



## Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of St John's Catholic School for the Deaf

May 2019

In accordance with its legal obligations, the Governing Body of St John's Catholic School for the Deaf endeavours to operate at a strategic level, leaving the headteacher and the senior leaders responsible and accountable to it for the operational day to day running of the school.

The three core strategic functions of the Governing Body of St John's Catholic School for the Deaf 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;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Canon Law (Church law) also requires that Catholic schools are "...at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area" and the Governing Body of St John's Catholic School for the Deaf are mindful of this requirement in all that they do.

<p><b>Governance arrangements</b></p>	<p>The Governing Body of St John’s Catholic School for the Deaf is made up of 7 Foundation Governors, 3 Staff Governors (including the Headteacher), 1 elected Parent Governor, 1 Local Authority Governor.</p> <p>Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop of Leeds, not simply 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 religious character. In order to ensure that the school’s religious character is protected and that the school is being conducted in accordance with the tenets of its religious designation, Governing Bodies of Catholic schools must always have a majority of Foundation Governors.</p> <p>The full Governing Body meets once each term, and we also have a number of committees to consider different aspects of the school in detail. At St John’s Catholic School for the Deaf, we have 5 committees. We also have committees that meet if required to consider pupil discipline and staffing matters.</p> <p>A list of serving Governors is set out at Appendix 1</p> <p><b>Teaching and Learning Committee</b></p> <p>Objectives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review and monitor the quality of pupils’ learning and achievement</li> <li>• To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is delivered</li> <li>• To review developments in the school’s curriculum</li> <li>• To ensure relevant policies are up to date</li> </ul> <p><b>Finance, Property and General Purposes Committee</b></p> <p>Objectives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and monitor the financial performance against the school development plan</li> <li>• Submit the annual financial plan to the main Governing Body for approval</li> <li>• Review the production of statutory accounts</li> <li>• Review property maintenance and management (in conjunction with the Diocese of Leeds)</li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Human Resources Committee</b></p> <p>Objectives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulating, setting and approving personnel policies</li> <li>• Reviewing staff grading and salaries</li> <li>• Terms and conditions of employment including disciplinary and capability procedures</li> <li>• Monitoring the effectiveness of the staff appraisal process</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Care Committee</b></p> <p>Objectives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review safeguarding and pupil welfare</li> <li>• To monitor the quality of care</li> <li>• To monitor arrangements to promote the health and well-being of pupils including for the recording, storage and administration of medication</li> <li>• To formulate and monitor care policies</li> </ul> <p><b>Premises, Grounds and Health and Safety</b></p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor compliance with health and safety legislation and best practice</li> <li>• To formulate and review policies relating to health and safety</li> <li>• To monitor the maintenance and development of the premises</li> <li>• To monitor the maintenance and development of the grounds</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Governors' attendance record</b></p>	<p>Governors have excellent attendance at meetings. See Appendix 2 for details of individual governors' attendance at meetings.</p>
<p><b>The work that we have done on our Committees and in the Governing Body</b></p>	<p>Over the past year, the Governing Body has focused on improving outcomes for all pupils at St John's. We have been briefed regularly about student progress and achievements and given details of the destinations of our leavers. We have been able to question and challenge the progress data thus helping to ensure that all of our children and young people make the best possible progress in their education and personal development. A governor's strategy group has been established and has met monthly with representatives of the senior management team in order to develop and drive forward plans for the next 3 – 5 years.</p> <p>We have discussed school policies to be updated and ratified by the Governing Body. Safeguarding is a major focus of our work and we undertake training in this important area, as do the staff. We were delighted to receive the very positive results of 2 OFSTED inspections and to note that the inspectors rated our residential provision as 'outstanding' with no suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>We have been informed of the continuing success of partnership work through the Wharfe Valley Learning Partnership, allowing our pupils, staff and governors to interact with those from other schools, learning from their approaches and sharing our own good practice.</p> <p>Our efforts to refresh the governing body and plan for succession have come to fruition. We have been able to appoint experienced governors as the Chair and Vice Chair and in addition, have recruited 4 foundation governors, a new teacher governor and a replacement LA governor. Governors have received training from both the Leeds Governor Support unit and Leeds Safeguarding Board to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities and are aware of what constitutes best practice. This has extended the expertise and skills of the governing body and increased its capacity to act as a critical friend to the school and contribute to its continuing development. Governors are often in school. They have visited classrooms, residential areas and the new facilities developed for our new occupational studies courses. In addition, they participate in staff recruitment, carry out the Headteacher's performance management, meet with staff or take part in school events, such as the liturgical celebrations, the Photographic Exhibition and Sports Day.</p>

	<p><b>The Teaching and Learning Committee</b> has scrutinised and updated all policies within its remit. It has informed itself of work carried out in Sport through a presentation and was impressed by innovative plans to extend provision and to further develop links with external professional sports clubs and organisations. The committee has overseen planning and the development of infrastructure for the introduction of in house vocational provision from September 2019 to better meet the needs of some Sixth Form and key stage 4 pupils for whom suitable external provision is unavailable. Pupil progress data has been scrutinised in detail and outcomes for both year 11 and year 13 pupils have been reviewed with the committee being pleased to note that no pupil left St John’s in July 2018 without moving to education, training or employment.</p>
	<p><b>The Premises, Grounds and Health and Safety committee</b> oversaw improvements to the school premises, including the redecoration of some of the residential bedrooms and offices and the installation of security fencing and gates, and CCTV monitoring equipment.</p> <p>The committee have received and reviewed reports from PIB Management, the school’s health &amp; safety advisors. They have also monitored the action plan arising from the school’s fire risk assessment (January 2018) and legionella risk assessment (August 2018).</p> <p>All policies within the remit of the committee have been reviewed and updated. In addition the committee have examined improvements in risk assessment and accident monitoring forms, and in procedures for locking up the buildings at night.</p> <p>At each meeting the committee tour selected areas of the school premises and grounds to improve their understanding of the school’s facilities.</p> <p><b>The HR committee</b> has reviewed and updated a number of policies relating to safeguarding, staff management and data protection. They have kept staffing levels under review and monitored the process to restructure the residential care team. They have discussed and authorised recruitment as vacancies and staffing requirements have arisen, whilst taking into account the needs of the pupils and budgetary constraints.</p> <p><b>The Care committee</b> has reviewed and updated all policies within its remit. It has considered the half termly unannounced reports of the Independent Visitor and ensured that all recommendations have been applied in full. The committee has carefully scrutinised the results of an independent safeguarding audit and monitored the implementation of its recommendations. Members of this committee are appointed as Safeguarding Governor, and Child Protection Governor.</p>

Governors have overseen the restructuring of the care team and residential groupings in order to better reflect the changing cohort of pupils and have inspected the residential accommodation to ensure that it is appropriate to meet need. They have received a presentation on the developing work of the school nurse including detailed description of an innovative initiative in relation to self-harm which has been recognised with a prestigious national award. They have supported the successful introduction of the residential care awards and the commissioning of intensive training to enhance the new assessment model in care.

**The Finance and General Purposes Committee** has overseen the school budget, closely monitoring anticipated pupil numbers and the subsequent effect on the budget. Management Accounts were received and reviewed by the committee on a termly basis and communicated to Trustees via the Diocesan Finance Sub Committee.

All major capital expenditure relating to the fabric of the school building was discussed with the Diocese and funding approved before any works began. Governors authorised operational revenue and capital expenditure within delegated limits noting that wherever possible at least three quotes had been obtained for significant works.

The end of the year draft accounts were scrutinised by the committee before being presented to the Full Governing Body by the Business Manager together with our Auditors Saffery Champness.

The committee continues to monitor the school's property portfolio, with input from the diocesan property department as required.

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents – you can ask at the school office if you would like to see any of the minutes of our meetings.

<p><b>Governors' future plans for the school</b></p>	<p><b>The Teaching and Learning committee</b> will focus on establishing and embedding the new sixth form vocational provision and on the development of more appropriate assessment tools for pupils with complex needs which will better reflect progress achieved.</p> <p><b>The care committee</b> will oversee the continued evolution of 'Steps for Success' the personal development assessment framework used at St John's and will monitor the development of the extended curriculum to prepare pupils for life after school.</p> <p><b>The Human Resources committee</b> will review outcomes of staff appraisals and related staff development activities, and will continue to monitor staff training against school development priorities. The committee will ensure that all policies that fall within its remit will be reviewed and updated in a timely fashion.</p> <p><b>The Premises, Grounds and Health &amp; Safety committee</b> will focus on the following areas in 2018/2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing the implementation of the action plan arising from the fire risk assessment</li> <li>• Reviewing the implementation of the action plan arising from the legionella risk assessment</li> <li>• Monitoring the impact and effectiveness of policies and procedures relating to the premises, grounds and health &amp; safety.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Finance and General Purpose committee</b> will monitor the school's financial forecasts and work with the Trustee by continuing to get best value for the school from the investment portfolio.</p>
<p><b>How you can contact the Governing Body</b></p>	<p>We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers and the wider school community. Please contact the Chair of Governors, Mrs Barbara Auty <a href="mailto:chairofgovernors@bostonspa.org.uk">chairofgovernors@bostonspa.org.uk</a></p>

## Appendix 1 List of Serving Governors – Updated September 2019

Chair of Governors	-	Mrs B Auty (Foundation governor/Child Protection Governor)
Vice Chair of Governors	-	Rev D Arblaster (Foundation governor/Safeguarding Governor)
		Mrs A Bradbury (Head Teacher)
		Mr T Forbes (Foundation governor)
		Mr V McNicholas (Foundation Governor)
		Clare Brookes (Foundation Governor)
		Jill Tarr (Foundation Governor)
		Andrew Morley (Foundation Governor)
		Cllr N Harrington (LEA representative)
		Mrs J Peacock (non-teaching governor)
		Mrs M McAleer (teacher governor)
		Mr G Riley (parent governor)
Clerk	-	Mandy Dowson

### The Finance and General Purposes Committee

Members :

Mr T Forbes  
Mrs B Auty  
Mr A Morley (Chair)  
Mrs C Brookes  
Mrs A Bradbury  
Business Manager (in attendance)

### The Teaching and Learning Committee

Members :

Mrs B Auty (Chair)  
Mrs J Tarr  
Mrs A Bradbury  
Mr V McNicholas  
Mrs M McAleer  
Mrs C Baldwin (in attendance)

### Premises, Grounds and Health and Safety Committee

Members :

Mrs J Peacock  
Mr G Riley  
Mrs M McAleer  
Mr V McNicholas (Chair)

### Human Resources Committee

Members :

Mr D Arblaster (Chair)  
Mrs A Bradbury  
Mrs B Auty  
Mr G Riley  
Cllr N Harrington  
Business Manager (in attendance)

### Student Care Committee

Members :

Mrs B Auty (Chair)  
Mrs A Bradbury  
Mr D Arblaster  
Mr G Riley  
Cllr N Harrington  
Mr D Phipps (in attendance)



### Governors Attendance Record for 2018/2019 academic year

Governor	Full Governing Body	Premises Grounds and Health and Safety Committee	Teaching and Learning Committee	Finance, Property and General Purpose Committee	Human Resources Student Care Committee
Barbara Auty Chair	Attended all meetings		Attended 2 out of 3 meetings		Attended all meetings
Rev David Arblaster Vice Chair	Attended all meetings				Attended all meetings
Ann Bradbury Headteacher	Attended all meetings				
Terry Forbes Foundation Governor	Attended all meetings			Attended all meetings	
Marie Lynch Foundation Governor	Attended 1 out of 3 meetings (Term of office ended Sept 2018)		Attended 1 meeting (Term of office ended Sept 2018)	Attended 1 meeting (Term of office ended Sept 2018)	
Graham Myers Foundation Governor	Attended 1 out of 3 meetings (Term of office ended Sept 2018)			Attended 1 meeting (Term of office ended Sept 2018)	
Clare Brookes Foundation Governor	Attended no meetings (Appointed Feb 2019)				
Vince McNicholas Foundation Governor	Attended 2 out of 3 meetings (Appointed Nov 2018)	Attended 2 out of 3 meetings (Appointed Nov 2018)			
Jill Tarr Foundation Governor	Attended 2 out of 3 meetings (Appointed Jan 2019)		Attended 2 out of 3 meetings (Appointed Jan 2019)		