



STM Governing Board Newsletter – Autumn 2019

Our Mission Statement

“Learning to love, live and celebrate as we grow in the knowledge and love of Christ“

Our Vision

To provide an outstanding education, with Christ at the centre, underpinned by a Catholic, spiritual ethos

It feels a long time since our last newsletter and it has been! Whilst it's nearly Christmas we've had the summer holidays since our last edition and we hope you all had a wonderful rest, break and found time to rejuvenate. It is evident that our wonderful students did just that as they have been full of energy and spirit in their preparations for STM Christmas celebrations despite being very near the end of a full term. What super stars they are!

We also welcome David Swarbrick as our new Chair of Governors. A little more from David later on.

As always, we are thankful to our teaching faculty. We are very sad to be saying goodbye to some of our STM family this term:

Mrs Veronica Standen

Mrs Standen has been supporting us since November 2013. First as an additional member of staff to support in Year 2 and then as a part-time teacher to provide cover. Mrs Standen has been a highly valued member of our team and our children have benefitted greatly from her care and expertise. We are sad she is leaving and wish her all the best.

We are very happy to welcome **Miss Caitlin Carey** as Teaching Assistant in Year 3.

We also hold Mrs Harris and her family in our thoughts at this time.

WHO WE ARE

David Swarbrick	Chair
Jan Davis	Vice Chair
Kathy Little	Head Teacher
Sally Meredith	Staff Governor
Michelle Anderton	Associate Governor
Fr David Burke	Foundation Governor
Theresa Kelly	Foundation Governor
Peter Fitzgerald	Foundation Governor
Leanne Butler	Foundation Governor
Jo Cosgrove	Foundation Governor
Monica Murray	Parent Governor
Laura Connor	Parent Governor

All governors serve STM in a voluntary capacity

We would like to thank our PTA who have worked tirelessly this term bringing together a number of very successful events including a great Christmas Fayre and Wreath Making Evening.

We are very lucky to have such a hard working PTA who consistently organise high quality events which both enhance the community life of the school and raise much needed funds.

We are sure that everyone would agree that their work plays a significant role in the success of our school.

A note on Safeguarding:

The safeguarding of our students is central to all that we do and one aspect of that duty is ensure that our site is secure and our children are protected. Everyone will be aware of the enhanced systems that have recently been put in place. Together with Greenway School we now lock and unlock gates at the beginning and end of the school day. The inconvenience this causes is far outweighed by knowledge that our children are less vulnerable. However, the GB are exploring all suitable solutions and looking into all sources of funding. This is a priority for us all.

The Marshmallow Test by Monica Murray

It's Christmas time, as if you needed to be reminded. Nor do you need to be reminded that it is a time of great excitement for children and likely over-indulgence from older, if not wiser, parents. An experiment created almost fifty years ago is likely to be played out unintentionally in many homes around this country. It's an experiment which has influenced attitudes towards bringing up children and education.

In 1972, Walter Mischel created what came to be known as the 'Marshmallow Test'. A child was offered a choice between one small but immediate reward, or two small rewards if they waited for a period of time. During this time, the researcher left the room for about 15 minutes and then returned. The reward was a marshmallow or a pretzel depending on the child's preference. In follow-up studies conducted years later, the researchers found that those children who were able to wait longer for the preferred rewards tended to have better life outcomes, as measured by SAT scores, educational attainment and other life measures. The delayed gratification tested above is one dimension of a word that has become synonymous with raising kids to go on to fulfil their potential. You've probably heard the word grit mentioned several times in the recent years at St. Thomas More.

Mounting research on grit suggests that your child's ability to work hard, endure struggle, fail, and try again may be the key to determining his or her long-term success and happiness. Christmas is a great opportunity to show the better side of ourselves through giving, through friendship, through time with our family and through our relationship with God. Perhaps this Christmas, we can consider the lessons from an experiment conducted fifty years ago to encourage a more controlled approach to consumption both from ourselves and in our children. The benefits will last a lifetime of Christmases...

Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about STM. The survey can be completed at any time; you don't have to wait until the school is being inspected. Ofsted will use the information you provide when making decisions about which schools to inspect and when. See the STM website for link or click here:

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>

A Christmas Blessing from Fr David

Loving God, Help us this Christmas to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Christ born in a stable is born in me
Christ accepted by shepherds accepts me
Christ receiving the wise men receives me
Christ revealed to the nations be revealed in me
Christ dwelling in Nazareth You dwell in me
Christ, grant that people may look at me and see Your Presence. Amen.

And finally, a note from our new Chair of Governors **David Swarbrick**

In September I was elected Chair of Governors upon the retirement of Peter Fitzgerald. The first thing I would like to do, on behalf of all the recent governors is thank Peter for his long period of service as a governor and latterly Chair of Governors at St Thomas More.

Currently the school, like many in the country faces some challenges. After a number of years of government austerity during which our income has been constrained and not kept pace with the rising costs we are facing some financial challenges. We are fortunate, in this respect to have a very capable, experienced Executive Head teacher, Mrs Kathy Little. Mrs Little has proved adept at stretching the budget to ensure that the school is able to continue to provide an excellent education for our children in a safe environment. As some of you will have noticed, however this has necessitated some organisational changes at St Thomas More.

As this first term of the year draws to an end, I would like to assure you the Governors along with Mrs Little and her staff continue to be determined to provide all the children fortunate enough to attend St Thomas More with a safe and happy environment in which to grow and learn. In addition to this we all wish to provide an excellent education delivered in a manner consistent with the school's Catholic values. The Governors, together with the staff have already embarked on a process intended to ensure that the school will be in a position to continue to maintain this provision for current as well as future children for many years to come. This process should yield some results by the end of this academic year and we will keep you updated on our progress during the year.

We wish you all a wonderful Christmas break and hope everybody is able to take some time to rest, relax and recharge. We look forward to seeing you in January and embracing the start of a new decade!

With thanks from the STM Governing Board

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