



# Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

## Governing Body

### **Purpose of this Governance Statement**

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of Holy Cross 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 2024-25 academic year.

### **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 governing board is the school's legally accountable body. It is accountable for the individual school to the local authority and the diocese.

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 Holy Cross Catholic Primary School 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. The Governing Body also has regard to the need for the Headteacher and teachers in their school to be able to achieve a satisfactory work life balance, and, through their strategic role, should provide support and challenge to help reduce unnecessary burdens, for example, in relation to the number of data requests that are made and the number and length of governing board meetings attended.

## **Governance Arrangements**

### Composition of the Governing Body

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.

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school in the Trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The composition of the school governing body is summarized in the following table:

Category of Governor	No.of Governors in category
Foundation	7
Parent	2
Head teacher	1
Staff (elected staff governor)	1
Local Authority (nominated by the local authority and appointed by the Governing Body)	1
<b>Total size of Governing Body</b>	<b>12</b>

The total number of governors on the school governing body is 12 and the term of office for every governor is 4 years from the date of appointment.

Governors are volunteers who have an important part to play in working with the school, providing strategic leadership and accountability to ensure that the school delivers a good quality education. Governors appoint the head teacher and deputy head teacher. It is governors who hold the main responsibility for finance in the school, and it is governors who work with the head teacher to make the tough decisions about balancing resources.

#### The first function is strategic.

The governing body is responsible for the strategic management of the school. The governing body decides what they want the school to achieve, they do this by agreeing a framework with targets, and agreeing policies, in consultation with the head teacher. The governing body then monitors and evaluates the implementation and effectiveness of the framework and policies.

#### The second is challenge.

It is important that governors ask relevant but probing questions. They examine the performance of the children in the school, and give praise where it is good and seek ways of making improvements when expectations are not achieved.

#### Thirdly, governors must ensure accountability.

For example, if a task is delegated to a committee, the terms of reference for the group must be clearly set. Governors must evaluate themselves and the actions they take.

Each individual governor is a member of a governing board, which is established in law as a corporate body. Individual governors may not act independently of the rest of the governing body; decisions are the joint responsibility of the governing body.

The headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body. Working together with the head teacher, the key functions of the governing body are to:

- set the aims and objectives for the school
- set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- set the targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- hold the head teacher to account for a school's performance
- make sure the school's budget is properly managed
- be a source of challenge and support to the head teacher (a critical friend)

The role of a parent governor is not as a spokesperson for the views of parents. They are the same as any other governor on the board, providing a 'parental viewpoint' i.e. representative parents rather than representatives of parents.

The role of a staff governor is the same as any other governor, strategic leadership and holding the Headteacher to account, but also includes providing a 'staff viewpoint'. It is important for prospective staff governors to fully understand the nature of the role prior to appointment. Staff governors are not a spokesperson for the views of all staff, nor should they be held to account in relation to their staff role by the governing board.

A LA governor is a representative of the local authority. The role of a LA governor is the same as any other governor, including providing a 'LA viewpoint', and they should participate in the same way as other governors. They are not required to be affiliated to a political party, although they should be aware of local issues.

Foundation governors are appointed to secure compliance with the school's trust deed and to preserve and develop the religious character of the school. Where the school has a foundation, the foundation governors ensure that the school is managed in accordance with the foundation's governing documents.

The role of a link governor is to ensure that someone has specific oversight of a particular area and to deepen the board's knowledge of a particular area. The role will involve visiting the school and meeting with staff leads to understand how the strategic objectives are being embedded, how money is being spent and any particular issues affecting delivery. These roles should always remain strategic and not operational.

## **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

The following lists are suggested key tasks that our Governing Body will undertake throughout the 2024-2025 academic year as part of our agenda planning process.

Standard Governing Body Agenda Items
Apologies for absence and consent to absence
Declaration of pecuniary interest
Review governing body membership
Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising
<div>Headteacher's report<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report on the provision for Looked After Children</li><li>• Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update on self-evaluation</li></ul></li><li>• Update on school development and improvement plan</li></ul></div>
Reports from committees
Reports on governor visits / nominated governors
Review governor training and development
Confirm dates of next meeting
Any other business (if required)
Confidentiality (to declare confidential items)

Items for the Autumn Term	Responsibility
Appointment of Chair / Vice Chair	Governing Body
Review of committee membership and terms of reference, including delegation structures	Governing Body
Review of governing body code of conduct	Governing Body
Register of business interest returns	Governing Body
Approval of school development and improvement plan	Governing Body
Review governing body strategic plan/self-evaluation	Governing Body/All Committees
Review scheme for financing schools (financial regulations)	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Review School financial procedures	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Review Whistle Blowing Policy	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Review and approve local authority service level agreement	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Ratify/approve audited school fund account	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/Governing Body
Monitor appraisal procedures for head teacher, SLT and teaching staff	Head teacher performance management Committee/ Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/Governing Body
Review of SATS/national tests/examination results	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Review of admission policy	Governing Body/Admissions Committee
Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)	Curriculum and Standards Committee

Items for the Spring Term	Responsibility
Review school information published on website	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Receive ASP online and analysis data	Curriculum and Standards Committee/Governing Body
Approve school term and holiday dates/occasional and INSET days	Governing Body
Review asset management plan/ building reports	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Approve initial school spending plan	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Review governors and staff financial management competencies	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Undertake/review and approve assessment for school financial value standard (SFVS)	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/Governing Body
Review pay policy	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Report in the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/ Curriculum Standards Committee

Items for the Summer Term	Responsibility
Review staffing structure	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Review attendance of pupils and staff	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Review pupil exclusions for the school year	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Monitor provision for special educational needs	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/ Curriculum Standards Committee
Ratify/approve initial school spending plan (if not already completed in spring term – by 30 <sup>th</sup> June)	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/ Governing Body
Undertake financial benchmarking exercise	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee
Agree meeting schedule for governing body and committees for forthcoming school year	Governing Body
Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/ Curriculum Standards Committee
Undertake pay review for headteacher, deputy head and teaching staff	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee

Items for Any Time of the Year	Responsibility
Implementation of audit recommendations (whenever audit of school undertaken)	Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee/Governing Body
Receive report from LA Link Professional/Governor	Curriculum Standards Committee /Governing Body
Preparation for Ofsted inspection / review of action plan following inspection	Governing Body
Review statutory policies as per governing body schedule	Governing Body

Items for Consideration Every Term
Monitor and evaluate pupil progress
Monitor and evaluate provision for disadvantaged children
Monitor and evaluate quality of teaching
Monitor and evaluate the school development plan
Update self-evaluation documentation
Monitor spending plan/school budget
Evacuation and Emergency Procedure

(September 2024)	
	Designated Governor
Catholic Life	All Foundation governors
Safeguarding	Y Allen
Special Needs/Equalities	Y Allen
Premium Funding	All Governors
Governors' Forum	B Foy

