

Annual Governance Statement 2021-22

St Marys Catholic Primary School

Purpose of this Governance Statement

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of St Mary's Catholic Primary School (hereafter referred to as the Governing Body) 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 2021/2022 academic year.

The Governors recognise and support the significant recognition from external bodies, that has been shown to St Mary's for academic and other curricular activities in 2021-22.

A list of serving governors is set out on the Governors' page of St Mary's website.

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 endeavours to operate at a strategic level leaving the Head teacher 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 Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the School and its pupils, and for the internal organization, 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.

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 Head teacher 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 5 Foundation Governors, 2 Staff Governors (including the Head-teacher) 1 Parent Governor & 1 Local Authority 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 is fulfilling the objects cited in its Instrument of Government and the trust deed under which the school was established.

Governing Body's work this year and Governors attendance at full Governing Body meetings

This year the Governing Body have:

- Approved the school development plan and reviewed its implementation and its effects on pupil outcomes through examining performance data for the school and considering where improvements can be made to the overall attainment of pupils.
- Considered ways to work in closer collaboration with local schools and other catholic schools in the Diocese of Northampton both formally and informally.
- Governing Monitoring
- Utilised new training providers for Governors to ensure training is accessible to all Governors.

The full Governing Body has met 4 times during the year.

We have not cancelled a Governing Body meeting because it was not "quorate" (the number of Governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made).

Overall Governors have excellent attendance at Governing Body meetings.

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Governing Body meetings can be found on our website.

Committees work this year and Governors attendance at Committee meetings

At St Mary's we have a Resources Committee which focuses on ensuring that the school sets and uses its budget appropriately in line with the school development plan and which reviews property maintenance, management and Health and Safety. A Catholic Life Committee which focuses on developing and monitoring the Catholic ethos of the School and which considers admissions in to the school. An Achievements and Standards Committee which reviews and monitors the quality of pupils' learning and achievement and developments in the school curriculum. The Pay and Performance Committee, which reflects on Pay and Performance and makes decisions under personnel procedures.

The Headteacher's Performance Management Committee, who meet with the school improvement advisor to set the Headteacher's objectives and evaluate these with the Headteacher, are now sub committees of the Resources Committee.

The work of the Governing Body Committees this past year:

Resources Committee: Met each term to consider the school's financial position and to monitor the school's expenditure against its development plan. This year the committee:

- Monitored the School's expenditure to ensure compliance with the approved budget for 2017/2018

- Reviewed the 2022 SFVS and submitted the return to the Full Governing body for approval
- Submitted the annual financial plan to the main Governing Body for approval for 2022/23
- Reviewed the Diocese Condition Appraisal Report and implemented urgent recommendations
- Inspected the school building and grounds to monitor maintenance programme and health and safety compliance.

Catholic Life committee: This year the committee

- Reviewed the School Admissions and Attendance Policy
- Considered the Applications for admittance in to the school
- Resolved to take steps to raise profile of the school in the local community and surrounding areas to increase pupil numbers
- Reviewed worship and prayer life in the school to ensure standards are consistently high.
- Considered ways of enhancing prayer reflection by the provision and improvements of prayer reflection areas.
- Monitored the provision of the religious education programme "Journey in Love" across the school.

Achievements and Standards Committee: This year the committee

- Monitored the use of Pupil Premium and Sports Premium and its impact on pupils
- Monitored the achievement and progress of pupils through an analysis of Raise on-Line Data and SATS results.
- Approved and reviewed policies pertaining to this area.

MAT Committee: This year the committee

- Considering the need for establishing an Academy or entering into a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and working with the Diocese to investigate

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Committee meetings can be found on the Governors' page of St Mary's website.

Governors' Future Plans for the School

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents - You can ask the Clerk, Mrs King C/O school if you would like to see a copy of the minutes.

Review of Value for Money

The Governing Body has used its resources to provide good value for money during the academic year and has assessed where value for money can be improved including the use of benchmarking data where available. The Governing Body has delivered value for money during the year by :

- Sourced and secured funding for amenities enhancement
- Review of whole school heating system
- Sourced funding for and arranged installation of new boiler
- Reorganisation of School and Governor administration support

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 Finance and Personnel committee of 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.

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 c/o School .

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

Signed:

Signed

