



Chair of Governors' Term 2 update – December 2016



As the term draws to a close it is good to reflect on all the activities and achievements of the past few months. Term 2 is full of special events like Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day, Bed Time Story and of course all the Christmas festivities and concerts, and these are all organised in parallel to on-going learning and normal school routines. So, we say a huge thank you to the staff who have organised them and enriched our children's lives. It is also appreciated that parents give a huge amount of support to Christmas events and activities as well. We hope that all our new children have settled in well and that they are discovering the joys of being part of the St Stephen's School family, as well as the St Stephen's Church community.

The key areas of focus for the governing body are to ensure that the school has a robust development plan that challenges our children and staff to achieve high standards; that the implementation of this is continuously monitored and is achieved; and that revenue and capital funding is spent effectively. The three committees of the governing body are aligned to ensure this overview and focus. The Committee members this year are as follows:

Pupil Support Committee: Siobhan Davies – Chair, Richard Cooper – Vice-Chair, The Revd Philip Hawthorn – ex-officio, Andy Bowman – ex-officio, Kate Seeley – ex-officio, Johanna Fitzgerald and Rachel Morcom

Finance and Resources Committee: Karl Stringer – Chair, Emma Elliott – Vice-Chair, Andy Bowman – ex-officio, Kate Seeley – ex-officio, Louise Flynn – Deputy Head Teacher, Peter Baxter and Oliver Lay

Standards Committee: Rupert Stubbs – Chair, Jonathan Derwent – Vice-Chair, Andy Bowman – ex-officio, Kate Seeley – ex-officio, Louise Flynn – Deputy Head Teacher, Sarah Chave, Justin O'Byrne and Steve Reilly

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During Term 2 governors have been taking part in detailed book inspections covering Maths and English. There has also been an Environmental Learning Walk focused on evidence of the embedding of The Golden Three in classrooms and play areas. The governor inputs from these exercises will then be reviewed by the Senior Leadership team to ensure that suggested improvements are properly considered and implemented as appropriate.

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The Clerk to the Governors, Sarah Klein has decided to step aside so that she can concentrate more on special projects, such as the After School Club, where her significant contributions played a major part in getting it up and running. Sarah has also done a great job as Clerk to the Governors for which we thank her very much. We will be looking to replace Sarah early in 2016 and will be sending out a brief role description. Please do consider who might be a suitable candidate, including people who are not currently linked to St Stephen's School.

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As previously mentioned, a key area of focus for the governing body this year continues to be the future of our school with respect to becoming an academy and joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). We regularly engage with both the Bath and Wells Diocesan MAT who would like to establish a Bath Hub, as well as with the formation of a potential Bath Primary MAT. The key factors for us in making a choice include the ethos and values of the MAT; the other likely partner schools in the MAT, some of whom we are already working with; school improvement initiatives and methodology; the future financial model; and governance. Due diligence is due to be completed in January and then we will be considering the options as a governing body. There will be a consultation period with parents and third parties, prior to commencing our Academy conversion process. We still plan to include an Academy page on the school's website, with a Q/A section which we will update as additional questions arise.

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The Governors recently got Christmas off to a good start when we enjoyed a Christmas dinner at the Hare and Hounds, following our Governors' meeting on 5 December. We now wish all of you and the staff at St Stephen's a joyful and peaceful Christmas and every good wish for the New Year.

Best wishes,

Kate

Kate Seeley, Chair of Governors

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