

Governors vital to help pupils



Chair of governors Barry Rowsell at St John's C of E Primary School in Gosport

IN DEPTH: SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Worshippers who volunteer to help run our C of E schools make a big difference to their Christian ethos

IN today's lesson, the children are mummifying fish. They're learning about Ancient Egypt, and this is a piece of hands-on history.

It's messy, it's smelly - but it's also thought-provoking. As they wrap on the bandages, they address their questions to the nearest grown-up in the room. What happens to us when we die? Is there any such thing as the afterlife?

Luckily for them, the grown-up in question is well equipped to help them think through the answers. For Canon Karina Green, it's just another day in the life of a school governor.

Governors are at the heart of our church schools and academies. These committed volunteers offer their time, skills and expertise, working together to oversee every aspect of school life. They support headteachers, engage with children - and help steer schools into the future.

Foundation governors are nominated by the local PCC or deanery synod and appointed by our Board of Education. They serve a four-year term, during which their role is to represent the diocese and help the school live up to its core Christian values, as well as achieving the best outcomes for children.

"From my point of view it's about mission, in its broadest sense," said Karina. She is governor for St Alban's C of E Primary in Havant, an aided state school where the church has a strong influence.

Karina sees her role as a chance to live out her faith in practical ways, whether she's answering pupil's spiritual questions or just being a reliable support: "Where



Canon Karina Green reads with children from St Alban's C of E Primary

else would we find such an opportunity to show God's love to children and parents?

"I'm also a governor at Sharps Cope School, which is actually where the episode with the fish happened. It's also important for churchgoers to offer to be governors at non-church schools, where there may be fewer people in the school community with an understanding of faith."

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Our diocese's education team are there for governors as they go about bringing God's presence to the life of their schools.

"The diocese has been brilliant

from day one, when they appointed me," said Nicola Hordell, headteacher and governor at St Alban's. "They're a source of information and knowledge that I can always call on, and they're always happy to help and give advice."

For Nicola, our greatest contribution has been helping the school shape its Christian ethos: "We see the impact of this every day. The children will go and help someone who's fallen in the playground: they'll be proactive, they'll go and ask 'Are you OK?'"

"They notice the other children, and that's down to the school values of hope, love, thankfulness and compassion."

Our involvement in church schools and academies also encompasses admissions and headteacher appointments,