

Governors' Review 2016-2017

During the school year the full Governing Body met three times; the Resources Committee (which deals with Finance, Premises and Personnel matters) met four times; the School Development Committee (which deals with the School Development Plan and curriculum matters) met four times; the Admissions committee met on two occasions to consider admissions policies and Nursery and Reception admissions.

Governors and staff worked together on school development. The school development committee received regular briefings from subject co-ordinators during the year and this additional face-to-face communication between staff and governors is invaluable. This is very important, given the significant changes to the national primary curriculum and assessment criteria, and staff have expended a lot of effort to ensure delivery of the new curriculum and assessment procedures are working well throughout the school. The committee has worked on updating and reviewing policies in line with latest legislation and guidance on good practice. Governors have also been involved with, and briefed on, keeping the SEF up to date.

Governors with a particular focus visit and work in school in accordance with our code of practice and Monitoring Policy. Maths, English and IT are good examples. Our SEN and RE Governors maintain close liaison with our INCO (Inclusion Co-ordinator) and RE co-ordinator. Fr. Shaun, our parish priest, is a regular visitor and celebrates Masses with the children, with the liturgy tailored to suit the occasion and the age range of the children. Parents also attended a number of these celebrations.

Performance management continues to work well and positively for all staff at St. Anthony's.

Our 2017 SATs results and value added clearly demonstrate the value we add to each and every child, and their progression, as they move through the school. The results are a credit to the children, staff and parents. The results also show that regardless of the various building works, new curriculum and changed methods of assessment of the children's progress, we continue to successfully prioritise the children's education and development. In February 2017 Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Standards, wrote to congratulate the school being amongst the top 3% of schools in England in terms of the progress pupils make between KS1 and KS2 in English and Maths – based on our results for 2016. A tremendous accolade and a credit to all the staff and children and the support from parents.

The project to improve the external fabric of the building and to provide additional admin space has been completed. This has dramatically improved the external appearance of the school and increased the reception area and office/admin space.

We prepared and submitted a bid for funding to replace the remainder of windows and doors in the main school building. We were delighted that the bid was successful and the work was tendered and contracted. The work started in the Summer 2017 holiday and is planned to complete early in the Autumn 2017 Term. We are only able to fund improvements such as this due to careful management of the school finances and the continuing generous support from parents and staff in many ways, including PFA and other fund-raising events.

Last autumn after a period of intense and exceptionally heavy rain staff came into school to find the dining room and classrooms next to the courtyard had been flooded. This was due to a blocked drain under the courtyard. All the staff worked incredibly hard to clean up and ensure that the school could run normally. The drainage problem has been resolved and the flood damage was remedied at the start of the Christmas break with term finishing two days early so that contractors could remove and dispose of the old flooring and fit the new flooring without any risk to children or staff.

Our admissions policies were subject to minor updates in line with Diocesan guidance and latest guidelines and duly published as part of the normal process. We continued monitoring the impact of the CCP as prospective parents became more familiar with the CCP process. At the end of the Summer 2017 term the Diocese issued new guidance on admissions which we will be considering early in Autumn 2017 term. There were no admissions appeals this year.

Governors attended an in-house INSET evening on 'Understanding School Performance Data'. Governors also attended a number of different training courses run by Herts for Learning and the Diocese.

Priorities for Governing Body development this year have been premises development and understanding school performance data.

Governors have also benefitted from various training courses including new governor induction, effective governance, and briefings for chairs and governors. Governors from St. Anthony's attended the November 2016 Annual Hertfordshire Governors' Conference (the theme was "Enabling the Future") and the December 2016 Diocesan Governors Conference.

Governors attended a number of Diocesan briefing and strategy events on government intentions (and the planned response of the Diocese) with regard to future capital funding for schools, conversion to Academy status and the role of Local Authorities. The Diocesan vision is for families of Catholic schools brought together under a multi-academy trust arrangement. This is still an area of considerable uncertainty, which governors continue to monitor in order to assess the implications for the school.

The Chair of Governors and Headteacher continue to foster and improve the profile of the school as part of the parishes we serve. Children from the school take an active part in a number of parish events and services. Y6 took part in a leadership retreat day in September at Holy Rood Church. During Advent 2016 children from Y3 spent a Jesse Tree retreat day at St. Bede's church.