Governing Body of St Andrew's CE VC Junior School

Annual Governance Statement
2025/2026

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of St. Andrew's School 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.**
3. **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

Governance Arrangements

St. Andrew's is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior school in Derbyshire, in the Diocese of Derby. The Governing Body was reconstituted with a new Instrument of Government on 29/06/2015; this Instrument is still in force.

St. Andrew's Governing Body consists of 12 Governors, in the following categories:

3 Parent Governors, elected by the parents of the school
3 Foundation Governors, nominated by the PCC of St Andrew's Church
3 Co-opted Governors, appointed by the Governing Body
1 Headteacher
1 Staff Governor, elected by the staff of the school
1 LA Governor, appointed by the Local Authority (Derbyshire County Council)

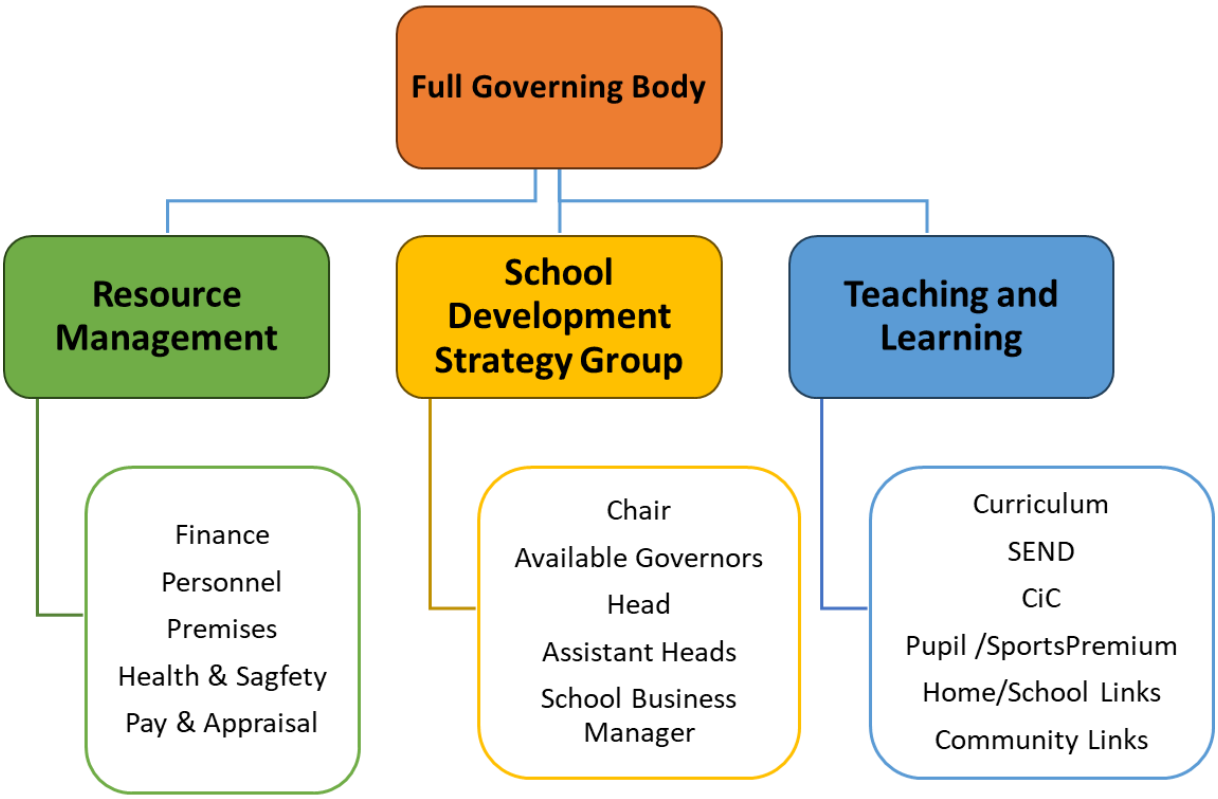
Of these members each year a Chair and a Vice Chair are elected in July ready for the following academic year.

Our Clerk is Mrs Elizabeth Powell, who is also the School Business Manager. We liaise with other school staff as well, particularly the Assistant Headteachers and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The Governing Body has a programme of meetings throughout the school year with the Full Governing Board meeting twice per term (six times a year). The Chair and Headteacher also meet regularly. The schedule of meetings for the current year can be found on the school website. Approved minutes are readily available for viewing within the school office.

The Governing Body monitors the school improvement plan using a programme of visits to school (known as 'learning walks') to enable us to see specific aspects of school life for ourselves. Each Governor has two or more subjects that they are linked to, and will carry out learning walks for those subjects at least once a year. In addition, some governors are linked to different strategic areas such as safeguarding, financial monitoring and wellbeing.

The Governing Body works as a flat structure with only the Full Governing Board (FGB) attending all meetings covering Resource Management, Strategic Management and Teaching and Learning Management.



For further information and terms of reference for the Governing Body and the committees please see the document on the website or available from the office. The membership of the Governing Body for 2025/2026 was as follows:

Governor	**Category**	**Term of office expiry/end date**
Mr Bruce Levitan (Chair)	Foundation Governor	23/10/2029
Mrs Amanda Cornwall	Headteacher	n/a
Mr David Ridley	Ex-Officio Foundation Governor	n/a
Mrs Judith Shaw	Foundation Governor	31/08/2029
Mr Jon Hinett	Staff Governor	03/07/2027
Mr Tim Ibbotson	Co-opted Governor	05/05/2030
Mr T Woods	Co-opted Governor	06/09/2025
Ms L Hudson	Co-opted Governor	17/03/2029
Mrs M Horner	Co-opted Governor	26/01/2030
Mr Phil Thomasson	Parent Governor	07/07/2026
Mrs Kirsten Gayle	Parent Governor	29/01/2028
Mr T Johnson	Parent Governor	05/12/2029
Mrs Sarah Neill	LA Governor	03/07/2027

We have one governor whose term has ended this year, Tim woods 06/09/2025, we thank Tim for his input over the last 12 months.

We are pleased to welcome two new governors, Tom and Marie. Their appointments bring the Governing Board to full capacity, which is a positive position for the school. Both have already demonstrated a strong commitment and have made meaningful contributions. We are confident they will be valuable assets to the board, and the school and Governing Board will ensure they are fully supported in their roles.

Attendance record for 2025/2026

A record is kept by the clerk to the Governing Body of governors' attendance at meetings. Meetings need to be 'quorate' to ensure that decisions can be made. Shaded rows in the table below indicate governors who resigned during the year.

Governor	**FGB meetings attended** (6 Meetings per year)
Mr B Levitan	6/6
Mrs A Cornwall	6/6
Mr D Ridley	4/5
Mr J Hinett	5/6
Mrs J Shaw	6/6
Mr T Ibbotson	4/6
Mr P Thomasson	0 (input added but due to work shifts cannot make meetings personally)
Mrs S Neill	3/6
Mrs K Gayle	4/6
Ms L Hudson	3/6
Mr T Johnson	3/4
Mrs M Horner	4/4
Mrs E Powell (Clerk)	6/6

This year's work

Overview

Last year we noted a fall in the school roll and although this year has not seen a further significant fall, the demographics of the country indicate further falls in years to come. Due to the excellence of our school management team, including our Headteacher and Business Manager, the budget has been well managed and the school remains financially healthy.

Three major themes have emerged from central government, centring on attendance, inspection and SEND.

I am happy to say that school attendance is good – usually above the national average, and in line with government expectations. Nevertheless, it is an area of concern as we have noticed an increasing trend to take children out of school for "out of season" holidays and minor ailments. We continue to work closely with parents to ensure attendance is good, but ultimately have no real control over this.

This year has seen the launch of the new inspection regime from Ofsted, which had emerged after the tragic suicide of a headteacher in 2023 under the stress of the old regime[i]. Our school was one of

the first to be inspected under the new regime (one of only two in Derbyshire), and whilst we felt the outcome was fair in terms of the criteria laid out in inspection guidance, we were dismayed to discover the narrowness in some criteria, allowing for no room to consider alternative approaches. On a personal note, I felt that the new regime is at least as stressful, if not more so, than the old one. But on a positive note, the inspectors recognised many of the key strengths of the school, noting that "The school is a happy and safe place to learn. Pupils are proud to be part of the school and they attend well. They live out the school's vision and values to 'develop compassion, responsibility and resilience in a caring environment'. Pupils understand and demonstrate the importance of respect and good behaviour. Pupils agree that staff are quick to sort out any worries they have or deal with problems that may arise. Pupils thrive because staff are kind and caring. Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils to achieve their potential, regardless of their personal circumstances or barriers to learning."[ii]

Those who listen to media reports on education will not have failed to note the new government white paper on SEND[iii]. This is not the place to summarise or comment on it, but it will obviously have a large impact on our school, and we have already started planning for this. The major change is the three tier support structure comprising Targeted, Targeted Plus and Specialist Support. The last of these is covered by the already familiar EHCPs. The two new layers relate to support for children who don't meet the ECHP thresholds, and where mainstream schools will be expected to provide the support. We anticipate that this will put additional pressure on mainstream schools, and hope that government funding and support will be in place to meet this.

In previous reports I have outlines the problems with the school's buildings. Unfortunately, there has been very little progress, and this is not an area where we have any control. We continue to experience issues with our very old heating systems, and there are major structural issues with part of the old frontage. The council has put temporary measures in place to ensure safety, but this is far from an ideal solution.

Teaching and Learning

The Governors continue to fully support the work of Mrs Cornwall, the SLT and teachers in their core focus of pupil attainment throughout the year groups.

Governors receive reports at full governor meetings. Mrs Cornwall provides a comprehensive overview and receives appropriate challenge from the Governors. We also maintain a governor monitoring programme that is linked to the school improvement plan, and governors report to the board for their specific areas of responsibility. This year we have introduced an extra level of scrutiny and challenge via a governor's questions paper that is filled in before each governing board, and then responded to during the board meeting.

We continue to monitor Academic progress with the headteacher and we use data analysis to help us understand both the positive progress and areas that require development, including quality of learning and outcomes. Governors robustly challenge and support to help ensure positive progress is made throughout the year groups. SATs results in 2025 were very good, continuing along a trajectory of year-on-year improvement. However, each year's cohort is different and we anticipate that 2026 results may be a little lower than last year. This is not a criticism either of the children or of the teachers – we know our children work very hard, and that we have a committed and expert staff.

We review the spending of Pupil Premium and Sports Premium monies to ensure targeted benefits come from its spending, and that outcomes are tracked and reported. The Sports Premium funding is used mostly to pay for the wide range of opportunities we offer, overseen by our excellent PE lead, Miss C. Williams. This includes swimming, taking part in 'The Place' Glossopdale cluster, our Sports Day, and clubs such as dance.

Also, we are very proud of our Forest School provision via Mrs Clare Thompson, and children have continued to be involved in tree planting working with the Tree Council, and rewilding, working with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and being a hedgehog friendly school.

This report would be very long indeed were I to highlight all aspects of our provision, and I could also mention our excellent music programme, led by Miss R. Sharp and of course our outstanding MACAWS provision led by Mrs M. Stafford.

Resource Management

The Governing Body is responsible for the financial management of the school, though much is delegated to the Headteacher and the School Business Manager.

We receive regular reports and updates on the budget and meet regularly with our LEA Patch Officer to review the budget (with a Governor in attendance when possible). We monitor the Pupil Premium and Sports Premium budgets and spending plan, and the impact of this funding on pupil outcomes. We have been looking at SEND funding and allocation as well and this work will continue into the next academic year, particularly with the continuing high number of pupils with SEND (our school has a high proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals – 34%, around 6% above the national average[iv]).

We oversee staff pay and work within agreed and set budgets. We have a responsibility to oversee the staff performance management review delegated to the Headteacher but are, in conjunction with the school's LEA Link Manager directly involved in the Headteacher's performance review. This gives Governors the opportunity to challenge and measure the progress made in school.

Church School

We are proud to be a church school and believe that our ethos, vision and values, and distinctiveness as a church school offer a lot to all our pupils. The Foundation Governors have a specific brief to uphold the ethos of the school as a church school, and, when circumstances allow, take an active role in assemblies and other school activities – for example one Foundation Governor has presented a "puppet collective worship", and again this year we have been hosted by St. Andrew's Church for Easter and Christmas activities. We were particularly pleased to welcome the new incumbent priest at St. Andrew's Church, Rev. David Ridley, on to our Board of Governors this year.

All governors who are able to, regularly attend Friday lunchtime "top table", which is another feature of the school's providing a wide and rich environment for the children.

We have a total of over 100 Collective Worship leaders across Y4 – Y6. This is amazing and the children do a fantastic job on a rotational timetable. They arrange the collective worship table and the readings/prayers.

Governors

We continue to endeavour to make the work of the Governing Body sustainable and targeted in order to fulfil our strategic functions, and to have all Governors involved and active in our work. We regularly review Governor-subject links (as new Governors are appointed) to provide an even spread and to emphasise the importance of this part of the Governor role. We also carry out an annual skills audit to show whether there are any areas that we need to focus on in terms of Governor CPD (all governors are encouraged to undertake training).

Changes to the Governing Board have been noted above, and currently we have a full complement. If you have an interest in supporting your school and feel you could make a positive contribution, please contact school on 01457 852328.

Strategic Planning for the future

The School Improvement Plan has been updated and revised to further develop the new curriculum. It continues to be based on Global Citizenship Goals and Christian Values. It also contains specific targets aimed at addressing the gaps that have arisen as a result of Coronavirus.

Our plans for next year include continuing to focus on improving outcomes for all pupils, particularly focusing on continuing to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and others. We also will continue to tighten up how our work ties in with the School Improvement Plan (the governor monitoring plan is noted above).

We have an exceptional Headteacher and staff who demonstrate extraordinary commitment. This has a positive impact on the children, who feel happy, cared for and thrive on good teaching, as noted by Ofsted (above).

Our support and understanding of modern mental health issues through the MACAWS and other provision (e.g. Forest School) is second to none and was highly praised by the Ofsted inspectors. We developed an outdoor MACAWS facility which the children were involved in designing, and are currently fundraising for an outdoors shelter for Forest School[v].

No school should rest upon its laurels, and we recognise that there are areas for improvement. We will to strive to be better, and I have every confidence that our school will continue to go from strength to strength.

How to contact your Governing Body

Information about the School's Governing Body is available on the Governors' page of the school's website. We can be contacted by email or through the school office.

Bruce Levitan
Chair of Governors, June 2026

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[i] See this BBC report https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-67639942
[ii] Ofsted Inspection report: 11 November 2025, available on school website at https://www.standrewshadfield.org/ofsted-report/
[iii] *Every child achieving and thriving*, available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/every-child-achieving-and-thriving
[iv] *Schools, pupils and their characteristics*, available at https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2025-26
[v] https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/outdoor-foresteducation-shelter-garden