



# St. Peter's Catholic Primary School

Marlow, Buckinghamshire, UK | Tel: 01628 472 116

## **GOVERNORS REPORT 2017/18**

“St Peter’s is a good Catholic school where pupils benefit from the dedicated leadership and commitment of the headteacher and her staff and the shared vision and support of the Governing Body.”

“Pupils appreciate the opportunities given to them to develop spiritually and morally and have an impressive awareness of what it means to belong and contribute to the school and wider community. They are proud to belong to St Peter’s.”

“Pastoral provision for the most vulnerable children and families is outstanding and is based on the careful building of trust between home and school”

Quotes from Section 48 RE Inspection, July 2018

## Chairman's Report

The role of the my Governing Board is to set the strategic direction of the school, oversee its financial performance and make sure that we give each and every child the best possible education.

At St Peter's we have a distinctive ethos which is encapsulated in our mission to 'live and learn as friends of Jesus'. Our parents regularly tell us that they value our sense of community and the welcoming, caring and nurturing environment that we offer.



As a Catholic School we are subject to Section 48 RE Inspections, and our most recent one took place in July. We are pleased that this affirms that "St Peter's is a good Catholic school where pupils benefit from the dedicated leadership and commitment of the headteacher and her staff and the shared vision and support of the Governing Body." I was particularly pleased that it recognises the pastoral care that we provide as outstanding.

The Governing Board recently reviewed the Strategic Priorities for the school and these are shown at the end of this report. As well as continuing to develop our distinctive ethos, we have recognised the need to promote ourselves more in the wider community. At St Peter's we welcome Catholic families as well as those from other faiths and backgrounds. In recent years the number of Catholic children in Marlow has fallen, and this is now reflected in the make-up of our school where about 40% of our children are not Catholic. As the number of Catholic children in the area fall, so we need to attract other families who sometimes are not aware of what we offer or that we accept children from other faiths.

St Peter's is owned by the Diocese of Northampton, and a key strategic policy of the Diocese is that all its schools should convert into Academies as part of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). This is to protect the distinctive nature of Catholic Schools as the political landscape changes and the role of Local Authorities in education diminishes. So far there are MATs in four the six Northampton Diocesan partnership regions and about half of the 44 Diocesan schools are now Academies. However, there is not a MAT in Buckinghamshire yet.

Over the last year we have increased our cooperation within our Buckinghamshire Catholic Schools Partnership, sharing best practice and learning. I have also been involved with the Chairs of these schools to determine how and when might be the best time for our schools to convert into Academies. We have identified significant benefits that can be obtained from being part of a Multi Academy Trust if it is structured correctly. This does not mean changing the distinctive local nature of individual schools. Rather it can provide a supportive umbrella that can help with school improvement, provide central services such as finance and HR and leave the school's staff free to spend more of their time on what they are best at – teaching children.

At the time of writing the Diocese is reviewing the structure of its existing MATs and is expected to update its policy around the end of the year. Any proposals relating to St Peter's will of course be communicated and be subject to consultation with staff and parents.

You will see from the Finance report that we have been able to run the school within our means and have carried a small surplus into 2018/19. That has only been achieved by diligent management of costs by the school and with the help of income generated by the school and monies donated by the PTA. We are very grateful for these. I am also most grateful to those parents who donate regularly to the School Development Fund. This enables us to unlock capital funds from time to time to improve the school. The new fencing is the latest such project. Thank you.

Governors regularly monitor the teaching and learning of our children. We are clear that we want to see our children perform well in statutory tests, but this must not come at the expense of a broad end engaging curriculum. We are pleased to see Ofsted coming to the same view. Over the last few years we have seen the quality of our teaching and the curriculum we offer enhanced. I'm pleased with our efforts to increase learning with opportunities outside the classroom, be it on school premises or further afield. Some of my best memories of Primary School are from school trips.

I would like to end by thanking all the Governors who give up their time freely to serve on the Governing Body. Thank you also to the staff of St Peter's for their dedicated service to the education of our children.

**Mike Jackson - Chairman of Governors**

## Headteacher Report

I am delighted to be able to write to you in more depth than usual as it enables me to celebrate success and make you aware of the progress on the things we have been working on, as we continue to relentlessly strive to develop and move forward.

It was a great end to the year to have our values externally validated by the R.E. Inspectors who commented “Pupils appreciate the opportunities given to them to develop spiritually and morally and have an impressive awareness of what it means to belong and contribute to the school and wider community. They are proud to belong to St Peter’s. “

Last year saw the continuing embedding of the creative curriculum; and this combined with the continuing use of Growth Mindset and the introduction of MindUp has seen a continued impact on the children’s enjoyment of the curriculum but also on their attitudes to learning. Not only are we continuing to offer a broad, balanced curriculum; with numerous enrichment activities we are now delivering them with more depth and challenge. The introduction of St. Peter’s Facebook page has enabled us to instantly inform you and the wider community about all the wonderful activities that are happening on a daily basis.

What can I say about the amazing productions! All were different but with the common elements of; enthusiasm, talent and a fantastic producer in Mrs Nicholls. Music has continued to be strength of the school as shown by the productions and music evening. The children’s singing is consistently commented on by visitors to the school.

Our main foci over the following year are:-

- To positively promote the school in the wider community
- To build a culture of success and achievement in all areas of learning
- To improve the school environment

We look forward to working with you and your children in this coming year and I would like to thank you for all your support and hard work over last year. I would like to finish by thanking all staff for their hard work and commitment and finally to the children; who are our priority; for their work, enthusiasm and talent.

**Amanda McCluskey - Headteacher**

## Finance

Unlike the school year which runs from September, our school financial year runs from April to March. We started the 2017-18 financial year with an operating surplus of just over £21,607 and ended the year with a reduced surplus of £8,712. This was better than we had initially budgeted due to slightly higher income than expected and careful cost management.

Our school budget income for the financial year 2018-19 is just over £833,000, which is just £3,000 more than the previous year. This is comprised of our Core Budget allocation from Bucks County, also Pupil Premium funding to raise the attainment of disadvantaged children, Sports grant and Free School Meals contribution. Most of this income is governed by the number of pupils attending the school, with each additional child attracting around £3,000.

We also generate additional income from sources such as:

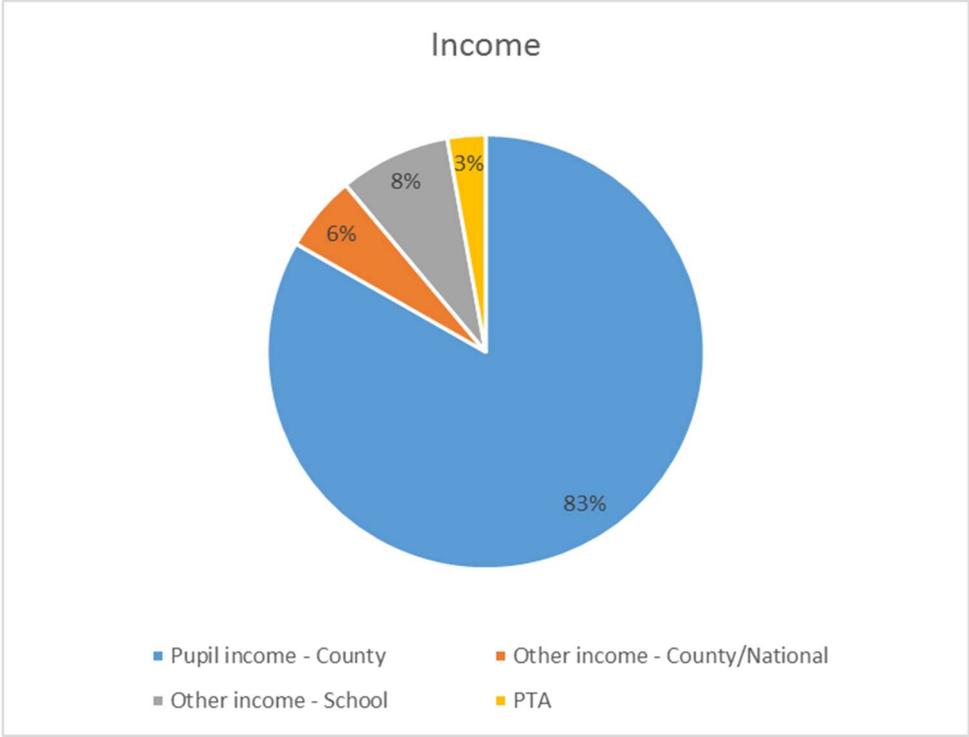
- Casual lettings of the school hall and other rooms for after school and holiday clubs
- Parental contributions to school trips and other educational activities
- Our very active and hugely well supported PTA

Despite continuing cost pressures, including funding a staff pay rise, the school has managed to produce a budget for 2018-19 showing a break even position at 31 March 2019. The Governors realise it will be very difficult for the school to achieve. However everyone on the Finance Committee will do their utmost to support the school in this endeavour.

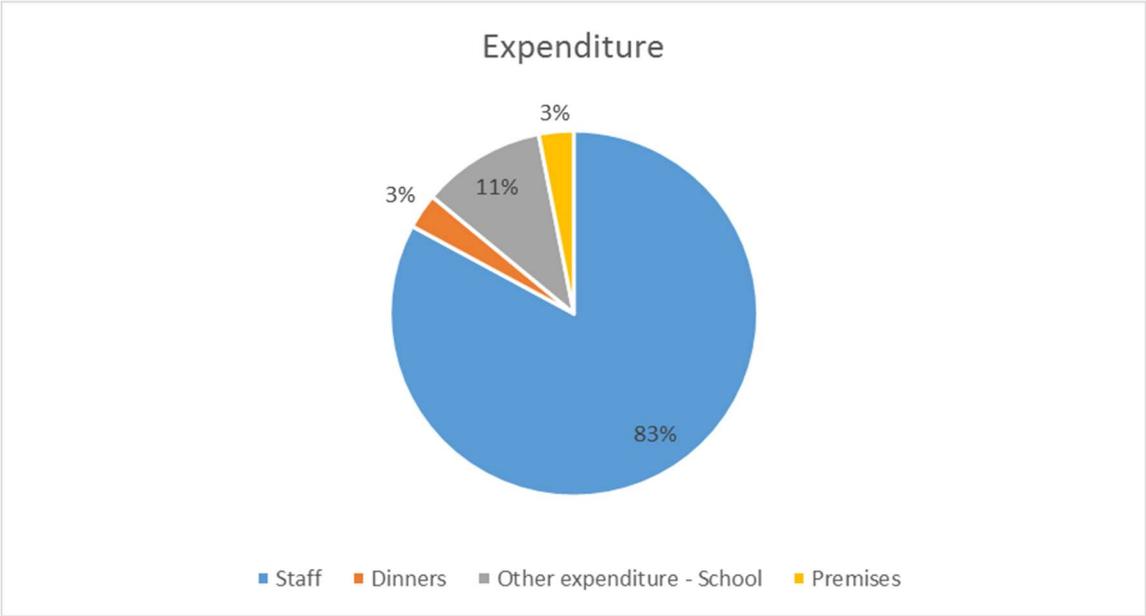
On the capital front, as a Catholic Voluntary Aided school we have to find the first 10% of any capital spend from our own resources. We are allocated a small amount of Devolved Capital each year, but for larger projects we have to seek capital from the Diocese. This year we were able to attract funding to improve the safety and security of the school site by installing new fencing. We were also able to replace two interactive classroom white boards.

We will continue with necessary maintenance and improvements to the school and we intend to use some of our Devolved Capital to improve some of our lighting and refresh the decoration of Key Stage 1 areas.

**Stephen Eastmond - Chair Finance Committee**



The majority of our budget is spent on our staff.



## School Development Fund

### School Development Fund 2017-18

St Peter's School Development Fund is a charitable trust set up to provide the school with funds to maintain and improve the school buildings and facilities. Monies from the Fund have previously been used to help finance double glazed windows and more recently replacing fencing and gates.

For large scale projects such as these, the school applies for capital grants from the Diocese. When those grants do become available, the school is required to contribute 10% of the cost from its own funds. In the past, income from lettings and other sources could normally be relied upon to keep the Fund topped up. In the current economic climate though, with rising costs and decreased funding from central government, we are almost wholly reliant upon donations from parents to ensure that the Fund is maintained at a level to support the external fabric and internal facilities of the school.

Donations for the tax year April 2017 to March 2018 amounted to over £4,565. The Fund has charitable status, so we claim Gift Aid on the money donated.

As of 31 March 2018 the Fund's balance was over £13,650. Miss McCluskey will soon be applying to the Diocese for monies to replace lighting and for decorating and refurbishment of the Key Stage 1 area and certain other improvements. However we need to maintain a reasonable contingency fund for any unforeseen emergency such as a new gas boiler or roofing.

On behalf of all the Governors, I would like to thank all the parents who have given so generously to the school to make these improvements possible. If there are any new parents who do not currently donate to the school improvement fund and wish to do so, please contact the school office.

**Stephen Eastmond - Trustee St Peter's Educational Trust**

## Teaching and Learning

### Teaching and Learning, Health and Wellbeing Committee

I am delighted to report to you all about the work of the committee over the past academic year.

Underpinning all of the work of the Governors is creating and implementing a vision for our school. Our school vision is:

“To be an outstanding school in which the unique abilities of our children are recognised and where each and every child achieves his or her full potential through excellent teaching, learning and the support of the wider community.”

One of the ways we have sought to work towards this is by ensuring the school provides a wide and engaging curriculum and by encouraging learning outside of the classroom. We believe this plays an important role in inspiring children and consolidating their learning. Mike Jackson is our named Outdoor Learning Governor; a position we have created specifically to ensure that the school continues to provide exciting opportunities outside the classroom. The use of external visitors, for example our very successful Greek and Egyptian Days, and trips to museums, outdoor activity centres and the like are being enjoyed regularly by every class from Reception to the residential trip in year 6. Our own school grounds with its field and garden provide great opportunities too, with Key Stage 1 taking advantage every week with Wellie Wednesdays.

We have also been delighted to see and encourage the increased opportunities the children have been given to participate in drama productions, assemblies, musical concerts, singing and sport.

This approach is not only welcomed by parents, as shown by our parent survey, but also dovetails with OFSTED’s much publicised new focus on schools providing a ‘broad and balanced’ curriculum.

Of course, this must not be at the expense of achievement in the core subjects of reading, writing and maths. We have worked hard to monitor and review progress and achievement across all year groups and have conducted book scrutiny’s and class visits. We were hugely encouraged with what we saw in these class visits; in every class we observed well-behaved children fully engaged with interesting and inspiring tasks.

Our 2018 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results appear in the tables below:

Key Stage 2	School	Bucks*	National*
Maths	71%	76%	75%
Reading	67%	79%	77%
Spelling/punctuation/Grammar	71%	79%	77%
Writing	54%	78%	78%

\*National and Bucks figures are provisional, but are not expected to change significantly

Key Stage 1	% expected or above	% greater depth
Reading	73	17
Writing	70	17
Maths	77	17
Science	83	N/A

We were of course disappointed to see that, despite a lot of focus and hard work, our Key Stage 2 headline results this year slipped below those achieved at a national or Bucks level. However, headline figures can be misleading and it is important to put these results in some context.

For this particular class of children, only half of the children had been with us since reception. A large proportion had joined us from other schools and often from other countries. In fact a significant proportion had not previously accessed the British curriculum before Year 6 itself.

We are always pleased to welcome new children to St Peter's from different countries and backgrounds. Their character, effort and attitude are an asset to our school. Despite their best efforts though, and those of their teachers, it was not possible to get some of these children up to the levels demanded by these tests in the short time they were with us.

We will be working hard as Governors to maintain high levels of scrutiny and monitoring to ensure the highest standards are maintained and every child achieves his or her potential. We share with the Senior Leadership Team a determination to ensure that there is significant improvement next year, and work began on this on day 1 of the new academic year.

## **Health and wellbeing**

Our committee has 'health and wellbeing' in the title for a reason. There is nothing more important than the happiness and safety of our children and we recognise that this is the foundation of good learning.

The school has again been proactive in promoting the children's wellbeing in this last year. We can report on three examples of this :

- (i) We have consolidated the initial success of Growth Mindset, which promotes positive attitudes to learning, by the introduction of the 'Mind Up' mindfulness programme earlier this year.
- (ii) We have used our PE grant not only to improve our PE provision, but also to have trained coaches working with our Key Stage 1 children at lunchtimes in the Aktivkids programme. This has had noticeable effects on behaviour and learning and is being rolled out to Key Stage 2 this academic year.
- (iii) We have carried out a wholesale review of how the school deals with incidents and accidents to ensure that information is shared more effectively and we are better able to identify risks.

Lastly, our fabulous staff...

St Peter's is consistently praised by staff, parents and children for its caring and nurturing ethos. This is only possible through the leadership of Miss McCluskey and Mrs Thomas, and the attitude and commitment of all our staff.

We are fortunate to have such wonderful, hardworking staff and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all, and to give a warm welcome to our new staff members who we hope will be very happy here at St Peter's.

**Johanna McDermott - Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee.**

## Strategic Priorities 2018-2021

### **1. To further develop the distinctive Catholic nature of our school**

- enable children to play a key role in the worship and Catholic life of the school.
- model Gospel Values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- ensure the same quality of provision in and approach to the teaching and learning of RE, that is applied to other areas of the curriculum, whilst recognising its unique place in the curriculum of a Catholic school.
- promote a culture of success and achievement in RE.

### **2. To positively promote the school in the wider community**

- enhance our capacity and competitiveness.
- further develop communication at all levels of school and wider community.
- to raise the profile of St Peter's and its activity among the wider community.

### **3. To build a culture of success and achievement in all areas of learning**

- develop educators who believe that all pupils can achieve and be successful.
- Ensure that every child continually aspires to further develop and extend their learning, as well as become confident, independent and resilient learners.
- monitor and evaluate pupil progress data to track pupils' progress and challenge, not just identify, underachievement.
- maintain a focus on narrowing the gap between vulnerable pupils and their peers, as well as challenging the underachievement of all pupils.
- set inspirational, yet realistic, targets for each pupil so that they can make the best possible progress.

### **4. To embed strong financial management**

- secure long-term financial viability
- ensure high standards of accountability, probity and financial control and deliver best value in all our activities
- ensure effective governance.

### **5. To improve the school environment**

- pursue consistency and continuity in quality and experience across all elements of our premises, outdoor, and information technology infrastructures.
- optimise our use of space.
- to seek to expand our intake at Reception.

### **6. To develop even stronger links especially with Bucks Catholic Schools Partnership including becoming part of a Multi Academy Trust**

- position ourselves to create and seize partnership opportunities at the frontiers of new knowledge, policy and practice.
- generate mutually beneficial practises.
- secure more efficient use of resources

## GOVERNOR IMPACT STATEMENT 2017/18

GOVERNING BODY ACTIONS	IMPACT
<b>Monitor and support actions to develop the distinctive ethos of St Peter's as a Catholic School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 48 RE Report GOOD</li> <li>• Pastoral provision for most vulnerable children identified as outstanding</li> <li>• Parent feedback continues to rate highly the caring and nurturing environment of the school</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic financial planning and tight budgetary control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balanced budget for 2017/18</li> <li>• Improved three year financial plans introduced</li> <li>• New fencing installed</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Prioritising marketing and promotion of school to wider community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook page launched</li> <li>• Greater involvement in local events</li> <li>• Regular local news coverage</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and support of teaching and learning including : appointing Governors with specific responsibility for Maths and Literacy; liaison with teaching subject heads; close monitoring of progress data and Governor learning walks.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All teaching now reported to be good with some outstanding elements</li> <li>• 84% of respondents to parent survey satisfied that the school is teaching children well</li> </ul>
<b>Continue to focus on outdoor learning and other learning outside the classroom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bronze and Silver Flag eco awards</li> <li>• Development of garden and outdoor space</li> <li>• Increase in out of school visits</li> </ul>
<b>Increased cooperation with the Bucks Catholic Schools Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings between school subject leads to share best practice</li> <li>• Regular meetings of Chairs of Governors</li> <li>• Ongoing exploration of Academy conversion options</li> </ul>