

School Governors



HOLY CROSS
CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Living loving learning together.

Governance in a Catholic School

Education has always been central to the mission of the Church but the re-establishment of the hierarchy in 1850, which saw the creation of the network of parishes, dioceses and provinces we recognise today, together with the establishment of local school boards in 1902, gave a particular focus to the place of schools in our Catholic communities.

Effective governing bodies are crucial to maintaining and further enhancing the quality of Catholic education in England and Wales. In almost all cases, the governing body is the employer of staff and is accountable to the local Catholic community and the civil authorities for the overseeing of all activities at the school.

Where a school is maintained by a local authority, the governing body will be composed of parents elected by the parent body, a representative of the local authority, a member of staff elected by the staff of the school and the headteacher.

In a Catholic maintained school, these governors are joined by a number (usually seven) of Foundation Governors, who are appointed by the bishop or by the superiors of the religious orders.

The Expectations of a Foundation Governor

A foundation governor in a Catholic school has the same general responsibilities as every other governor. As a corporate body, governors:

- Set the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and
- Oversee the financial performance of the school, ensuring money is well spent.

In a Catholic school, all governors of whatever category have the responsibility to uphold and develop the distinctive Catholic ethos of the school, particularly in respect of religious education and religious worship. Under charity and education law, it is the responsibility of the governing body to run the school in accordance with the Trust Deed as set out in the Instrument of Government.

Alms

- To be an effective governing body by having clear vision, ethos and strong strategic leadership.
- To raise standards, promoting achievement and ensuring the wellbeing and safeguarding of pupils.
- To establish good lines of communication and an excellent working relationship that will contribute greatly to the leadership of the school and its successes.
- To have in place governors that have the skills and experience that is needed for the continuing success of this school.
- To have in place an agreement that supports and strengthens the already close working relationship between governors, headteachers and the Local Authority.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has the following responsibilities:

Legislation

- To ensure full compliance with all statutory responsibilities.
- To have in place an instrument of government.
- To ensure the school complies with all equalities legislation.
- To be legally liable for all actions taken in its name by individual governors or committees with delegated functions.
- To act as a corporate body and to acknowledge that individual governors have no powers acting alone and can have no individual liabilities if they have acted in good faith.
- To ensure that when discharging its duties this Governing Body always complies with the school's instrument of government.

Election of Governors

- To ensure governors are elected under the correct process.
- To ensure the term of office for a governor is four years from the date of election or appointment.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

- To elect both the chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body for one year or for a period of four years.
- To ensure the Chair of Governors conducts the business of the Governing Body in accordance with all legal requirements.
- To ensure the Chair of Governors keeps the Governing Body focused on its core functions and ensuring that it operates effectively.

Clerk to the Governing Body

- To appoint a Clerk to the Governing Body.
- To ensure the Clerk Body produces high quality professional clerking when undertaking the following duties:
 - Organising and informing governors of meetings
 - Ensuring minutes are taken
 - Ensuring minutes are approved by the Governing Body or sub-committee
 - Ensuring minutes are signed by the Chair or the Chair of the sub-committee
 - Ensuring minutes and other relevant paperwork are available for inspection by anyone wishing to view them
 - Sending out all relevant documentation in readiness for a meeting
 - Keeping a register of the terms of office for each governor
 - Keeping an attendance register
 - Reporting absences to the Governing Body

Delegation of Duties

- To annually discuss the delegation of duties.

Link Governors

- To have in place a timetable of link governor visits to the school agreed by the Headteacher.

Aims and Values

- To agree the aims and values of the school.

Policies

- To have in place policies that will allow the achievement of the school's aims, objectives and targets.
- To agree policies relating to the aims, purposes and practices of the school.
- To be responsible for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly.

Headteacher

- To delegate certain powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher.
- To appoint and manage the performance of the Headteacher.
- To delegate the everyday management of this school to the Headteacher.
- To support the day-to-day operational decisions taken by the headteacher.

- To have a close working relationship with the Headteacher and senior leadership team.
- To hold the Headteacher and senior leadership team accountable for the school's performance.
- To delegate power and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy.
- To ensure the main duty of the Headteacher (who has decided to be a governor of this school) is to advise the Governing Body on establishing and implementing its strategic framework for the school.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

- To ensure all governors are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service checks before taking up their appointment.

Monitoring

- To regularly monitor and review school performance.
- To be up to date with the school's achievements and performance in preparation for a school inspection.

School Self-evaluation and School Improvement

- To be aware of and to part in school **self-evaluation**.
- To produce action plans for improvement following school inspections.
- To influence and approve the school development plan and approve and monitor the allocation and expenditure of the school budget.

Health and Safety

- To be responsible for the health and safety of all pupils, school personnel and school visitors.

Pupils

- To ensure individual pupils' needs are met, including special needs.

Staffing

- To recruit and select staff.
- To be responsible for all staffing matters.
- To be responsible for all staff disciplinary procedures.

Teaching and the Curriculum

- To make sure that the National Curriculum is taught.
- To be responsible for improving the quality of teaching.
- To be responsible for agreeing the curriculum policy.

- To be responsible for monitoring the curriculum policy and reviewing its implementation.

Finance

- To be responsible for overseeing the school's finances.

Governor Allowances

- To annually discuss whether provision will be made for the payment of governors' allowances.

Register of Business Interests

- To establish and maintain a register of business interests for all governors and the headteacher.

Equality Act

- To nominate a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy.
 - Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

School Website

- To publish on the school website information about the Governing Body including relevant business and pecuniary interests.

Annual Review

- To annually review the effectiveness of the Governing Body by assessing whether the size and structure is fit for purpose and whether governors have the necessary skills required for the further development of the school.

Links

- To give parents information about the school.
- To be responsible for forging strong links pupils, parents, the immediate local community, local business and employers.
- To receive annual feedback from all stakeholders on the effectiveness of the role of the Governing Body.
- To establish and maintain positive links with the local business community.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Training

On induction all governors will receive training from an accredited trainer that deals with:

- The role of the school governor
- Governing Body Code of Conduct
- Governor meetings
- Committees
- The various roles of school governors
- The Mission Statement
- Vision and strategic direction of the school
- School Improvement Planning
- School self-evaluation
- Accountability
- Performance Management
- Monitoring progress
- Analysing school performance data
- Finance
- The Ofsted inspection process
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Equal opportunities
- Inclusion

Periodic training will be organised for all school governors so that they are kept up to date with new information and guide lines concerning equal opportunities.

We ensure all school governors have equal chances of training.

Statutory Panels

As well as the three sub-committees there are several statutory panels that the governing body is required to have in place. At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School governors often volunteer to be on these as and when a statutory committee is required to convene depending on availability. These statutory committees often do not need to meet but when they are, each governor will be notified promptly and a suitable date and time will be arranged.

The Statutory Committee's include:

- Pupil Discipline/Exclusion
- Staffing / Pay
- Complaints
- Appeals
- Headteacher's appraisal

Each panel will consist of at least 3 governors, although staff governors are not allowed to serve on these due to the nature of discussions

TERM OF REFERENCE: FULL GOVERNING BODY (FGB)

Quorum

A quorum will be 50% of the total number of members of the governing body. If a governor leaves during the meeting and it loses its quorum the meeting must be adjourned.

Any 3 members of the Governing Body may ask for an extra meeting to be held.

Although decisions may be delegated, the Governing Body as a whole remains responsible for any decision made under delegation.

- To receive reports and recommendations from sub-committees where full discussion of issues will take place
- To make decisions and ratify recommendations
- To receive the Head teacher's written report on a termly basis
- To review correspondence
- To provide an overview of the work of the school and its sub-committees
- To make decisions on those matters which cannot be delegated and are reserved for the Full Governing Body

Matters reserved for the Full Governing Body:

- To determine the strategic direction of the school
- To monitor and evaluate the performance of the school by receiving reports from the head teacher
- To agree constitutional matters, including procedures where the governing body has discretion
- To consider whether or not to exercise delegation of functions to individuals or committees and to establish the committees terms of reference
- To receive reports and ratify recommendations from committees or from individual governors
- To consider business provided by the LA
- To investigate financial irregularities (if head suspected)
- To agree selection panel for headteacher and deputy head appointments
- To suspend or end suspension of head teacher
- To draw up the instrument of government and any amendments thereafter
- To appoint or remove the chair and vice chair
- To appoint or dismiss the clerk
- To hold at least 3 governing body meetings a year
- To set up a register of governor's business interests
- To recruit and appoint new governors where appropriate
- To appoint the chair of any committee (if not delegated to the committee itself)
- To suspend a governor

- To manage the school budget & consider proposed revisions to the budget
- Decide whether to delegate power to spend the delegated budget to the head teacher and if so establish financial limits of delegated authority (see scheme of delegation)
- To ensure a policy review cycle is in place

Committees Terms of Reference

- Membership of the committee will be no fewer than 3 governors, plus the Head teacher who is a Governor.
- The quorum for each meeting shall be 3 governors.
- The committee is to meet termly and otherwise as required, using the terms of reference as a guide to agenda setting.
- The committee is to report to each meeting of the full governing body.

- The committee clerk will be responsible for arranging meetings, taking and distributing the minutes (together with other relevant papers) and following up agreed actions.
- The committee has delegated power to make its own decisions on behalf of, and without referral to, the full governing body, except where the subject matter requires full governing body consideration by law or in accordance with the school's established scheme of delegation.

Curriculum/Standards Committee

Terms of reference Curriculum and Standards:

- To provide and support curriculum development as set out in the School's Development Plan or School's Improvement Plan.
- To monitor the implementation of the governing body's plans and report back to the full governing body.
- To consider curricular issues which have implications for Finance and Personnel decisions and to make recommendations to the relevant committees or the Governing Body
- To oversee arrangements for individual governors to take a leading role in specific areas of provision, eg SEN, Literacy, Numeracy. To receive regular reports from them and advise the Governing Body.
- To oversee arrangements for educational visits, including the appointment of a named co-ordinator
- To review annually those curriculum policies/provision which are required by law (Sex Education, RE and Collective Worship, Special Needs, Complaints Procedure).
- To review pastoral support systems within the school.
- To review and advise the governing body on testing and assessment procedures and arrangements for reporting to parents.
- To review the policy and provision for pupils with special needs, ensuring that these are met.

To Monitor and evaluate:

- The effectiveness of leadership and management
- The impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement
- The impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance
- The effectiveness of provision for children with special educational needs and Disability
- The quality of the curriculum (the curriculum policy) in securing high standards of achievement
- The impact of any actions or interventions taken to address differential standards of achievement or rates of progress within groups of pupils (eg SEN, gender, free school meals, BME, EAL, children in care etc)
- To agree annual attendance targets and monitor progress towards achieving these

- Identify and celebrate pupil achievements
- Quality of school's provision for personal development & well being (SMSC) and effectiveness of care, guidance & support for learners

Additional Item:

The impact of the school's punctuality, attendance and behaviour policies

Finance/ Buildings/ Personnel Committee

Finance/ Buildings/ Personnel Committee

- Membership of the committee will be no fewer than 3 governors, plus the Head teacher who is a Governor.
- The quorum for each meeting shall be 3 governors.
- The committee is to meet termly and otherwise as required, using the terms of reference as a guide to agenda setting.
- The committee is to report to each meeting of the full governing body.

- The committee clerk will be responsible for arranging meetings, taking and distributing the minutes (together with other relevant papers) and following up agreed actions.
- The committee has delegated power to make its own decisions on behalf of, and without referral to, the full governing body, except where the subject matter requires full governing body consideration by law or in accordance with the school's established scheme of delegation.

Terms of Reference

Finance:

- In consultation with the Headteacher, to draft/approve the first formal budget plan of the financial year
- To establish and maintain an up to date 3 year financial plan
- To consider a budget position statement including virement decisions at least termly and to report significant anomalies from the anticipated position to the Governing Body
- To ensure that the school operates within the Financial Regulations of the City Council
- To monitor expenditure of all voluntary funds kept on behalf of the Governing Body
- To annually review charges and remissions policies and expenses policies.
- To make decisions in respect of service agreements
- To make decisions on expenditure following recommendations from other committees
- To ensure, as far as is practical, that Health and Safety issues are appropriately prioritised
- To exercise virement between budget headings as necessary and up to an agreed maximum
- To prepare and review financial policy statements, including consideration of long term planning and resourcing

- To agree the level of delegation to the Headteacher for the day to day financial management of the school.
- To authorise staff to have responsibility for signing orders, invoices and petty cash claims.
- To authorise the Headteacher to enter into contracts up to an agreed limit
- To liaise with those responsible for the school funds to ensure an overall policy on expenditure is agreed to the best advantage of the school.
- To respond to any audit reports on the management of the budget and financial procedures
- To determine whether sufficient funds are available for pay increments as recommended by the Headteacher
- In the light of the Headteacher Performance Management Group's recommendations, to determine whether sufficient funds are available for increments

Personnel

- To draft and keep under review the staffing structure in consultation with the Headteacher and the Finance Committee
- To establish a Pay Policy for all categories of staff and to be responsible for its administration and review
- To establish and review a Performance Management policy for all staff
- To oversee the process leading to staff reductions
- To keep under review staff work/life balance, working conditions and well-being, including the monitoring of absence
- To make recommendations on personnel related expenditure to the Finance Committee
- To consider any appeal against a decision on pay grading or pay awards
- To formulate and review staffing and personnel policies
- To draft and keep under review Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for approval by the Governing Body and to ensure that staff are kept well informed.
- To agree recruitment and selection procedures and the level of involvement by governors in the appointment of staff.
- To review Headteacher's, Deputy Headteachers' and teachers' salaries as required by the Pay and Conditions documents.

Premises Committee

- To advise the Governing Body on priorities, including Health and Safety, for the maintenance and development of the school's premises
- To oversee arrangements for repairs and maintenance

- To make recommendations to the Finance Committee on premises-related expenditure
- In consultation with the Headteacher and the Finance Committee, to oversee premises-related funding bids
- To oversee arrangements, including Health and Safety, for the use of school premises by outside users, subject to governing body policy
- To establish and keep under review an Asset Management Plan
- To establish and keep under review an Accessibility plan
- To monitor, and report regularly to the Governing Body on:
 - Energy
 - Cleaning
 - Grounds Maintenance
 - Security
 - Maintenance
- To make recommendations for minor works related to improvements or repairs to the buildings or grounds.
- To approve the costs and contracts for maintenance, repairs and decoration within the budget allocation.
- To review and advise the Governing Body on all matters relating to Community Use, including the charging policy.
- To approve a Health and Safety Policy. To monitor on a regular basis all issues relating to health and safety and to work closely with the Health and Safety Representative within the school.