

Matlock Bath Holy Trinity CofE (VC) Primary School

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Imagine, Believe, Achieve



Summer 2017
OUTSTANDING
CHURCH SCHOOL



Governing Body End of Year Summary 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you to give you an overview of the work of the governing body this academic year. First of all, I want to thank you for the tremendous support you have given to the school throughout the year, and for entrusting your children to our school for their nurture and education. The head, staff and governors are so grateful for all that you do to support their work.

This has been a very good year for the school. It is obvious to me as a governor when I go into the school that the children are happy and confident, enjoying their learning and benefiting from high quality teaching in a supportive environment. This was also the conclusion in the report of our OFSTED visit, which was warm in its praise for the school, and very much matched our own assessment of what the school has to offer. Despite the criticism of OFSTED in some quarters, the two inspectors who came to us were excellent, helping staff and pupils to feel at ease, and encouraging an open discussion of our work, progress made and next steps for school improvement. As governors we want to pay tribute to the head and all the staff whose excellent work and sustained effort have achieved this position. Furthermore, excellent SATs results from this year demonstrate the drive and commitment of staff who are enabling all children to flourish and achieve. Our combined percentage for achievement in SATs for reading, writing and maths (RWM) is 70%, the national percentage is 59%.

Our work as governors has focused on helping the head teacher in decision making on staffing matters and the best use of the school budget. I am pleased to say that, despite the pressures on finance, we are projected to maintain a surplus while keeping current staffing levels, and while energy costs and pay settlements are difficult to predict we should be in a sound position over future financial years. Governors keep the budget under constant review with help from the local authority finance department. We discuss the allocation of targeted funds such as Pupil Premium and Sports Funding, and monies spent on keeping the building and the site in good condition and safe for the children. The gates and improved perimeter fencing installed last summer holiday have helped with this, and new windows and doors have improved security and energy efficiency.

We have also spent time considering how we can improve our support for parents and carers by extending the time children can be supervised by staff on the site, offering a wrap-around care facility. This has resulted in our advertising for staff to cover the additional hours, and making appointments so that the school will be open next term from 7-30am to 5-30pm for families that need such cover. The head and governors have sought to offer this cover at an hourly rate which we hope will be affordable in these difficult times for household budgets, but which should meet the school's costs if the take up is in line with the parent survey undertaken earlier in the year.

"Let us run the race before us and never give up" Hebrews 12.1

As governors we undertake annual training, particularly to update our understanding of safeguarding and data protection, and we scrutinise and endorse a range of policies required of the school, and which need to be regularly checked and amended. We have discussed more than a dozen such policies this year, in many cases using a format provided by the government or the local authority, but which need to be personalised to the school.

We have been delighted to have presentations led by staff on Monster Phonics and mental health initiatives incorporated into our meetings, and we have subject links with staff where we can be given insight into curriculum developments. Governors also contribute in other ways, such as Sheila Laming with collective worship and school events in church, Sarah Parsons with the bee keeping and initiative to develop the school garden, Rob Burton exploring how to move the school towards Net Zero, and my taking drama club. Governors regularly attend school events such as Christmas and Summer Fayres, sports day and the occasions in church.

There have been some staff changes during the year, and we have been lucky to find Mrs Lee, joining us in December after Mrs McCourt moved on to work in another school, and Miss Harby joining the TA team, with governors involved with the appointment process. We are delighted to have such a strong team of staff, including our brilliant cleaning and caretaking staff, midday supervisors and school cook, under Mr Layhe-Humphreys' excellent leadership.

There have been changes, too, in membership of the governing body, with Mr Moran having to stand down as parent governor owing to the pressures of his senior NHS role. Mr Whitehead reaches the end of his term as parent governor this summer, and we would like to thank him warmly for his unfailing support for the school over many years, for his wise contributions to our discussions, and for his work always to ensure the best for the school. Mr Layhe-Humphreys will be writing to you in September to invite nominations to join us as a parent governor.

On behalf of all the governors may I wish you a very enjoyable summer break, and to offer best wishes to our Year 6 pupils moving on.

Tony Jones, Chair of Governors, July 2023