

# Governors Newsletter

CHILTHORNE  
DOMER CHURCH  
SCHOOL



Autumn term 2025



## A message from the chair ...

Welcome to our latest Governor newsletter. I hope this will give you a flavour of what the governors do and our role within the school community.

I took over as Chair in the Spring of 2022 and will continue in the role through the current school year, alongside Sallyann Batstone continuing as Vice-Chair. It is a privilege to head up our team of governors who freely volunteer their time for the good of the school.

We have had some changes in our team over the last year. We have welcomed a new Parent Governor to our board. Mr Dan Meeghan joined us in the Spring and brings welcome new ideas and perspectives to our board. Sadly, we will be losing one of our community governors this term.

Mrs Linda Bickerton is standing down as a community governor at the end of her term, she has worked incredibly hard, not just over the last 4 years but also as a past parent governor when her own children attended our school. We are losing a wealth of experience and skills when she leaves us. We will miss her outstanding commitment, and she takes with her our very best wishes. I know she will continue to promote the best interests of the school in any way she can.

We will also greatly miss Mrs Nicky Mitchell from the school office. Not only did she hold the school office together for 22 years, but she also acted as Clerk to the Governors for most of that time and continued to work closely with us after standing down from that role. What she didn't know about the school wasn't worth knowing!

The landscape of education is changing rapidly, with financial pressures, changes in local authority support structures widespread drift towards multi-academy trusts. As a governing board we have actively discussed and monitored these changes and continue to keep abreast of the situation when making difficult decisions about the future of our school. Please read below for more updates.

It has been a delight to see the OPAL programme (outdoor play and learning) develop and become embedded as part of our school. I still find it a joy to see the imagination and creativity of the children when I am in school at break times. I have witnessed the impact and benefits it has on school life. Thank you for the continuing hard work of the staff, the support of the parents and of course the children for making those efforts worthwhile.

Sadly, we have said goodbye to another group of Year 6 leavers. I hope they will remember the school fondly. We are all very proud of all their achievements and they take with them our best wishes as they move on through their education.

I must also welcome our new reception class and their parents to our school community. I have every confidence that you will flourish and enjoy your time with us over the coming years. I look forward to meeting you in the months and years to come.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact the school office, or email me directly [pluscombe@cdcs.uk](mailto:pluscombe@cdcs.uk). I also come into school most Wednesdays and will be delighted if you want to meet me or just say hello.

Peter Luscombe, Chair of the Governing Board

### In this newsletter you can expect:

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## Our vision statement

As Governors we will work with staff and parents to her children enjoy their learning and achieve their best in all aspects of school life.

“Raising expectations, creating opportunities, celebrating success. We will ensure that every child is provided with an outstanding education, so that they can flourish into confident young people with a sense of self-worth, which reflects Gods love, who believe they can make a difference in the world”

### Governor spotlight



**Nichola Chesterton**, Headteacher



**Peter Luscombe**, Chair of governing board



**Sallyann Batstone** , Vice chair



**Rebecca Denley**, Staff Governor



**Howard Ashton**, Local Authority Governor



**Anna Thomas**, Foundation Governor



**Gemma Plowman**, Parent Governor



**Dan Meeghan**, Parent Governor

### PARENT GOVERNOR APPEAL

Could you help shape the future of our school?

We're looking for a new Parent Governor to join our school's governing board – and we'd love one of our fantastic parents or carers to step into the role.

You don't need to be an expert in education or have any special qualifications – just a bit of time, an interest in how the school is run, and a desire to make a positive difference to children's learning and wellbeing.

As a Parent Governor, you'll bring a vital perspective to the table – helping ensure the decisions we make reflect the needs and views of families in our school community.

We'd love to hear from you.

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## Working together..

As a Community Learning Partnership (CLP), Long Sutton C of E VA Primary School, High Ham C of E Primary School, Curry Rivel C of E VC Primary School and King Ina CofE Academy have been working together for many years and have built strong relationships with a real focus on collaboration. While our school is not part of the CLP, over the years we have worked closely with them especially over the last 2 years.

Alongside many other schools, over the last 3 years, the governors of Chilthorne Domer Church School have been actively investigating the options that are available to us in relation to our future position - be that staying as we are or joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). We have undertaken significant research both individually as a school and, over the last 18 months, collectively with the CLP and decided that, for the benefit of our children, staff and communities, we would like to explore being part of a MAT moving forward.

There are a multitude of reasons for this. MATs are charities that have responsibility for running a number of schools. By working in partnership with each other, the schools within a MAT can share staff, curriculum expertise and effective teaching practices, and work together to deliver the best outcomes for pupils.

While other types of school partnerships can be effective, the key difference with MATs is that there is shared accountability for standards across the trust; all schools within the trust support each other and the trust is accountable for them all. We would welcome the opportunity to be part of a strong network like this.

Having decided that we would like to investigate the possibilities open to us, we have worked closely with colleagues from the Diocese of Bath and Wells, listened to numerous presentations from different organisations, visited schools, and governors from all 5 schools have made independent decisions that they would like to join The Priory Learning Trust. The Priory Learning Trust consists of 3 secondary and 8 primary schools across Somerset and North Somerset. The Trust comprises a mix of rural and suburban, church and non-church, large and small schools educating young people from 2 to 18 years.

We have been working in close partnership with The Priory Learning Trust and each other over much of the last school year with the intention of joining during the next academic year. We have already benefited greatly from the advice and practical support we have received, and this will have a positive impact on the children in all our schools. We will continue to work more closely with the trust and their schools, working towards continued school improvement and widening our support network for all involved.

There is much work to be done as we move forward. We will of course keep you updated as we go through the process and ensure that we share the work we are doing over the next year.

We are really excited to formalise our successful partnership of 5 schools whilst benefiting from the knowledge and expertise of a wider family of schools who share our ethos and values.

Peter Luscombe | Chair of the Governing Board

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