

GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER

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*"Striving to be the best
we can guided by the
light of Christ"*

Welcome to our Christmas Newsletter!

These past two terms have been incredibly busy at School as always. We would like to thank all our amazing staff and pupils (and their families) for their hard work throughout, especially with the Around the World topic day and the beautiful Nativity plays and Carol Service. We are incredibly proud of you all – well done!

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you have a fun but restful break with your families at this special time and look forward to seeing you again in 2016!

The Governing Body of St Bon's

Update from our Standards Committee

All change at the Standards Committee! We now have a new Chair of the Standards Committee as well as a change in membership. Many thanks to Eddie Romero, our previous Chair, and to Niki Hawke and Father Michael. Alison Duckett has taken over as Chair of the Committee and joining her is Kevin Molloy, who is also the SEND link governor. They join our existing committee of Lucille Charles, Steph Woolley and Eddie Romero.

The big change for our Committee this year is in the reporting of pupil data. Our School will now be using a system called Target Tracker to record and report our children's progress and attainment. In order to ensure success for our children, it is critical to identify the gaps in learning for individual pupils and groups of pupils. Target Tracker provides gap analysis by subject which can be filtered by group or individual pupil. This can help our teachers with identifying the next steps and planning appropriate lessons. St Bon's plans to hold an evening for parents in Term 3 to explain how the system works and the terminology that will be used to report our children's progress and attainment going forward.

At our term 1 meeting Mr Davies, our School Science Lead, kindly attended to give us an update on the Science curriculum and the School's shift from simple comprehension to more probing questions and the use of 'big ideas' that require un-coverage and broadening of the question. Success has been shown through the film in Term 6 last year. Mr Davies also shared with us the launch of the Big Science Challenge, our Science video competition which is currently in progress. We look forward to seeing all the amazing films produced by our children in January.

Parents' Evening Governor Survey

Following on from the survey we carried out at the two parents' evenings back in October, we wanted to let you know more about the results, the feedback we received and the School's plan of action.

You might be asking how did we choose the three questions in the survey? You may remember that in July the school asked parents to complete an end of year online parent questionnaire. Based on the comments and feedback from that survey we, as governors, felt that the three areas to find out more about were communication, the level of information received by parents from the School and the School's response to unacceptable behaviour.

The number of responses was truly amazing, for which we must say a huge thank you. We had 231 responses out of 298 families at the School. The comments and feedback made us very proud of our wonderful School. For each of the three questions asked 80% or more are happy (or very happy) with the School. Those that made comments wrote very helpful, constructive comments, which is really valuable when reviewing and feeding back to Mrs Charles and the staff.

Set out below is a summary of the answers for each of the three questions together with what the School is going to look at/work on between now and the end of the academic year.

Looking at the **first** question (***How do you feel about the level of information you receive on your child's progress throughout the year?***), 94% of you are at least happy with the level of information that you receive. Views worth noting were that the information is good, the teachers are very approachable, and the parents' evenings are very informative and well timed. Specific comments included "Very thorough. Academic and pastoral (general well-being)", "The reception information session was great", "Teachers always happy to help and explain for English as an Additional Language parents".

Areas that you felt you needed to raise were:

1. ***More opportunity in between the parent evenings to look at your child's work and see their progress:*** The School has agreed to add two sessions between now and the end of July (three every year from September 2016) whereby you can just drop in to your child's class to see their work. The session will be along the lines of 2.45-3.10pm and you will be given plenty of notice to allow you to plan ahead. Please remember that you can always book a dedicated time slot with a teacher at the end of the academic year following the Term 6 reports. Please also note that you can always email your child's teacher if you have anything you wish to discuss (each teacher's email address is available on their class area of the website).
2. ***For those unable to attend the parent's information evenings a more accurate record of what is discussed to allow them to be kept informed:*** The School is going to investigate the technology available to facilitate the capturing of this information. In the meantime, teachers will write down all the questions asked and answers given at these information evenings and add them to the end of their slide presentations. These presentations will then be uploaded on to the School website, as is current practice.
3. ***The need to be kept informed about additional help provided to each child:*** The School will have a think about how best to keep parents informed if their child receives additional help. It may be via their red reading book. Whatever method is chosen the Senior Leadership Team will monitor to ensure that what has been decided is being done. More on this in the future.

*"Christmas is joy,
religious joy, an
inner joy of light and
peace"*
Pope Francis



Parents' Evening Survey (continued)

4. **Mid-year reports.** The School has agreed to monitor how the above measures are working out and whether you feel they are making a difference as to whether they look in to this in the future.

Looking at the **second** question (*How do you feel about the communication between the School and parents e.g. in person, through the school newsletter, website?*), 82% of you are at least happy with communication. Comments included "Wonderful", "Very good, we feel listened to", "The School reception team are always helpful", "Great communication from top down!" and "Good. Much better than it was five years ago".

Areas you commented on were:

1. **The website needs to be kept up to date:** The governors have recently carried out two separate website audits. In conjunction with the work needed as a result of the audits, the School is going to address this issue by ensuring the pages are kept up to date on a more regular basis. The teachers have been reminded of the minimum expectation of information required. However, please remember that there will be differences between classes to allow the teachers to use their own creativity.
2. **Sometimes letters do not make their way home:** School is going to remind the children that they are responsible for taking letters home. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ask. We want to ensure a balance between making sure the information gets home and teaching our children independence and responsibility.

Looking at the **third** question (*How do you feel about the School's response to incidents of unacceptable behaviour?*), 47% have not had any experience of this or made no comment and a further 52% of you are happy or very happy with the School's response. Comments included "The very few incidents that have occurred have been dealt with well", "Very good response to anything I have raised, quick and dealt with, with compassion", "Confident in their safeguarding of my child", and "Excellent – very professional and sympathetic".

The areas that you commented on were:

1. **If something does happen, keeping parents in the loop could be better.**
2. **Incidents are very infrequent but when they do happen the School seems a little slow to respond.**

Please remember that if you ever have any concerns or would like to know more about an incident, Mrs Charles, who is the school Child Protection officer, is the person to contact. Chris Jackson is the Child Protection and Safeguarding governor and he can always be contacted to discuss a concern or more general issue via our Clerk. The School does have a Behaviour Policy, an Anti-Bullying Policy and a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, which can be found on the School website. These policies are always adhered to. Please also remember that if there is ever a safeguarding issue Mrs Charles will seek external professional help when appropriate.

Finally, the governors would like to thank you all again for taking the time to tell us what you think. Taking on board what you say and acting upon it is one of the best ways we can improve as a School.



*"What you are is
God's gift to you;
what you make of
yourself is your
gift to God"*

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AGMEP (we do love an acronym!)

One of our roles as governors at St Bon's is to monitor the progress and performance of the School. As part of this monitoring, all members of the board of governors are encouraged to undertake at least two visits to the School throughout the year. These visits are carried out in pairs and have specific foci agreed in advance. We've even given the visits a catchy name – the Annual Governors Monitoring and Evaluation Programme or AGMEP for short! This year the visits focus on a number of different areas including: the new curriculum, the priorities set out in the School Improvement Plan, Special Educational Needs & Disabilities and there is always an annual Ethos and Learning visit looking at the Catholic life of the School. This year we have planned 14 formal visits. The visits are an integral part of our yearly monitoring calendar and help us to hold the School to account. They also help us as governors to play a role in the strategic management of the School. These visits enable governors to see the School and pupils at work, get to know the staff, support and challenge the Headteacher, staff and activities of the School, gain first-hand information to assist with policy making and decision-taking and observe the learning that goes on at St Bon's. After the visit a report is written by the lead governor carrying out that visit, which is shared with both the School and the Full Governing Body. Governor visits are an informative and enjoyable experience and result in affective monitoring which helps contribute to School improvement.

And finally ...

- We would like to thank our wonderful PTFA and everyone involved with the Christmas Fair that took place at the start of December. It was such a brilliant afternoon and we do appreciate all the hard work that goes into these events. You organise so many fantastic ways to celebrate and contribute so greatly to the overall life of our pupils at School. We are very lucky to have your constant support and ideas. Thank you!
- We welcome Fr Tom Smith to the Governing Body. Fr Tom was a Foundation Governor in his previous parish and we look forward to working together and continuing to build on the School's link with the Church.
- This means we are pleased to say that our governing body is still at full complement (this is quite unusual for schools) but we would always welcome your involvement so please do contact our Clerk (contact details above) if you are interested in getting involved.
- As always, do feel free to let us have your ideas for areas you'd like us to cover in the future by contacting our Clerk.