

# Governor Newsletter

## Spring Term 2020

### Finance

At this time of year we will receive our planned budget for next year. Once we receive this the Resources committee will meet to discuss and approve it. The budget is prepared by Mrs. Ip and Lancashire County Council financial services, it is based on the number of pupils that we have in school in the Autumn. The budget runs from April each year,

At this meeting we will also complete the Schools Financial Statement. This is an online document that asks a number of questions about our financial management.

### Training

On 21st January I attended a governor update session—Defining a new relationship with schools—embedding system leadership. Run by LCC at Lancaster University this course was about potential changes to the school advisory services and about new partnerships that are being set up for head teachers to meet and exchange ideas and good practice. This is not intended to replace existing clusters such as the Lune valley cluster which are working in a very effective way. The new system is on trial and we will know more next year.

In January six governors and Mrs Ip attended the training course *Strive and Thrive - a Happy and Well School Community*. The course was held at Melling St Wilfrid and was an opportunity to share ideas with Melling governors. We looked at ways to ensure our school provides a good working environment and that the staff feel supported by the school community.

### Blackburn Diocese Governors Conference

On Saturday 8th Feb John Wilson, Bronwen Osborne and myself attended the bi-annual Diocese conference at St Cuthbert's Church Fulwood.

The main address was given by Bishop Jill Duff. Jill read from Isaiah 11:6 'The calf and the young lion and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them.' She spoke about our vision being led by children.

Stephen Whittaker, Director of Education, closed the conference with a talk about the Diocesan strategy for small schools. A small school is categorized as under 150 pupils so he had created a new category of 'smallest' school for those with under 50 pupils. There are only 14 such schools in the Blackburn diocese, 8% of the overall number; three of which are in this benefice—Tatham Fells, Melling and Leck.

The diocese is working to support these schools and he listed a number of areas to consider to reduce costs by working with other schools through collaboration or in clusters. These included things such as property management, catering and educational visits. The Diocese is creating training and support programmes that look at having a specific vision for a school that is part of a formal partnership. He went on to talk about federations and academies. Federations are when different schools are run by the same governing board. Although there is not a drive to make all schools into academies at the moment it is still possible this may happen. If all or most of the diocesan schools became academies this would equate to between 5-10 academies.

Helen Wilkinson  
Chair of Governors