

ST AIDAN'S
Voluntary Controlled
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Governors' impact statement, March 2022

Introduction

The last year has been another challenging one for school leaders, staff and governors but as we emerge from Covid restrictions and life at school feels increasingly 'normal', it is a good opportunity to take stock and look back at the work of the Governing Body, outlining specific areas of impact as well as detailing our priorities for the current academic year.

St Aidan's aims to provide an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. Our vision for every child is to 'inspire and prepare for life in all its fullness' and this means helping every pupil to achieve their potential and become independent learners, ready for the transition to secondary school and well equipped for life beyond St Aidan's. To deliver this the school must be well-led by an ambitious and inclusive team, working with motivated and skilled staff who feel supported, valued and professionally challenged.

The role of the Governing Body (GB)

The GB plays a crucial part in improving and developing the school through providing both effective support and effective challenge and is responsible for:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, values and strategic direction;
- holding the Headteacher 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.

Governance structure

The Governing Body consists of 15 appointed and elected governors:

- 3 Foundation (Church) Governors;
- 1 Headteacher Governor;
- 1 Staff Governor;
- 5 Parent Governors;
- 1 Representative (local authority) Governor;
- 4 Co-opted Governors.

Currently all positions are filled.

Meetings and committees

Full Governing Body meetings are held six times a year, once each half term. Parents and staff are always welcome to attend and observe the first section (part 1) of these meetings.

A wide variety of business is conducted at full Governing Body meetings. Outlined below is a selection of activities that happen at these meetings across the year:

- Governors receive a report from the Headteacher including an update on issues such as progress in all areas of the School Development Plan, pupil attendance, behaviour, safeguarding and staff training. Governors discuss this report and ask questions to challenge all aspects of the school's performance.
- Each of the Governing Body committees (detailed below) reports back on the work they have undertaken which provides an opportunity for other governors to ask questions or discuss any aspects.
- School policies and key statutory documents are reviewed, both those passed by committees and those that need to be ratified by the full Governing Body.
- The Governing Body receives presentations from curriculum leaders for English, Maths and Science and uses these sessions to ask questions about the priorities for those subjects and progress being made towards them. Governors also receive presentations from particular subject leaders in areas where the school might be introducing a new initiative or any areas that they would like to know more about and be able to scrutinise.
- The Governing Body receives reports from Link Governors (see later) and has the opportunity to ask questions on the priorities and progress for each of the Foundation subjects or other specialist areas of responsibility, for example Inclusion, use of pupil premium, more able pupils.

Over the last year, the Governing Body has maintained a number of Covid related adjustments:

- Full GB meetings and committee meetings were held either on Zoom or in person depending on Covid rates and our risk assessments in place at the time.
- The school risk assessment document was continuously reviewed and adjusted as DfE guidelines changed.
- Governors continued to receive written reports from the Headteacher at all Governing Body meetings (previously reports alternated between written and verbal presentations) to capture a detailed written record of events and decision making.
- The frequency of regular meetings between the Chair of Governors, Vice Chair and Headteacher, which were fortnightly pre-Covid, have continued to be held weekly to ensure increased support for the Headteacher, regular flow of information to the GB and to allow for swift decision making when necessary.
- Staff wellbeing is an agenda item at every meeting, C&C committee meeting and every meeting between the Chair of Governors, Vice Chair and Headteacher.
- The Link Governor roles were reviewed again to ensure they reflected key priorities as the school emerged from lockdown.
- Recruitment for staff posts has been in person where possible and conducted over Zoom where not.

Committees

The Governing Body is split into smaller committees that also meet each half term. This model ensures that there is sufficient focus and time allowed to drill down into the key areas that each committee oversees. Below is an outline of the typical remit of each committee as well as a number of specific highlights from work carried out in the last year.

A more detailed understanding of the work of the individual committees can be found in the committee Terms of Reference in the Governor Section on the school website.

Standards

This Committee is responsible for following pupils' progress and achievement, ensuring the school provides a high quality teaching and learning experience and delivers a broad and balanced curriculum in keeping with the school's aims and national curriculum requirements. In this committee, governors analyse school performance data and review both internal and external data reports allowing them to track all groups of children within school and against other London schools and nationally. Governors ensure that they ask about the comparative progress and attainment of different groups including those targeted by the pupil premium grant, children with special educational needs (SEND) and the different ethnicity, gender and ability groups. They ensure that the pupil premium grant is used to make a positive impact on the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. They also keep the SEND policy under review, monitoring provision and ensuring that the school fulfils its responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs and with disabilities.

The Standards Committee is also responsible for staffing, which covers the quality of education and the professional development needs of staff; reviewing the staffing structure (teaching and non-teaching) at least annually in relation to the school development plan; reviewing the appraisal/performance management policy and how staff objectives and CPD are linked to school development priorities; performance management of the Headteacher; recruitment of new staff and the adoption, implementation and review of staffing policies and procedures to ensure that all principles of good and fair employment practice are adhered to and legal requirements fulfilled.

This year, governors on the Standards Committee have:

- scrutinised and contributed to the School Development Plan;
- reviewed pupil progress through discussions with school leaders, data from internal assessments (there were no national tests for the second year running) and input from our school improvement partner;
- evaluated gaps in learning, the impact of them and strategies to mitigate them;
- reviewed our BAME action plan and worked with Governors on the Care & Communication committee to pursue priorities;
- reviewed progress against the HEP humanities curriculum introduced at KS2;
- reviewed the provision and progress for children with SEND, assessing the effectiveness of interventions and outcomes
- worked with school leaders to revise the SEND information report for parents;
- supported the SENCo in representing the School's position to the Local Authority, on children with Education Health and Care Plans;
- met with Ofsted inspectors as part of the LA SEND review (St Aidan's was selected to contribute based on our excellent SEND practice and strong outcomes for children with SEND);
- reviewed teaching profiles to ensure all children are receiving high quality teaching;
- retained a strong commitment to funding CPD for staff to ensure that their skills and learning continued to be strengthened and monitored uptake;
- reviewed deployment of the pupil premium grant through termly reports to the Governing Body by the link governor and scrutinised our pupil premium impact statement and funding plan;
- supported school leaders in the recruitment of staff, in particular a new Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Manager due to the retirement of the post holder;
- a panel of governors, conducted the Headteacher's Performance review with support from our external School Improvement Partner.



Resources

Governors on this committee are tasked with detailed monitoring of the school's finances. They ensure that:

- the school operates within the financial regulations of the local authority;
- adheres to school finance policies and procurement codes;
- complies with DfE and SFVS (School's Financial Value Standard) requirements;
- responds to any issues arising from the audit of the school's accounts or annual SFVS review.

Governors hold the Headteacher to account for the financial performance of the school and scrutinise the draft and final school budgets. They are joined by a School Business Manager (SBM) who works with the Headteacher and School Administrator throughout the year and an external finance consultant who works with the SBM on the quarterly finances and budget setting.

The governors bring a wide range of professional expertise to the school and this helps to ensure that budgets are effectively scrutinised, managed and appropriate steps taken to plan for the future.

This committee is also responsible for health and safety, overseeing the maintenance and development of the school site and premises (with sustainability in mind) to ensure it is safe and fit for purpose.

This year, governors on the Resources Committee have:

- worked with the Headteacher and SBM on regular financial monitoring;
- agreed budget assumptions and parameters for budget-setting;
- applied to the LA authority for a cash flow advance to ease cash flow pressures;
- reviewed recommendations from the Standards Committee regarding the re-structure of SLT and subsequent financial impact;
- led strategic discussions with the Local Authority about the school's financial position;
- scrutinised the budget and presented it for approval to the full Governing Body;
- worked with the Headteacher and SBM on submission of an application for a Licensed Deficit from the LA;
- participated fully in consultations and reviews with Haringey about managing falling primary school rolls across the borough
- led a review of a strategic school partnership;
- conducted on-site health and safety reviews;
- reviewed recommendations from the fire safety audit and actions required;
- supported the recommendations of the Standards Committee through budget commitment to high quality CPD for staff.

Pay

This sub-committee of the Resources Committee meets as required, typically twice a year, to review proposed changes to pay and authorise any recommended revisions.

Care and Communication

This committee is concerned with the health and wellbeing of the children and staff and with maintaining good communications with the school community, taking responsibility for the maintenance and promotion of parental and community engagement. Governors on this committee monitor the school's contribution to pupil wellbeing, their behaviour and safety, including promotion of healthy lifestyles and contribution to the wider community.

Governors regularly review policies designed to promote good behaviour and discipline and monitor their implementation and outcomes. They also monitor pupil attendance and evaluate strategies designed to maximise it. They undertake an annual review of safeguarding procedures including the child protection policy, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of them and

making recommendations to the Governing Body to address any emerging issues. They also monitor and evaluate the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This committee is responsible for reviewing the way in which the views of all stakeholder groups (pupils, parents/carers, staff and the local community) are taken into account. Governors gauge the opinions of parents, pupils and staff by preparing surveys including an annual parent questionnaire. They ensure compliance with statutory requirements such as the publication of information on the school website, publicising the complaints procedure, privacy notices and home-school agreement. They monitor parental engagement, community links and community use of the school and evaluate the school's contribution to promoting community cohesion.

This year, governors on the Care and Communication Committee have:

- regularly reviewed the health and wellbeing of staff and pupils;
- scrutinised pupil attendance and discussed actions to address any concerns;
- led the production of the governors' annual report to parents;
- developed bereavement guidelines for families following the death of a staff member;
- regularly reviewed safeguarding and any concerns arising;
- reviewed the school website and fed back on changes to improve access/usability;
- prepared the annual parent survey which they reviewed along with the pupil and staff surveys;
- appointed a new parent governor, through an online election process;
- governors from the committee contributed to the BAME working party;
- worked on the development of an anti-racism plan;
- reviewed a raft of policies ranging from EYFS induction, to e-safety, anti-bullying and our public sector equality duty.

The full list of school policies can be found at: <https://staidansprimaryschool.org.uk/our-school/school-policies/>.

SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) working party

A team of governors responsible for the religious character of the school (St Aidan's is the only Voluntary Controlled Church of England school in the London Diocese) meets to review the impact of the school's Christian character on the provision to pupils and on the daily life of the school. This group of governors is also responsible for writing the SIAMS SEF (self-evaluation framework).

Governor attendance

Attendance at full GB and committee meetings (most of which have again been held virtually on Zoom this year) remains extremely high and Governors have never had to cancel a meeting because it was not "quorate" (i.e. the number of governors needed to ensure decisions are legally made). Attendance data for governors is published on the school website.

Individual governor responsibilities

As well as sitting on committees, governors have individual subject responsibilities (link governor roles) or working party responsibilities, which, wherever possible, have some connection to their professional skills, expertise and/or committee membership. This year, the schedule of Link Governor visits, and their scope, was reviewed and adjusted once more as the school returned to greater normality in school life.

Link Governors typically meet with the school leader for their relevant area at least once a year. These visits focus on evaluating the subject against the School Development Plan or other relevant planning documents. For curriculum subjects Link Governors assess the scope of and sequencing of the curriculum; how the subject is enhanced beyond classroom learning and identify key points

to report back to the Governing Body. Core subjects (English, Maths and Science) are each reviewed by the whole Governing Body through presentations and Q&A sessions at full GB meetings.

For areas such as Health & Safety, Safeguarding and SEND/Inclusion, the review visits are more frequent and are aligned to particular checks pertinent to those areas.

Link Governor roles in 2021/22

Area of responsibility	Governor(s)
Health & Safety	Alan Burns Elaine Gutzmore
Safeguarding	Jetta Norton Laura McGill
Inclusion	Bryony Howe
Pupil Premium	Bryony Howe
EYFS	Jetta Norton Helen Froggatt
PSHE	Jennifer Paker
Humanities (History & Geography)	Owen Sloman
More able pupils	Helen Froggatt
MFL	Father Ben Kerridge
RE	Father Patrick Henderson
Music	Nick Buzzard
Computing	Helen Froggatt
Art & DT	Sophia Jones
PE	Laura McGill

Other governor interactions

In addition to the visits governors make to school for GB and committee meetings or their link subject reviews, they also make numerous informal visits to attend assemblies, carol services, music concerts, school productions, sports days and other school functions. This year again, these visits have been more limited as a result of Covid restrictions but more recently governors have been delighted to be back in school more regularly, participating in staff recruitment, learning walks and, for our Church governors, conducting regular assemblies and collective worship.

Strategic direction and School Development Plan

Setting the strategic direction of the school is a key function of governors. They support and challenge the Headteacher and senior leadership team in agreeing the school's priorities, strategic direction, success criteria and monitoring plans.

Governors monitor the School Development Plan (SDP) regularly during the year. They receive reports from the Headteacher on progress against the SDP, both at full GB and committee meetings. Governors evaluate the progress towards achieving targets and goals through evaluation of internal and external data, detailed discussions about children's progress and attainment and external validation, such as visit reports from our School Improvement Partner. This information along with questioning and analysis of data helps to set the SDP for the following year.

The School Development Plan (SDP) 2021/22

The SDP is developed and reviewed by Governors on the Standards committee in the Autumn term and is then taken to the full Governing Body for approval. It is also scrutinised by our external School Improvement Partner. During the Covid pandemic, some priorities originally planned for 2020-21 had to be paused to allow for focus on issues arising from the rapidly changing situation. This academic year sees a return to some priorities previously on the SDP as well as some new ones. The headline priorities are outlined here:

- **Priority 1**: Ensure St Aidan's has highly effective curriculum provision by ensuring that there is ongoing review
- **Priority 2**: All pupils to achieve high standards across the curriculum with the aim of closing the gap and being in line with the London Top Quartile (LTQ)
- **Priority 3**: Develop outstanding practitioners by evolving pedagogy through the application of research
- **Priority 4**: Review our staffing structure to ensure that it best meets the needs of the school

Policies

Governors review all policies at appropriate committee meetings on a scheduled basis to ensure that they meet the statutory requirements and that all guidance is relevant and up to date. Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list. There is a nominated governor (the Vice Chair) who oversees all policy development and compliance. The Vice Chair is a member of Standards, Resources and Care & Communication committees to ensure good oversight across all areas.

Training

St Aidan's buys into the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) governor training package for our whole governing body. This provides governors with access to a range of training modules across the year. Additionally, all governors can access e-learning through The Modern Governor and The Key. External specialists are also sometimes invited to train the whole Governing Body together. New governors are expected to attend the Local Authority's induction programme run by HEP.

Governors are encouraged to attend any training that is relevant to the SDP or their Link Governor responsibility in the first instance. Governors may also attend any training that is of particular interest to them.

Over the last year, members of the governing body have attended training on:

- Safeguarding
- Safer recruitment
- Equality
- Early Years
- BAME achievement
- BAME for lead governors
- SEND briefing for mainstream governors
- Updates on the Ofsted framework
- Understanding the HEP Primary Curriculum
- Staff and pupil wellbeing
- Online safety training for governors
- Health and safety responsibilities for Governing Boards
- Making effective use of your school's data
- HEP half termly governor briefings



- HEP Annual Governor Conference
- New governor training

Broader contributions to school improvement

The St Aidan's Governing Body is committed to engaging proactively with the wider education agenda and to contributing to school improvement across the borough.

The Chair of Governors is one of four Local Leaders of Governance and is the Chair of West Haringey Primaries Forum. She has also recently completed a two year term as a Non-Executive Director on the HEP board. She is now a Director on the Model for Change Delivery Board, responsible for Alternative Provision within the borough and also sits on Schools Forum. Another of our governors supports other Governing Bodies in Haringey by sitting on exclusion panels and has regularly been called upon by the HEP to support other schools.

The Headteacher works as a consultant Improvement Partner for HEP supporting three schools (two in Haringey and one in Enfield), and is a member of the Hornsey and Stroud Green Headteacher Network Learning Community, which continues to meet fortnightly. Prior to COVID, this group only met once every half term.

Contacting the Governing Body

Suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents and carers are always welcome. Governors can be contacted through the school office via telephone, email or in person. Alternatively, emails to the Chair of Governors at chairgovernors@staidansprimaryschool.org.uk.

Helen Froggatt
Chair of Governors
March 2022