



## **Governors' impact statement, April 2024**

### **Introduction**

At St Aidan's we are focused on supporting and developing every pupil to achieve their potential and become independent learners and thinkers. The role of Governors is to support and challenge the School. Our responsibility is for strategic planning and oversight.

In this statement, we detail the responsibilities of the Governing Body, outline the work governors have done over the last year and lay out the priorities for the current academic year. We hope this report helps you to understand how governors contribute to life at St Aidan's.

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## **1 The role of the Governing Body (GB)**

The GB plays a crucial part in improving and developing the school by providing effective support and challenge. It 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 money is well spent.

## **2 Governance structure**

The GB 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. Governors meet regularly both as a full governing body and in smaller groups (committees), which oversee particular aspects of the School.

## **3 Full Governing Body meetings**

Full GB 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 GB meetings such as:

- Governors receive a written report from the Headteacher at each meeting, including an update on issues such as progress in all areas of the School Development Plan (SDP), 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 GB committees (detailed below) reports back on their meetings 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 GB.
- The GB receives presentations from curriculum leaders for English, Maths and Science followed by a Q&A about the priorities for those subjects and the progress being made towards them.
- Governors also receive presentations from subject leaders linked to particular areas of the SDP that they want to scrutinise in more detail, for example, Early Reading or developing outcomes in writing.
- The GB receives reports from Link Governors (see later) who update the whole governing body on the priorities and progress for each of the Foundation subjects or other specialist areas of responsibility, for example inclusion, use of pupil premium, safeguarding.

## **4 Committees**

The GB is split into smaller committees that also meet half-termly or termly. Below is an outline of the typical remit of each committee as well as 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 Policies area on the school website.

#### **4.1 Standards committee**

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. Governors in this committee:

- 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.
- 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.
- ensure that the pupil premium grant is used to make a positive impact on the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- monitor the provision and progress for children with SEND, assessing the effectiveness of interventions and outcomes and ensuring that the school fulfils its responsibilities.
- receive and reflect on input from our School Improvement Partner, who conducts external reviews of all areas of provision.
- contribute to and evaluate the School Development Plan.

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 with 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.

#### **4.2 Resources committee**

Governors on this committee are tasked with detailed monitoring of the school's finances; they hold the Headteacher to account for the financial performance of the school. The governors bring a wide range of professional expertise to the School and this helps to ensure that budgets are effectively scrutinised and managed, and appropriate steps taken to plan for the future. At Resources meetings, Governors are joined by the School Business Manager (SBM), who works with the Headteacher on day-to-day financial management. They also receive input from an external finance consultant on quarterly finances and budget setting. The committee ensures 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 SFVS review.

Like many schools across London and nationally, St Aidan's is facing financial pressures. In addition to the broad duties outlined above, this year governors have also:

- led strategic discussions with the Local Authority about the school's financial position;
- applied to the LA authority for a cash flow advance to ease cash flow pressures;
- reviewed and agreed recommendations regarding staffing options to reduce the deficit;
- presented our restructure plans to the Local Authority for approval;
- worked with the Headteacher and SBM on our Licensed Deficit application to the LA;
- participated in consultations with Haringey about managing falling rolls.

The Resources committee is also responsible for health and safety, overseeing the maintenance and development of the school site and premises. This includes site visits and monitoring checks to ensure the site is safe and fit for purpose.

#### **4.3 Pay committee**

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 in line with the Local Authority pay policy.

#### **4.4 Care and Communication committee**

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. They 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 GB to address any emerging issues. They regularly review safeguarding during the year in partnership with the Safeguarding Link Governor and also monitor and evaluate the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This committee is responsible for reviewing how the views of all stakeholder groups (pupils, parents/carers, staff and the local community) are taken into account. Governors evaluate the opinions of parents, pupils and staff through 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. They also have a lead role in anti-racism work, contributing to the anti-racism working party, meeting with parents and working on the implementation of the anti-racism plan.

#### **4.5 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). They also attend relevant training given by the LDBS. This year they have also focused on reviewing the School's Christian vision in line with the new SIAMS requirements to make sure it reflects the context of the school and is aspirational for all.

### **5 Strategic direction and School Development Plan (SDP)**

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 resulting SDP regularly during the year. They receive reports from the Headteacher on progress against the SDP, both at full GB and committee meetings. They evaluate

the progress towards achieving targets and goals using internal and external data, discussions about children's progress and attainment and through external validation. External validation includes visit reports from our School Improvement Partner (most recently in history, maths, science and early reading), liaison with other schools in our local Network Learning Community and through governor training. This information along with questioning and analysis of data helps to set the SDP for the following year.

### **5.1 The School Development Plan 2023/24**

The SDP is developed and reviewed by Governors on the Standards committee in the Autumn term and following feedback and amendment, is then taken to the full GB for approval. It is also scrutinised by our external School Improvement Partner. **The key priorities for 2023/24 are:**

- **Priority 1:** To raise the school attendance to be at least 97% during the academic year with a particular focus on persistent absence.
- **Priority 2:** Ensure St Aidan's has highly effective curriculum provision by ensuring that there is ongoing review.
- **Priority 3:** Develop outstanding practitioners by applying research to evolve our thinking and best practice.
- **Priority 4:** Continue to ensure excellent delivery of early reading through continuous professional development (CPD).
- **Priority 5:** Continue to develop excellent leadership and teaching and learning in EYFS to ensure all pupils make excellent progress.

## **6 Ongoing review**

Each year the GB reflects on its practices to ensure that the School is supported and challenged effectively. For example, this year:

- some committee meetings were held in person and some remotely, to make the best use of governors' time and availability.
- link Governor roles were reviewed at the start of the academic year to ensure they reflected the key priorities for the school.
- timings of full GB meetings were reviewed to make the start time a better fit for governors who are members of staff.
- governors reviewed whether we should adopt the 'circle model' of governance, where all governor business is conducted in full GB meetings. St Aidan's governors decided to continue with smaller committee meetings, alongside the full GB meetings, to allow more time to drill down into key areas and cover items such as finance, pupil progress and policies in depth.

## **7 Governor attendance**

Attendance at full GB and committee meetings remains extremely high and no meetings have had to be cancelled because they were 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.

## **8 Governor involvement**

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 carol services, music concerts, school productions and PSA events such as the summer fair and quiz evenings. Our Church governors also visit weekly, conducting regular assemblies and collective worship.

### **8.1 Link governor responsibilities**

As well as sitting on committees, non-staff governors have individual link governor roles or working party responsibilities, which, wherever possible, have some connection to their professional skills, expertise and/or committee membership.

For curriculum subjects, Link Governors meet with the subject leaders to assess the scope of and sequencing of the curriculum; how the subject is enhanced beyond classroom learning, evaluate the progress against the subject development plan and identify key points to report back to the GB. Core subjects (English, Maths and Science) are reviewed by the whole GB through presentations and Q&A sessions at full GB meetings.

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

### **8.2 Link Governor roles**

<b>Area of responsibility</b>	<b>Governor(s)</b>
Health & Safety	Lead: Nicolas Simbault; Elaine Gutzmore
Safeguarding	Helen Froggatt
Inclusion	Bryony Howe
Pupil Premium	Bryony Howe
Racial Equity	Bryony Howe
EYFS	Helen Froggatt
PSHE	Martin Bishop
Humanities (History & Geography)	Torsten Bell
More able pupils	Owen Sloman
MFL	Father Ben Kerridge
RE	Father Patrick Henderson
Music	Nick Buzzard
Computing	Marie Tulloch
Art & DT	Sophia Jones
PE	Helen Froggatt

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

## **10 Training**

St Aidan's buys into the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) governor training package for our whole GB. This provides governors with access to a range of training modules across the year. Additionally, all governors can access e-learning through The Key for School Governors. 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 GB have attended training on:

- Safeguarding
- Prevent duty
- Cyber security for schools
- School finance
- Equality in schools
- Cultural competency
- Staff and pupil wellbeing
- Headteacher performance management
- Early years for lead governors
- Safeguarding for lead governors
- BAME for lead governors
- SEND briefing for governors
- Updates on the Ofsted framework
- New governor induction training
- HEP half termly governor briefings
- HEP Annual Governor Conference

## **11 Broader contributions to school improvement**

The St Aidan's GB 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 the West Haringey Primaries Forum. She is also a Primary Governor Representative on Haringey Schools' Forum, where schools can put forward their views to the Local Authority on matters such as the allocation and distribution of funding; arrangements for special educational needs; the funding of early years provision.

The Headteacher is a member of the Hornsey & Stroud Green Network Learning Community, which provides an excellent opportunity for schools to collaborate and share best practice.

## **12 Contacting the GB**

Suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents and carers are always welcome. Governors can be contacted through the school office via telephone, email, letter or in person. Emails can also be sent directly to the Chair of Governors at [chairgovernors@staidansprimaryschool.org.uk](mailto:chairgovernors@staidansprimaryschool.org.uk).

Helen Froggatt  
Chair of Governors  
April 2024