



### **Chair Letter - Governors Update - December 21st, 2018**

Dear Parents and Friends,

It would be hard to believe we're at the end of the autumn term if it weren't for the many school festivities of the past few weeks. From Christmas Fair, decoration day, carolling, Courtyard pantomime, wonderful Nativity event and the annual school Christmas party makes the holiday season feel complete. Thank you to all of our teachers and staff for their amazing efforts to make the holiday season extra special for our children!

An update from governors is now well-overdue, since the last one sent out was in April 2018. We have a number of changes to our governing body to share, and then want to inform all of you that we will be holding an election for TWO parent governor openings in the new year. This will trigger a full school election, which hasn't happened in recent memory, as we will have more than one candidate running for the posts.

Our newest governor, Chris Hollowood, immediately came on board as our Chair of Finance. Chris definitely hit the ground running as soon as he joined us in September. He is the grandfather of two of our students (Mia and Isabella), and has a long history in education. Chris was a headteacher of a secondary school for 12 years (1200 pupils!), and since retirement does consultancy work in the education sector in Wales as Regional Officer for the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL). He is now overseeing the finances of our new classroom project, and we're very grateful to have him as an important part of our team.

In January, we will be welcoming back Melanie Williams to our governing body. She was previously a governor and also a former teacher at Michaelchurch, so she knows our school well. Melanie had to step down in 2016, as her job within Herefordshire Local Authority (which she has now left) created a conflict of interest. Melanie is interested in returning to help with Curriculum Committee and has much experience with Safeguarding in particular.

Two full governors have stepped back into Associate Governor roles, as their busy lives have made it difficult for them to regularly attend FGB meetings. Benna Waites, our previous Chair of Governors, will remain as an advisor to governors. Her expertise and insight is a real asset to governors and we're pleased that she is still a part of the team, even after all three of her sons have now left Michaelchurch!

Amy Forbes-Robertson has been an active part of our Curriculum Committee for a couple of years, and has recently found it challenging to juggle FGB meetings with her thriving new business which require lots of travel (not to mention having two young children Albie & Flora). Amy will still remain involved with governors by doing monitoring visits and training staff on the new RSE (Religion and Sex Education) policy for next September. We hope that once the dust settles, she'll be able to return to full governors again!



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Our constitution states that we have ten governor slots: 2- Parent governors, 1- headteacher, 1-staff, 5- co-opted, 1- local authority slots. If there is more than one candidate standing for the parent opening, then this triggers an election. The governor role entails 5-6 meeting of full governing body (FGB) each academic year. These are now being held at 3pm on Tuesdays, and last approximately two hours. In addition, most governors join a committee to help distribute the workload between us all. We have Curriculum, Finance, Site & Safety committees, which meet a minimum of once per term. Occasionally we have working parties for specific tasks that need special attention, such as for Preschool until it was fully established and became governor-run last year.

The actual workload of being a governor depends largely on how involved an individual chooses to become between committees, monitoring visits and special projects. We happen to have a particularly active governing body, which was vital the past five years as we required all hands on deck to save the school from closure and help secure a 'Good' Ofsted inspection in 2016. Please have a think over the holidays, and if you interested in joining the team as a parent governor please contact me via email: [diahannhawk@me.com](mailto:diahannhawk@me.com)

Finally, thank you to everyone who completed the parent survey this term. Your input helped inform our governor Kristan Pritchard, who did a great review of hot dinners and has been working on the healthy eating policy for our school. Flexi-school feedback was useful to Karen Morris-Dawson, who has put greater details of 'good practise' assessment together for future reference. Miss (Rebecca) Cook is busy helping our school earn our Silver eco-award, and will be leading the eco-week in early January. There are a few of the highlights, as it's useful to know the work happening behind the scenes. We should have even more to share in the spring term.

Best wishes for a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Diahann

Diahann Hughes Hawkins - Chair of Governors