

Annual Governance Statement
St.Mary's Catholic Primary School
2024



Purpose of this Governance Statement

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of St.Mary's Catholic Primary School, Claughton in compliance with our duty to report on the ways in which we have fulfilled our obligations and responsibilities relating to (i) our overarching duty to conduct the school in accordance with its Catholic character and (ii) our core functions (which are explained below) during the 2023-24 academic year.

A list of serving governors is set out below.

Role of the Governing Body

As the Governing Body of a Catholic school, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that the School is conducted in accordance with its Catholic character at all times, and this overriding duty (which is also a legal duty) permeates everything that we do. Further, in accordance with our legal obligations, the Governing Body endeavors to operate at a strategic level leaving the headteacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to us for the operational day-to-day running of the School. It is by achieving these aims that we can be sure that our School has effective governance.

The three core functions of the Governing Body are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the School and its pupils, and for the internal organisation, management and control of the School, including performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the School and making sure its money is well spent.

As an integral part of the vision for the holistic formation of children and young people Canon law (Church law) also requires that Catholic schools (which includes academies) are "...at least

as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area" (806§2) and the Governing Body are mindful of this requirement in all that we do.

In exercising their functions, the governing board shall

- Act with integrity, objectivity, and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
- Be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.

Our governing board has a Code of Conduct which is reviewed and agreed annually. All governors and associate members are obliged to abide by this code

Scope of Governing Body's Responsibilities

The Governing Body acknowledges that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that St.Mary's has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve our objectives, and can provide only a reasonable (as opposed to absolute) assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Governing Body has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the headteacher for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management.

Governance Arrangements

Composition of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is made up of Foundation Governors, Staff Governors (including the headteacher), Parent Governor(s), Local Authority Governors(s) and Co-opted Governor.

Who volunteers on the school's governing board?

COMMITTEES

SEC COMMITTEE	RESOURCES COMMITTEE
S DEAKIN	S DEAKIN
J PEARCEY	J FITZHERBERT-BROCKHOLES
P BURGESS	A HUNT
S WATT	S O'ROURKE
A HUNT	J MCDONALD
M BLAIR	S WATT
	J PEARCEY
	M BLAIR

The Clerk to Governors is	Val Morris
The Chair of Governors is	Jenny Fitzherbert-Brockholes
The Vice Chair of Governors is	Michael Blair



CURRENT GOVERNOR INFORMATION 2024-2025

Name	Governor Category	Date of Appointment	Responsibilities/Roles	Term of Office	Relevant business & pecuniary interests	Governor role in other educational constitutions	Relationship between governor or school staff
Mrs J Fitzherbert-Brockholes	Foundation	10/11/2023	Chair of Governors DSL Designated Mental Health Equality & Diversity Music Governor	4 years	None	None	None
Ms J McDonald	Foundation	03/02/2023	RE, Catholic Life & Mission, Collective Worship, HRSE	4 years	None	None	None
Ms S O'Rourke	Foundation	15/12/2023	Training Link Governor	4 years	None	None	None
Mr M Blair	Co-opted	11/11/2024	Vice-Chair of Governors Safeguarding & Child Protection	4 years	None	Chair of Governors at St. Francis' Catholic Primary, Goosnargh	None
Miss S Deakin	Executive Headteacher	01/09/2024	Headteacher	4 years	None	Headteacher St Francis Goosnargh	None
Mrs A Hunt	Associate member	01/09/2021	English Governor KS1 Governor	4 years	None	None	None
Mr P Burgess	Staff	04/11/2024	Computing & Online Safety Governor School Website KS2 Governor PE Governor	4 years	Member of staff at St. Mary's school	None	None
Mr J Pearcey	Parent	25/04/2023	EYFS Class Maths Governor Science Governor	4 years	None	None	None
Mr S Watt	Local Authority	7/11/2024	Foundation Subjects (Languages, Humanities & Arts) SEND Governor	4 years	None	None	None

Governors who have left the Governing Body during 2023-2024: Mr P Rydeard, Mrs J Tuson, Mr J Seed

Vacancies: 5 foundation governors, 1 parent governor

Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese in which the School is situated. The Bishop not only appoints his Foundation Governors because of their particular skills, but, more importantly, for the strict purpose of ensuring, on his behalf, the Catholic character of the School. Foundation Governors are also under important legal duties to preserve and develop the School's Catholic character. In order to ensure that the School's Catholic character is protected and that it is being conducted in accordance with the tenets of its Catholic designation, Governing Bodies of Catholic schools and academies must always have a majority of Foundation Governors.

The Diocesan Bishop is Canonically responsible for his schools and academies. He ensures that the Catholic ethos of the school/academy is maintained, particularly through the appointment of Foundation Governors, but also through overseeing the appointment of members of staff and through Diocesan inspection, in order to ensure that the school/academy is fulfilling the objects cited in its Instrument of Government/Articles of Association and the trust deed under which the school/academy was established.

* Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are people who, in the opinion of the Governing Body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and

success of the school/academy. On our Governing Body 1 of the Co-opted Governors are members of the local community.

Governor Meetings

At St.Mary's Catholic Primary School, members of the governing body are dedicated, passionate and highly skilled at driving the school forward. The current governors who are all listed on the website, are all volunteers, giving up their own time to fulfil the roles for the benefit of our children.

We have held three termly full governor meetings over the year 2023 – 2024 with three Standards, Education and Curriculum (SEC) meetings and three Business and finance meetings held over the year.

Governor attendance has, as always, been of a very good level, with any absences having been fully explained and accepted and approved by the governing body.

There are no causes for concern at the level of commitment shown by any member of the governing body. On the website, the governor's section highlights governor attendance at meetings.

We have a very experienced clerk that helps us to ensure all the topics we are required to discuss each year are covered, and we have a number of sub-committees that perform much of the detailed work in accordance with their terms of reference.

The Work of The Governing Body 2023-24

Our work is driven by our overall Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and our Annual School Development Plan. This sets out our vision ethos and long-term direction for the school. We evaluated and updated the impact⁶ made on a termly bases for all areas of key priority listed below. This plan is used to inform decision-making and to assess progress against our priorities. We also approve, evaluate and monitor the School Development Plan (SDP) to challenge and support the strategic improvement of the school during the full governor meetings.

Skilled governors are linked with classes and also subjects. Visits are purposeful and support the overall monitoring, continued development of staff and work of our senior leadership team. Subject leaders are spoken with at length. Book looks, walk throughs, display analysis, subject leader evaluations, data analysis, external sources, speaking with parents, children and the community alongside other accountability checks aim to ensure governors know our school and that we challenge and support the headteacher.

One of our governors, Mr. Burgess, met with Tech-hub and Mr. Gilmour to test our filtering and monitoring systems in the building and to ensure our school provides the highest levels of filtering and monitoring safety for our children. He also meets to conduct the governor checklist and have a working group with a child representative, staff representative and parent (in his parent governor role).

Attendance

The governing body receives regular reports from Miss Deakin, once per half term in governor meetings and also shared with our chair of governors during weekly phone calls.

We work alongside our attendance officer, liaising with county when we feel children's attendance is a cause for concern. Positive strategies are put in place throughout school and persistent absence is low.

ST. MARY'S CLAUGHTON 02042 – Governor attendance 2023/2024 2024/2025

Governor	AUTUMN FGB 2023/24	AUTUMN RES 2023/24	AUTUMN SEC 2023/24	SPRING FGB 2023/24	SPRING RES 2023/24	SPRING SEC 2023/24	SUMMER FGB 2023/24	SUMMER RES 2023/24	SUMMER SEC 2023/24	FGB MEETING %
Mr Rydeard	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
Mr P Burgess				✓			✓		✓	66%
Mrs J Fitzherbert-Brockholes	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		100%
Dr PJ Halstead	✓									50%
Mrs A Hunt	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	66%
Mr J Pearcey	✓								✓	33%
Mr J Seed	✓	✓	✓ (OBS)	✓						100%
Mrs JE Tuson	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	66%
Mrs J McDonald				✓			✓	✓		66%
Mrs S O'Rourke				✓			✓	✓		100%
Mr S Watt							✓			100%
Miss S Deakin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
Mr J Gilmour	✓			✓						66%

Safeguarding

Governors receive regular reports and understand how school keeps children safe in many areas. Section 127 safeguarding audits are shared with governors and 7 minute briefings/other relevant safeguarding information is sent to governors from the headteacher to keep updated throughout the school year.

A whole school safeguarding review was completed and an overview of effective school practice was produced by the headteacher.

School liaises with many outside agencies: NSPCC, Place2 Be, Barnardo's, Winston's Wish, CFW services, MASH, Encompass, Anna Freud, CES, other schools to ensure we support the children and families we serve and Early Help Assessments are undertaken when necessary to get early help and soon as it is needed.

School staff use CPOMS to log any concerns. The headteacher keeps a full list of signpost and pathway guidance to support children and families. The staff room has safeguarding boards for reference and scenarios are discussed throughout the year alongside 7 minute briefings for staff. Children have a post box to post any problems and the website has a contact page to report concerns to the headteacher. Staff all know how to make a referral and they have this information on their lanyards as part of god practice.

School Development Plan (SDP)

Governors work co-operatively with the head teacher and head of school in writing and monitoring the School Development Plan. The School Development Plan sets aims for the

forthcoming year. The SDP for 2023/24 was based on priorities identified from data, school self-evaluation and Ofsted priorities. The SDP is set out with clear aims, the key tasks which will be completed in order to achieve these aims and the success criteria in order to measure outcomes. The SDP is monitored and reviewed termly, with an evaluation overview being completed and presented to governors alongside the Head Teacher report.

Key Priorities for 2023-24
1. Begin the implementation of the new RED and respond to the new Catholic Schools Inspectorate expectations for the Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education and quality of Collective Worship in our schools.
2. To ensure the same standards are reached in writing as with other core subjects.
3. To develop leadership at all levels.
4. To continue our commitment to the highest levels of staff and pupil wellbeing.

Examples of the impact of these visits include

Co-operative working to fully understand and oversee teaching and learning in classrooms by a skilled class governor. Development of policies and effective practice throughout school has continued to raise standards and ensure teachers and staff are constantly moving forward with curriculum development.

Working alongside SLT and agreeing the SDP targets has meant we have been successful in opening a pre-school/EYFS unit for children to extend our school age range and secure succession of our school.

Data analysis

Governors view data periodically throughout the year when they visit school. For example, the English link governor spends time on analysing children's current attainment and progress in all year groups and challenges the head teacher on any children under achieving. We also analyse data from all subjects and this is done at least three times a year.

The headteacher's report to governors is thorough and highlights data for all subjects in the curriculum. Data is made available to governors through termly meetings with verbal and written presentations followed by question and answer sessions with the headteacher and head of school. By doing this the governors are able to benchmark their data against similar schools, the Local Authority and schools nationally to ensure the schools standards and expectations are high and are able to be closely scrutinised.

Particular scrutiny is placed on pupil progress across all ability groups including vulnerable groups and on the effective use of the Pupil Premium. We have a live document to monitor pupil premium spending and all groups of learners.

Policies

Governors review all relevant policies on a programmed basis to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date.

Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list and the Local Authority recommended list.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Pupil Premium

Equality Act and protected characteristics

Our duty statement-this can be found on our website:

Public bodies such as schools have a duty, under the 2010 Equality Act, to ensure they promote equality within their organisation and this statement sets out how we endeavour to achieve this.

As a Catholic school, we believe in the right of every single person to be treated with equal dignity and compassion alongside equal legal protection is fundamental to the ethos which underpins everything we do in school. Our constant aim is for all to feel valued, included and recognise their beauty, purpose and contributions to the world in which we live.

The equality duty has two main parts: the 'general' equality duty and 'specific duties'. The general equality duty sets out the equality matters that schools need to consider when making decisions that affect pupils or staff with different protected characteristics.

This duty has three elements. In carrying out their functions public bodies are required to have 'due regard' when making decisions and developing policies.

The Curriculum

EYFS

Our intent is to give each unique child a high-quality early education with high quality care. This is delivered within a safe and nurturing environment which makes a powerful contribution to children's wellbeing, development and learning.

Play, both indoors and outdoors, is rich and we aim to ignite curiosity, awe and wonder of the world to develop the whole child. We provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure, inclusion and a real love of learning for every child to feel success and happiness.

Every child is recognised as a remarkable individual with a diverse range of experiences and starting points. We celebrate and welcome differences within our school community and we work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that our first experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling us to develop a lifelong love of learning. We plan with the children and adapt our environment by discovering new lines of development together (PLOD planning) to keep learning exciting and engaging.

The curriculum is flexible, ambitious and carefully sequenced. Adults 'scaffold' children's learning, modelling new skills and by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently. Teaching and exploring new vocabulary has high importance and stimulating experiences develop their communication skills. As such, there is a strong emphasis on the Prime Areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language.

Whole school

Subject leaders link with governors and visits are purposeful and challenging.

Revised intent, implementation and impact statements were created with due regard to best practice in adaptive teaching and ambition for all children as a focus. These can be found on our website.

Our curriculum continues to be ambitious, broad and take into account cultural capital in order to prepare children to be confident, positive and achieve their full potential in all areas of learning and development. We have focused on diversity in life and our children's future aspirations. Big thinking questions allow children to have a voice and to explore youth social action and care for our world. We continue to ensure children, staff and families are emotionally secure and supported.

Outcomes and progress

EYFS

At the end of the year 2023-24, children at the end of the EYFS achieved standards in line with National average or well above national average. The average for a Good Level of Development (GLD) was 87.5%. This means children achieved the expected level in all prime areas/Literacy and Mathematics.

National average for end of year 203-2024 was 67.7%.

Year 1 phonics screening check

100% met the standard again and we had no Year 2 retakes due to 100% pass rate the previous year.

KS1 teacher assessments

Reading 100% age related

Maths 100% age related

Writing 67%

KS2-small cohort

Reading 75% and 50% Greater depth

Writing 50%

Maths 50%

Well-being

- A wealth of information on our website to support families and children.
- Visitors throughout the year to support children's personal development.
- Play leaders, CAFOD club, Sport leaders, Eco council, librarians and many roles in school for children and prefects provide opportunities to be thoughtful and independent future citizens.
- Mental health and wellbeing week, Place 2 Be and online safety newsletters with the Safer Schools App support many issues and areas of being healthy and happy.
- Staff access anti bullying alliance resources and the Life Education Bus visits school to support personal development.
- Plenty of enrichment opportunities throughout the school year to promote wellbeing

- Pupil questionnaires are analysed
- HRSE is of huge emphasis
- My Happy Mind and other initiatives have been embedded.

Health and Safety & Premises

Workplace inspections are regularly completed. Lancashire County Council review our future needs through planned and unplanned PROP and we are awaiting works on our septic tank.

Risk assessments for all areas of school were updated in Summer Term 2024 and governors have had sight of risk assessments for classroom areas/activity areas and general risk assessments for equipment.

The health and safety policy is reviewed by the headteacher annually and the asbestos, fire, evacuation, emergency plans and contingency plans are seen by governors. In the previous year, the headteacher was subject to HSE asbestos inspection and she was highlighted as one of the schools who impressed the HSE inspector with sound knowledge of systems. The file was reported to LCC as being of high quality the inspector was very pleased with the systems we have in place.

Moving forward, we are due to use the energy grant for schools on improving classroom ventilation.

We approved the establishment of a new breakfast and after school club. The need for two members of staff and one manager on site was discussed and we have successfully employed two members of staff to be on site.

The headteacher reported that thumb locks for all classrooms were to be installed in the new term for extra security of lockdown procedure.

SLT have regular health and safety training through LCC and other credited courses. They liaise with LCC for support/general advice and for asbestos and legionella training.

Finance

This committee meets six times a year, with a focus on: - Ensuring that the school's resources are being managed in the most efficient and effective way to support its strategic aims. - Providing support and challenge to strategic investment decisions, making sure that they deliver good value both in the near and longer term. - Monitoring income streams and looking ahead to potential opportunities or challenges that may be on the horizon. - Benchmarking the school budget against similar schools locally and nationally. - Reviewing staffing levels and the management structure to ensure that we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right roles.

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents -if you would like to see a copy of the minutes please ask at the school office.

The Risk and Control Framework

The School's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability, where appropriate. In particular it includes: –

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body;

- Regular reviews by the Business and Finance reports which indicate financial performance against the forecast and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- Identification and management of risks.

Capacity to handle risk

The Governing Body regularly reviews the key risks to which the School is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

Review of effectiveness

The Governing Body has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the systems in place in the School to identify and manage risk and plan to address any weaknesses (if relevant) and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Governors' Future Plans for the School

We are looking ahead to monitor the updated curriculum cycles and knowledge maps across all subjects.

We will continue to monitor EYFS numbers and the success of our pre-school.

Class link governors will continue to be regular visitors in school.

We will focus on the key priorities on this year's school development plan

Key Priorities for 2024/25
1. To review our foundation subject knowledge overviews using KAPOW to enhance teaching and learning sequences.
2. To review our English key texts and writing planning within our half termly topics.
3. To review SEND provision across the school with quality first teaching and adaptive teaching strategies within all curriculum subjects.

For the past five years, we have no significant data trends due to small cohorts. Writing across the curriculum remains a mindful focus and we will be holding half termly writing moderations across both schools and internally. LCC consultant training will remain within our Cluster of schools and training for Year 2 and 6 teachers will continue. Cluster writing moderation across the 14 schools for every year group from EYFS will continue. We purchased Grammarsaurus to support teaching and learning within day to day teaching. We are part of the English Hub and the English subject leader, headteacher, attends and coordinates training for all staff.

We have established our creative curriculum and we are now reviewing our curriculum offer for foundation subjects. What are the key things we want children to learn and remember? Are there half termly topics that can be combined to study deeper? Is all current content relevant? Do we need to adapt plans and create new content within our ever changing world? We have purchased KAPOW to enhance our subjects and ensure well planned and cohesive lesson content is supported with this excellent planning resource. Big Thinking questions, quizzes, hooks,

skillability and youth social action continue within our half termly curriculum maps to give children the greatest toolkit of cultural capital and care for our common home and each other.

Music, HRSE, PE and the arts will remain held to high esteem to support children's mental health and wellbeing. Both schools will be attending the Preston cluster of sports events, entering children from EYFS in competitions throughout the whole school year. Many events will be held on Whitechapel grounds. We will focus on our online safety aspect of our computing curriculum to support safeguarding and behaviour requirements.

Ambition for all:

Research tells us that children thrive in an inclusive classroom and we have reviewed what adaptive teaching strategies can look like within the different subjects for all children to achieve.

Enrichment opportunities:

We will continue to develop the whole child and provide excellent enrichment opportunities for all children to enjoy learning and live life to the full.

Impact of our Governing body 2023-24

- Extended our age range to 3 years old to welcome pre-school children
- Agreed plans to extend to wrap around care for September 2024
- Supported the headteacher in accessing wrap around care funding from the Local Authority.
- Agreed with continuing our three teacher and class approach now pre-school has proven successful.
- Scrutiny and analysis of data within the context of the school
- Monitoring the implementation of the school development plan.
- Ensuring the continual updating of the SEF and reviewing impact made.
- Successfully appointing new teachers to our team.
- Supporting the continued development of SSP and early reading with another year of 100% phonics pass rate in Year 1 screening check
- Reading success in Year 6 SATs meant another year of 50% greater depth and 75% meeting expected expectations.
- Joint collaboration training with governors from St. Francis
- Meeting with our school adviser for external validation of our school priorities being achieved.
- Supporting and creating community events where school is involved.
- Managing the short term sickness of members of staff.
- Monitoring the implementation of the computing curriculum and monitoring our online safeguarding procedures
- Improvement of the school learning environment-with reference to outdoors.
- Ensuring compliance with website statutory requirements.
- Monitoring changes in pupil numbers and the implications for both budget and staffing.
- Budget setting and monitoring and review of school finances and monitoring of SLT movement across our collaboration to ensure needs are met when they arise across both primary schools.

- Review of school policies and documentation.
- Monitoring of the school's performance management cycle.
- Overseeing the continual compliance in school with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- Completion by all governors of the NGA Skills Audit, results collated and shared anonymously with the governing board.
- Completion of the SFVS Financial Management Skills Analysis.

How to contact the Governing Body

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers and the wider school community – please contact the Chair of Governors, Jenny Fitzherbert-Brockholes on jfitzhert-brockholes@st-maryslaughton.lancs.sch.uk.

This governance statement is approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on and signed on its behalf by:

P. Burgess

S. Deakin

Paul Burgess

Sarah Deakin

Governor

Headteacher

