

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is with pleasure I present on behalf of the Governing Body our annual report for 2024-2025

Thank you for taking time to read it and engage more fully with the school.

Reflecting back over the past year a lot has happened.

September saw the start of the new year with children joining us in reception. As always within our school community a lot of work had gone in to make the transition into school as smooth as possible. Likewise we liaise and work very well with the secondary schools to support our year 6 students as they transition into Key stage 3.

The 'new' format for our Nativity play works very well in the school hall for Key stage 1 children, enabling parents to enjoy the performance. We are grateful to the Gateway Church in Acomb for the loan of their staging and the group of parents who helped to transport it. On a separate date the Key Stage 2 classes presented a Christmas themed evening of music, drama and poetry. Our Easter Service at St. Mary's Church was a joyful occasion, welcoming parents. On another happy note Sports Day, 2024 was held on sunny afternoon with parents, governors and friends able to join the school for a fun filled occasion with refreshments served by the Governors.

July saw the culmination of our year 6 children's seven years at St. Mary's, where we have nurtured and supported these children from reception through to year 6. Just as with the reception children who are preparing to come to us in September are receiving a caring and thoughtful transition programme so our year 6 children were given the same degree of support as part of their transition to secondary schools. The leavers service was a wonderful celebration of the young people who have spent seven years at St. Mary's. Their speeches expressed their memories of the time spent at school and it was very humbling to hear them articulate their memories and thanks to the school so well. We wish them every success in their new schools and welcome hearing their news as they progress through life.

Governors have been working hard to support the school. We have welcomed the opportunity to share in training sessions with the staff to enhance our understanding and involvement. Open the Book and some Collective Worship sessions are organised and led by a governor or Reverend Martin and Reverend Karen. It was a very special service at York Minster on June 28th when Karen Flood was ordained and will serve as a curate in our parish of 5 churches. Karen has been working with us and leading Collective Worship in school for the past year. Governors have also attended Celebration Collective Worship which is held on Friday. It is a joy to see our young people rewarded for their success across all aspects of their school life, academic, social, sporting and out of school achievements.

The Governing body has seen valued members moving on. Ann Watson retired as Foundation governor but has continued to support us with Open the Book and Experience Church. Dave Riley and his family have moved house and we will miss them all, Hannah has been a great volunteer parent helper in class 1 and the 3 children were such a happy trio. Gary Bownan has also left as a parent governor as his long association with the school came to an end in July when Matthew moved on to Tadcaster Grammar School.

We are delighted Liz Mastin has become the Foundation Governor and vice chair of the Curriculum committee and to welcome Helen Durham as a community co-opted governor. Alice Hanratty, a former parent and chair of FOSMs has joined as a community co-opted governor. Rob Kelly joined us on the finance committee in the summer term. It is a privilege to work alongside a dedicated and enthusiastic team of people who work to support the Governing bodies Vision and Values statement which is, **Adding Value – Making a Difference**. This underpins all we do.

I continue to work closely with the headteacher to ensure the Governing Body fulfils its objectives to offer challenge in a supportive and constructive way (something all governors are expected to do). Governors work in Key areas such as SEND and Safeguarding and in all curriculum areas, where link visits are made with staff to share understanding and progress.

As a school we continue to have amazing support from the Friends of St. Mary's School (FOSMS) allowing investments in school experiences that are not provided for in the delegated budget from the Local Authority. The funds FOSMS raise greatly benefits the children and adds to our vibrant learning environment. Their

funds enabled the school to update the Forest School with the new classroom, equipment and enhanced spaces. We welcomed Bishop John to school to dedicate the area shortly before he retired.

Our school lunch provision continues to be a great asset. Run by Sandra and with Teresa this ensures lunches are a great offer for children, staff and visitors. Special events are catered for, such as our amazing, Wimbledon Lunch and end of term Seaside Spread. The catering team scored an amazing 98% in a recent audit. Well done ladies! Sadly, we said goodbye to Teresa at the end of last term and await a new replacement.

Our teaching staff have largely remained very stable. Mrs Boast continues in class 1, Mrs Halliday and Mrs Batchelor job share class 2. In class 3 we welcome back Mrs Owen who had been on Maternity leave but has now returned after having her little boy Elis. Mrs Gee is in class 4 and although Mrs Walmsley reduced her teaching time continues to work in class 4 with Mrs Gee. At the end of the summer term, 2024, we said goodbye to Mrs Stott and we wish her and her family well, although we will still be seeing her in her role as a parent. Mrs Gibbs chose to retire and we hope she enjoys her leisure time. Mrs Lewis also left us to have more time to care for her family and is missed by everyone. We welcomed Mrs Kettlwell to KS1 and is a great asset to the school. Mrs Houchen left to begin her PGCE course and we appointed Anna Tennant as our new TA in September.

The changes and challenges our children meet benefits them in many ways, from learning to adapt, share new experiences, meet new people and they continue to be a source of pride to you, their parents/carers and the whole school community.

As Chair of Governor's, I would like to express my thanks to staff, governors, volunteers, parents and children for all they do to make St. Mary's Church of England Primary School successful. The staff worked tirelessly throughout another year to maintain the excellent educational provision which St. Mary's School prides itself in, developing our children academically, socially and spiritually, upholding our distinctive Christian Ethos

The whole governing body, the staff team at the school and our colleagues at the Diocese and Local Authority remain committed to providing a school where all children succeed to the best of their ability in an environment that is caring, safe, stimulating, challenging and happy, based on our Distinctive Christian Ethos. We look forward to another year where we are, as our Vision states,

'Small school, big heart, learning and growing together'

The Education Act (No. 2) 1986 requires all Governing Bodies to prepare an Annual Report on their work. This report acknowledges the excellent work and achievements of the school during the academic year 2024 - 2025

Yours sincerely,

Glynis Ashford

Chair of Governors

September 2025