



Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Purpose of this Governance Statement

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of St Edmund's Catholic Primary School & Nursery (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 2020/21 academic year.

A list of serving governors is set out at **Appendix 1**.

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 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.

Scope of Governing Body's Responsibilities

The Governing Body acknowledges that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that St Edmund'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 8 Foundation Governors, 2 Staff Governors (including the headteacher), 2 Parent Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor and 2 Co-opted Governors*.

† 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 is a staff member and the remaining 1 is a member of the local community who has significant experience with school admissions.

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

The full Governing Body has met 5 times virtually during the year.

One extra ordinary meeting was convened during May to discuss academy conversion.

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 good attendance at Governing Body meetings.

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Governing Body meetings can be found at **Appendix 2**.

Committees work this year and Governors attendance at Committee meetings

At St Edmund's we have:

Resources Committee, which focusses on finance & premises; this year we have continued to monitor health & safety around the school, particularly in light of the continuing restrictions and requirements around Covid-19. We have needed to monitor additional spending associated with Covid-19 and have been able to plan for works to take place around the school that were rescheduled from last year. We have major works scheduled in school over the Summer to replace the heating system and so the committee extends our appreciation to all the families who contribute to the Governors Fund, which will allow us to achieve this.

Curriculum & Achievement Committee which focusses on the progress & attainment of the children and how our school provides a broad & balanced curriculum; this year our main focus was initially to ensure that children were able to learn whilst in school and also from home, due to the Covid-19 disruption. Since all children returned to school in March the focus has been on how staff were settling the children back into a school routine. Governors have had the opportunity to analyse internal progress and attainment data, and have learnt how school staff and children are working hard to catch up on any learning lost over the last year because of Covid-19 disruption. School leaders have kept us up to speed with all the additional opportunities and experiences that have been arranged to help the children as they have settled back into their school routine since March.

Community Committee which focusses on other key areas such as Attendance, Behaviour, Equalities & Inclusion, Wellbeing, Marketing; a major focus for this committee this year has been the wellbeing of everyone in our community and what actions are being taken to care for the mental health of all. This has meant monitoring behaviour and attendance which can be key indicators of mental health concerns. We have been kept up to date with the feedback from parent, children and staff surveys. Governors learned about the work that has been going on for the School Diversity Project, and governors have been trying to understand why parents from more diverse backgrounds are not able to volunteer as governors. Much more work is needed in this area and we will be seeking guidance as to how we can best communicate, learn and improve our board's diversity. School marketing has been a key focus as pupil numbers are changing quite rapidly. It is a competitive marketplace and we must be making sure we work to secure pupil numbers for the future.

Pay and Personnel Committee which oversees the staff and salary structure of our school; each year we meet to discuss anonymised staff performance in relation to the progress and attainment of the children, and to ensure that pay awards are in line with performance management decisions.

Admissions Committee School manages the administration of school admissions. The Admissions Committee has only needed to meet twice in order to oversee the categorisation of Nursery & Reception applicants. We have monitored the number of applicants to both our Nursery and Reception classes as this is a very rapidly changing picture. We have worked with the Community Committee to look at how the school markets itself so that we are doing everything we can to secure pupil numbers for the future.

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Committee meetings can be found at **Appendix 3**.

Governors' Future Plans for the School

The Governing Body of St Edmund's will have the following focuses for the school year 2021/22 (subject to change) as well as priorities from the School Development Plan 2021/22:

1. Continue to focus on the progress of all children, with particular attention to:
 - PPG & SEND children (to ensure their progress is at least as good as non-PPG & non-SEND children) especially those more impacted by Covid-19 disruption;
 - Other year groups/classes/groups where data indicates children's progress has been negatively impacted by Covid-19 disruption;
2. Focus on the impact of COVID Catch Up Funding and how interventions are helping children to catch-up on any gaps in their learning due to Covid-19 disruption;
3. Continue to focus on the school budget, achieving best value for money and to make cost savings where possible;
4. Continue to focus on school marketing to attract high quality staff and as many applicants as possible for our Nursery and Reception;
5. Focus on improving the diversity of our board;
6. Focus on wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community.

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents and you can ask the clerk to the Governing Body, Gaynor Nicholl, on g.nicholl@st-edmunds.richmond.sch.uk 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 [improved] value for money during the year by:

- New, reduced cost, maintenance agreements have been set up for items such as checking the boiler & water systems
- A new telephone system, that combines a tannoy, will be installed shortly. This will make it much easier to contact individual classrooms and gives a much better way to alert the whole school, in case of a lockdown situation. It also means that we now don't have to install a new, stand alone, 'warning system'.
- A new higher quality and cheaper CCTV system was purchased and installed.
- We implemented a new software program to enable us to manage smaller renovation projects by ourselves, thus saving on the fees we used to have to pay to third parties to do it for us.

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 Resources 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 Co-Chairs of Governors, Deb Long & Clare Jones via our clerk Gaynor Nicholl at g.nicholl@st-edmunds.richmond.sch.uk.

This governance statement is approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on 13/07/21 and signed on its behalf by:

Deb Long

Governor

Clare Jones

Governor

Carmel Moreland

Headteacher

Appendix 1

Governing body of St Edmund's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

List of serving governors – 2020/21

Governor details	Category of Governor	Term of office expiry date
Domini Bingham	Foundation Governor	Resigned 31 st August 2021
Sean Carey , Chair of Admissions Committee	Foundation Governor	31/8/2023
Gary Cole	Foundation Governor	Resigned 17 th September 20
Guy Elliott , Chair of Resources Committee	Local Authority Governor	14/3/2022
Brenda Green , Deputy HT	Co-Opted Governor	31/8/2021
Nigel Griffin	Foundation Governor	31/8/2021
Louis Harrison	Parent Governor	5/12/2022
Clare Jones , Co-Chair of Governors	Parent Governor	5/12/2022
Bob King	Co-Opted Governor	31/8/2021
Christina Lingeman	Parent Governor	24/11/2020
Deb Long , Co-Chair of Governors, Chair of Pay & Personnel Committee	Foundation Governor	31/8/2022
Sean McAlinden , Chair of C & A Committee	Foundation Governor	31/8/2023
Carmel Moreland , Headteacher	Ex-officio	N/A
Fearghal Nash	Staff Governor	23/9/2023
Susan Sparkes , Chair of Community Committee	Foundation Governor	20/12/2022
Hazel Taylor , Vice Chair of Governors	Foundation Governor	31/08/2023

Appendix 2

Governing body of St Edmund's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Governor attendance at Governing Body meetings for 2020/21

Governor	Full Governing Body meetings attended	Out of a possible
Domini Bingham	4	6
Sean Carey , Chair of Admissions Committee	4	6
Gary Cole	1	1
Guy Elliott , Chair of Resources Committee	6	6
Brenda Green , Deputy HT	6	6
Nigel Griffin	5	6
Louis Harrison	6	6
Clare Jones	6	6
Bob King	4	6
Christina Lingeman	1	1
Deb Long , Chair of Governors, Chair of Pay & Personnel Committee	6	6
Sean McAlinden , Chair of C & A Committee	6	6
Carmel Moreland , Headteacher	6	6
Fearghal Nash	6	6
Susan Sparkes , Chair of Community Committee	5	6
Hazel Taylor , Vice Chair of Governors	5	6

Appendix 3 -Governing Body of St Edmund’s Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Governor attendance at Committee meetings for 2020/21

Governor	Committee meetings attended	Out of a possible
Admissions Committee		
Sean Carey, Chair	1	1
Guy Elliott	1	1
Brenda Green, Deputy HT	1	1
Bob King	1	1
Deb Long	1	1
Carmel Moreland, Headteacher	1	1
Susan Sparkes	1	1
Community Committee		
Sean Carey	1	3
Brenda Green, Deputy HT	3	3
Deb Long	3	3
Carmel Moreland, Headteacher	3	3
Fearghal Nash	3	3
Susan Sparkes, Chair	3	3
Hazel Taylor	2	3
Curriculum & Achievement Committee		
Domini Bingham	1	4
Sean Carey	3	4
Guy Elliott	4	4
Brenda Green, Deputy HT	4	4
Nigel Griffin	4	4
Clare Jones	4	4
Christina Lingeman	1	1
Deb Long	3	4
Sean McAlinden Chair	4	4
Carmel Moreland, Headteacher	4	4
Fearghal Nash	4	4
Hazel Taylor	3	4
Pay & Personnel Committee		
Clare Jones, Chair	1	1
Deb Long,	1	1
Carmel Moreland, Headteacher	1	1
Susan Sparkes	1	1
Resources Committee		
Guy Elliott, Chair	4	4
Brenda Green, Deputy HT	4	4
Louis Harrison	4	4
Deb Long	2	4
Sean McAlinden	4	4
Carmel Moreland, Headteacher	4	4