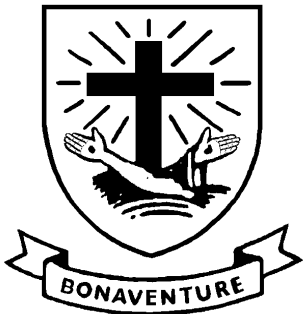


# GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER

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*"Striving to be the best  
we can guided by the  
light of Christ"*

## Welcome to our Christmas Newsletter!

One of the great strengths of St Bon's is its diversity – we have families from all over the world with children at our school, with a wide variety of languages spoken on the playground. This does not come without its challenges for those children where English is not their first language, as the curriculum taught in English schools is very language-rich. The Governors are keen to ensure that all children at the school are able to access everything that the school has to offer, and we are happy to celebrate our EAL families in this newsletter.

### Introduction

As you will see from the item on the Diocesan inspection, the Clifton Diocese is heavily involved in the Catholic schools in its area, and as part of this it has organised its schools into a number of "partnerships" – groups of schools who work together and share knowhow, best practice and, where possible, resources to enable the schools to save costs. St Bon's is part of the Newman Partnership, and as such I and other Governors attend Diocesan briefings for the schools within the partnership. The latest of these was held at the beginning of the month, and one of the key topics covered were the latest changes to the Ofsted regime, and in particular the increased emphasis on a broad and balanced curriculum. I have to admit to being heartened in hearing what the revised expectations are – offering more than simply the national curriculum has always been a strength of St Bon's and it strikes me that the school, and our fantastic staff team, are already meeting those expectations. The Governors will continue to monitor this at a committee level, as well as through our ongoing programme of Governor visits, to ensure that the school remains well prepared for any Ofsted visits in the future.

In this newsletter, I often have the job of paying tribute to Governors who have served on the governing body and who have stepped down during the year. This edition is no exception – we have to say goodbye to Neta Roylance-Smith and Krzysztof Inorowicz who have stepped down as Foundation governors, and I would like to pass on our thanks to them for all they did while on the board. I would also like to say a very big thank you to Tony Nelson, who is stepping down as an Associate Member of the governing body – Tony has been a member of the governing body for some years now, first as a Governor, and more lately as an Associate Member. Tony was instrumental in overseeing the development of the school, as well as lobbying for the funding that enabled the redevelopment, and the new buildings we enjoy today are a testament him.

One of the biggest good byes that we will have to say this year is to Mrs Charles – there will undoubtedly be a large number of tributes paid to her later on in the year as the date of her retirement comes ever closer, and I will save those from the Governors until then. In the meantime the Governors have started the recruitment process and we will keep you updated on that throughout the next few months.

I hope that you all have a festive and restful Christmas, and look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

**Jacob Preisner, Chair of Governors**

## Diocesan inspection

Catholic schools are subject to not one, but two, inspection regimes – that of Ofsted and that of the local Catholic diocese. The staff and governing body have to be prepared for either inspection at any time, as we are only given a couple of days' warning that the inspectors are on their way! Mrs Charles received that call from the Diocese towards the beginning of September, and so followed two days of intense scrutiny of the school and its teaching, all of which was to assess how well the school is doing in not only teaching our children about the Catholic faith, but also how well it is doing in infusing Catholic principles into everything that it does.

*“The power of this Child, Son of God and Son of Mary, is not the power of this world, based on might and wealth: it is the power of love”  
Pope Francis*



The response from the inspectors was overwhelmingly positive, and we are enormously proud that the school once again received an “outstanding” rating from the Diocese. This is testament to the staff, who work tirelessly to ensure that our children receive the best Catholic education that they can provide, and I would like to extend the thanks of the Governors to each and every one of them for all their efforts.

It is also a testament to the children themselves – the inspectors commented that “The pupils’ excellent behavior, conduct and attitudes around the school reflect its Catholic character, and this makes a significant contribution to the whole ethos of the school..... They value and respect one another, and all feel included in every area of school life.”

The report also recognises that “St Bonaventure’s is a welcoming and inclusive community where all are valued and invited to participate. As a result, all have a strong sense of belonging to a community that celebrates difference and diversity.”. As mentioned above, this diversity is a very important part of our school community and something that we will continue to celebrate.

Finally we would like to say a big thank you to the parents who took time to respond to the Diocese’s questionnaire – 110 responses were received, which is a significant response rate, and what was encouraging was not only that they were overwhelmingly positive about the school, but that parents were happy to challenge the school and suggest positive improvements. This important feedback is most important to us, and we are very grateful to parents for engaging in the process.



## Celebrating our EAL community

### The Governors of St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School

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We are all familiar with the traditional British Christmas, but these traditions are not the only ones that are celebrated by our school community each year. When on the 24th of December the first star appears on the sky, Polish families are getting ready for 'Wigilia' (Christmas Eve).

Wigilia is celebrated by seating together at the table covered with white table cloth, with (depending on the region of Poland) a little hay under it. This is for good health and luck. We start with lighting the candle usually by the oldest person in the family and breaking the Oplatek (Christmas wafer) and we wish each other all the good things we can think of.



Traditionally the Christmas Eve meal consists of 12 dishes, but this varies from house to house. The main ones are Barszcz (beetroot soup) or Mushroom Soup with Uszka (small ears ;- ) which are dumplings with mushroom or cabbage inside.

We also eat fish, traditionally Karp, Sauerkraut and Pierogi - more dumplings. There is always something sweet too and again depending on the region of Poland this could be noodles with poppy seeds, nuts, raisins and honey or other variation based on this theme.

When the meal is finished everyone is waiting for Aniolek (Angel) or Gwiazdor (Father Christmas) who is bringing everyone presents and leaves them under the Choinka (Christmas tree). It is also our tradition to go to a Mid-night Mass where we sing lots of Polish Carols and go to see Szopka (The Nativity Scene).

On the First and Second Day of Christmas we still continue the celebrations, we visit other family members and very often go from church to church to see different Nativity Scenes. The most famous although a little different are from Krakow.

**Ewa Bubnicka-Gyde**

**Foundation Governor and RE Link Governor**

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"*

*John 3:16*

### Website:

<http://www.st-bonaventures.bristol.sch.uk/>



## And finally ...

A very Merry Christmas to all!

Wesolych Swiat

Obi Uto Krismas

Joyeux Noel

Buon Natale

Feliz Natal

Eku Odun koresimesi

Vesele Vianoce

Frohliche Weihnachten

Hari Kirihimete