



## St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Governors' Impact Statement 2020 – 21

St Benedict's is a one-form entry primary school nestled in beautiful surroundings in the town of Handforth. We are a welcoming, inclusive family school with a strong Catholic ethos, a sense of community and a commitment to excellence for all children in our care.

We are very proud of our children – they are bright, energetic, kind and helpful and always strive to do their best for the love of God and others.

The Governors and team of staff all work hard, in partnership with supportive and engaged parents and alongside the parish of St Benedict's, to nurture children and to ensure they receive an excellent catholic education.

**This is underpinned by vision and values which are based on high expectations and aspirations for every learner which support their preparation for adulthood, independent living and lifelong learning.**

We are a committed group of parents, staff and members of the community, who work collectively as the Governing Body. We identify and utilise our collective skills to support and challenge the Senior Leadership Team, ensuring that the governance and strategic leadership of the school is focused on ensuring high quality outcomes for all pupils. At the heart of all we do is the wellbeing of our pupils.

We are committed to the Church's mission in education, with spiritual and moral development a priority. The school's mission statement 'As unique individuals, we do our best at work and play, for the love of God and others' encourages pupils to celebrate the success of others alongside their own, helping to promote mutual respect and a love of learning.

The Full Governing Body meets four times a year to review progress against the School Improvement Plan.

We organise our work through a structure of committees, working parties and designated lead governors.

What we do as a Governing Body is described in our Terms of Reference, and the principles we adhere to are outlined in our Code of Conduct. Governors' attendance at meetings is high and their contributions are constructive and supportive.

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of St Benedict's Governing Board 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

### **Organisation and Membership.**

The Governing Board, which meets at least six times each year, is comprised of:

Headteacher Governor  
Foundation Governors  
Local Authority (LA) Governor  
Staff Governor  
Parent Governors  
Co-opted Governors

More information can be found here: <https://stbenedicts.cheshire.sch.uk/governors.html>

In addition, each governor is given a link governor role. With the responsibility to monitor and support a Curriculum area

Lucy Maudsley	Chair Foundation	Head Teacher Performance Management Humanities Link Governor
Kirsty Mitchell	Vice Chair Foundation	Head Teacher Performance Management Training Liaison Data & Curriculum Liaison Maths Link Governor
Lisa Jones	Foundation	Safeguarding Link Governor Reading & Writing Link Governor
Helen Butler	Foundation	Head Teacher Performance Management Pupil Premium Catholic Life & RE Link Governor
Gerard McCann	Foundation	PE Link Governor
Mike O'Hare	Foundation	MFL Link Governor
Louisa Joyce	Foundation	SEND Governor
Alistair Revell	LA	Science Link Governor
Sean Callaghan	Parent	Finance Link Governor
Licia McDonald	Parent	Equality and RSE Link Governor

### **Strategic Direction and School Improvement Plan**

Setting the strategic direction of the school is a vital role of governors. They support the Headteacher and senior leadership team in setting the school's priorities and strategic direction.

Governors continually monitor the School Improvement Plan (SIP). They receive reports from the Head Teacher relating to the SIP and monitor the progress towards achieving targets and goals.

At the end of the academic year 2019/20, the SIP was reviewed and further actions identified.

### **The SIP 2020-2021**

Governors have approved the SIP for this coming year and its key areas for improvement across the school and it can be viewed on the school website.

### **Policies**

Governors review all relevant policies, during the relevant committee meeting, on a programmed basis to ensure that they meet the statutory requirements and that all guidance is relevant and up to date. All policies, which are dated and set for review, are available on the school website and on Trust Governor.

### **Training**

As Governors we agreed last year to buy into the Local Authority's governor training.

New Governors are expected to attend Diocesan training for new Governors.

Governors are encouraged to attend any training that is relevant to the SIP in the first instance.

Governors may also attend any training that is of particular interest to them.

All Governors attended training in the Equality Act

All Governors have completed prevent training.

### Actions this year:

- In September 2019, Lucy Maudsley became Chair of Governors and has been supported by Kirsty Guite as Vice Chair since December 2019.
- In 2020, we welcomed Licia MacDonald, Sean Callaghan and Louisa Joyce to the board and Karen Mann stepped down. We thank Karen for her time and impact. Ruth Browne became staff governor. Staff have received governor training.
- A new meeting structure was introduced – moving from 11 meetings per year to 6 with no sub-committees. The aim was to reduce possible duplication of time and effort, but without lessening the scrutiny of either educational standards, or of finance. Indeed, one intention was to make a stronger link between education standards and expenditure.
- All meetings post-March 2020 were via the internet, [a situation which still pertains in June when the document was updated]
- The Governing Body are supported by a clerk from One Education.
- Prior to lockdown, 2 link governor visits were made by the governor with responsibility for safeguarding – one to look at site security and to conduct a safeguarding review. The link governor for health and safety made a site visit and identified actions. During lockdown, the Chair of the finance committee met with the School Business manager.
- A committee was formed and the complaints policy was overhauled.
- All Governors sign the CES Code of Conduct
- Governors take a keen interest in assessment systems to ensure that progress within the different subjects is tracked effectively. They will review the effectiveness of the new system later this year.
- Strategic Governor development is driven by the annual skills audit.
- Governors have been focussed on the wellbeing of staff during and prior to the pandemic. They ensure that staff are well supported and as a result staff are motivated.
- The safeguarding governor has spent time ensuring that any 'weak spots' were identified. Because of this involvement a new surveillance system has been installed, a new intercom will be fitted shortly and all staff have a walkie-talkie. There is a new lockdown procedure in place.
- The governors have been instrumental in saving money with their support in understanding insurance arrangements and school have now adopted the RPA.
- Governors are very involved with the school community. They attend assemblies and community events – for example, attending the creation of Marchbank Meadow which helps them to have a better understanding of the school and its context.
- Governors have been involved in the development of the new curriculum and will monitor the impact at the end of the academic year.
- All staff and governors received Equality Act training and so are fully aware of their responsibilities in this area.

#### Holding Head teacher to account

- Robust headteacher performance review alongside an external partner
- Acting as a critical friend when reviewing policies, finances, the SIP or staffing
- Pupil attendance figures are reported at each meeting. The Governors continue to set challenging pupil attendance targets and analyse trends in detail at FGB meetings and, despite the pandemic, attendance figures have improved and persistent absence has reduced
- The chair of governors has been pivotal in ensuring the school has high standards in meeting and exceeding its obligations with the Equality Act.

#### Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

- Budget papers reviewed at FGB 6 times a year
- Finance Link governor meets the SBM to discuss and raise challenge
- Challenging questions posed at FGB meetings

#### **COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted every area in the life of the school including the Governing Board, which has continued to fulfil its roles and responsibilities during this time through online meetings and distanced communication. The GB has received notifications on up-dated government legislation as regards staff and pupil welfare, together with safeguarding changes. The GB has been actively involved in supporting the SLT with the oversight and scrutiny of the School's response to this. The safety and wellbeing of the whole school community has been central throughout every decision making process, including the planning for the re-opening to all students in March 2020.