



The March CE Primary School

June 2016

The Governors' Newsletter

Welcome to the first in a series of newsletters keeping you informed on important issues at the March School

Voluntary Aided Status

The March School is a Voluntary Aided Church School. So what does this mean? And in what ways do both Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled Church of England schools differ from other schools?

As state-funded voluntary schools they are nevertheless owned by trustees (for the March School it's the Diocese), not by the state or the Local Education Authority (LEA). While all Church schools are, like other schools, inspected by OFSTED, they also receive a second inspection (for us it's due this September) to see how well their collective worship and teaching fits with being a Church of England school.

There are, though, two *types* of Church School: Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided. So in what ways do *they* differ?

Broadly speaking, the control bit in 'Voluntary Controlled' means that it's the Local Education Authority that controls pupil admissions, staffing and funding. Voluntary Aided schools, on the other hand, have a much higher degree of independence in these matters. So it's the governing body of a Voluntary Aided school (not the LEA) which decides the admissions policy for pupils and which directly employs the teaching staff. In other words, it's the school which keeps control over which pupils it admits and who is to teach them. Secondly, the Governing Body and the Head Teacher of a Voluntary Aided school decide the contents of the RE syllabus (again not the LEA). When it comes to the funding of larger-scale repairs and capital developments, Voluntary Controlled schools are dependent on the LEA budget whereas Voluntary Aided schools are dependent on the Department for Education (DfE). DfE grants for larger schemes are funded at 90% with the remaining 10% being the responsibility of the governing body - so, in these circumstances, when the need arises, appropriate fund-raising appeals will usually need to be made to parents.

The March School is, as has already been mentioned, Voluntary Aided and it's worth pointing out that, though the Governors believe the benefits of Voluntary Aided status outweigh any potential financial disadvantages, there is, in any case, no mechanism for altering its status to Voluntary Controlled even if they wished to do so.

Parents will no doubt have heard in the news about the recent proposal by the current Government to turn all Primary Schools into academies and may be wondering how such a change might affect our current status. While this is not of immediate concern to the March School, we plan to explain where we stand on that in a future Governors' Newsletter.

You can contact the school governors by email at governors@march.w-sussex.sch.uk

The current governors are:

Mr John Proctor (Chair), Mrs Nicola Metcalfe (Head Teacher), Mrs Heather Sellors (Vice Chair), Mrs Stella Aldred, Mrs Rachel Bryan, Mrs Sue Bradstock-Smith, Mrs Mary Isgar, Mrs Justine Howard, Mr Ashley Hatton, Mrs Nicola Smallwood, Rev Simon Holland, Mr Ian Harmer-Draper & Mr Nick Brown.