

Winter 2022 Newsletter

Farewell for now but not Goodbye!

Victoria Amella, Foundation Governor appointed by Ripon Diocese



After my eldest son first joined RTS in September 2008 I instantly became involved in the school and everything it had to offer. From first attending the Nativity performance in reception to seeing those little reception children flourish into big Year 6s and weeping my way through the leavers service. I was lucky enough to enjoy two more of my younger children attend the school and experience all the delights it had to offer.

I joined the governor team in 2013 after spending several years previously working tirelessly with the Friends of RTS. This was hard work but massively rewarding as we raised much needed funds to support the school and its pupils. Once I joined the governors, I was able to see first-hand the intricate workings of the school and was able to work closely with the wonderful leadership team.

After nine years on the governing body, I am now stepping down to allow new members to join. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a governor, especially being in school, working with the pupils. Special thanks must go to Dentdale who I was fortunate enough to visit several times as their link governor. I was also able to attend the Year 6 leavers service in July this year which is always an emotional event! I had seen these students develop and mature over their seven years at RTS and am always amazed and proud at how they grow into these fabulous young people ready to embark on their next journey.

Every member of the RTS team continue each day to strive for the very best in education for the pupils of the school, I will miss them all. RTS plays such an important role in the community it serves which is really the foundation of its ethos. To this, I will always be a supporter of the school and will continue to follow their progress through their new social media platform.

In the words of Mr Symonds "nobody who joins RTS ever leaves" So watch out, I will be back!

Links between Richard Taylor School and St John's Church

Rev Simon Dowson, Foundation Governor Appointed by the Ripon Diocese



As most readers will know, there has been a long and fruitful association between Richard Taylor School and St John's. Many of the governors, past and present, have been or are regular worshippers at St John's; many a Tuesday worship time has been delivered by one of the St John's and St Luke's staff team; and children are regular visitors to the church for a variety of services. These have included Education Sunday, which sadly did not take place this year due to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; beginning of year services (thus we welcomed the school in late September), and various end of term services not least at Christmas and Easter. And this year we are looking forward to the children coming for their Advent Service on 28th November and their carol service on 15th December.

And in addition to this, whenever I go into school, I am always greeted by children happy to say hello. And I am often surprised by how many of them I know from church and other connections

So, the relationship is rich and strong, and I believe mutually beneficial, not least because we at the church are hopefully able to contribute to the clear distinctive of the school, namely it's Christian ethos and values which I believe add a vital spiritual dimension to the lives of the children. And I'm pleased to say, not least due to the openness and support of Mr Symonds and the staff team, that I can only see this relationship growing stronger in the years ahead.

On another matter, in these difficult times, I wanted to let you know that I am the chair of a charity, independent of the school, but nevertheless known as the Richard Taylor Educational Trust, which does have funds to help children with educational needs, ranging from school trips to extra equipment. Our funds are not unlimited, but we like to help whenever we can. If you need an application form, simply email clerk.rtef@gmail.com

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Nikki Hutchinson, Foundation Governor appointed by Ripon Diocese/St John's PCC



I came into school for the Macmillan coffee morning. The supply of cakes and coffee was second to none. It was a pleasure to see so many people had come to support a great cause but also supply cakes to be bought! I tied in this trip with a chat with Mr Symonds and Jan covering a review of policies for equality inclusion and diversity for the students in school. And also, a walk round the school to see the work that had been completed over the summer in the courtyard. A brilliant morning!

Thank you to Victoria

Steve Scarisbrick, Foundation Governor appointed by Ripon Diocese



Victoria Amella has been a committed member of the Governing body of Richard Taylor School for over a decade. We are all sorry to see her leave her role as Vice-chair of Governors.

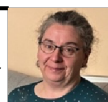
Over her years she has provided dedicated and enthusiastic support to our school, building up a rapport with all Governors, staff members and the children.

Recently Victoria was heavily involved in representing the Governing body during the OFSTED inspection, working closely with the staff to give the Inspector the very best view of a school which provided a judgement of which we can all be proud.

Victoria has been supportive of me personally over many years as a friend and colleague and she will be greatly missed.

Greek Café in Coverdale & Remembrance Day

Jan Johnson, Chair & Foundation Governor appointed by Ripon Diocese/Richard Taylor's Educational Trust



Kalimera (Good Morning) from the Greek Café in Coverdale

It was fabulous to join Mrs Crisell and all of Coverdale for a food filled morning producing amazing Greek food. Mr Symonds and I joined in with all the fun of hummus handling, flatbread forming and tzatziki tasting, alongside the very able chefs of Coverdale.

Two groups made the hummus, two groups made tzatziki and a one large industrious table provided us with a wealth of flatbreads. The teamwork was outstanding, but the eagerness to all get together and help clean up at the end of the session was phenomenal, a real pleasure

for me to be part of such an uplifting lesson.

Finally, it was wonderful to help create the delicious Greek treats, but even more enjoyable to take part in sampling of the finished products. Coverdale, if your Greek food is anything to go by, please put me on the helpers list for the next cooking lesson and I'll be there. Efcharistó (Thank you) from Mrs Johnson



Remembrance Day at RTS

Fridays are the day that I have the weekly meeting with Mr Symonds, but last November 11th, I was lucky enough to be around at the same time as the Remembrance Day Assembly.

It was a calm and quiet reflection on what Remembrance Day is all about, with all the children listening to the personal stories of soldiers Mr Symonds knew about, along with the beautiful music of Elgar's Nimrod. Even the very smallest students were attentive and engaged.

The silence at 11am was observed beautifully by all in the school yard, after a solemn presentation of the poppy wreath at the Cross and it was moving to hear the Last Post being played to announce the two minutes silence. Well done to all for paying tribute in such a fitting way.

Tea & Cake Friday's with Lollipop Bob & Mr Symonds & Advent Service

Caroline Fox-Robinson, Elected Parent Governor



Whilst I was in school for a meeting with Mr Symonds this term, I was kindly invited to join him and Lollipop Bob for their tea and cake sessions with a nominated pupil from each class. What an honour! It was so lovely to meet so many of the pupils selected that week and discuss their achievements and what they'd been doing in school.

This event clearly has a big impact on the children and is a wonderful way for them to interact with other pupils from year groups they might not often get to mix with. I was so impressed with everyone's polite manner and eagerness to finish the cakes before the end of day.

I also had the pleasure of attending the Advent Service at St John's, the children selected for lantern carrying were beaming with pride and the service was very well attended. It is wonderful to see so many events held at school and at St John's.

Dentdale visit

Phillip Richardson, Foundation Governor



So this is my first entry into the Governor Newsletter as I joined the team as a foundation governor at the start of this academic year - I must say that I didn't realise how big a commitment it would be when I first took up the position, but I would still have taken on the role even if I did because Richard Taylor is important to me and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the wonderful journey that the school is on.

I became a governor because I currently have three children at the school, with a fourth only a couple of years away; I have also been involved with the school's worship since lockdown by providing several worship assemblies during the year. For this reason, I already felt a part of the school community and wanted to be more involved. Now that I am I have seen more clearly all the work that goes on to make Richard Taylor such a wonderful place for a child to grow and I am so excited to be involved.

Speaking of excitement, I also had the privilege of meeting the students in Dentdale (my link class) and what a great time I had. It was wonderful to meet all the students who were so encouraging when they found out I wasn't very good at art – teaching teenagers means I rarely have pupils tell me to believe in myself, so it was lovely to have several children telling me not to give in (that might change though when they actually see how bad I am drawing).

It really was great seeing how proud they were of their work on display and the whole class was so friendly that I wish I could go in more often – I really look forward to seeing how they progress through the school.

As I start my governor journey, my word of the day is exciting. The school is such an exciting place to be, you can feel the excitement for learning in the classroom and I am so very excited to have the fortune to be involved.

Harvest Festival & Coverdale School Trip

Joanne Sykes, Elected Parent Governor



It was lovely to go into school for the Harvest Festival and hear all about how the students have been reflecting on how we can reduce waste. There were lots of generous donations of food and other items for the community tea hampers and for Harrogate Food Bank.

I was also lucky enough to join Coverdale on their class trip to Harlow Carr, where the students enjoyed a walk around the gardens identifying plants and collecting leaves to add to their mobiles. After crafting their mobiles and a break for lunch we went on another walk around the grounds, this time searching for signs of autumn and taking lots of photographs. Thank you, Coverdale, for letting me join you on your trip.

A message from Mr Symonds



Since the last Governor's Newsletter, the school undertook its latest Ofsted Inspection in June 2022. You will be delighted to know that the governing body were given a glowing report following their meetings with the lead inspector. They know the school and were able to share a clear understanding of the school's vision and how we are implementing our development targets.

At a time when local governing bodies are struggling to recruit members, you will be pleased to know that at RTS we have a strong and flourishing LGB. I would like to thank all the governors for their commitment and support in ensuring that we as a school are successful in achieving the best outcomes for our children.

I would like to take this opportunity to especially thank Mrs Victoria Amella for her outstanding service to the school in many roles over a number of years. After a significant period of service, she is standing down from her role as Foundation Governor and Vice Chair of the LGB. She has been a superb advocate for the school, a wonderful ambassador, and a fantastic governor. It has been a pleasure to work with her and she will always remain a very special friend of the school.