St Mary of the Angels! Time passes so quickly! You came to see us in October to see how your children were progressing, on our first Open Evening of the year. Since then, internal data, examination of our pupils' work and regular teachers' assessment meetings show us that pupils of all abilities are making good progress, in all current classes. Well done to everyone concerned. We are very grateful for all the home reading that you provide, as well as your support with your children's homework. It's really helping our children to progress well.

We also have a new way of assessing children's progress, as National Curriculum levels are now gone. The government has said that they are not fit for purpose, because our new curriculum is about deeper learning – consolidating what you know, before you move on. (However in this interim year, we are continuing to align pupils work to the former levels, with an altered emphasis accommodating the new age related expectations in each class.)

Our new system, which is being introduced gradually, is called the 'Depth of Learning Index' - and we'll be offering parental sessions and information sheets in the new year to make sure you understand how your child is making progress.

The new system will enable us to track how pupils achieve against the new National Curriculum; to see who needs more support, and who is learning 'deeply'; and we will then email reports to parents, showing progress and future targets for each child. This should be better for everyone! At the moment, most schools are still using old levels; and we are 'well ahead of the game'. However some functionalities of the new system are still being worked through; we are one of a 'pilot' set of

### **Rob Hughes, Headteacher Governor.**

schools, and very shortly, the system will have enough technical IT capability to create the pupil reports. As soon as this happens, we'll be putting it into practice. Thanks for your patience.

Don't forget to keep checking our website for updates on data, progress and assessment. There's an achievement and attainment section for you, with lots of photos, as well as a link to all the government data sites. And remember, if you have any worries about your child, just pop in and see us! We're here for you.

### **VIOLIN CONCERT FOR PARENTS, DECEMBER 2015.**



## And Finally.....

### St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

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On behalf of all the governors, I would like to thank you all for the support that you have shown in helping your children with their learning and your support for the school in all our endeavours this year.

Also, thank you to everyone in school who work so hard in their respective roles to make St. Mary of the Angels the very special place that it is.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Colette Winterburn.

Chair of Governors.

### Your School Governors

#### Chair

Mrs Colette Winterburn

#### Vice Chair

Mr Francis Kwateng

#### Foundation Governors

Mrs Maria Lavelle

Ms Gemma Fleming

Mrs Kathleen Leahy

Deacon Tony Hunt

Mrs Cathy Warren (from 2016)

#### Staff Governors

Mr Robert Hughes

Mrs Christine Atkinson

#### Elected Parent Governors

Mrs Joanne Heffernan

Mr Gordon Couper

#### LA Governor

Mr Mark Lightburn

Our photographs have been put up in reception. If you see us come and say hello!

## Communication

**Good Communication is vital to our school and we are constantly striving to make it as easy as possible to stay in touch:**

**In person:** If you just need a quick word, please feel free to approach your class teacher at the start or end of each school day. If you would like a bit more time to discuss something in particular you may like to book some time with your teacher to suit you both. If you would like to meet with our Head-teacher, Mr. Hughes you can pop into the school office and make an appointment.

**Email:** This is a great way for you to contact the school office, your teacher or the Head-teacher. Mrs. Mills or Mrs. Wilson in the office will always forward your emails confidentially to the intended recipient.

Our school email address is [admin@stmaryoftheangels.co.uk](mailto:admin@stmaryoftheangels.co.uk)

**By Phone:** One of the office staff will always be available to answer any query, pass on a message or arrange a good time for your teacher to call you back.

Our telephone number is 0151 338 2430

**Text & email message:** Tell us your mobile number and email address and we'll keep you informed of all urgent or important messages by text & email.

**Website:** We've got a great website that is kept right up to date. Please visit it regularly to see the latest pictures of school trips, terms dates, calendar of events, school successes and Governor information.

Classes have links to homework sites and to all the latest activities that they have been doing. There's lots of information about admissions, school policies and our curriculum etc. Plus some really important information for parents and carers in the 'safeguarding' section.

**Find us on [www.stmaryoftheangels.co.uk](http://www.stmaryoftheangels.co.uk)**

Our church website, for you to find out about services and to contact the clergy is on; <http://rcchep.co.uk/>

**Post:** Our postal address is set out on the left hand side of this page.