



Berwick
St Mary's
CE First School

Achievement - Creativity - Endeavour

Governors of
Berwick St Mary's CE First School
Annual Statement 2022-23

Our school vision

'To realise the potential in all by creating a community of unique individuals who are guided by a shared light.'

"I can do this through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13

What is the Governing Body at St Mary's?

The National Governance Association defines the roles and responsibilities of a school governor as:

- developing a vision and strategy for the school
- overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- holding the school leader to account to ensure that every pupil has the best possible education
- engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community to understand their views of the school

In practice, this means looking at information and evidence in order to have conversations and ask school leaders questions about the school. You will decide how the school's budget is spent. In certain circumstances, you will also make decisions about things like pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary matters.

To fulfill the role you will need to:

- attend regular meetings (around 6 each year)
- visit the school(s) occasionally
- do some background reading
- take part in induction training and ongoing development

At St Mary's Governors also have a key role in ensuring the delivery of our Christian Vision and Values, and through this providing opportunities for the school to act as a genuine support for the local community and families it serves.

The National Governance Association says that as part of the governing body team, a governor is expected to:

Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing body meetings which determine:

- The vision and ethos of the school
- Clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school
- That all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- The school's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation The school's staffing structure and key staffing policies
- The principles to be used by school leaders to set other school policies

Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the school's performance; this includes:

- Agreeing the outcomes from the school's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the School Development Plan
- Considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of school performance
- Asking challenging questions of school leaders
- Ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits
- Ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies
- Acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing body on the progress on the relevant school priority
- Listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local Employers

Ensure the school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.

Governing Body membership

Name and Category	Category	Appointing body	Start Date / Term of office	Committees	Financial interest	Other interest
Joyce Guthrie	Chair of Gov	Foundation	1.9.15	Resources	None	
Catherine Handley	Vice Chair	Foundation	20.7.15	Strategic Direction	None	
Dennis Handley		Ex-officio	1.4.18	Resources	None	Governor at Holy Trinity First School. Vice-Chair of the Newcastle C of E Diocesan Board, Bishop's representative on the Board at Northumberland Church of England Academy in Ashington
Gary Hilton	Head teacher	Head teacher	1.9.14	Resources / Strategic Direction	Head Teacher	Executive Head teacher – Norham St Ceolwulf's CE First School
Alisha Pearson		Staff	22.3.22	Strategic Direction	Staff member	
Flora Simpson		Co-opted	1.9.15	Resources	None	
Chris Hudson		Co-opted	9.5.22	Resources	None	
Emma Baxter		Parent	1.12.20	Strategic Direction	None	
Dan Crowe		Parent	25.4.22	Strategic Direction	None	Teacher Longridge Independent School
Richard Bollands		Co-opted	1.12.20	Strategic Direction	None	Head teacher Red Row Community First School

	Resource Finance Committee Meeting	Strategic Direction & Policy Committee	Full Governing Body
	10.06.22	08.06.22	12.07.22
Joyce Guthrie	Cancelled due to illness	Cancelled due to illness	✓
Catherine Handley			✓
Dennis Handley			✓
Gary Hilton			✓
Flora Simpson			✓
Richard Bollands			✓
Emma Baxter			✓
Alisha Pearson			✓
Dan Crowe			✓
Chris Hudson			✓

The Governing Body's Committee Structure and Membership

The full Governing Body meets once a term and the 2 primary committees (Resource and Strategic Direction & Policy) usually meet twice a term. This collective work is supplemented by additional contributions, such as school visits, from individual governors in their respective roles as link governors.

Governors regularly undertake a skills audit which has confirmed a broad and balanced range of experience and expertise within the Governing Body and no significant shortage of specialist skill or understanding.

The Strategic Policy and Direction Committee

The overall purpose of the Strategy Policy and Direction committee is to:

- monitor standards achieved by pupils and help them achieve more;
- monitor the school's success in promoting inclusion;
- ensure that the school development plan is focused on appropriate priorities for raising standards at the school;
- ensure that policies are reviewed on a regular basis to promote improved standards and contain appropriate targets/success criteria.

The Resources Committee

The overall purpose of the Resource Committee is to:

- monitor the school budget, approve the annual and indicative budgets, contribute to the Schools Financial Value Standard process.
- contribute to, monitoring and evaluating parts of the self-evaluation summary, the school development plan and policies relating to resources issues, reporting or making recommendations to the full Governing Body.
- consider recommendations from relevant external reviews for example audit, Ofsted or local authority review, to agree the actions needed to address any issues identified and to monitor and evaluate regularly the implementation of any plan agreed, reporting or making recommendations to the full Governing Body.
- act as a personnel and pay committee by making decisions on behalf of the Governing Body relating to individual members of staff, as set out in the Governing Body's personnel policies and procedures.
- take appropriate action on any other relevant matter referred by the Governing Body.

Other secondary committees are:

- The Headteacher Appraisal Group, which carries out the Governing Body's statutory responsibilities for the Performance Management of the Headteacher.
- The Support Committee which will be formed if there is a requirement to:
 - hear personnel appeals;
 - consider complaints;
 - review pupil exclusions; and
 - take appropriate action on any other relevant matter referred by the Governing Body

Primary Committee Membership

Resource Committee	Strategy Policy & Direction Committee	Headteacher Appraisal Group
(Quorum 3) Joyce Guthrie Flora Simpson Rev Handley Gary Hilton	(Quorum 3) Catherine Handley Alisha Pearson Richard Bollands Emma Baxter Dan Crowe Chris Hudson Gary Hilton	To be confirmed in the Autumn term each academic year. 2022-23 Joyce Guthrie Catherine Handley

Support Committees

Complaints, personnel appeals, pupil discipline.	Appointment Selection Panel
(Quorum 3) For appeals, quorum equals the size of the committee which made the decision being appealed against . Three governors subject to eligibility and availability Anyone employed at the school cannot be selected	<i>Leadership group:</i> Three governors subject to eligibility and availability <i>Teachers:</i> One governor subject to eligibility and availability <i>All other appointments:</i> Delegated to the headteacher

Governor Roles and responsibilities

Teaching and Learning Interests			
Safe guarding and e-safety	Rev Handley	Pupil Premium	Catherine Handley
SEND, Inclusion and Equality	Catherine Handley	Health and Safety	Rev Handley
Maths	Richard Bollands	Science	Dan Crowe
English	Joyce Guthrie Richard Bollands	Other curriculum areas	Emma Baxter
Early Years	Flora Simpson Joyce Guthrie	Humanities	Dan Crowe
Religious Education / Collective Worship	Chris Hudson	Performance Management / CPD	Gary Hilton
Pupil Well-being / PSHE	Chris Hudson Joyce Guthrie	SIAMs & Christian vision	Strategic Direction Committee
Strategic Interests			
Well being	Joyce Guthrie Rev Handley	Community	Joyce Guthrie Rev Handley

Governor Monitoring

Governors gather information about the performance of the school from a variety of sources, including:

- Supporting the leadership team in completing the school self-evaluation process and related school development plan,
- Reports presented at meetings,
- Visits to school to meet staff, pupils and parents,
- Reports from external sources such as the School Improvement Partner, the Local Authority and national organisations such as the Dept of education or Ofsted.

Each term Governors meet with the linked member of staff for their area of responsibility, during the meeting they will carry out a variety of tasks which may include:

- A discussion on the progress of agreed action plans,
- A review of school data,
- A scrutiny of pupil work,
- A discussion with pupils,
- Learning walks.

Action plans are then used to evidence the work of the Governors, enabling the Governing Body to ensure a consistent approach to holding all leaders accountable within the school.

Understanding pupil views

The views and well-being of the pupils has always been a key priority of the Governing Body at St Mary's, however due to the unprecedented times we are currently experiencing, the importance of hearing the pupil voices is without doubt our main focus.

Governors are encouraged to meet and talk to the children every time they come into school, thereby allowing a robust and fair approach to understanding the children's experiences within the school and any potential challenges.

Governors also have access to school data such as pupil surveys and the reports from staff and parents.

Engagement with parents and the community

As a school focused on fulfilling its role as a community hub, Governors work collaboratively with all stakeholders in our community from the church to local businesses, from school families to local community action groups.

Parent interests are represented on the Governing Body by parent Governors who are available to all our families both through formal channels via the school, but also informally meeting in the school gates, etc.

Governors have an open door policy to listen to the views of parents and the community, and meetings can be arranged by contacting the school office on 01289306170, or if you prefer emailing Joyce Guthrie - admin@st-maryscofe.northumberland.sch.uk.

Governors analyse parent feedback through the annual parent survey, (published on the school website) but also have access to the Government's Parent View website.

Governor training

Governors are able to access a range of training to support their roles and development. The main route of support is via training offered by:

- Northumberland County Council (NCC) Governor services,
- The Diocese of Durham and Newcastle Education Board,
- The National Governance Association,

- The school's HR consultants.

All Governors are able to attend termly updates from NCC and the Chair and Vice Chair regularly attend Director briefings on behalf of the Governing Body from NCC and the Diocese.

The Governing Body is also supported by a clerk from NCC, who delivers updates to the whole Governing Body each term.

Other training opportunities are actioned once needs are identified, for instance this year support is to be provided to enable to Governors support middle leaders in school in developing an appropriate enriched curriculum, as well as the increased awareness of well-being for pupils, families and staff.

Each year Governors carry-out an audit of their skills, this is then analysed with the results used to determine training requirements. The Audit is carried out sometime in the Spring term, so Governors then have the opportunity to organise training so they are fully prepared for the next academic year.

Governing board priorities for the coming year

The full detailed list of school priorities is published in the school development plan (SDP), which is available via the school office. However, the headline priorities are:

- Implementing Executive Headship and the subsequent operational changes.
- Monitoring the school to school support for Norham St Ceolwulf's CE First School.
- Ensuring all children catch-up and make at least good progress, with an emphasis on:
 - School readiness in Early Years
 - Speech and language
 - Phonics
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Math
 - Curriculum development
- Ensuring well-being is seen as a priority for children and staff, with a focus on the quality of experiences in school for child and adult alike.

In addition to SDP new priorities have emerged this academic year, and these include:

- Development of Primary Support Base for Partnership within the school.
- Supporting families through issues related to the growing challenges of poverty, especially energy poverty and changes in local employment.