



Executive Headteacher - Mrs. Judith Jones  
Chair of Governors – Dr. Kirsty Byrne  
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June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm writing to let you know of the activity of Carleton Rode and Forncett schools' governing board this year. As an introduction, I would like to revisit the role of governors and how our new federated governing board is made up.

Our governors fulfil three main functions. These are, first, to ensure the clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school. Second, they hold our executive leaders to account for educational performance and finally, they oversee making sure that money is well spent.

Following federation in September 2019, our new governing board is made up of 14 governors. It consists of the Executive Head Teacher and one staff governor, two elected parent governors and one Local Authority governor. We have a Bishop's Representative, and a further seven Diocesan and Parochial Church Council governors. We also have the support of two, non-voting, associate governors. We are an outward-looking board, bringing a variety of skills and we also continue to benefit from having three Multi-Academy Trust Directors as part of our team.

Information on all of our governors, and their roles, are on display on the noticeboards outside each school office, and further profile information is on each school website.

Both schools are represented at every governor meeting: we have at least six full board meetings each year. Four sub-committees meet half termly, and report to the board. We have an excellent attendance record and every meeting this year has been quorate (the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made). Governors continue to benefit from training, which has been particularly focused on the new Ofsted Curriculum, and on Monitoring. At the start of the year, we undertook a skills audit to re-examine our knowledge and help us to focus on areas for development.

Federation has enabled the individual budgets of both schools to remain balanced and ensured the preservation of quality. Equally, it has also brought new opportunities for curriculum and staff development in both schools, as well as shared learning experiences. There have, as you will know, been many challenges this year and the board has supported the improvement journey of both schools during Judith Jones' absence. We have endeavoured to share updated information with parents and carers, and also worked with external agencies to ensure this time remained as stable and productive as possible for the children and the whole federation community. Other challenges we continue to work on include safer parking, late arrival and attendance. We have supported both schools in other ways, too: highlights have been sharing two combined school curriculum days, visiting schools, staying and playing and attending a school council meeting. Another challenge has been to support the schools through the Coronavirus pandemic and ensure they were able to remain open to key worker and vulnerable children who needed the service throughout

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closure, including over the holiday periods. We have also been involved in the re-opening preparations and were consulted throughout, holding regular online meetings.

Governors have listened to our parent and child feedback on the value and quality of pastoral support in schools. We have continued to listen, and respond to, external advice, especially in the area of mental health and wellbeing. At Forncett, a Calm Corner has been created and it is proving both useful and popular. At Carleton Rode, the library is being improved as an area for nurture work.

Strategic development has been a major focus of governor time and effort as we have restructured, in one year, from partnership to federation. Lots of work has been done to align our school development priorities, and we have reviewed and improved almost all school policies whilst remaining mindful of the individual identity of each school.

Celebration is also part of our work, and, in July, governors shared a cake with Martin Humphreys as he retired after an incredible 42 years' service as a governor at Forncett, whilst similar celebrations were held at Carleton Rode for Claire Matthews' 12 years of service and Clerk Rachael Seaward's 10 years' work. Governors and staff across both schools have also contributed a great deal of work in preparation for the recent SIAMS (Church of England) inspection at Forncett.

Going forward, the governing board continues to explore ways of sharing for the mutual benefit and improvement of both schools whilst maintaining the unique identity and budget of each school.

The Minutes of the governing board and all four sub-committee meetings are public documents and you can ask for them at the school offices.

We welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents and carers; the Chair of Governors, Kirsty Byrne, can be contacted via each school office.

Kind regards,

Kirsty Byrne,  
Chair of Governors.