



16 July 2021

INSPIRING CHILDREN TO LOVE LEARNING AND TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Dear Parents and Guardians,

What a year it has been - could we ever have imagined the challenges that have been presented and followed through? And how proud are we that our school has managed to get through everything without closing a bubble? Tremendous thanks must go to the whole team for the way in which support, help, advice and love have been shown across the school, with children, parents, staff and governors working together to ensure the best for our children!

As a governing body, we have had our own challenges, ensuring that we have been that "critical friend" during an extremely busy couple of terms. We could not have known the staff changes that were to be presented to us when the year began in January.

So, what have we done this year:

- Held 9 Governors meetings virtually
- Made regular visits with Mrs Price for discussion and support
- Advertised, shortlisted, interviewed and appointed:
 - a head teacher - Mrs Collier
 - an assistant head - Mrs Banat-Rinz
 - 3 other teaching posts - Mrs Winton, Mrs Costa and Ms Pahnke
 - a new caretaker - Ms Ireland
- Undertaken training in relation to safeguarding, academy processes and safer recruitment
- Undertaken required Health and Safety inspections
- Worked with local authority finance officer and business manager to set a balanced 3-year budget
- Supported Mrs Price and Mrs Whiting in their successful bid for replacement windows and doors to maintain the fabric of the school building
- Planned for the split of Y1/2 into two separate classes as our school continues to grow
- Agreed staffing and teaching assistant positions for September
- Said goodbye to Stuart Forgan after a very helpful and effective time with the Governors
- Welcomed two new foundation Governors - James Noakes and Father Arul
- Attended meetings to gather information about potential future Academy status
- Supported the Year 3/4 children as they celebrated First Holy Communion
- Assisted teaching through hearing readers and small group STEM activities

School will seem different in September, with a new leadership team and teaching staff but with Mrs Finch and Mrs Hawley as two well-known teachers guiding the team.

At the core of our school are our splendid teaching assistants who have provided so much stability over the last year and will be there on first days in new classrooms to make children feel secure and confident - a huge vote of thanks to all of these.





Mrs Worrall will be there as the friendly face of the school, juggling so many different jobs efficiently, effectively and with a smile. I must commend her on everything she does but especially the wonderful newsletter that gives so much more than just information about school, thank you. Along with Mrs Whiting, our business manager, they are a dynamic duo, ensuring that all administration and finance matters are looked at ensuring best value for our community.

Our cleaning staff and caretaker have done a truly amazing job, ensuring that the school has been kept clean and COVID clear over the whole time - a job done quietly but very conscientiously - and much deserving of a grateful thank you!

So now to our leavers:

- to our Year 6 children who have been role models and leaders over the last 12 months. The Governors wish you all the best for the future in your new schools. Your time at St Mary's will have given you a great grounding to your further education and your faith life. "Goodbye" stems from the phrase "God be with you" and we cannot wish for more!
- to Miss Righton who always had such a warm and welcoming smile with a lovely sense of enthusiasm. We wish her luck and fulfilment in her new career in tourism.
- to Mrs Whiteford who has shared teaching in Y1/2 for 5 years inspiring children to learn in a cross-curricular way and always producing wonderful displays to share children's learning. I am sure a lovely life of retirement lies ahead!
- to Ms McAloon whose enthusiasm, creativity and faith have shone through the school over the past 3 years and for having been Mrs Price's right-hand woman throughout. I wish you all the best in your future career and know you will continue to inspire children as you have at St Mary's.
- to Mrs Price whose leadership of the school through the last 9 years has been an inspiration. Headship can be a lonely place and decisions challenging, but the children have always come first. Thank you for all you have done to support not only children but also parents and staff. Have a wonderful retirement!

My thanks to the Governing Body - it has been an "interesting" year with many challenges but the support given to the school means that the next stage of the school's journey is ready for September. I look forward to welcoming Mrs Collier, Mrs Banat-Rinz, Mrs Winton and Miss Pahnke to the team and wish them a successful and happy future.

A special thank you to all children and parents. Wishing you a happy and relaxing summer break. Let us hope for wonderful weather, happy times and a return to a more normal school in September.

Yours Sincerely

Angela Scull
Chair of Governors

