



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Newsletter

*"a place of educational excellence
with Christ at its centre"*

Spring Term 2

Head teacher: Mrs L. Concannon

A message from the Chair of Governors.

Dear Parents,

I hope you are all well, it has been a fantastic spring term, with the children having a wealth of different experiences and opportunities, from school trips, competitions, science week and sporting events with our sports partners.

The governing board has continued its work to review academisation and we will keep you updated with progress as we have it.

We have unfortunately lost some members of the governing board and are therefore keen to recruit new members. We require a foundation governor and another parent governor. If this is something you would be interested in please contact me directly or the school office and I would be very happy to talk you through the commitment.

Lastly, I would like to welcome all the new families that have joined us this term, we are thrilled you have chosen our school and welcome you into our community.

On behalf of the governors may I wish you all a holy, restful and enjoyable Easter break.

Kind regards

Rebecca Iley, Chair of Governors

The Governing Board

Rebecca Iley – Chair of Governors

Steve Prance – LSA Governor

Debbie Brimson – Staff Governor

Lisa Beavers – Foundation Governor

Theresa Atkin – Foundation Governor

Tanya George – Parent Governor

We are fully committed to being an inclusive board and ensuring equal opportunities. We are keen to make our board as diverse as possible, and we hope to attract applications from underrepresented groups, including, Men, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people, people with a disability. Please do consider how your experience and skills could benefit the board; we would love to hear from you.

Premises – Thank you to Steve Prance (LSA governor) who has been working closely with Laura Concannon to ensure we are working towards and achieving our premises 'To Do' list. The new entry door system has now been procured and will be fitted the 3rd week of May. We will update you with the new procedures after the May half term.

As we move into spring and the weather starts to improve, we are keen to get busy in the school gardens, if anyone has some spare time and would be willing to volunteer to help we would love to hear from you. Please contact either myself or the school office.

Standards and Achievements –

We are pleased that the teachers have again been able to invite parents and families into school for 'book looks' and parent meetings. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to see what your children have been working on, and to be a part of their learning. You should also have received your child's interim progress report this week.

Teachers have been working on raising the standard of children's writing skills, after it was identified this was not at the expected standard. Interventions have been put in place and lots of new and exciting initiatives put to the children – writing competitions, spelling bee's, weird and wonderful vocab and of course the first school newspaper. As always, the children have risen to the challenge and the teachers are pleased and encouraged with the progress they are making.

We are expecting OFSTED this year, as inspections move to those last reviewed in 2018. The Governors will be an important part of the inspection and will be in attendance on the day. In the lead up we will be ensuring we are ready and able to showcase the excellence of St Mary's. We will keep you up to date with any developments and inspection dates when we know them. We would like to acknowledge the very sad events relating to OFSTED and the Berkshire headteacher, and to reassure you that we are working closely with Mrs Concannon to ensure all staff feel supported, their wellbeing is of the upmost priority and importantly that the inspection is a reflection on the school as a team and community in which we all have our part to play, no one individual is solely accountable. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Academisation – the Governing Board are working with Mrs Concannon to investigate joining one of 2 Catholic Trusts; Pope Francis MAC (Oxfordshire) or Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust (Northamptonshire). As you will be aware it is the Governments terms that by 2030 all schools will be part of a trust. Catholic dioceses are particularly keen for this to happen to ensure the longevity and strength of the catholic faith. It is important that as a school we are proactive in this move and have the space and time to make the right decision for St Mary's.

The team have now met with both the Pope Francis MAC and OLICAT for initial discussions. The governing board will hold an extraordinary meeting, specifically to appraise both options, following which a vote will take place for which MAC is most appropriate for St Mary's to join. This will then allow the lengthy process of joining to commence.

Please rest assured throughout the decision process the core values and ethos of St Mary's will be upmost in our minds, ensuring that the entire St Mary's community, staff, pupils, and parents are at the centre of our decision making. We will ensure both staff and parent information evenings are built into the process, to keep you fully informed. We have been assured by both Trusts that there will be very little change to school life for pupils, families and staff

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss anything detailed on this newsletter or any other matters.

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