



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Annual Governance Statement 2022-23

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of St Joseph's (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 2022/23 academic year.

A list of governors who served on the Governing Body during 2022/23, their attendance, areas of responsibility and declarations of interest can be found on the school website alongside this statement.

## 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
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 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 Joseph'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 1 Co-opted Governor\*. † 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 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 is fulfilling the objects cited in its Instrument of Government and the trust deed under which the school 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.

## **Governing Body's work this year**

### **During the year 2022/23 :**

- We continue to be committed to school success and governors are focussed on working with staff to improve and build on the wider curriculum. To achieve this we have expanded the SLT with an Assistant Headteacher co-ordinating a school wide approach. Teacher subject leads have commented on the success and positive impact of the new post AHT Wider Curriculum on pupil learning.
- The board have taken the decision to explore conversion to Academy status and the option to join the Xavier Catholic Education Trust. We are currently in the consultation period with parents, staff and all who are interested in our school.
- We are committed to enhancing RE learning and have introduced a new curriculum as we prepare for the Catholic Schools Inspection in early spring 2024.
- We work with external advisors to guide us on teaching, testing, leadership and performance.
- We have supported staff training in Talk for Writing, an engaging Teaching Framework resource and the investment has seen a positive impact across the school.
- We have spent time in school in May 23 for Governor's Day. The programme included attending a Year 1 Assembly, Forest School, 6 classroom visits focusing on RE, Maths and English ending with the May procession and Mass. Governors enjoyed joining the children for lunch and the opportunity to chat informally with both pupils and staff.
- We have continued to monitor the effectiveness of subject leadership via yearly meetings between subject leaders and link governors. We have been able to pick up on the action plans from the previous academic year and looked for evidence of impact of changes made. The focus is always on looking for evidence of a positive impact on children's learning.
- We have continued to focus on the use of targeted funding such as pupil premium, covid catch-up and sports premium. We review evidence of how the funds have been spent and question senior leaders to ensure we are satisfied that money is being spent in a way that maximises the benefit to children.
- Through regular meetings and monitoring we have ensured stewardship of the budget and awareness of the school's financial position.

The full Governing Body has met 4 times during the year.

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 excellent attendance at Governing Body meetings.

## **Committees work this year and Governors attendance at Committee meetings**

At St Joseph's we have a Resources Committee, which focuses on finance, premises and personnel matters; a Curriculum Committee which focuses on Learning & Teaching; an EDR (Ethos, Discipline and Relationships Committee) which focuses on the Catholic ethos of the school, Behaviour, Relationships, Safeguarding and Inclusion; an Admissions Committee which deals with all matters relating to admissions including examination of all applications in the normal admissions round for places to start in the September and placing all applications in a rank order list which is submitted to Surrey CC; a Pay Committee which deals with matters related to staff pay and a Performance Management Committee which together with an independent external adviser deals with the appraisal of the Headteacher. Each committee is delegated by the Governing Body and

the responsibilities for each committee are set out in the terms of reference which are agreed by the Governing Body at least annually.

## **Governors' Future Plans for the School**

- To ensure that safeguarding is front and centre of all that we do and to ensure effective implementation of the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- To support the school as it undergoes a spring CSI inspection under the new framework and to ensure that the new RE curriculum is embedded.
- To lead the current consultation process as we consider becoming part of the Xavier Catholic Education Trust and to ensure that the outcome decided upon is in the best interests of the pupils of St Joseph's School.
- To ensure effective leadership and management of the school with review as necessary of the current structure; governors to impact on the strategic direction of the school and to hold leaders to account through the implementation of the School Development Plan.
- To ensure the quality of teaching and learning in all school years; governors to ensure an ongoing commitment to the OFSTED 2022 recommendation regarding the effectiveness of individual subject area teaching.
- To monitor the implementation of the new Sustainability Strategy, an initiative in which pupils play an integral role.
- To check the effectiveness of the PSHE curriculum in meeting children's needs & general wellbeing, and to focus on staff wellbeing.
- To continue to ensure that the new early years curriculum is effectively implemented.
- To ensure that the funds allocated to the school are spent in a way that maximises the benefit to children's learning and to navigate through the challenges of higher overall costs.

## **Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings**

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents unless they are deemed 'Confidential' by the Chair. Pay Committee and Performance Management Committee minutes are deemed as confidential and are therefore not public documents.

## **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 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 Chair of Governors, Eveline Fredericks on [evelinefredericks@stjosephsredhill.co.uk](mailto:evelinefredericks@stjosephsredhill.co.uk)

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



Chair of the Governing Body



Headteacher