



## St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs. P.M. Best B.Ed M.A. NPQH

### Governors' Update

19<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for everything you are doing to support Saint Polycarp's School. All the governors are so delighted with the amount of support and help that the school has from parents and members of our local community. The summer term is always filled with activities but this year it has been an exceptionally busy summer term. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of July we had a beautiful Mass to celebrate Karen Trafford's retirement. Karen has worked at St Polycarp's for 24 years and has been an inspirational deputy head and an amazing colleague and friend. We will miss Karen very much and we wish Karen a long and happy retirement. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of July we joined Karen at Arundel Cathedral for a special Mass with Bishop Richard to celebrate all the staff who were leaving schools in the diocese this year. The leavers included our wonderful Xavier Chief Executive Ani Magill who is also retiring.

The governors were so pleased to see the level of support for the summer fair. The fair was a great success, despite the very damp weather at the beginning of the day. Thank you to the PTA for everything that you have done to support our wonderful school this term, and for all your help throughout the year.

This week the governors have been enjoying presentations from all the children in year 6 about what they want to do in the future. We are always surprised by how much thought the children in year six put into their future life and we are so delighted with the range of opportunities that the children have found. It is so good to see the children being inspired to do amazing things by their time at St Polycarp's. Every presentation has been a joy and each child has answered our questions so well. We will miss year 6 very much as they move on to their new schools and we wish them well for the future.

The approach to reading has recently changed in KS1 and the new system, Read Write Inc, is helping our children to read very well. Emma Firth met with the English leaders in May and updates us on this new system as well as some other new reading systems.



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### Curriculum Visit by Emma Firth, Link Governor, English

Read Write Inc (RWI), a synthetic phonics system, is embedded in EYFS and year 1. The majority of children have finished RWI by the end of year 2. It is anticipated that the current year 1 children will move off RWI earlier than this next year. The books are a mixture of fiction and non-fiction. After RWI, children currently move on to the Oxford Reading Tree series, starting from the gold band. From September, the plan is to move from colour band books to Accelerated Reader. This is an evidence-based approach aimed at supporting KS2 reading progress. From September, Master Reader will be taught every day from year 2. It is a structured 30-minute daily reading lesson using a key class text which aims to develop comprehension skills. RWI has been in place since March 2022 for KS1, with reception starting on the scheme from September, and results so far are very encouraging. A benchmarking scheme ensures consistent results, and every child has a baseline to assess against. There is also a large focus on book corners in classrooms, which include diversity and inclusion topics.

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### New Trophies

Very sadly my mother passed away suddenly this year. Rather than have lots of flowers at the funeral I asked for donations to the governor fund and I wanted to use some of the money to provide something positive after such a difficult start to the year. We decided that two trophies would be good for the children to celebrate them "overcoming challenges, difficulties and demonstrating Saint Polycarp's values". Last week I presented the trophies to Ruby and Grant. I hope that Ruby and Grant will feel proud of all that they have achieved this term and I look forward to seeing more children rewarded with these trophies. I hope that this will inspire more children to do the very best that they can – something that my mother would be proud of as a legacy.



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### Transport Survey and Mini Bus Routes

Thank you to everyone who completed the transport survey. I have included a couple of graphs which show, as we had expected, that most children are driven to school. We also have a much better view of where parents are travelling from, so this is very helpful to us in planning our future transport strategy. Thank you also for your very helpful comments on the survey that we will consider more deeply during the summer holidays.

We have started to plan the route for our new mini bus, which is likely to include Church Crookham and Hale. If it were possible to operate the bus in a way that could reduce traffic to the school we would very much like to do this, and we are still looking at whether it might be possible to collect two groups of children with the bus in a morning. This is something that will take time to establish. There will be more details of the service for September released tomorrow.



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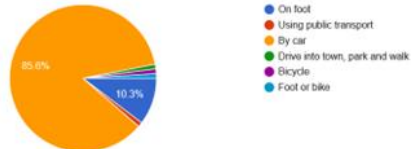


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How do you usually bring your child to school in the mornings?

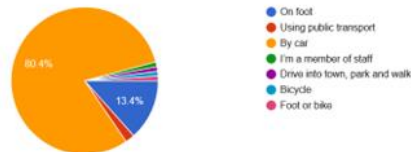
97 responses



In the evening do you collect your child

97 responses

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Finally, I want to wish you a wonderful summer. I hope that the holidays will be relaxing for you and I hope that you will have time to enjoy happy and fun filled family days. If you are travelling, I wish you a safe journey.

God bless you and your family,

*Martin Parr*

Martin Parr  
Chair of Governors



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