



St Michael's CE Primary School

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Cultivating Respect, Persevering, and Learning with Courage

17th February 2022

Dear Staff, Volunteers, Parents and Carers,

As you are no doubt aware from his December letter, Kevin Moyes has now left the Governing Board and we are honoured to act as the new Co-Chairs. Kevin's work for the community of St Michael's over the last two years has been so extensive that we felt that it would take more than one of us to try and fill his shoes. In other changes to the Governing Board, we received one nomination for parent governor before the deadline. As such there will be no need for an election and Alex Rennie-Lis will join the Governing Board from March. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Emma Walker for her extensive work as Parent Governor over the last two and a half years, especially her work on building communications and links with the community and for ensuring that the perspective of the parents and students was always clearly heard in our meetings.

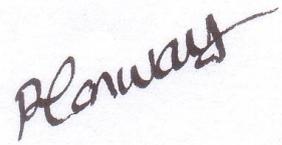
Since Christmas we have had two meetings of the Governing Board for which minutes will be available on the website in due course. However some of our key foci have been starting, finally, to look beyond COVID and planning for the future ahead. One key topic has been plans to support students catch up on learning loss caused by the disruption of the last two years. We have been impressed by the exciting and supportive plans developed by the Headteachers, and the unwavering commitment of all staff, after two draining years, to giving everything they can to delivering this critical objective. There are exciting programmes of reading, mentoring and curriculum development all created with this goal in mind. The data are already showing signs of closing those gaps and we know this is only possible because of the hard work of the team at St Michael's and the parental support they receive. Hopefully lockdowns and remote learning are now things of the past, but the ongoing work of supporting children's learning at home through reading, homework and providing enriching learning experiences continues. No-one at school underestimates the importance of your contribution as parents and carers for children's success in learning.

It is unfortunate that at stressful times, such as those we have all been through over the last two years, we can find our frustrations getting the better of us. Staff and governors at St Michael's welcome feedback when there are ways we can better enhance the learning of our students. We know that parents and carers know their children the best and can be the most important guides on how to support them. If you have concerns or suggestions then please do not hesitate to raise them. The St Michael's Code of Conduct embodies our value of respect. In following this we can model to our students the caring and tolerant behaviour we wish them to develop. We can also show respect for the ongoing work and commitment

of the staff in the school. We would like to emphasise our support for the message sent out last week about the importance of dealing with issues appropriately and showing respect for the staff who do such an amazing job every day.

We want to take this time to thank all the staff of the school for the work they have done since schools returned to live teaching to keep a safe and functioning learning environment. As everyone is aware infection rates have been high since late November and this has affected our community like many others. Staff have taken on extra responsibilities, given up their planning time and breaks, worked longer hours and gone the extra mile to cover for each other, support students in colleagues' absence and ensure that the children of St Michael's get the best educational experience that they can possibly provide. For us, the school value of perseverance has been embodied by the team at St Michael's over the last few months. Sadly, as you will be aware, despite everyone's best efforts, we did recently have to reduce the Acorn Class to key workers' children only. You will know this was not a decision taken lightly and the safety and wellbeing of the children was the only consideration when doing this. We would very much like to thank those parents who have had to make adjustments to their own lives in order to accommodate this decision. Particular thanks to the many parents who took the time to contact the staff and express their understanding of the situation or otherwise show their support. At a difficult time, these gestures of kindness make a big difference to the whole community.

With kind regards,



Robin Conway

Co-Chairs of Governors



Nick Field