

Dear parents,

We wanted to get in touch with you at the earliest opportunity, as we feel it is important to address the recent announcements within our school community. The unexpected resignations of our Headteacher, Mrs Barnett, and separately of our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Philpott, may have come as a surprise. We understand that this news might be unsettling to you, but we want to assure you that the Governors, Mrs Barnett, and Mrs Philpott, are committed to ensuring a positive and smooth transition to new leadership of the school. We are available to you should you want to share with us any concerns or questions you may have, as well as to input into the process of recruiting our new Headteacher.

Firstly, we want to acknowledge Mrs Barnett and Mrs Philpott's invaluable contributions to our school. They have worked tirelessly to create a thriving community where every child is valued, and their potential is maximised. We are immensely grateful for their dedication and hard work, and we will miss them greatly.

As we prepare ourselves to bid farewell to Mrs Barnett and Mrs Philpott, we recognise that change can be challenging, but we want to reassure you that St Mary and All Saints is in a strong position. We have excellent teaching, the most wonderful children, a caring and dedicated staff, highly engaged parents, and a fantastic range of activities that support the wider curriculum. Our incredible team of staff put hard work, creativity, and care into their roles each day, for the benefit of all of our children. Their commitment and passion for education is one of the key strengths of our school.

Governors understand how important the role of the Headteacher is; we believe this will be the most significant decision we will make as a Board. The Head sets the culture of our school as well as shaping our vision and strategic priorities. We want you as parents to understand that we are totally committed to finding outstanding candidates for this role. We will not compromise on this appointment, and we will commit all the time, energy and resources needed to ensure that we find a fantastic leader.

Governors are already in the process of finding exceptional candidates who will build on Mrs Barnett and Mrs Philpott's legacy and guide our school into the future. We are taking this very seriously and as soon as knew of the resignations we met regularly over the break to discuss our strategy, consult with external bodies, read all documentation, agree a Headteacher Appointment Panel, create a clear action plan for recruitment, and reflect on what the school might want in a Headteacher. We are considering all options, including the possibility of an Interim Head, to ensure we have the necessary time to find the perfect candidate. We have also received excellent support from County and the Diocese to date. We feel very positive that this will result in an appointment that will move our school forward

in exciting ways, embracing new opportunities for innovation and development, and build on all the very hard work that has been done in recent years.

One thing that is essential to us is that we hear from as many of our school community as possible about what they would like in their next Headteacher. We are meeting with staff this week to answer questions and listen to the kind of leader they want. We will be talking to children, via the student council, to hear their views too. We would also be very keen for you to input into this process. We will use all of the feedback we receive to help guide our recruitment process.

If you would like to provide your thoughts, please can you answer the five questions accompanying this letter. We have chosen to use ParentMail, as it allows all responses to be automatically anonymised. Our new parent Governor, Debs.Croatto has kindly volunteered to collate all your responses. Due to our tight schedule for advertising the position, please can we ask that you provide your responses by midday on Tuesday 23rd April. In addition, Debs. will be in the playground on Friday after school if you have any questions you want to ask about the process. Caroline Davis-King, Chair of Governors, will also recommence being on the KS2 gate on Monday mornings, for the next few weeks, as she did when she first started, to answer any questions.

In closing, please remember we are here for you. If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Your voice matters, and we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition during this period.

We thank you for your understanding, patience, and continued support of our school. We are confident that, together, we can navigate this journey and ensure a very bright future for our wonderful school.

With warmest regards,

Caroline, Ruth and the Governing Body

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