



From the Chair – Peter Griffin



Dear Parents

I do hope my ancient face is not too off-putting! At our Governors' (online) meeting this week we're committed to improving our website to make it more welcoming and we're working on including photographs of all staff and governors so that you can 'put a face to the name'!

Living as I do on Leamington Road, one of the joys of my retirement a few years ago was gardening or working on the house and hearing the children at play 200 yards down the road, something my wife and I sadly missed during 'lockdown'. So it has been wonderful to once again hear your children at play since they returned in September.

We held our first 'virtual' FGB (Full Governing Body) meeting of the year on Monday Sep 7th and began by expressing our sympathy and praying for Margaret Patrick, former Headteacher, whose husband recently died. We know that some families have suffered recent bereavements and our thoughts and prayers are with all those that have lost loved ones.

As Governors we are very much aware of the dedication and commitment that all Our Lady's staff give to the school and your children and we want to publicly thank them for the care and love that they show; the last six months have been very worrying and demanding and we know how much you as parents have done your best to support your children's education during 'lockdown' and how appreciative you are of the resources and help provided by the school. We hope and pray over the coming weeks and months that schools will remain fully open. We were very reassured by the high attendance figures as school resumed last week.

In the last two newsletters we indicated that the FGB had concerns about our finances and projected budget deficit; we are determined to address this and any increase in pupil numbers will help. As Governors we know our best marketing tools are our parents and children, so we are looking to enlist your support to promote Our Lady's to prospective parents. One obstacle we face is that many parents rely on nurseries and pre-school care for their younger children and often choose to send their child into Reception at the attached school; we have decided to investigate establishing a pre-school for 3-4 year olds, because we firmly believe and support the benefits that accrue to young children and their parents and are convinced that we have something to offer. To help in this task you will shortly be receiving a questionnaire which encourage you to complete and return to school asap.

We are fortunate to have two excellent parent governors who can offer sound advice from a parents' perspective and hope to appoint a new Foundation Governor from the parent body soon.

However, you don't have to be a governor to help with marketing our lovely school and the questionnaire will provide essential information and give you the opportunity to offer your support.

At our FGB Mrs Batson updated Governors on all the measures put in place for the new school year which I won't repeat here; suffice to say that we've been kept fully informed and have been able to approve all the measures taken to keep your children safe. We're so pleased that Care Club, managed by our lovely Mary Daly, is back up and running and offers you parents the support many of you need to balance work and childcare.

I want to conclude by again thanking all parents for your support and understanding during the last six months and can assure you that as Governors, we will continue to strive to do our best to support our wonderful school community.

Stay safe and God bless

Peter Griffin

Chair on behalf of Our Lady's Governing Body