

Governor's Annual Statement **2021-2022**

The Governors would like to thank all the staff, families and the children themselves for continuing to rise to the many challenges thrown at them, particularly during the exceptionally high numbers of Covid in the first half of the academic year.

Thankfully, we are gradually returning to a semblance of normality and it has been brilliant to be able to return to assemblies together, parents' meetings in person, Jubilee celebrations, school disco, sports day and the summer fayre. It is these shared opportunities that helps bind us together as a community and embodies the spirit of Marlborough St Mary's.

Overview of the Governor's Year

It has been a year of change for the school. At Christmas, we wished Anne Schwodler all the best for a happy and well-deserved retirement. Anne had successfully amalgamated the infant & junior schools, oversaw the building of our fantastic new school and helped Marlborough St Mary's achieve a rating of "Good" in its first Ofsted in 2019. At the same time, we also said goodbye to the Deputy Headteacher Toni Holford-Wright who left to become a headteacher herself and embark on the next steps of her career.

In January, Dan Crossman became our new Head teacher and an exciting new chapter began. The Governors would especially like to thank the three temporary Assistant Heads Gemma Harris, Ben Ferris & Katie Kuryszko who stepped up and have done such an exceptional job in supporting Dan in his first few months and ensuring a smooth transition. We also welcomed Woody the school dog, a very popular new addition to our school community!

In May, after a rigorous recruitment process, Russell Goodman (an ex St Mary's & St Peters pupil himself) was appointed as the new Deputy Head to start in September 2022.

Marlborough St Mary's has continued to build on its diverse and inclusive nature by welcoming a number of Ukranian refugee children & families over the summer terms.

As covid restrictions have been relaxed the Governors have been able to get back into school on a far more regular basis. This year the school successfully completed both a Local Authority Financial and Health & Safety Audits.

Governors joined staff on the TD day in January for a whole school self-evaluation exercise with the main outcome that there was a need for a focus on improved communication and well-being. After the last few years of Covid, we are now able to focus again on reviewing our vision and strategy. We would like to thank all those families who took part in our recent survey which will feed into this on-going work.

Governance

Governors are volunteers who give up their free time to benefit their school. The role of Governors is to be "a critical friend" to the Head Teacher and school leadership team who are responsible for the day-to-day operational running of the school.

Key Functions of the Governing Body

- *Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction*
- *Hold leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff*
- *Oversee the financial performance of the organisation and make sure its money is well spent*

Governing Body

In November, Gill Macdonald had to step down as Chair of Governors due to ill health. We are pleased to advise that after a short sabbatical to recuperate Gill is back and will be heading up our curriculum monitoring. The Vice-chairs Dawn Steele and Kate Hughes became co-Chairs of Governors and Mandy Cook became Vice-chair.

In March, two new governors joined the board. Helen Eames, parent governor and mother to Esca in Oak, joined the Finances & Resources committee. Louise Stevens became the new Staff governor after the departure of Toni Holford-Wright.

As we approach the end of the academic year, we are sad to be losing Vanessa Minchin, parent Governor, who stood down at the end of May and Mark Whitehead, foundation governor and the chair of the Finance & Resources committee who stands down at the end of the academic year. We would like to thank them both for their contributions to the board. With Vanessa's departure we will be asking for nominations for a new parent governor early in September.

Our Governing Body is currently made up of 14 Governors and 1 Associate Member, appointed as follows:

- Two Staff Governors (including the Head Teacher = ex officio)
- Three Foundation Governors, appointed by Salisbury Diocese, in consultation with St Mary's Church, Marlborough (including the Rector of St Mary's Church = ex officio)
- One Parent Governor and One Parent Governor Vacancy (nominations to be sought, and if more than one candidate, election to be held in September 2022), elected by a ballot of parents or if no candidates present themselves at the time of the election appointed onto the board
- One Local Authority Governor nominated by the Governing Board who can bring a range of skills, knowledge and experiences to the Governing Board
- Seven Governors co-opted by the governing body who can bring a range of skills, knowledge and experiences to the Governing Board
- One Associate Member (no voting rights) appointed to support the oversight of financial matters

The Full Governing Body (FGB) meets 6 times a year once every term. Governors also normally sit on one or both of two committees which meet in advance of each FGB for more detailed discussions and to review policy documents. The Finance and Resource Committee monitors finance, health & safety, staffing and property. The Teaching and Learning Committee monitors the curriculum, pupil progress, attendance, safeguarding and behaviour. Governors also visit school on a regular basis for support and monitoring purposes.

An experienced professional Clerk supports the Governing Body, ensuring all relevant topics are covered. A list of current Governors and their responsibilities can be found on the school website.