



St. Peter's Catholic Primary School

Marlow, Buckinghamshire, UK | Tel: 01628 472 116

GOVERNORS ANNUAL REPORT 2016/7



Year 6 production of *Panto Pandemonium*



Year 3 girls celebrating First Holy Communion

Headteacher's Report

I am delighted to be able to write to you in more depth than usual as it enables me to celebrate success and make you aware of the progress on the things we have been working on, as we continue to relentlessly strive for outstanding.



Last year saw the first year that all classes were working with the creative curriculum; and this combined with the continuing use of Growth Mindset has seen a big impact not only on the children's enjoyment of the curriculum but also on their attitudes to learning. The creative curriculum; a focus on outdoor learning; introducing the teaching of French from Y2 (though it is only statutory from Y3), increasing the number of enrichment activities through focused weeks and such events as a Taste of Democracy has enabled us to provide a broad, balanced curriculum. (The focus of the new OFSTED framework!).

The introduction of House Competitions has been one of the highlights of the past year. All of the children from Reception to Year 6 were involved in a range of competitive events ranging from Maths to geography; art to sport. It was lovely to see the team work, the co-operation and enjoyment that occurred at these events; we look forward to many more in the coming year.

What can I say about the 3 amazing productions?! All 3 were different but with the common elements of enthusiasm, talent and a fantastic producer in Mrs Nicholls. Music has continued to be a strength of the school as shown by the productions and music evening. The children's singing at Mass was commented on by the Bishop on his visit in June.

Links with the Parish have been strengthened with the children's work being regularly displayed at the back of church, which will continue for this year.

We are fortunate to have a stable staff, who work well as a team and are resilient enough to embrace change and develop their practice, which contributes to the positive and nurturing environment of the school.

Our main foci over the following year are:-

- To further develop writing across the school
- To embed and expand outdoor learning
- To promote further the resilience and independence of all learners through Growth Mindset

We look forward to working with you and your children in this coming year and I would like to thank you for all your support and hard work over last year.

I would like to finish by thanking all staff for their hard work and commitment and finally to the children, who are our priority; for their work, enthusiasm and talent.

Amanda McCluskey
Headteacher

Chairman's Report

I am pleased to be able to report to you after my first full year as Chair. As I am sure you know, Governors are not involved in the day to day operation of the school, but have a strategic role in ensuring that there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. We hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and oversee finances making sure money is well spent.



The mission of St Peter's is to "Live and Learn as Friends of Jesus" and our vision is to be an outstanding school in which the unique abilities of our children are recognised and where each and every child achieves his or her full potential through excellent teaching, learning and the support of the wider community.

We welcome children from Catholic families as well as many from other faiths who share our values. Love, Respect and Honesty are at the core of our ethos. We were pleased to receive an interim review this year by the Diocese of the religious life of the school which indicated that we are performing well.

Last year I referred to Education being a political football, and it is even more so given the political events of the last year. You will no doubt have read in the press about funding reductions, shortages of teachers, and possible changes to school meals provision amongst other things. As I write this report it is unclear how things will pan out, but one thing that seems certain is that we are facing very challenging times from a funding perspective.

The Governing Board were able to sign off a balanced budget for 2017/18, but this was difficult to achieve. Despite increases in costs we received less income from Government as a result of having slightly fewer children in school and increased 'top slicing' by the Local Authority to make up for the ending of the Education Support Grant. Our initial projections for 2018/19 suggest that the budget will be very challenging indeed and this will be a key matter for the Governing Board over the next period.

Meanwhile I would like to thank the PTA for their support and fundraising for the school as well as those parents who contribute regularly to our Development Fund. Without these we simply would not be able to make

capital improvements to the school. Long awaited improvements to our ICT facilities as well as external fencing are now on the cards.

On the education front we have been pleased with the strengthening of the leadership team and the introduction across the school of a 'Creative Curriculum'. External reviews of the school confirm that we are operating at a good level. This has been the second full year of the new national curriculum and new and harder SATs and provisional results for KS2 show a marked improvement this year putting St Peter's overall result significantly above the national average.

I reported last year the Diocese wishes to see all its schools convert into Academies as part of Multi Academy Trust. We already cooperate with the Catholic schools in Buckinghamshire, and over the last year this cooperation has increased with teachers meeting to share knowledge and experience. The Chairs of these schools now also meet to explore opportunities. It is likely that over the next year that this group will make a proposal to deepen this cooperation by forming a Multi Academy Trust. The Governors of St Peter's will consider any such proposal carefully and will consult with staff and parents before proceeding.

I would like to end by thanking all the Governors who give up their time freely to serve on the Governing Body. Special thanks go to Dennis O'Connor who steps down after 12 years of service, many of those as Chair.

Thank you also to the staff of St Peter's for their dedicated service to the education of our children. Special thanks to Mrs Nicholson who served on the Governing Board for a number of years as she retires from the school this year.

Mike Jackson

Chairman of Governors

Teaching and Learning Committee Report

The Teaching and Learning Committee is made up of a number of Governors, the Head and the Deputy Head Teacher. It meets twice each term to review the provision of a balanced curriculum and to monitor progress and achievement. It now also monitors behaviour as well as safeguarding matters and the health and well-being of our children.



I have chaired this committee again this year as well as being Chair of Governors, but I hope that another Governor will take on this responsibility next year.

We are a Catholic School and our mission is to 'Live and Learn as Friends of Jesus'. This underpins all that we do at St Peter's. We were therefore pleased that an interim review of our school by the Diocese of the religious life found us to be performing well.

Last year we identified the need to strengthen teaching and leadership in KS2 and we supported the school in prioritising finances to achieve this. We have been able to sign off a balanced budget again this year that preserves this position, but looking forward unless there is easing in funding from Government we will need to look closely at our staffing costs more generally.

We aim to instil in our children a love of learning, and this year we rolled out the 'Growth Mindset' programme to more classes. This encourages a positive approach to learning and a 'can do' attitude. It has been well received by the children and by parents. This year we have also been pleased to see the school adopt a 'Creative Curriculum' with each class focusing work on specific topics for a period of time. Again this has been well received.

Learning outside the classroom can also inspire children, and we have continued to look for ways to achieve this either off site or in our own school grounds. For example, we saw some classes enjoy a taster Forest School experience at the beginning of the year. We also have a wonderful garden and I have seen our children make use of it for learning activities.

ICT is another area that can excite learning in some children, and we have for some time wanted to improve our ICT facilities. Thus far we have been unable

to find the money needed. However, thanks to PTA fundraising we are hopeful that we will soon be able improve our ICT suite.

Of course, monitoring progress and attainment is a key function of this committee. I mentioned last year that we were getting to grips in a world with a new national curriculum and without 'Levels' to help us assess progress. I'm pleased to be able to report that the data we are now able to see at school and class level from our 'Target Tracker' system is now making more sense. It gives us a clearer view of how our pupils are doing and allows us to challenge the Leadership Team should progress seem to slip. We are also confident that the data is being used well by the Leadership Team with class teachers to review the progress of each child.

Our performance in writing in the new KS2 SATS last year trailed that in Maths and Reading, and this has become a focus of attention for us. Across the school specific writing books have been adopted which are used for all subjects. This helps identify progress more easily. School data suggests we are improving and we will continue to monitor this closely. Provisional SATS results for KS2 are encouraging, showing a marked improvement this year in Reading, Writing and Maths. These put us well above the national average for Reading and Maths and much closer in Writing (which is teacher assessed rather than tested by exam).

Finally, I'm pleased to have seen greater cooperation between the schools in our Buckinghamshire Catholic Schools Partnership this year. This has seen school leaders and subject leaders come together to share knowledge and experience. As a small school we can benefit significantly from such exchange.

My thanks go to the staff who teach our children as well as the Governors who have given up their own time to support this Committee over the year.

Mike Jackson

Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Finance Committee Report

We started the March 2016-17 financial year with a surplus of just over £21,000 and ended in a break even position. That deterioration was mainly because of a lower school roll and increasing pay costs.



The school has managed to produce a budget for 2017-18 showing another break even position at 31 March 2018. The Governors realise it will be very difficult for the school to achieve. However everyone on the Finance Committee will do their utmost to support the school in this endeavour and we ask parents to do all they can to help the school in this matter.

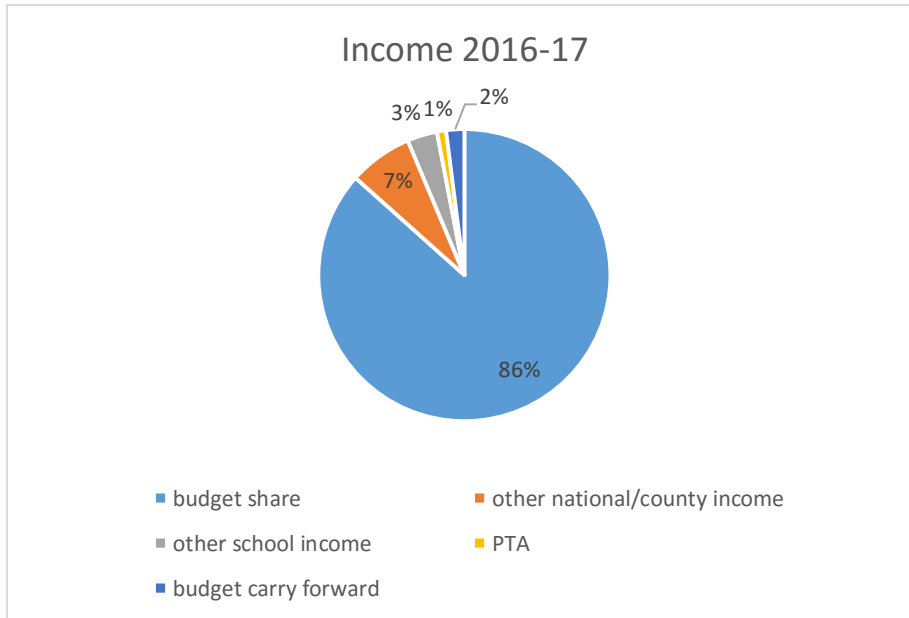
Our school budget for the financial year 2017-18 is just over £809,000. This is comprised of our core budget allocation from county, Pupil Premium funding to raise the attainment of disadvantaged children, Sports grant and Free School Meals.

We also generate additional income from sources such as;

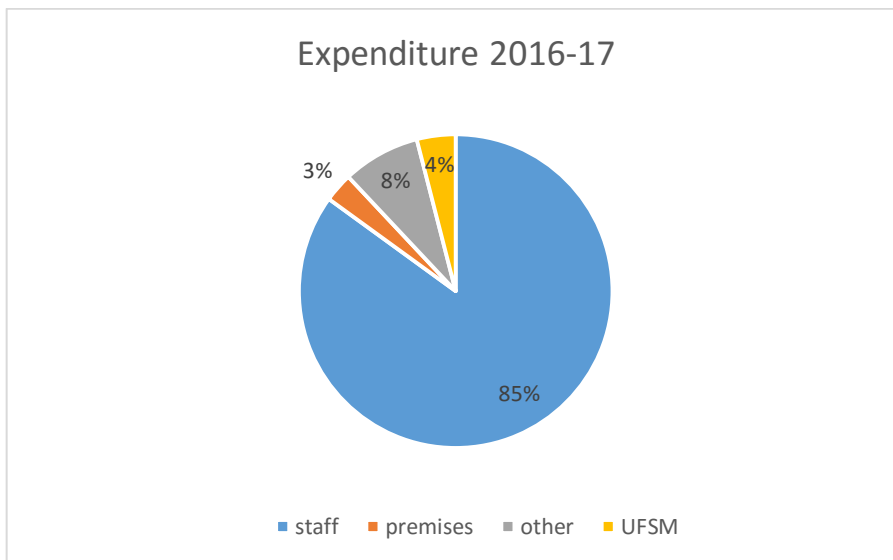
- casual lettings of the school hall and other rooms for after school and holiday clubs
- our very active and hugely well supported PTA

We shall continue with necessary maintenance and improvements to the school and this year the fencing at the front of the school will be improved.

Analysis of year ended 31 March 2017



The majority of our budget is spent on our staff and premises costs.



(UFSM = Universal Free School Meals)

Stephen Eastmond
Chair Finance Committee

School Development Fund – Sept 2017

St Peter's School Development Fund is a charitable trust set up to provide the school with funds to maintain and improve the school buildings and facilities. Monies from the Fund have previously been used to finance the music room; and more recently on replacing windows throughout most of the school and installation of new gates from the playground to the key stage 1 and 2 teaching areas.



For large scale projects such as these, the school applies for capital grants from the Diocese. When those grants do become available, the school is required to contribute 10% of the cost from its own funds. In the past, income from lettings and other sources could normally be relied upon to keep the Fund topped up. In the current economic climate though, with rising costs and an expected decrease in funding from central government, we are almost wholly reliant upon donations from parents to ensure that the Fund is maintained at a level to support the external fabric and internal facilities of the school.

Donations for the tax year April 2016 to April 2017 amounted to £3,695. Our monthly donations have increased again during this year and as at last April the Fund was receiving donations over £300 per month. As a fund with charitable status, money donated by tax payers eligible for Gift Aid can be reclaimed from the Government. As a result the Fund has claimed £1,336 from the Government representing the Gift Aid for the last two Financial Years.

As of 29 August 2017 the Fund's balance was £10,550. Miss McCluskey has applied to the Diocese for monies to replace the fencing and gates at the front of the school and for the remaining windows. Both of these will require a 10% deposit which is likely to be in excess of £4,000 for the fencing and £2,000 plus for the windows. On top of this we need to maintain a reasonable contingency fund for any unforeseen emergency such as requiring a new gas boiler or equivalent capital expenditure which would need to be fixed immediately.

On behalf of all the Governors, I would like to thank all the parents who have given so generously to the school to make these improvements possible.

Dennis O'Connor
Trustee St Peter's Educational Trust

GOVERNOR IMPACT STATEMENT AND ACTION PLAN 2017

GOVERNING BODY ACTIONS	IMPACT	ACTION PLAN 2017/18
<p>Strategic financial planning and tight budgetary control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving small budget surplus for 2016/17 • Balanced budget submitted for 2017/2018 despite rising costs and lower budget share from local authority • Staffing levels to be maintained for 2017/18 • New perimeter fences and gates to be installed for 2017/18 	<p>Achieve balanced budget without reduction in staff levels</p>
<p>Rigorous monitoring and support of teaching and learning including : appointing Governors with specific responsibility for Maths and Literacy; liaison with teaching subject heads; close monitoring of progress and attainment data; focus on behaviour and writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regular visit from our Bucks Excellence Advisor confirmed that St Peter's was a good school and improving. • Children were judged to be 'very well behaved and interested in their work' • Writing was judged to be of a good standard • Provisional SATS results at Key Stage 2 show 2017 combined results for reading, writing and maths are above the national average • Effectiveness of Teaching Assistants has been improved with a programme of comprehensive in-school training 	<p>Continue to improve progress and attainment throughout the school</p>

GOVERNING BODY ACTIONS	IMPACT	ACTION PLAN
<p>Promoting Catholic ethos of the school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RE review inspection confirmed good RE teaching • Staff and parent surveys almost unanimously praised ethos and caring culture of school • Increased parish links, with school displays regularly in church 	<p>Maintain positive and nurturing Catholic ethos</p>
<p>Focus on outdoor learning and out- of- classroom experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classes have had the benefit of at least three outside trips or visits into the school • Numerous activities throughout the year eg Forest School taster, year 6 science forum, Yr 4 sports tournament, community cops scheme. 	<p>Continue to ensure children have opportunities to enjoy inspiring activities and experiences</p>
<p>Pro-active oversight and implementation of new government safeguarding guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of safeguarding culture and practices in school 	<p>Continue to embed new safeguarding guidelines and promote and maintain an excellent safeguarding culture throughout the school.</p>