



St Mary's C of E Primary School, Timsbury

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24<sup>th</sup> May 2018

## May Newsletter from the Chair of Governors

Hello, my name is Steve Boxall and for those of you who don't yet know me I am a parent governor and, since March of this year, Chair of Governors.

Can I start by saying what a privilege it is to be able to spend more time in the school and see first-hand how hard the staff work for our school? I also wanted to say what a real pleasure it is to get to know more of the children, especially the young ones; it has been a while since my girls were that small!

At the beginning of term the governors sent out a questionnaire to all parents as part of directly communicating with you all. Thank you to all of you who took the time and trouble to respond. The governors will use the information as part of our planning for next year.

I am pleased to say that the response was overwhelmingly supportive with some very helpful suggestions and comments. We are busy collating the responses and will publish them on the website in due course. In some instances I will be contacting parents directly to offer more specific response if necessary.

As you know, we have recently, conducted a ballot to fill a vacancy for a second parent governor and I would like to welcome Emma Sage on to the governing body. Emma is a teacher at Writhlington School and as such offers the governing body a useful perspective on the local education landscape as well as her technical skills.

A real theme this term has been health and wellbeing and it is a really important part of St Mary's ethos. It was fantastic to see the new cycle shelter so full during the cycle and scooter to school week; and great to see so many children are continuing to cycle.

Some of you will have noticed a small corner of the hall has been given over to a garage. Eight girls from year 5 and 6 are building an electric go kart to compete against other schools in the summer. They have been assisted by Mrs Bramley and me; but I can assure you they are doing the work themselves. It is generally recognised that "girls don't do

engineering”... but these girls do! We are almost at the point of testing and then it’s off to Castle Combe. Their enthusiasm and skill is quite infectious.

I would like to mention the school football team who have been making great progress under the guidance of Mr Finlay. The inter-school league was a very tightly fought competition this year and we came a fantastic second place, only losing one match which was against the eventual winners. In addition, the year 3/4 football team reached the semi-finals of a B&NES football tournament that consisted of 16 teams; and we have also won a competition to win a full football kit for next season sponsored by Nike!

Those of us lucky enough to see the fabulous dancing on show at Dance Umbrella event in Bath, will agree that Miss Morris and Miss Smith did a fantastic job choreographing our troupe and their spectacular routines and, once again our children did us all proud. Of course these events rely on the support of parents for cheering participants on, and for transportation to/from events. Thank you.

I must thank our fantastic PTA who continue to support the school and provide entertaining and lucrative activities for us all to enjoy which allow the school to spend money on the nice-to-haves. I would also like to thank the Parish Council for agreeing to meet the costs of the annual Life Education Van visit in full, enabling all children to benefit from this highly effective personal, social and health education experience.

As school funding is squeezed ever tighter, the importance of this fundraising and support is not to be underestimated. Schools are funded in a variety of different ways – with the main bulk of our income known as “Formula Funding”. (You may have heard politicians discussing the National Funding Formula on the news). To give you a concrete example of the squeeze, we will receive £16,000 less in the funding formula this year than we did in 2014 – yet costs have continued to rise. As you can imagine, that brings challenges to the school, to staff and to governors; but we all remain committed to doing the very best that we can for children with the resources we have.

As I have now officially retired, I am at the school most days when I do drop off and pick up. Please come and say hello!

Thank you for all your support.

Steve Boxall