



February 2017

IMPACT/AMBITION STATEMENT
LETTER FROM THE GOVERNORS OF ST JOSEPH'S

Dear Parents

As 2017 gets underway, the governors would like to review last year's achievements and look forward to what the school hopes to achieve in the forthcoming year.

The governors have been busy meeting with the Senior Leadership Team and staff to ensure St Joseph's goes from strength to strength. The governors' monitoring offers challenge and support to ensure the best possible school for our community.

Governors' monitoring over the last year has included: subject leader interviews, lesson observations, health and safety walks, book scrutinies, exam invigilation and pupil interviews. All of which help inform the governing body about how the school is performing against the expected school standards. Governors provide written feedback to staff which includes strengths and points for development.

Governors have also been proactive in undertaking training to ensure that they are up to date with government and Ofsted priorities. Training has included: Ofsted training, safeguarding training and data training.

The Senior Leadership Team are well established and the driving force for continued school improvement. There have been a number of staffing changes across the school and although it is always sad to say goodbye to familiar faces, new staff offer opportunities for growth. Through a process of induction, new staff are now established as part of the St Joseph's team.

Pupils' academic achievement and progress remain the core business of the school. The school has re-written its curriculum in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum and offers children the opportunity to study in a creative topic based approach, with dedicated mathematics and spelling, punctuation and grammar lessons.

The impact of school action taken over the last two years has seen improvement in writing levels, especially for boys. Staff have developed their subject expertise and are now regularly called on to support schools across Bexley, which enhances their own leadership skills and in turn benefits our children. Staff are well supported by governors in setting budgets that prioritise good staffing levels and access to curriculum resources.

The positive Religious Education Inspection result shows how the school continues to move forward.

Analysis of data for the school shows many positive results. Whilst cohorts of children enter St Joseph's at or below the National Expectation they leave the Reception Class with 'Good Level of Development' consistently above the National average. Phonics test results in Year 1 show a three year trend of being well above the National average. In summer 2016, results showed that 93% of the class made the required levels against a National figure of 81%. Test results for Key Stage 1, that is the Year 2 class, showed

results in Reading, Writing and Mathematics for children working at the expected standard were all above National figures. Key Stage 2 results were above National averages and 67% of pupils attained the expected standard in all three subjects which was 14% above the National average.

The governors would like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication given to achieve these results. Parents too have played their part by supporting with homework, hearing their children read and getting involved with diary and descriptive writing.

Yet, as always, there is still more to do. The governors are ambitious for the school and have set targets for 85% of pupils to reach the expected standards. Staff are rising to the challenge. The challenge is to raise attainment and progress for all pupils, groups of pupils and to increase the numbers achieving 'greater depth'.

Pupil premium children benefit from extra funding and the school use this to target additional support in terms of individual and small tuition groups, access to free sports clubs and subsidising school trips or extra enrichment opportunities.

Children who have been identified as 'more able' have been targeted for extra challenge. Children attend more able English and Mathematics workshops with other children from across different schools and have been identified as pupil subject leaders.

Staff regularly work with small targeted groups of children both during and after school to ensure the barriers to academic success are removed. Academic results above National don't just happen, but are the result of dedicated teaching, day in, day out, ensuring the best possible outcomes for our children.

The governors recognise there is more to a good/outstanding school than academic results and league tables. The teachers work hard at promoting an enriching environment where children can thrive and grow as individuals. Pupils are offered an increasing range of opportunities to get involved in student leadership groups, sports activities, healthy life style initiatives to name but a few. Recently our local MP, Mr Evennett, visited and the pupils had the opportunity to ask questions and learn first-hand about British Values.

Government policy to move all schools towards becoming academies is one the governors regularly review. The governors are always guided by the principles that they must act with the best interests of our school and our pupils in mind. The governors have considered becoming part of a MAT (a Multi Academy Trust) but are not convinced by the arguments which put financial interests above the needs of children. Currently the governors are considering moving toward an Umbrella Trust with several local Catholic schools where the possibility of a dedicated staff to St Joseph's would remain a priority and difficulties of being an outpost of a much larger organisation could be avoided.

The governors recognise the challenges of the next few years, especially in terms of tightening budgets, but will continue to work with the school to ensure that our children have the best opportunities for personal development and academic success.

Mr M Lawrence
Chair of Governors