



Michaelchurch Escley Primary School

Michaelchurch Escley
Herefordshire
HR2 0PT

Headteacher: Mrs L.C. Crocker

Wednesday 26th April 2017

Dear Michaelchurch Families & Friends,

This academic year we have had some important changes behind the scenes to the governing body at Michaelchurch. As the incoming Chair I would like to share a bit about the role of governors, introduce the current governing body team and especially welcome the newest members.

It may come as a surprise to many that school governors are the largest single body of volunteers within the UK. They are mostly parents and community leaders who offer their time and expertise to the oversight of schools, and are responsible for holding the strategic vision. They are there to support not only the headteacher who manages the school on a day-to-day basis, but also the staff and parents. Governors meet at least once a term (at Michaelchurch we meet half-termly) to oversee the School Development Plan, ensure the school is Ofsted-ready, monitor pupils and classrooms, make regular school visits, have responsibility for oversight of the budget, set curriculum guidelines, and continuously attend professional training courses. It takes an entire team to support any school, and I'd like to introduce you to our very active & skilled governing body at Michaelchurch.

The newest members are Karen Morris-Dawson and Rhiannon Taylor, both who joined us in September 2016. Karen has been busy helping us to hone our Flexi-school Programme and has worked tirelessly with parents and staff over the past year. She also can be seen helping out with the preschool and monitoring visits. Rhiannon is a former secondary headteacher from Shropshire, who now lives with her husband just on the outskirts of Michaelchurch. Rhiannon has also been a governor trainer, school improvement consultant as well as a teacher. Many of you might have seen her visiting the school before. We are very grateful that she has joined us, bringing her great wealth of expertise and enthusiasm for education to our team. Rhiannon is our special education needs (SEN) governor

We have two staff governors that are our Headteacher Louise Crocker and Acorn class teacher, Jennifer Brockwell. Amy Forbes-Robertson is a parent governor, who is particularly active on our Curriculum committee. Kirsty Stewart (Michaelchurch Preschool manager) has come on board as an associate governor with emphasis on Site & Safety. We also have Ben Hall on our governing body, and though their family moved to France two years ago, Ben continues to help us weed through lengthy documents and advise us from time to time as an LA governor.

Robert Fraser, whom many of you have seen at school driving the minibus in turns with his wife Chrissy, has been our invaluable Chair of Finance for a number of years. Robert's corporate finance background has enabled him to easily (or so it seems!) balance our books and keep our school running healthily, when many others throughout the UK are struggling. Ruth Young, who is our very experienced Curriculum Chair, is also assuming the Vice Chair role until we have filled the vacancy. She has experience from many years of teaching, and most recently has held the position of Assistant Principal of Steiner Academy. We are grateful for her professional insights and the many years she has given to Michaelchurch as a governor.

Last but not least, I would like to give a HUGE thank you to our outgoing Chair of Governors Benna Waites, who together with Ruth and then governors, worked tirelessly to keep our little school open throughout the period of defederation with Longtown over three years ago. Benna has had an

enormous workload and held responsibility for the school for the nearly 9 years she has been a Chair. She needed to step down to have more time with her family after successfully helping us get through our Ofsted 'Good' inspection last June. We are all very pleased that she has decided to still stay on the governing body as a 'wise owl' for a bit longer.

We also need to give a big thank you to Sarah Collier, who has been our clerk of governors for nearly 2 years. Sarah has organised us and made sure that we have legally complied with the many rules & regulations that concern governing bodies. She will be leaving us this term, but we wanted to make sure that she knows how much we appreciate all her hard work, especially throughout the Ofsted inspection.

Please feel free to approach or contact any one of us if you have an issue that you feel we could help with in our individual areas of expertise. We are all here because we believe strongly in our wonderful small school, and want to help it continue to thrive for yet another generation of children!

Best wishes,

Diahann Hughes Hawkins - Chair of Governors