



## **GOVERNING BODY UPDATE**

**DECEMBER 2019**

Dear parents and carers

Before we break up for the Christmas holidays, here is a brief update on what's been happening behind the scenes at school this term and where your governors have focussed their attention.

### Alison Bateman

We hope you've all had an opportunity to meet Alison. We know she has felt very warmly welcomed into our community and has loved getting to know the children. You won't have noticed any big changes since she became headteacher as that's very much Alison's style – to wait and to listen, taking her time to reflect carefully on what she learns from staff, parents and pupils.

### Questionnaires

Thank you to all parents that completed the questionnaires around Values and Vision. As we explained, the governors are redeveloping the school's Values and consulting our stakeholders is a key part of this process – staff and pupils were also given a chance to have their say. It was lovely to hear that kindness and care were so evident in what you see at Holy Trinity and that pupils are treated as individuals.

The next stage of the process will be for Alison and the governors to write a Vision for the school, underpinned by our Christian ethos. This will be fleshed out into development aims for the next five years and we promise to take account of some of the concerns you voiced in the questionnaires also.

### Results and league tables

Of course, as your replies to the questionnaires testify, where we rank among local schools isn't what matters but we can't pretend it isn't gratifying for parents to know they send their children to a good school, for staff to see their hard work pay off and for governors' efforts to bear fruit. We were pleased with the Parent Power tables in the Sunday Times last month that listed HT at number 138 in their Top 250 State Primary Schools in England. The ranking is based on an aggregate of summer SATS results and we rose from number 415 the year before.

While the government probably had bigger things on its mind last Thursday, they still managed to publish the complete league tables for primary schools with a full breakdown of KS2 SATS performance. Holy Trinity came 3rd in Richmond for reading and 6<sup>th</sup> for maths, in both we scored 'well above average' which means in the top 10% of the country. Our writing scores were weaker by comparison, only 'average' nationally, and redressing this remains a focus of our school development plan this year.

Well done to last year's Year 6 pupils and huge congratulations and a vote of thanks to our dedicated teachers.

### Nursery extension

From January our nursery is expanding to offer an all-day (30-hour) facility to parents who wish to have their child in our care for both the morning and afternoon. Until now, children over 3 attend one or other of the sessions but thanks to careful planning we are able to offer an expanded nursery provision. This appears to be the trend in Richmond among both state and privately-run nursery schools with greater

demand for all-day places where parents both work. We will have 16 places available for families wanting the 30-hour provision, 10 of these are already taken.

#### SIAMS Inspection

Next term Holy Trinity comes up for its five-year inspection by SIAMS. This is the authority which inspects Church schools in England. Not so different from an Ofsted inspection, we do at least know which term the inspectors will visit and have to produce a huge document of evidence to demonstrate the myriad of ways in which pupils experience our church school distinctiveness and how our Christian values shape everyday life at HT.

We shall keep you posted.

#### Kingfisher Fund

A sincere thank you to the many parents who have either sent one-off donations to the newly-launched Kingfisher Fund or set up monthly standing orders. We have been delighted with the early response.

While school funding was frequently raised during the election campaigns, it will take time before we can expect any changes so our funding deficit and balancing the budget remain a challenge for the governors for the foreseeable future.

If supporting the Kingfisher Fund is still on your 'to do' list don't worry as there is no deadline. Here is a reminder of the payment details:

Account name: Holy Trinity School

Sort code: 60-22-03

Account Number: 63531925

#### Farewells

We are saying goodbye to three members of staff this term.

- Helen Beany leaves us after eight years as an LSA and a teaching assistant and we wish her well with her new position at her local church.
- Ellie Sims Hilditch is going travelling for 3 months and we hope she has some wonderful adventures as she sets out for Australia.
- Janet Velumyl retired earlier in the term. She had worked at HT for 29 years, in reception apart from the last few years when she worked with individual children requiring extra help. She particularly enjoyed being with the younger children when they arrived in "big" school and was always ready with a friendly smile. Jan's cooking, both with the children and for the staff, was legendary. Her birthday was a particular highlight as the staffroom table would be full of delicious cakes, biscuits and savouries. She is greatly missed.

Wishing our community a joyous Christmas and may your 2020 be happy and blessed.

Michèle Marcus  
Chair of Governors