

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to share some important updates about our leadership team and staffing for the final two terms of the academic year.

The Governing Body is delighted to announce, after a robust and rigorous interview process, the appointment of Mrs Jane Godfrey as our Deputy Headteacher, with her new role beginning after the Easter break.

Mrs Godfrey is already a much-loved and highly respected member of our school community. As our exceptional Hazel Class (Year 1) teacher—and through her wider leadership as Continuous Provision Lead and KS1 English Lead—she has consistently demonstrated deep expertise, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to our children. We are very pleased that she will now bring this experience to Mr Everitt's leadership team as Deputy Headteacher.

Alongside this, Mrs Godfrey will also take on the role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), ensuring continuity and a strong, knowledgeable advocate for children with additional needs. She will continue to teach Hazel Class for the remainder of this academic year, providing stability and consistency for children and families.

It is with real sadness and deep gratitude that we share that Miss Karen Mearns has decided that the end of this academic year is the right moment for her to retire.

Miss Mearns has been considering this step for many months, reflecting her own personal plans and long-term thinking, prior to this and any other staffing announcements. She has been an extraordinary presence throughout her 16 years at St Michael's—a compassionate champion for pupils with additional needs, a trusted colleague, and a steady, thoughtful leader. Her impact on children, staff, and families has been profound, and we will have opportunity later in the year to celebrate her contribution properly.

This is the right time to inform you of this news, now that we are clear that Miss Mearns' SENCO responsibilities will move across to Mrs Godfrey, ensuring a smooth and secure transition for our children and families.

With Mr Everitt formally becoming Headteacher after the Easter break, we are also pleased to confirm that:

- Mrs Englefield will continue to teach Elder Class (Year 4) part time. I want to thank her and Mrs Lodge for their support over the last few weeks supporting Mr Everitt as he shadowed Mrs Arkwright during this transition period.
- She will be joined by Mrs Ford, whom we welcome back from maternity leave.

In addition, with Miss James beginning her maternity leave just after Easter, we are grateful and thankful that:

- Miss Mearns has agreed to work full time for the final two terms of the year
- Mrs Sharp, whom we welcome back from maternity leave will support both Acorn (Reception) and Hazel (Year 1) Classes as Teaching Assistant.

These arrangements ensure continuity, stability, and strong teaching provision across the school.

Over the coming weeks, we will begin the process of appointing a long-term replacement to take on Miss Mearns' classroom responsibilities ahead of the 2026–2027 academic year. Once this appointment is confirmed, we will share the full staffing plan for next academic year.

We recognise that there has been a high amount of change over recent months, the most the school has seen in over a decade, and that the news of much-loved staff moving on can feel emotional. At the same time, this period has shown the strength and depth of our staffing model. We are incredibly proud that two senior leadership roles have been filled through internal promotion, reflecting the talent, commitment, and stability within our team.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of our staff and our school community. Congratulations once again to Mrs Godfrey, and I look forward to seeing many of you next week as we say 'thank you and good luck' to Mrs Arkwright during the last week of term.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.



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