

Governors Annual Statement - January 2025

Vision statement: "Learning, loving and sharing, guided by Jesus"

St Laurence Church Junior School has had another very busy, yet exciting and rewarding twelve months. Our pupils have continued to be shining lights both in school and in the community.

In the last year, the school had both its OFSTED Inspection and Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist church schools (SIAMS). Despite the additional work for the leaders and staff, this has resulted in all areas of the school being praised and acknowledged for the excellent work that is going on.

The Ofsted report highlights that *'There is much that is unique about St Laurence Church Junior School. From its long-established residential trip to York, to the charity work done as part of the Lenten Project, the school's vision statement 'Learning, loving and sharing, guided by Jesus' shines through. Pupils become confident, independent learners who are well prepared for their move to secondary school.'*

The SIAMS inspection which took place in October 2024 recognised the work that has been completed with our school vision. The inspector commented on the many amazing things he saw, the fantastic team and support for the school, commenting to those in the feedback session *'You have a wonderful school'*.

'Leaders have embedded a strong Christian vision and associated values that permeate all aspects of school life. Pupils and staff have a deep understanding of the vision and strive to ensure it makes a tangible difference to the school community.'

The vision inspires deep relationships and partnerships which ensure Christian values are the lived experience of the whole school community. This creates a profound, loving ethos where adults and pupils value the worth of each individual.'

Governors were again extremely pleased with the achievements of our Year 6 pupils in the summer of 2024, producing an excellent set of SATs results. This again has provided them with the necessary skills and confidence to move onto the next stage of their learning in secondary school, even though there were over 20 different schools that our children transitioned to! As part of continuous school improvement, pupil progress is monitored and analysed throughout the year to ensure that pupil needs are being met and that gaps in learning are supported. Governors are confident that the school is on track to meet its ambitious targets across all year groups.

Governors have spent time meeting with staff to ensure the continued progress of the pupils in school and to ensure that our curriculum is broad, balanced and meeting all needs; the Quality of Education was praised in the OFSTED inspection. The ever widening range of additional opportunities for pupils continues to grow and develop. The latest initiative of Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL), which is supporting and extending the activities available to pupils during play times and lunch times, is proving very popular. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the activities they can now experience

and it is making lunch times more fun and productive – *'this is the best playtime ever'* was a comment by one pupil recently!

Children have access to a variety of clubs: alongside the traditional sporting and musical clubs, ensembles and choirs, children can now partake in Art, French and Science clubs. Annual trips include a Christian and non-Christian place of worship for each year group and our Year 4 and 5 pupils all visit Aztec Adventure annually to complete their Outdoor Adventure part of the PE curriculum. The Year 6 choir members visited the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital to sing and play for staff and patients at Christmas. Year 6 children still head to York on their annual residential, this was enjoyed by children and staff alike in September. On top of these experiences, children have an engaging curriculum that encourages them to explore the local area and more of our trips include a train journey into Birmingham so children have a more 'real-world' experience as part of this.

Following the retirement of our breakfast and after school club manager in July, a new lead is in place and this provision continues to develop and be a real strength of the school and we are continually grateful for the staff that provide a safe and stimulating environment for the children who use this facility. The health and wellbeing of both pupils and staff is a continual priority for us.

Generosity is one of our key values and the pupils and staff at school have again been successful in raising vast sums to actively support charities. This year we focused on charities closer to home and were able to raise close to £4000 for the Northfield Partnership. The pupil leadership team have visited to see the work that is going on and how the money is being spent. We also donated our Harvest collection to Birmingham City Mission and St. Bart's Pantry and the Pupil Leadership Team have even volunteered helping out at the pantry.

Our main building priority during the year has involved replacing the roofs and the installation of solar panels which we hope will make us more energy efficient, sustainable and reduce our fuel costs. This major project did cause some disruption but was well managed. At the end of September we experienced a 'weather event' in school where parts of the building were flooded as torrential rain came gushing through some classrooms, the main corridor, entrance halls and the main hall! Staff were superb in manning mops, brushes etc. to try and minimise the water damage. One of our parent governors, who is a fire officer, managed to get a fire truck on site to pump the water from our boiler house, again minimising the damage. The school were so grateful for all the concern and support from parents and the community, particularly those who offered help, heaters and dehumidifiers! The school is now back to looking its best, thanks to the generous donations of our community in raising a significant amount through a fundraising page. Thank you!

In a time of reduced funding and spiralling costs, we are increasingly grateful to our fantastic Friends PTA who raise an incredible amount of money each year for the school and the children within it. Both the Summer and Christmas Fairs have been amazing events, alongside the discos, film nights, quizzes, Frozen Fridays and other events. We are lucky to have such an active group of parents – thank you to all of you



who volunteer and donate. We look forward to the installation of an outdoor classroom at some point this Spring, paid for through all of those donations.

This coming year will I am sure continue to bring its challenges, not least the impact on our budget with the increasing costs. However, we are looking forward to another productive and successful year for all involved at St Laurence Church Junior School. Thank you for all your support.

Jill Saunders

Chair of Governors.

Andy Murphy

Headteacher