

The Federation of Sacred Heart and St Marys RC Primary Schools Battersea

The Governors Statement and Impact report 2021-2022

The government has high expectations of governing bodies. They are the strategic leaders of our schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. For schools such as ours this is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school' in line with our Mission Statement;

"A man took a grain of mustard seed and sowed it his field. Indeed, the sees is smaller than all the seeds but when it is grown it is greater that the herbs, and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches

In all schools, governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The governors bring a wide variety of experience and expertise to the school, and this helps ensure that the school is moving forward and standards are constantly raised in a way that is in line with the overarching ethos and vision of the school, along with the statutory directives from the Department of Education and The Archdiocese of Southwark

Governance Structure

Mr J. Brading The Executive Headteacher

Mrs Byrne and Mrs Mitchell Associate Headteachers of Sacred Heart and St Mary's respectively by virtue of their role

Mr R Wickham and Mr A Cooper. Joint Chairs of Governors

(Experience and skills in HR Change management project management IT)

Mr John O'Brien Chair of Resources and Premises Committee

(experience and skills in Law, GDPR and budgets)

Mr Matthew Somorjay Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee

(experience and skills in HR, Project management, marketing and visual arts)

Ms Annabel Clarkson Chair of the Admissions and Discipline Committee

(experience and skills in Theology, education, Catholic responsibility)

There are other governors whose details are on the website including

- Two Parent Governors
- One Staff Governor
- One Local Authority Governor
- Foundation Governors appointed by the Archdiocese of Southwark
- Co-opted Governors

Governing Body meetings

Governors attend three full governing body meetings (FGB) each year. In addition, there are termly committee meetings of each committee to

- consider the financial resources, premises maintenance and staffing of the schools,
- to have oversight of standards of education and the curriculum offer as measured both externally and internally to the children of both schools as well as the Catholic life of the school.
- to decide upon admissions to each school. This Committees to review pupil exclusion, hearings and appeals are convened as the need arises

A standing item on the FGB is the Governors committee report. This ensures that all members of the FGB are aware of the priorities and actions of each committee. Governors also receive a Headteacher report at each FGB meeting that covers all aspects of school life. Governors discuss and ask questions on this report and it is an opportunity to challenge the Senior leadership of the Federation on aspects of school performance. At these meeting we also review the School Improvement Plan, the Schools Financial Value Statement and Self evaluation form.

Governor Training

All members of the Governing Body receive training through Wandsworth Council Governors Service and attend events run by The Archdiocese of Southwark. This allows us to keep up-to-date with our responsibilities with regards to the latest requirements and expectations, as well as local and national Best Practice.

Governor training in the previous year included:

- Academisation: training with Archdiocese of Southwark Education Commission – presentation by Simon Hughes,
- Safeguarding – Governors’ role and responsibilities: introduction (SCH GOV 22) – Wandsworth Borough Council,
- Admissions: Financial and other Challenges Ahead for Governors, Archdiocese of Southwark Education Commission
- An introduction to school finance for governors - an overview
- Strategic priorities and the school development plan - the role of governors (Zoom)

Policies

Governors review all relevant policies throughout the academic year to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. A list of the policies can be found on the respective schools websites.

Governors visits and monitoring of the curriculum and standards

Following the return to normal schooling the Governors returned to in person meeting and to a programme of school visits.

Governors participate in monitoring visits and produce a visit report. Governors with specific responsibilities also spend time visiting each school each term to look at learning/teaching and to meet with children and subject leads. In this way, governors’ understanding of the school is greatly

strengthened. The impact of these visits has been a much sharper focus on the SDP and the evolution of the curriculum

Feedback on all visits is given to the Full Governing Body meetings and this allows all governors to be kept informed about progress, and also to be aware of any concerns that need to be addressed.

In 2021-2022 the Governors received presentations on and visited to see the new Wandsworth music scheme and staff in action at St Marys. They approved a change in PE management to an outside provider at St Marys Chelsea FC and on the new phonics scheme at Sacred Heart -Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. They were presented with information about the use of Sounds Write at St Marys and considered and approved the associated financial costs in resources training and interventions.

Governors followed through on learning walks and book scrutinise to see the development of curriculum milestones and knowledge organisers in Science, history and Geography. They were supported by a meeting with the School Improvement Partner. The notes of her visits to each school are also a standing item on the termly.

Governor Link Roles 2022-2023

Subjects	Name of Governor
Religious Education	Annabel Clarkson and Deacon Michael
Numeracy	Rex Wickham
Science	Peter Lam
Literacy	Matthew Somorjay
Geography and History	Natasha Kulinski
Early Years	Deacon Michael
Arts (Music, Art, Drama)	Matthew Somorjay
P.E	Carlos Bandoh
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Deacon Michael
British Values	Andrew Cooper
Safeguarding including Looked After Children	John O'Brien
SEND and Disadvantaged Groups	Precious Nwifo
Governor Training	Annabel Clarkson
Analyse School Performance	Rex Wickham
Computing	Rex Wickham
Personal, Social and Health Education and Education for Personal Relationships	Natasha Kulinski
Behaviour and Attendance	Annabel Clarkson
Finance	Carlos Bandoh
HR/Personnel Governor (to include monitoring issues related to NQTs)	Andrew Cooper
School Council	Andrew Cooper and Rex Wickham
Health and Safety	Peter Lam
GDPR	John O'Brien

Financial Management

Governors with significant expertise in financial management meet regularly with the Headteacher and School Business Manager in the resources committee. The chair and members of the Committee oversee the financial management of the school and ensures that the school is fully compliant with financial expectations.

There are twin challenges facing Inner London schools – rising costs and falling pupil numbers. Governors have approved cost cutting measure like sharing staff across the Federation and reducing staff costs without impact too adversely on education standards and provision. The impact of the Governors’ role in the school ensures that the budget is managed effectively and improvements are effective and continuous and contribute strongly to positive pupil outcomes.

Examples of the impact of Governor Expertise on school improvement include:

- ☒ Notable improvements to the learning environments, buildings and the school grounds.
- ☒ Highly effective staff recruitment and deployment as well as outstanding professional development.

☑ An engaging curriculum with new resources such as the 'Power of Reading', 'Bug Club', and 'Big Maths'.