

COG report, March 2015.

In this terms report I would like to highlight our progress in 3 areas which we have been working on not just this term but for some time.

Academy Conversion. We have this term completed the formal consultation with both staff and parents over academy conversion. As part of this we held separate meetings at School for staff and parents. Many thanks to all the governors who were able to help with these events. The large turnout of governors was I think a clear indication of the strong involvement of the entire governing body to this process. As part of our wider consultation with stakeholders Jane and I also gave an overview of the process at the Education Sunday mass at St Francis Church recently. There have also been other discussions with a range of other interested parties including the pre-school and other Catholic schools in our area. The proposal has I think been well received with much recognition of the benefits that becoming an Academy as part of a MAT can bring. This term we have also received further communication from the Diocese developing their position on Academy status. All Catholic schools have now been instructed to become academies as part of a MAT, ideally in the next 2 years. I think this confirms the position we have taken all along that eventually we would have to become part of a MAT and therefore there would be a benefit to converting early in this programme so we could help shape its direction.

Self Evaluation; We have made progress this term with three parts of our formal self evaluation process; the GSET, skills audit and funding survey to parents.

Our initial GSET evaluation has been populated. We now need to identify some key actions to help us improve our performance which we plan to do at committee level.

We have had a number of responses to the skills audit from the CES. As you may remember we were asked to rank our understanding of the issue from 1 (no knowledge) to 4 (extensive knowledge). There were only 2 areas of the 53 where at least 1 governor did not give a self rating of 4 and only 7 where the average score was less than 2.5. I suggest we target an average score of over 2.5 to consider our collective knowledge of the area to be acceptable. The lower scoring areas were; financial management/accountancy, legal, risk assessment, PR/marketing, procurement/purchasing, premises and facilities management and health services. It would be good to improve our confidence in all these areas but in particular I think there are three that should take priority; financial management, risk assessment, premises and facilities management. Following discussions within the finance committee(which covers all three areas) I think we now have an action plan that I hope will address this.

- We are trying to appoint an associate governor with expertise in financial management.
- We have decided to arrange termly site visits which will include a health and safety audit and a site walk-around to help identify areas for improvement/maintenance of facilities. The plan would be to involve a number of governors, in rotation, in these visits.

We will have an opportunity to discuss this at our meeting and I will then feedback our findings to the CES.

I think you will now have seen the summary of the funding survey, a copy of which is also available on the website. This survey highlights a number of areas where our communication with parents on some of our funding streams can be improved. I think these surveys can provide a useful tool for us to seek feedback. Next term we plan a further survey to get staff feedback on areas such as the Teaching School programme. One of the areas that came up in the GSET discussion was how we obtain feedback from staff so this will help us address this issue.

Data Analysis. I was very pleased to see in the skills audit that some of the areas where we had a very high governor confidence were in data analysis for tracking pupil achievement and progress. We have invested a lot of time in this extremely important area both in terms of training and discussion time at governor meetings. Our termly plan for the Standards committee ensures we have clear objectives. If you haven't already seen it I would encourage you to look at the summary of the Raiseonline data analysis that Karen completed following a recent governor visit. We have a number of new systems to get used to as the way data is reported again changes so we will probably have to renew our training in this area.