



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Rowden Hill, Chippenham, Wiltshire. SN15 2TF

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Headteacher: Mrs Jane Howie-Boyd

25 March 2019

Dear Parents

UPDATE FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARD (I.E.B) – TERM 4

During Terms 3 and 4, the I.E.B has been involved in a range of issues and activities, and we are delighted to share these with you.

Site Security and Premises

The School site has been greatly enhanced by security fencing and gates to the front sections of the main buildings, with additional infilling of Security Fencing to the north boundary adjoining the public footpath running between Lowden and Rowden Hill – A4. These works have been totally funded by The Poor Servants of The Mother of God. Further works are planned subject to funding being made available; the I.E.B will update once these are more clearly defined and funded.

Safeguarding

We have continued with measures to make safeguarding all members of the School community a natural part of our School's culture and practice. A recent quality assurance audit by the Local Authority showed that the School now conforms with best practice in training of staff, and that we are compliant in areas such as safer recruiting procedures, maintenance of the School's records on DBS checks for School visitors and volunteers and child protection-related training for staff and governors. Additional training is taking place. We have reviewed and revised all relevant policies and procedures which relate to safeguarding. We are monitoring for safeguarding practice on a routine basis.

School Finance

At this time of year, schools all over the county and country are preparing their budgets for the coming financial year. Many continue to experience challenges in making ends meet. At St Mary's, we have been faced with the lack of any proper budgeting or financial management before September 2018, which has impacted on setting a realistic baseline budget for 2019-2020. Present calculations show an approximate 11% budget deficit for the coming year, though this will reduce with a savings package.

School Improvement

Monitoring visits in Term 3 showed that staff are making considerable progress addressing areas of improvement. Mrs Lisa Tudor has continued to work alongside senior leaders and teachers, and she met with staff recently accompanied by Mr Stuart Telling of the LA. LA adviser Mrs Bev Ball has also conducted an intensive review of literacy and numeracy and reported on strengths and areas for development. One note worthy development is the way that children are responding to the new 'MOT' maths and 'Power Maths'. Teachers and Teaching Assistants have had training in phonics, provided by the LA Literacy Adviser.

The I.E.B is looking forward to receiving information on data later this month. The data reports will come from the new electronic recording system introduced just before Christmas.

Working with the LA and Catholic Diocese of Clifton

We have met with the LA's new Director for Education, Helean Hughes, who visited the School at our request. Following our meeting with the Diocesan Education representative, we have extended an invitation to Bishop Declan to visit the School in April.

Working together

The IEB's main purpose is to ensure that the School progresses rapidly on a journey of improvement. We are still awaiting an interim monitoring visit from Her Majesties Inspectorate (HMI), which could happen at any time. We will of course provide you with feedback after their visit.

We all want every one of your children to have the very best quality of education that they can whilst entrusted into the care of the staff. If you have any concerns or questions about the progress your child is making, or what is happening in School, please come and talk to Mrs Howie – Lee in person. Talking is the most appropriate way to manage issues. The IEB has been saddened to hear of recent negative posts on social media. Some comments have been aimed at individual members of staff, and we ask that people do not do this.

The I.E.B is aware that some parents have expressed views on School uniform, and we have sought policy clarification from the Diocese. During the summer term, we will be seeking yours views and that of the children on changes that are both realistic and economic. We anticipate that any changes would come into effect at the start of the new academic year in September

The I.E.B has scheduled Parent Forum meetings in Terms 5 and 6 on the dates below, and do hope that you will be able to come along. One of the discussion items will be school uniform.

Parent Forum Meeting Dates –

Monday 29th April @ 6.15pm
Monday 10th June @ 6.15pm

We wish you and your children a happy and peaceful Easter.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Millard



Brian Wheelwright



Michele Blain