

# HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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**We work  
together  
through the  
love of God**



Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

**"Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success.  
If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." Herman Cain**

Despite it seeming like only a short few months ago that we witnessed the start of another school cycle, watching our children move up that yearly step and welcoming our newest recruits in Foundation into the school family; here we are, unbelievably, at the end of the academic year.

We are writing to you to share our lessons learnt and to celebrate our successes from the last twelve months. Attached to the end of this letter are two key documents that provide summaries from two very important aspects of school life; the effect our governance has had on school improvement and also the results of our recent parent questionnaire.

Taking the sentiment behind the quote above, we couldn't be happier with the outstanding results from across the school this year, (sent out last week by Mrs. Buchanan); including the best SATs results Holy Trinity has ever achieved. It is especially wonderful to see the range of cross curricular activities happening around school, knowing that this additional focus on breadth and depth learning, combined with the additional spending on intervention training and new resources, is having a very real, very positive impact.

We've also seen some incredible highs this year in the form of the excellent events organised by our ever-effective PTA; raising much needed funds to help with expenditure such as the new resources.

Given all the above, and the overall details of the following attachments, it seems like the perfect opportunity to thank Mrs. Buchanan and all staff at Holy Trinity for caring so much for our children, their education, their safety and their happiness. Thanks also to Marsha Rickard and her trusted team of PTA members.

Most importantly, we want to say a huge 'thank you' to our pupils who, throughout the year, have worked so hard. You have shown equally impressive levels of determination and energy; all with the healthy vibrancy of fun, laughter and enjoyment.

Playing our part in supporting this school, the team and the children, is, for all governors, a happy pleasure; and that happiness, as we are seeing, truly is the key to success.

Have a lovely, restful summer with your families. We look forward to welcoming you all back in September.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is "Jo Tyrrell" and the second is "Adam Jennings".

*Jo Tyrrell and Adam Jennings*  
*Chair & Vice Chair of Academy Committee*

Headteacher: **Mrs Lorna Buchanan BA.** *Head.3420@holy-trinity.oxon.sch.uk*

## Attachment 1: Summary of Parent Questionnaire Results

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return your questionnaire. Your responses help the Senior Leadership Team, (aka 'SLT'; which includes the Head, Assistant Head and the Governors), to shape the School Development Plan, (S.D.P.), with your views – the parent perspective – playing a key part in that process. The S.D.P. is used to plan what work needs to be undertaken in a given school year, to improve various aspects of school life, from teaching and learning to the condition of school buildings and everything in between that needs urgent attention.

Your feedback helps us focus our attention on where you feel we are doing well and where we need to do better.

The results of your feedback have been collated and are included below for you to see. We have also reproduced some of the comments we received from you; including both those that share our success this year and those that offer constructive criticism for us. As always, all feedback from you is very welcome.

### ***Some wonderful key points from the questionnaire for you to see...***

- **100% of those responding agreed that their child enjoys school**
- **100% of those responding agreed that their child is safe and well cared for at school**
- Of the 28 people who responded to question 23, **over 78% agreed that the school meets the needs of children with special educational needs**. This is especially pleasing to see as a lot of work has been undertaken in the last 18 months to ensure growth in our support in this area. A separate, anonymous questionnaire will be going to parents of children with special educational needs at the start of the Autumn term to help us continue with this successful development.

### ***...and some key points for us to consider:***

- Communication between school and parents, especially around **reporting children's progress and homework**, could be improved; as is seen by the responses for questions 3, 12, 17 and 19.
  - o *This has now become part of the S.D.P. for next year and will be actively reviewed by the SLT.*
- The governors, (now termed 'Academy Committee Representatives'), roles and methods of contact need further explanation.
  - o *This has also become part of the S.D.P. for next year and, as above, will be actively reviewed by the SLT.*
- The website needs to work better for parents, especially in communicating last minute changes.
  - o *This is already part of the current S.D.P. and a new website is currently in development.*

### **The results in full, (from a total of 41 respondents from foundation to year 5):**

	Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No answer
1	My child enjoys school	30	11			
2	I feel my child is safe and well cared for at school	35	6			
3	I am kept well informed about my child's progress	11	22	8		
4	My child is making good progress at school	19	21			1
5	My child's needs are well met at school	24	16			1
6	The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	19	2		

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7	The school takes account of my child's view	13	24			4
8	The school prepare my child for prayer and mass	22	16	1		2
9	The school promotes Catholic gospel values	25	15			1
10	The teaching is good at my school	24	15			2
11	The school is well led and managed	24	16			1
12	Homework helps with learning and is well explained	13	20	7		1
13	The school promotes good attendance and punctuality	21	7	1		1
14	The school asks for my views and takes account of suggestions and concerns	7	19	3	1	
15	I am made welcome at the school	25	14	1		
16	The school encourages me to take an active part in learning and school life	21	18	2		
17	The school communicates well with parents through parent mail, the weekly newsletter and our website	24	15	2		
18	The school deals effectively with bullying and other unacceptable behaviour	14	20	4		3
19	I understand how to raise concerns about my child using the correct pathway, namely class teacher first, then key stage leader, followed by the Head and finally the Chair of Governors	22	16	3		
20	The school offers a good range of extracurricular activities	15	22	1	1	2
21	I would recommend the school to new parents moving into the area	31	10			
22	I understand the role of the governors and how to contact them	15	17	8	1	
23	The school supports and meets the needs of children with special educational needs	6	16	4	2	13
24	The school encourages my child to be the very best that they can be (aspirational)	22	14	4		1
25	I would like to serve on the parent council, meeting with the Head on a regular basis	8	8	11	1	12

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**Your comments:**

Please note: *not all comments have been included to ensure total anonymity and some reproduced here are excerpts from larger amounts of text that would not be practical to fit into this summary in their entirety. None have been altered and where an excerpt has been used we have tried to retain enough of the original context in which the comment was suggested. All comments received have been reviewed by the SLT.*

- Thank you to all the staff
- My children do enjoy school
- I would like to feedback about the size of school dinners – I will not be continuing as the children always come home hungry unless they go to school with a packed lunch
- With 2 children in school could parent mail just be sent to the oldest/youngest children as 2 emails about everything is quite excessive
- Homework is frustrating as we always spend 5 – 10 minutes trying to find the right page
- Parent mail communicates well. The website doesn't
- My child is often unclear on if homework has been set. There have been occasions when he hasn't covered the something at school but asked to do homework on it. I would like to see spellings and homework also on the website to save ringing round at weekends.
- Other than a note in a reading book stating what level they are reading at I am really not aware of my child's progress against benchmarks however I trust the school to make me aware if there is a problem.
- I am very impressed at what my child knows in less than a year at school.
- I can only assume teaching is good as I have not witnessed it at first hand.
- Maths passport is a little vague. Sure it will become more structured in later years.
- I really appreciate the photos and updates that are put on the webpage.
- Incident involving my son but I was not informed even though other parents were apparently called in. I raised it after my child mentioned it and was reassured it was being dealt with. I possibly would have appreciated being told.
- Homework is not always properly explained.
- Can parentmail indicate whether info has been shared with children prior e.g. next class teacher allocation?
- Overall we are really pleased with how this year has gone. The school has a fantastic ethos and we are all very much enjoying being part of the Holy Trinity community.
- Some communications have not been clear, would have liked to have been made more aware of class website sooner, also for all info to be posted there.

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- Thank you to you and your staff for all your hard work.
- I would be grateful if my children had a diary where a list of homework is written down where it would also be clear their progress. It would help to have written down what they have done well and what they need to work on, on a weekly basis. In that way I would feel more helpful to my children and their teachers.
- It would be nice to see the head teacher more often outside before the bell goes.
- The children at HT always seem happy and polite.
- I would like more forest school sessions for KS2.
- It would be good to see the governor's more frequently in the playground after school so we can discuss any ideas or issues that we have.
- Website needs improvement.
- Provision until later in the day would be very helpful. Breakfast club is excellent.
- The school has a wonderfully warm and caring atmosphere.
- The main area of improvement relates to teacher / parent communication on progress and how to support learning and homework at home.
- A supportive and caring school.
- Would love to see a small percentage of study in RE to be spent looking at other world religions considering that 70% of the children are not Catholic (whilst also appreciating that this is a Catholic school).
- Concerned by the new curriculum which I realise is not of the schools choosing.
- We are very happy.
- My child is finding reading / writing difficult and I feel that I could have been kept updated not just at the parents evening.
- I am very happy with the school.
- It would be great to have more parents meetings or regular reports to see what they have been doing in the term, or even a termly assembly that the parents can go to, to see the children's work.
- Could the class pages be updated more regularly i.e. when PE days are changing.
- Homework has become rather dull, workbook based rather than a combination of prescriptive worksheets / books alongside more creative project based work with parents.

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- Not nearly enough emphasis on daily individual reading at home. There could be more encouragement and guidance for parents on how to extend their children's vocabulary. Only some class teachers are willing to provide reading lists of good books. Reading and writing challenges, competitions, book reviews and word puzzles may help to stimulate the thirst to read. The school could do more to signpost parents to good websites and resources.
- I feel the main focus is in getting everyone in a particular cohort up to a certain standard rather than aspiring to anything higher. This is particularly reflected in the quality of subjects such as art, music and drama where presentations are rarely exceptional despite individual talent in classes. Creative opportunities each week are limited.
- Having a substantive Catholic head teacher has helped secure the continuity of Catholic Ethos throughout the school, which has been very positive.
- Exploration of religious art and music / classic prayers learnt by heart.
- Although introductory lessons in sex education is welcomed. I feel the school could be more courageous and clearly explain the Catholic social teaching in this area before they get to secondary school and a quite different perspective.
- More could be done to encourage healthy lunchboxes.
- Still a perception in the community that HT does not manage children with SEN well and that teachers lack experience and training to cope with learning disorders and extreme behavioural difficulties.
- Despite multiple channels of communication as a working parent with little access to the school I find the sending of information very inconsistent.
- Information about events held during the working day is often provided only days before leaving it to late to book holiday in order to attend.
- Handouts from events not made available to those that could not attend.

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## **Attachment 2:**

### **Academy Committee impact of Governance on school improvement.**

#### **The issue identified and why –**

- Improve the quality of governance and work as effective partners with the Head teacher
- The need to move from a Governing body to a fully functioning Academy Committee as part of The Pope Francis MAC
- Governance has previously primarily focused on recruiting a head teacher and MAC conversion. Now we need to cement our role in improving standards for our children across the school.

#### **What did the Academy Committee decide to do about it –**

- Became an Academy on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015
- Recruited 4 new Academy committee members with a range of experience and expertise ( Feb - June 2015). 2 Foundation and 2 parent
- Nominated a Chair and Vice Chair. New Vice Chair in April 2015 when previous member stepped down
- Skills audit completed in September 2014
- Reorganised as per current guidance from MAC board re Roles and responsibilities (Sept 2014)
- Reorganised agenda to focus on performance and standards.
- Agreed with clerk to clearly document Governor questions to HT in minutes.
- Set up a Matters arising document to save time at next meeting and ensure tasks were completed.
- Carried out HT PM and set objectives linked to key priorities in the school improvement plan and rooted in data (supported by consultant). Targets reviewed in July 2015.
- Began the process of monitoring linked to Safeguarding, SEND, Pupil Premium, Health and Safety, RE and Behaviour and Attendance. Governor link roles established or maintained for each of these involving production of a report for the full ACM (June 2015)
- Fed back to senior leaders and other academy committee members (see minutes)
- Wrote to parents (September and April) about who committee members are, what they do and what the role is.
- Attended training led by Oxford County Council trainers on Taking the Chair, Closing the Gap (Quality education for all), New Governor Induction ,The role of the SEND Governor, Safeguarding Training and PREVENT training.

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- HT reports achievement and attainment data at each full ACM with 'Headlines' to make it easily accessible to new Governors
- Post training reorganised some roles and responsibilities and recreated finance committee and health and safety Governor role.
- End of year Governing Body Health Check self - evaluation (July 2015)
- Chair meets with Head teacher at least monthly
- Web site audit and action
- Began review of Governor Induction process
- Parent questionnaire with results feeding into development of next year's SDP (July 2015)
- Started to set up Governor visits linked to specific roles and responsibilities
- Supported the school in losing 2 parish priests in 1 year.
- OFSTED Governor file for evidence behind actions
- Set up a document to ensure all Statutory Responsibilities are completed each year

#### **The action taken by the school –**

- Developed effective lines of communication and welcomed academy committee members in to school.
- Maintained procedures for school visits and monitoring
- Provided termly data reports that identified the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils in school.
- HT reports and subject leadership reports identified areas of strength and areas for improvement.
- Staff questionnaire
- Took part in training

#### **How did the academy Committee monitor progress?**

- Ongoing discussions with a clear focus on strategic leadership of specific areas. HT reports key information / Question and answer sessions. (see minutes)
- Interrogated Data (six times a year) focus on achievement and attainment
- Visits to school as appropriate/monthly Chair meeting with HT

#### **What was the impact of this strategy and action?**

- Established good working relationship with the Chair and HT

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- Full functioning academy committee
- AC focussed on improving standards for children across the school

#### **What lessons did the Academy committee learn?**

- Need to establish effective governance
- Need for a variety of skills on the academy committee and deploy people effectively
- Need for trust and openness so that everyone can fulfil their role effectively
- How to read and analyse ongoing data and the link between the allocation of resources
- The need to clarify roles and responsibilities with the Directors
- Achievement is good across the school and this is as a result of improved teaching and monitoring. Teaching has improved because staff are more familiar with data, use data to target underperforming pupils and they are made accountable in PP interviews.
- Better understanding of the role the Academy Committee have played in supporting the school in dealing with complaints
- It can be very difficult for Governors who are also parents
- Need to produce evidence behind our work in terms of minutes, reports and visit reports
- Next year Governors will have specific areas for development in the SDP as well as linking through the main areas for the school.

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