



September 2022

Happy New Academic Year from the Brabourne Governors!

And welcome to the new families that have joined the school. For those new faces, a quick summary of what the governors do.....and what we don't do.

We're not involved in the day to day running of the school. Mr.Stapley is responsible for that, along with the teachers and staff. However, we support that by helping set the longer term plans for the school, overseeing the finances and ensuring the headteacher has the support and challenge he needs. We meet as a full governing board six times a year – once a term – but also have committee meetings to oversee the finances, teaching and learning and ethics and culture and we all visit the school to see it in action.

The school has a vision – something everybody works together on to deliver the best experience for every child:

Through creative and challenging experiences, we inspire our school community to develop resilience, a passion for learning and the courage to pursue our dreams. Within our nurturing environment and beyond, we live out Christian values, enabling all to flourish in the love of God.

In order to achieve that, all governors and staff meet together once a year to check on progress and set next steps – and this results in a school improvement plan (SIP) that we use to set shorter term actions.

The teachers have worked incredibly hard over the last year or two to develop detailed curriculum plans for every subject that are mapped out over the entire school so that every subject builds, year on year, and links into topics that cover the whole school too. You can find these on the school website. These all work towards that '**passion for learning**' from the vision, making academic learning exciting and engaging. Much of the year ahead will be starting to use those plans and checking their success.

Beyond that, the SIP this year has a big emphasis on extending all pupils personally – giving them chances to test themselves, try new opportunities, lead activities, develop their spirituality and wellbeing. We're trying to build the '**courage to pursue our dreams**' – making sure pupils can cope with challenges and have the personal strengths to achieve whatever they want to in life. As governors, we'll be visiting school to see how the plans on paper are delivered – and what the pupils think of it all!

Obviously there will be challenges this year as well – along with the wider world, finances will be 'interesting'. Since oil prices are not capped, the cost of heating the school is a worry but we are in a stronger position than many schools. We are nearly full in terms of pupil numbers which is the biggest variable for school income – so we hope that, with a little belt tightening, we should be able to cover increased energy prices and our solar panels are an ongoing bonus, especially after a long



and sunny summer. But we will be reviewing the position regularly and the support from the PTA always makes an amazing difference to what the school can afford.

We're always interested to know what pupils and parents think too. As governors we need to take into account the views of all stakeholders (and that includes the local community too) so every February we send out the questionnaires that most of you will have seen – and staff and pupils also answer similar surveys too – but if you have any feedback or suggestions for governors at any other point, do feel free to have a chat at the school gate or send us a message.

We're also still looking for a new clerk to governors. The clerk is the only paid professional on the board – they help set the agenda and take minutes but also provide advice to governors to make sure we fulfil our role. It's not a very time-consuming role although it has peaks and troughs but requires ongoing training to stay on top of the ever-changing legislation. If any of you are interested – or know somebody who might be – do get in touch and we can provide more information.

The governing body members are as follows:

- Hester Fenwick – Chair, SEND link governor and governor training and development co-ordinator (Co-opted governor)
- Lucie Edmed – Vice-Chair & Chair of Teaching & Learning Committee (LA governor)*
- Emma Watson – Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee (Co-opted governor)
- Rev.Chris Denyer – Chair of Ethics & Culture Committee, Safeguarding link governor(Ex Officio as parish priest)*
- Ruthie Gilbert – Member of Ethics & Culture Committee (Foundation Governor)*
- Becks Massie – Member of Ethics & Culture Committee (Parent Governor)*
- Selina Eyles – Member of Finance Committee (Parent Governor)*
- Lena Valentine – Member of Ethics & Culture Committee, Health & Safety link governor (Parent Governor)*
- Natasha Hilton – Member of Teaching & Learning Committee (Parent Governor)*
- Katie Vasu – Member of Teaching & Learning Committee (Staff Governor)
- Andrew Stapley – Member of Teaching & Learning and Ethics & Culture Committees (Ex Officio as Headteacher)

*those with asterisks are either current parents or grandparents (or, in one case, both) so regularly at the school gate and available for a quick chat (and, clearly, the staff governor and HT are easily accessible too).

We wish all of you, and your children, the very best of years!

Kind Regards,

Hester (hesterfenwick@hotmail.com or 01303 814432)