

# St Bartholomew's C of E First School

## Governor's Newsletter—October 2020



### *Roots to Grow and Wings to Fly*

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It's hard to believe that our first half-term is nearly complete. On behalf of the Governing Body I would take this opportunity to welcome all of our new children and families to St Bartholomew's. I hope your children have settled into their new school lives.

Following our first full Governors meeting of the academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the Chair of Governor's for the 2020/21 academic year. I feel immensely privileged to be continuing in this role. I am so grateful for all the support I receive from you as parents and carers. As a governing body we are expected to challenge and support the school leadership in making sure the school does its very best for every pupil. The Chair, however, has a unique role in working closely with the Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team as they identify, plan and resolve both day to day and longer term challenges. This will look quite different this year with the impact of the pandemic meaning that we will only visit the school site if it is deemed essential. I and the board will be doing the majority of our monitoring virtually, but will assess this as the academic year progresses.

It has been a very unusual half-term, with all the new and different procedures in place for yours and your children's safety. Thank you for your support in adhering to the correct drop off and pick-up times, as well as social distancing when near the school site. I appreciate that these are difficult and challenging times, but through us working together and all doing what we can, it will continue to help keep you, our staff and our children safe throughout this pandemic. I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to our fantastic staff team who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes this term, implementing the vast risk assessment across our school and taking on extra responsibilities to keep our children safe. Despite all the extra procedures our staff have continued to provide inspiring and amazing opportunities for our children. I have been delighted to hear about all the exciting learning that has already taken place this term.

I look forward to being a part of another exciting year at St Bartholomew's, where we aim to build on the fantastic work that took place last year, making our school the best it can be for everyone in it.

**Cheryl Govier**  
*Chair of Governors*



#### **Who are your Governors?**

**Cheryl Govier**— Chair and Foundation Governor  
Responsibilities: Christian Distinctiveness and RE

**Steve Briggs**—Vice Chair and LA Governor  
Responsibilities: Key Stage 1 and SFVS

**Gemma Coward**—Head Teacher

**Emma Harwood**—Parent Governor  
Responsibilities: Safeguarding and Online Safety

**Rachael Howe**—Parent Governor  
Responsibilities: Key Stage 2 and SEND

**Tsonka Hristova**—EYFS and Health and Safety

**Lucy Ramwell**—Staff Governor  
Training and Governor Visits

**Sonia Yorke**—Clerk to the governors

**Vacancy**—Foundation Governor

#### **Working in Partnership**

I recognise the significant role the School plays in shaping your children. I, therefore, look forward to working closely with Mrs Coward and the Senior Leadership Team, in partnership with you, our parents and carers, to nurture, challenge, educate and help all of our children to be the very best they can be, giving them the Roots to Grow and Wings to Fly, in a safe and happy environment.

#### **Educational Provision in Ilminster and Crewkerne:**

Following the communication you received from the Local Authority 2 weeks ago, we await the outcome of the recent proposals being taken to the cabinet on 21 October. Please be assured that we continue to work hard in ensuring that St Bartholomew's is fully represented so that we can make the most informed and wise decisions for the future of our school. We will keep you informed of any further developments.

#### **Contacting the Governors:**

If you need to contact to me at any point, please do so through Mrs Yorke, the Clerk to the Governors. Mrs Yorke can be contacted via the school office.

**Our next full governing body meeting for this academic year is on 3 December, 2020.**

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#### **2020/21 Academic Year Aims for the Board of Governors**

As a Governing Body, we seek to embrace our school vision of 'Roots to Grow and Wings to Fly', helping all members of our school community to have strong roots, that enable them to fly. Throughout this academic year, we aim to achieve this through setting the following three aims:

1. To continue being 'visual', communicating to our whole school community appropriately within the restrictions brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic. We aim for everyone to know who the governing body are, our roles and how we monitor, challenge and support the school.
  2. To build on our link governor roles. This includes our key stage links, as well as the additional areas of individual responsibility we have, such as safeguarding, health and safety and Christian Distinctiveness. Through this, governors seek to have a deeper understanding of the data and what standards look like.
  3. To be mindful of staff well-being, particularly in light of the additional pressures brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic and area review. We commit to helping become the best school we can be for our children, families and staff in an energising, positive way without overburdening staff and losing their amazing dedication and enthusiasm.
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#### **What do the Governors do?**

Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, Governors regularly visited St Bart's to help us fulfil our roles and responsibilities. Governor visits help us to improve our knowledge of the school, the needs, priorities, strengths and weaknesses. They are important in monitoring and assessing the priorities and it helps us establish whether the staff are making progress in meeting the targets set in the School Development Plan (SDP). Governors must also evaluate statutory policies in action as well as oversee and monitor the finances for the school. As mentioned earlier, the way in which we conduct monitoring this year will look very different. We will still be completing our visits, but in the main, these will be completed virtually. We continue to seek advice from Governor Services at the Local Authority to ensure we are still fulfilling our roles in this current climate. For each meeting with a link member of staff, governors will complete a report that will be presented to the full governing body at regular intervals throughout the academic year.