

Federation of Sacred Heart and St Mary's RC Primary Schools Battersea



Co-Chairs Report

Autumn 2020 - Summer 2021

The 2020-2021 year has continued to be dominated by the Coronavirus outbreak and the continuing response to that. In some ways, the schools have now adapted to a 'new normal' in working practices but the impact of Covid will remain with us for a long period.

Autumn term 2020

The beginning of the term started smoothly mainly due to the schools attempts to maximize attendance during the period after the first lockdown June and July.

The governing body met over zoom the summer break with the management of the two schools to agree on the safety measure and mitigations that were going to be in place for the Autumn term.

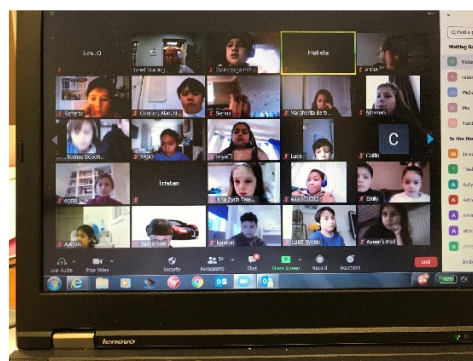
These include clear implementation of the bubble structure throughout the day including dinner time, playtimes and in class.

The school implemented staggered start and separate entrance to keep children apart whilst waiting for the start and end of day. These were all approved and observed in practice by the Governing Body.

Extra cleaning and hygiene practice were implemented. The costs approved by the Governing Body. Teachers were also adopted mitigation strategies including limits to the staff room, remote meeting and mask wearing in communal areas

These strategies worked well with on 3 classes sent home to self-isolate across the 2 schools in the Autumn term. There were considerable costs incurred with supply cover needed to cover self-isolating staff however.

The resources committee continued to monitor spending and encourage Covid claims and cost cutting where safely possible within the bubble structures.



Zoom became the new normal

Spring Term 2021

Second Lockdown

Extra zoom meetings were in place to support the management team and keep Governors informed of school community needs. The governing body are particularly proud of the support given by both schools in the additional areas of free school meal vouchers, food parcels, home school communication art and stationary equipment and ICT support.

The schools remote teaching was much enhanced this term. Governors were given access to the School Learning platform - Class Dojo and monitored the quality of the children's work and engagement. Governors were also given zoom invites to join lessons if they had availability.

All classes were given zoom lessons and catch up with their teachers and governors were given monitoring data to keep informed of numbers engaging with remote learning



Hilary House at the Oval



Food parcels supported our families

Hilary House remained open the whole time of the second lockdown

Of course school remained open throughout this lockdown for vulnerable and key worker children.

Summer term 2021

School re-opened with hygiene, bubble structures and mitigations in place.

Health and safety plans were again approved remotely by the FGB. All meetings remained remote until the final FGB of the summer term. After changes in guidance this meeting was held in school but with governors meeting remotely from different spaces. The evening culminated in a farewell and thank to Governors outside at St Mary's.



Some of the key events of the 2020-2021 school year

- We said goodbye to our clerk Ahmed and hello to Sue Burke in October 2020.
- We welcomed Precious Nwufo and Matthew Somorjay to the governing board as Foundation Governors in November 2020. Precious has a background in SEND and child therapy. Matthew works for Getty Images with a background in the photography industry.
- In Spring we said goodbye to Parent Governor Inma Goodhew, who moved out of the area.
- The Senior Admin Officer has embedded well in the new working practice. She was appointed from September 2019. She looks after both schools and works part time from each school.
- There were thankfully few buildings related problems but bids have now been submitted for school playground and electrical system updates.



Sport at St Marys

Notable items of interest

Financial Concerns

Covid affected the schools finances quite badly. Both schools were unable to let out their spaces as normal and offered rent holidays to businesses using the premises. Additional cost pressure covering the numerous staff absence from Covid and self-isolation placed pressure on the budget as did PPE and additional cleaning costs

Falling roles (common across London) are a concern. However both schools set budgets with positive balances. Sacred Heart continues to be in a different financial position to St Mary's which benefits from the additional funds from letting.

Staffing

Both schools benefited from good succession planning and staff retention. Both school start the new school year fully staffed with QTS teachers. Sacred Heart has a number of newer teachers but is delighted to retain staff who trained with the school.

Curriculum



Deacon Michael engaging Yr6 in religious discussion

Governors visits to schools will resume in the Autumn term 2021