

## **Governors' Report - Our Lady's Catholic College 2022/3**

The purpose of this brief report is to inform parents, guardians and the students themselves on what has been happening in our school over the last academic year.

Overall, from the perspective of the Governing Body, the school year has been one of hard work undertaken by both staff and students. From my viewpoint, highlights have been the examination of the school by external professionals: school advisors, Vincent Ashworth and Darren Beardsley, Tom Bennett, OBE, and Lancashire education advisors. These professionals have all, after their investigations, completed reports which show that the current action plan, implemented by the school following the last Ofsted inspection, shows clear signs of improvement. The senior leadership team, teachers and the Governing Body have all made a valuable contribution to achieving these positive results.

The areas that specifically have been the focus of our attention are the curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding of our students and staff and the Governing Body themselves. It is with some pride that I can categorically state that all areas have been the subject of hard work, open, honest and purposeful scrutiny in order to improve these areas of school life.

Of course there are other areas that make up the school year. It is too early to comment upon the recent examination period; having discussed this with senior leaders, like other schools, some students will have found this time challenging. I sincerely hope that the hard work undertaken by our students results in a successful examination period for them.

The Catholic Life of the School is at the very heart of all that Our Lady's does regardless of the specific area e.g. teaching, pastoral, moral, spiritual and social. A celebratory whole school Mass took place this week and there has been discussion regarding a further whole school Mass within the school year. We have a new lay chaplain in post to take over the role recently vacated. On behalf of the Governors, I would like wish every success to Ben O'Flynn who will commence in this role in September.

One area that does require a specific mention is the behaviour of our students in school. This is of course closely linked with safeguarding. Behaviour does not just relate to students but also to the behaviour and actions of our staff. In this regard, I can report that all staff have received enhanced training in aspects of safeguarding and the school's behaviour policy. Over this academic year, a senior leader has had the task of looking at the existing behaviour policy and improving it to maintain the safeguarding of all members of the school; this ensures pupils and are able to develop and learn in a safe environment. Any inappropriate behaviour will be managed in accordance with the new policy as I believe parents, students and staff would expect. I would ask that parents and students embrace the essence of the policy and give it their full co-operation. There may be aspects of the policy that you disagree with. I would like to assure you that a lot of hard work has gone into creating the new policy regarding the use of smart devices in school; myself and the board of governors firmly believe that the new rules are for the greater good of all within school regardless of their role; we expect this to have a positive impact on both the learning and wellbeing of our pupils.

Unfortunately, we have experienced a number of days affected by teachers' national strike action which I sincerely hope did not adversely affect the education of the students. We, as a school, respect the right of staff to make their opinions to the government known through the appropriate legitimate processes.

One further area of development in the school is the new main entrance. I would like to thank you for your patience in accessing the school via the temporary entrance whilst the building work has been taking progress. This is a project that the senior leaders and Governing Body have been striving for and should be finalised for the coming academic year; this work will enhance the safety of both students and staff, whilst also improving the accommodation of visitors to the school.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people associated with the running of the school regardless of their roles, also the parents, guardians and the pupils themselves; many of whom are a shining example of the work Our Lady's Catholic College devotes to them. I wish you all a restful and hopefully sunny summer holiday.

Philip Jones

Chair of Governors