



From the Chair – Peter Griffin



Dear Parents

This term we have held two full governor meetings, the most recent being last Monday (27<sup>th</sup> March). I am delighted to inform you that Sarah Sellars has agreed to undertake the role of 'local authority' governor; Sarah attended on Monday as an observer and was impressed by *'a purposeful and supportive group of people who I am looking forward to getting to know better.'* She lives on the Leamington Road and her three sons all attended Our Lady's so she knows the school well. Mary Daly gave her a typical Mary welcome when she met her in the entrance! Sarah and her husband Ian are recently back from Shanghai where Ian was working for JLR. I am confident that with Sarah's career in education she will prove to be an invaluable addition to the governing body. I'm still on the lookout for two new Foundation Governors, who are appointed by the Archdiocese and are required to be practicing Catholics; it would be particularly pleasing to find a former pupil of Our Lady's now in their 20s or 30s willing to join our team. If any parents amongst you have relatives or know of anyone who might 'fit the bill' please do get in touch.

You may recall that we wrote to all parents at the start of this term about an important decision the GB had taken to formally apply for Our Lady's to become an 'academy' and to join the Multi-Academy Company (MAC) of ***Our Lady of the Magnificat*** which will eventually be a family of about 24 Catholic schools. Much more information and links to the website were provided in that January newsletter and parents were encouraged to ask for further information from either of our two parent governors, Amy Husband and Chris Bartup, or myself. The formal consultation period has now closed and over the next 12 months we will be undertaking the process of conversion to academy status which should be complete by April 2023. **Parents and staff can be assured that the essential character and ethos of Our Lady's will remain unchanged.**

One of our key roles as governors is to monitor the financial performance of the school. Like many schools we have to address the issue of falling numbers applying for Reception. We have no spare capacity in 5 of the other 6 year groups but to balance our budget we need 15 children entering Reception each year; one of our reasons for opening the pre-school Nursery class was to provide a crucial service to busy working parents but also to provide a pathway so more parents would choose Our Lady's. We were advised that it would take time for this to become established so can I encourage you to spread the word for both Reception and the pre-school. It's not too late to apply for either year group for September 2022.

With the changes to Covid rules governors have been able to visit and carry out monitoring functions and I am pleased to report that we were highly satisfied and impressed with two recent visits checking on GDPR compliance and safeguarding.

I'm sure you are all appalled and shocked by the war in Ukraine which has dominated our thoughts and prayers in recent weeks. I can confirm that, with the collaboration of the diocese, we at Our Lady's will go out of our way to welcome any child of primary school age if any refugees move into the area or if any parents offer a home or accommodation to those fleeing Ukraine.

On a lighter note, if you read this on Friday evening, I hope to see you tomorrow at the inaugural duck race organised by our fantastic PTA. Wrap up warm but can I also urge you be considerate of our neighbours on Leamington Road (& Sheep Dip Lane) and ensure no driveways are blocked.

Best wishes

Peter Griffin

Chair on behalf of Our Lady's Governing Body