



# St Cuthbert's Governor Newsletter



Winter 2016

## Welcome from the Chair

On behalf of the Governors, welcome to our latest newsletter!

We've got a refresher of the role of Governors, but I also wanted to touch on some of the more practical things we get involved in at St Cuthbert's.

As we get into the colder and wetter season, we're certainly delighted to have the benefit of the new double-glazed windows and doors that we successfully bid for with the Diocese and part-funded through the Governors Fund. We also improved the heating through radiator upgrades last year – and shouldn't have any leaks due to the major re-roofing last summer, again funded by the Diocese and Governors Fund.

Recently Governors were reviewing the SATs results for 2016 – congratulations again to the teaching team for another year of great results for our school – fantastic achievements, progress and significantly better than the national average. Results are important of course, but in line with our vision to enable every child to fulfil their potential we take great pride in the holistic opportunities St Cuthbert's provides, across sports, music and languages and via our creative curriculum.

The Governing Body has gained several new members of the team over the past year and in this newsletter Claire McAdam shares a little more about her experience. As a team we continue to work across policy updates, monitoring processes, results and safeguarding in school, budgeting (always a challenge as education funding continues to get more and more squeezed), feeding in to the School Development Plan and liaising with stakeholders including the Diocese, Surrey County and with parents. There is plenty going on, I hope the newsletter gives you a flavour!

Please feel free to get in touch at  
[chair.governors@stcuthberts.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:chair.governors@stcuthberts.surrey.sch.uk)

Ed Culf, Chair of Governors

## About the Role of Governor

Governing bodies meet at least once a term, usually after school or in the early evening. In addition governors need to attend committee meetings, school events and appropriate training. Governors are encouraged to visit school during the day to see it in action, and to get to know the staff and pupils. Governors usually serve for four years.

- Together with the headteacher they are responsible for making sure our schools provide good quality education.
- Provide challenge and support to headteachers, drawing on their knowledge and experience
- Make decisions together on matters such as performance, targets, school policies and school development plans.
- Monitor the impact of policies and oversee school budgets and staffing.
- Report on school achievements and respond to inspection recommendations.
- Hear appeals from pupils and staff and consider complaints.
- Ask searching questions and respect the position of headteachers as professional leaders of schools.
- Select headteacher.
- Make sure the national curriculum is taught.
- Decide how the school can encourage pupil's spiritual, moral and social development.
- Make sure the school provides for all its pupils, including those with special needs.

## Resources Update

The Resources Committee is a sub Committee of the Board of Governors and primarily focuses on financial aspects of the school.

### Running Costs

In these times of ongoing financial austerity this continues to be a challenging area. Public sector funding for the school is not forecast to increase in the near future and against that backdrop the only two options available in order to balance the books are

- Spend less (or at least maximise the value of any expenditure), and/or
- Consider ways of generating other sources of income.

The school has made significant progress in these areas in the last year and much credit should be given to both the School Business Manager and Head Teacher who have sought to maximise the value of what is available whilst delivering some difficult messages in recent times.

### Capital Costs

Turning to capital expenditure (i.e. amounts spent on the school to improve the fabric and structure of the building) there have been significant developments in the past year or so.

In December 2014 we applied to the Diocese (an annual opportunity) for funding to carry out roof repairs. This was a significant sum of money, running into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

These annual applications are not always successful, as all other Diocesan schools will also lodge bids for what is ultimately a finite amount of money.

On this occasion our luck was in and we received the full amount requested, consequently a major area of the roof was repaired and has hopefully been future proofed for many years to come.

Fortuitously, this cost less than had originally been anticipated and we were permitted to spend the surplus on replacement windows throughout the school. Not only do these look so much better than

the old windows, but they should also help keep heating costs down to some degree.

We have also embarked on an IT refurbishment programme through the school in recent months which is providing an upgraded IT infrastructure for both staff and pupils. You may have noticed large interactive screens in a couple of the classrooms (Yrs 5 and 6): these are being rolled out through the school as and when funds allow, together with mobile devices to give both teaching staff and the children the resources they need (and will continue to need) in the modern world.

### Thank you... and a polite request

As a final point, it is worth noting that the Governor's Fund is liable for 10% of any Diocesan funding received, so to those of you who make monthly contributions to this Fund we say a huge 'thank you' and trust you will agree with reference to the projects outlined above that this is money well spent.

If you would like to know how to contribute to the Governor's Fund then please either call in at the office where you can obtain the relevant forms.

**Andy McDaid - Honorary Treasurer, Chair of Resources**

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## Behaviour and Safety

The Education sector is constantly changing and evolving and with that, government guidelines and statutory information has been updated. This has resulted in a team of Governors and school leaders spending the best part of the autumn term reviewing documents and making sure the school's policies are up to date and in line with the appropriate guidelines.

For an update on our policies, please see the website.

Irene Missen was one of the team members that took on the majority of this task, she mentioned ... "This meant spending a lot of time in the school, getting to know the staff better and seeing them in action. We have a dedicated and outstanding team here and I am proud to be an ambassador for St. Cuthbert's CP School".

*"We are a Catholic community, living and learning in faith. Through the Gospel values of faith, hope, trust and love, we aim to recognise individuality and enable each other to fulfil our potential"*

grandparent. I am looking forward to working with St Cuthbert's Governing Body. *Claire McAdam*

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## Admissions

September saw us welcome 30 children to Reception and Mrs Tapscott tells us they are all doing very well. They certainly all seem to be enjoying themselves if the smiles at the gate are anything to go by. We had around 73 applications for this year's Reception showing how St Cuthbert's continues to be a very sought-after school. It is always disappointing to have to turn any child away but it is also why we have to strictly follow the admissions criteria.

The autumn term is often the busiest for the four Admissions governors as we begin the application process for 2017. We have assisted at a number of open mornings for prospective parents and have been on hand to answer questions at the two (SIF) signing evenings organised by our clergy. If you are applying for your child's admission to St Cuthbert's in September 2017 and you missed the SIF signing don't worry, you can ask Father Hugh or Deacon Aidan after mass on most Sundays.

Closing date for 2017 applications is January 16th but I'm pleased to say the forms are already coming in thick and fast!

**Alec Wilkinson - Chair of Admissions**

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## Getting to know the Governors Claire McAdam

I was appointed Foundation Governor in April 2016. St Cuthbert's was my two daughters' primary school in the 80's! So being a Governor now at the school has special emotional ties for me.

I have been in 'education' for a long time from being a helper at the Playbox Nursery at St John's church in Egham to being Deputy Headteacher at St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School in Windsor.

'Education, Education, Education', I am not the first one to have said that! But that is my belief, my drive when taking part in school Governance now. 'Every Child matters' is my experience as a teacher, a parent and now a 'hands-on'



## And lastly .....

A big thank you to all the parents that stopped by the Governors stand at the Parents Evening. We will continue with this initiative and hope to see more parents at future evenings.

May we take this opportunity to wish you and all your families a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2017.



Do please feel free to send governors your feedback, ideas and suggestions. This email is the best way:

[chair.governors@stcuthberts.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:chair.governors@stcuthberts.surrey.sch.uk)



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