

The aim of this Policy is to clarify issues around the recruitment, roles, responsibilities and rights of our Governing Body. Full regard should be made to both current and future legislation relating to Governors including identified policies and the current 'Instrument of Government'.

The Governing Body of St Scholastica's Catholic Primary School will act with integrity, confidentiality, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of the school; will be open about decisions made and actions taken, and will be prepared to explain decisions and actions to interested persons. Its procedures and guidelines for Governing the school will be consistent with the principles of public life: objectivity, openness and accountability.

Our Governor Policy is very much a reflection of our school Vision Statement. At St Scholastica's Primary School our Vision Statement says:

"Our school is a Catholic community, committed to providing a safe environment where everyone is significant and respected for their differences and achievements. We inspire each other to learn, grow, enjoy and be happy. Nurturing everyone through the love of Jesus Christ, we create a strong self-belief, so that all are prepared to meet the demands of a changing world and make positive contributions."

GOVERNORS' AUTHORITY, ACCOUNTABILITY & OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY.

Schools operate in accordance with a range of policies and legal requirements determined by the Department of Education (DfE) e.g the Governor Handbook.

The Governors' Handbook, applies to maintained schools and academies, outlines the responsibilities of school governors. Section 1.2 says that the governing body's three core functions are:

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

It also explains that these functions are reflected in the criteria that Ofsted inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of governance.

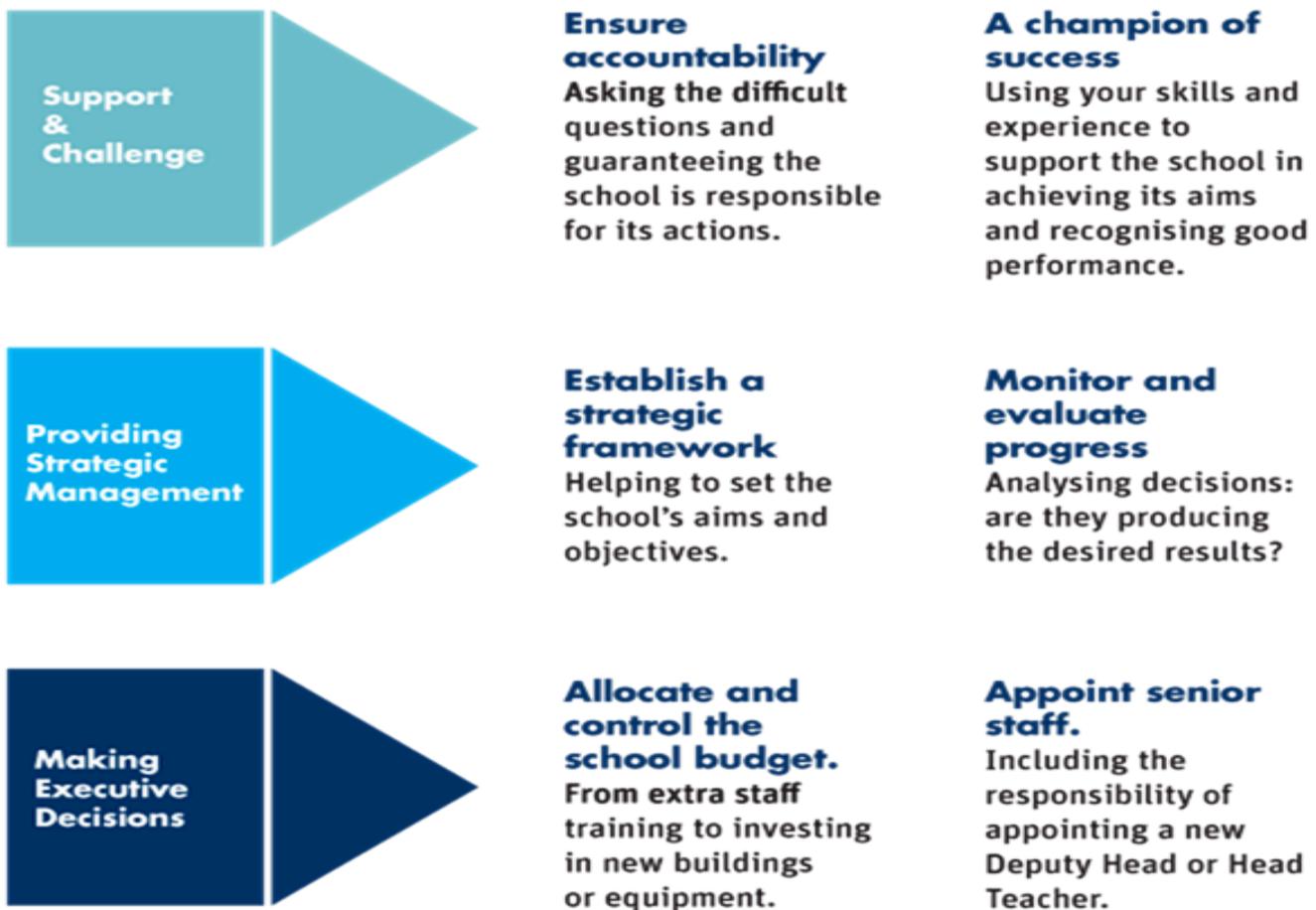
Key activities of the governing body

Section 1.9 has a diagram which gives an overview of the governing body's key activities. It says that governors should:

- ✓ Understand the school
- ✓ Set the school's strategic direction
- ✓ Agree improvement targets and how to monitor progress, and allocate resources
- ✓ Manage the performance of the school's leaders and appoint headteachers
- ✓ Check the governing body is fit for purpose

The Governing Body and Head Teacher have been entrusted with the responsibility for establishing and maintaining its aims, values and Catholic ethos, deciding its policies, supervising its management and monitoring its performance. This is undertaken in line with both recognised legal, Diocesan and Local Education Authority (LEA) procedures and the policies approved by the Governing Body. As unpaid voluntary public servants, the Governors help to sustain the school's identity and provide a link with the community served by the school. The Governors are best thought of as trustees for the performance of the school, in the interests of both current and future pupils, and aim to promote high standards of educational achievement in everything they do.

Governors do not manage a school day-to-day, but are required to oversee its long-term development. Ultimately, all governor responsibilities come back to this task and can be split into three core roles:



STATUS OF THE GOVERNING BODY:

The Governing Body exercises its powers and duties collectively, but Governors' Committees have been established to act on behalf of the Governing Body in certain matters. These delegated areas are identified in the committee remits. All Governors have an equal say on the Governing Body, an equal right to serve on its committees and to stand for election as Chair or Vice-chair of the Governors.

If an issue cannot await the next meeting, or a specially convened meeting, then the Chair or Vice-chair can act on behalf of the Governing Body, even if that area has not been specifically delegated to them. Similarly, if neither the Chair or Vice-chair is available, and inaction would seriously harm the school or the people in it, the Head Teacher can act as necessary but must seek the Governing Body's retrospective approval as soon as possible.

Governors, including the Head Teacher, cannot act as clerk to the Governing Body or its statutory committee meetings, namely admissions, staffing dismissal, staff dismissal appeals & pupil behaviour committees.

GENERAL PROCEDURES:

The full Governing Body meet twice each term and the committees at least once at term. Governors are also expected to find time for serving on committees of the Governing Body, visiting the school, attending school events, training and the preparation and follow-up involved in all these aspects of their work. The school has a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation policy, which forms the main framework by which Governors monitor the effectiveness of the school.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF GOVERNORS:

As defined in our Instrument of Government, St Scholastica's Catholic Primary School Governing Body consists of fourteen governors of which there shall be:

- (a) eight foundation governors (of whom two shall, at the time of their appointment, be

- eligible for election or appointment as parent governors);
- (b) one head teacher governor;
- (c) two parent governors;
- (d) one LA governor;
- (e) one staff governor;
- (f) one co-opted governor.

ELIGIBILITY OF GOVERNORS:

The eligibility of people to serve in each of these categories together with the respective periods of office can be found in the 'Instrument of Government'.

ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY:

The election of representatives to the School Governing Body must be undertaken in accordance with established procedures.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

Governors are accountable to:

- the LEA, which maintains the school, for its good performance and for the effective use of the funds which the LEA has delegated to them;
- the parents, pupils and community served by the school for the good education of the pupils
- the staff, as good employers
- the Diocesan Board of Education which established and helps maintain the school

FINANCIAL LIABILITY:

The members of the Governing Body have no personal financial liability for any action of the Governing Body.

FUNCTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY:

In fulfilling their statutory responsibilities for the overall management of the school, Governors have the following specific duties:

Pupils

- ✓ Promote pupil attainment in all areas of the curriculum
- ✓ Promote improvements in pupil attainment
- ✓ Improve assessed pupil progress in English and maths
- ✓ Make effective use of pupil premium funding to close the attainment gap
- ✓ Meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- ✓ Promote the highest possible standards of pupil behaviour
- ✓ Ensure the provision of appropriate sex education
- ✓ Ensure the provision of extra-curricular activities

Leadership

- ✓ Ensure that all necessary child protection procedures are in place
- ✓ Oversee pupil admission arrangements
- ✓ Oversee the implementation of a home-school agreement
- ✓ Oversee vigorous and effective teacher appraisal
- ✓ Ensure that all necessary child protection procedures are in place

Staff

- ✓ Ensure pay arrangements for all staff are cost effective and fair
- ✓ Provide the best possible staff, at all levels, throughout the school
- ✓ Conduct the headteacher's performance management review

Other

- ✓ Guarantee that all aspects of the school's finances are properly managed
- ✓ Guarantee that all relevant health and safety procedures are implemented
- ✓ Provide and maintain the highest possible quality of buildings and facilities
- ✓ Oversee the implementation of fair and effective complaints and grievance procedures
- ✓ Publish specified information on the school website
- ✓ Oversee the development and publication of statutory policies

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS:

Many of the Governing Body's duties are designed to ensure that parents are informed about what the school does, and tries to do, what it is providing for the pupils and how they are progressing. Conversely the views of parents should be brought to bear on the Governing Body's work.

Governors should attempt to secure and develop a positive rapport between the school and all parents, which is based on mutual respect and trust. One of the key ways that this is achieved is through explaining the school aims, objectives, values, expectations and policies to every parent. This has been partly achieved through the development of the School Mission Statement and the 'Home - School agreement.'

The Governing body has a number of specific statutory responsibilities towards parents. These include producing:

- ✓ a school prospectus
- ✓ a 'home-school' agreement, in consultation with parents
- ✓ information for parents in relation to the curriculum
- ✓ pupil records
- ✓ pupil behaviour procedures
- ✓ a policy concerning charges made for certain school activities

The above should be supplemented by a wide range of non-statutory arrangements by which parents are individually and collectively informed, consulted and involved in the work of the school.

Although the responsibility for non-statutory arrangements generally falls to the Head Teacher, Governors should keep themselves informed about such arrangements:

Such arrangements should include:

- supporting or monitoring the Friends of St Scholastica's
- procedures for reporting children's academic progress, behaviour or well being to parents
- consulting with parents over major issues
- supporting the Head Teacher in disseminating curriculum issues to parents
- supporting extra curricular activities such as prayer meetings, church outreach etc

ROLE OF PARENT GOVERNORS:

St Scholastica's Catholic Primary School has two elected Parent Governors. Parent governors must serve as members of the Corporate Governing Body and generally have the same powers, duties, rights and responsibilities as other Governors, some of who may also have a child at school.

Parent Governors are not on the Governing Body simply in order to represent the interests of parents, because all Governors must have regard to the rights and duties of parents. They are not bound to carry out the parent body's wishes, because they are not the mandated delegates of the parents.

However, by having a child at the school Parent Governors are well placed to understand the needs and points of view of parents.

Parent Governors are not the official link between the Governing Body and parents but can strengthen the Governing Body's relationship with parents by keeping in touch with them through both formal and informal channels of communication.

When dealing with individual concerns from parents, a Parent Governor should:

- listen carefully to parents concerns, keeping an open mind on the issue
- be aware that the school has to act in the best interest of all the children in school
- clarify that, being an individual governor, they cannot act for the Governing Body
- be aware of the schools procedures for dealing with parental concerns, and in appropriate cases advise parents that these procedures must be followed before the Governors can be involved
- avoid being an intermediary between a parent and the school on a matter of substance
- not publicly criticise the Head Teacher, but ensure that grievances are handled in the appropriate way
- identify that there may be little or nothing that the school can do in response to the parents point where it concerns matters outside the control of the school, e.g. LEA funding, class sizes, etc.
- be prepared to explain the reason for any decisions the Governors may have made

- inform the Head Teacher of any concerns prior to a Governors' meeting so that a more informed discussion can be held
- raise any parental concerns as a separate, confidential point on the agenda, after considering any advice from the Head Teacher.
- raise any significant staff concerns with the Head Teacher rather than the Governors, as internal discipline procedures may need to be implemented prior to it being an issue for Governors to consider.

*See NAGM paper 'Governors and parents.'

TRAINING:

As a result of continual changes in education, governors recognise the need for up to date training. At the start of each financial year, the governors consider the different training packages available from the Diocese and LEA subject to the schools financial allocation. Newly appointed governors are particularly encouraged to attend training.

GOVERNORS' EXPENSES:

At a full governors' meeting it was acknowledged that governors had the right to submit claims for the reimbursement of certain types of expenses. Governors felt that it should be left to the discretion of individual governors to submit any claims. Governors should also note that all claims submitted are funded from the formula allocated budget and that no separate budget is available to meet governors' claims.

* See School Policy on Governors Allowances

Agreed By Governors: 1st July 2015

Presented to staff: July 2015

Signed by Chair of Governors _____ Date _____

Signed by Head teacher _____ Date _____

Review date: June 2017