

GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER

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

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

Well, we have made it to the end of another School year and what a fantastic year it has been! We have been so pleased to see the pupils and staff settle into their new School buildings; we have been delighted by the successful roll out of our new curriculum, especially the fantastic film premières and would like to thank all our pupils, staff and their families for your support and hard work throughout the year.

We wish you all a very happy Summer and look forward to seeing you in September refreshed and ready to embrace a new academic year!

The Governing Body of St Bon's

A note from our Chair of Governors

A couple of weeks ago, I had the privilege of welcoming the parents of the children who will be joining us in September. For many of them the evening session strengthened the realisation that they will soon be handing their children to comparative strangers. If you are reading this, chances are that you have done that and have grown comfortable with the thought. However, as I looked at the people facing me I remembered my own anxiety about letting my precious child go. Mrs Charles and I reassured them that St Bon's considers every child as a precious and unique human and that the School is a community that seeks to enable each child to develop all their talents. Not only does the School aspire to excellent academic standards but also to foster the child's artistic and dramatic abilities, their critical intellect, their sporting skills, to have fun and last but not least to nourish their inner life, the life of the spirit. This can serve as a reminder to all of us, hardened parents of school children that we are, of what St Bon's is about.

We are now fully settled in our newly rebuilt School, something that looked like a mirage only a few years ago; I believe that the buildings provide a safe environment conducive to good learning. We will endeavour to make this count and carry on improving our provision.

Our next priority is to improve the outside space, to provide adequate playing facilities, quiet spaces for more reflective activities and a more diverse environment. We recognise that much learning happens as children play and we will endeavour to enable this.

As Chair of Governors, I am extremely proud of our School, of its dedicated staff and well behaved children. From the feedback we get from the secondary schools they go on to, we know our pupils go from strength to strength validating the efforts of their families and teachers.

Eddie Romero, Chair of Governors

Spotlight on our Sub-Committees

Each sub-committee meets at School once a term. We asked each of our main sub-committees - Standards; Management Equality & Child Protection (MECP) and Finance Premises Health & Safety (FPH&S) - to let you know about their achievements this year for our School and here's what they wrote:

Standards Committee: Throughout the year, we monitor the impact of the quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and attainment and the quality of the curriculum in securing high standards of achievement. The committee has responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of provision for children with Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND) and gifted or talented pupils. It also reviews the impact of any actions or interventions taken to address differential standards of achievement or rates of progress within specific groups (e.g. SEND, by gender, Free School Meals, English as an Additional Language etc.)

Over the year 2014/2015, the committee has focused on some very specific areas identified to us through our anonymised pupil data. The first of these was a whole School focus on writing. This has been addressed by the School with a cross curricular approach to writing allowing our children to spend more time producing quality pieces of work. The whole School topic has been a key element of this and has provided some stimulating opportunities for many but in particular for boys, one of our key focus groups in this area. Members of the senior leadership team have spent significant time in class monitoring this area.

A second key area for us has been the monitoring of specific year groups where we have identified areas of concern. One of these areas was identified in the last Ofsted report as our Year 3 provision. There have been significant operational changes in this area over the last two years including the move of an experienced teacher from Year 2 to Year 3 to assist with any issues with transition to KS2. Monitoring pupil data is now a key objective for all teaching staff so areas of concern are now quickly identified and solutions put in place.

We have been very lucky over the last year to have a member of staff focused two days a week on our SEND pupils. This has ensured a rigorous and consistent approach throughout the School. The School has invested in equipment and in very targeted and measurable intervention systems. The results of this are a key item on our termly agenda.



MECP: Our committee has continued this year to assist St. Bon's in achieving its objectives by providing support and challenge to the School Leadership Team in the management of the School, the provision of equality for all and the provision of robust Child Protection policies and procedures. The committee also serves to assist the School in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities in these areas.

The committee is responsible for a large number of the School's policies and ensures that they are kept up-to-date, compliant with statutory requirements, conform with good practice and are evaluated in accordance with the review timescales in each policy.

*"Dear young people
do not bury your
talents, the gifts that
God has given you!
Do not be afraid to
dream of great
things!"
Pope Francis*



Spotlight on our Sub-Committees

Over the year 2014/15, the committee has focused on, among other things, admissions, staffing and the new performance related pay/appraisals. We have taken part in the drafting, consultation and adoption of the admissions policy in order to ensure that it complies with the relevant legislation. We have accompanied the School in planning and forecasting staffing needs for the coming year, including supporting the recruitment and appointment procedures.

We have also monitored and challenged the appraisal process throughout the year, including the adoption of a new online system of collating evidence and support material relating to the appraisals.



FPH&S: Having finally got rid of the builders, we have turned our concentration to how we maximise the opportunities our new environment provides for our teachers and learners alike. Our upgraded ICT infrastructure has allowed us to set our sights on how the latest technology can help deliver the curriculum in a fun and exciting way. All of our classrooms have interactive white boards and we are gradually making sure all pupils have the option to use iPads during lesson time. For our staff, upgrading PCs and improved connectivity has increased the flexibility of working throughout the School.

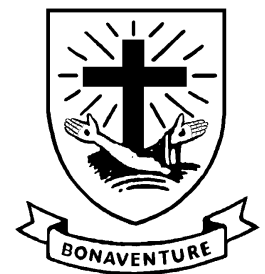
Whilst our budget is always tight we have worked hard to identify where savings can be made resulting in a surplus being generated this year. The School has agreed a plan for how this is re-invested back into delivering our aims and ambitions. We are required to agree a budget for the year ahead with the Local Authority by the end of May. Our 2015/16 budget was submitted on time and has been approved allowing us to get on and develop our plans for the year ahead, knowing we have the funds to deliver them.

This year we also agreed a plan to establish an internal audit function, which will ensure we, as governors, are well informed about the decisions that are being taken on our finances and can respond in an informed way when action is needed.

Some of the identified surplus is going towards the re-development of our School grounds; the final part of our ambitious plan for St Bon's. Subject to receiving the necessary permissions we will install an effective drainage system (we have been advised this is a pre-requisite for any works undertaken to improve the condition of the main grassed area) and will help to alleviate concerns identified in the north wall of our Church. When this is done we hope to replace some of the grass with a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) subject to planning, which will offer the school greater flexibility in how and when it uses its outside play space.



This is just a selection of our sub-committees' achievements this year. We will update with progress in later newsletters.



"Train the young in the way they should go; even when old they will not swerve from it"
Proverbs 22:6

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Pupil Premium

The pupil premium is additional funding provided for schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.

For St Bon's this is a small but significant part of the funding we receive from Government. We are required to publish details of how this is spent and the impact it makes to our pupils attainment on a routine and regular basis. You can read our detailed report for 2013/14 on our website by clicking on Pupil Premium on the School's website under the School Information tab and our 2014/15 report will be up-loaded once Governors have agreed it.

Whilst our allocation from Government reflects the needs of our cohort of children it is often more difficult to get results from a small pot of funding even if the numbers of children we have to support is also small. Nevertheless, we take our responsibilities seriously and want to ensure all our pupils reach their true potential whilst they are with us.

In 2013/14 our budget was just under £30k, rising steadily to just over £50k for 2015/16. This rising trend reflects an increase the numbers of pupils attending our School with additional needs and is proof of our inclusive approach.

Is your child eligible for the Pupil Premium?

It is not just about Free School Meals so even if a pupil is in KS1 it is very much worth applying if you think you qualify. You can find details about qualification at: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/children-and-young-people/free-school-meals-and-pupil-premium>.

We will continue to make you aware of our plans for how we utilise this funding, but if you have any further questions about this please raise them with the School and we will be happy to discuss them with you.

And finally ...

- Thank you for the positive feedback on our newsletters. Please do feel free to let us have your ideas for areas you'd like us to cover in the future by contacting our Clerk (contact details above).
- We say a very fond farewell to our terrific Year 6 pupils. We wish you all the very best at your secondary schools and look forward to hearing about your continuing achievements. You have been a pleasure and we are all very proud of you.
- The governing body is currently at full complement but we are on the lookout for associate members to act as "governors-in-waiting" so do let our Clerk know if you are interested in becoming involved.