Governing Body of St Andrew's CE VC Junior School

Annual Governance Statement
2023/2024

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)

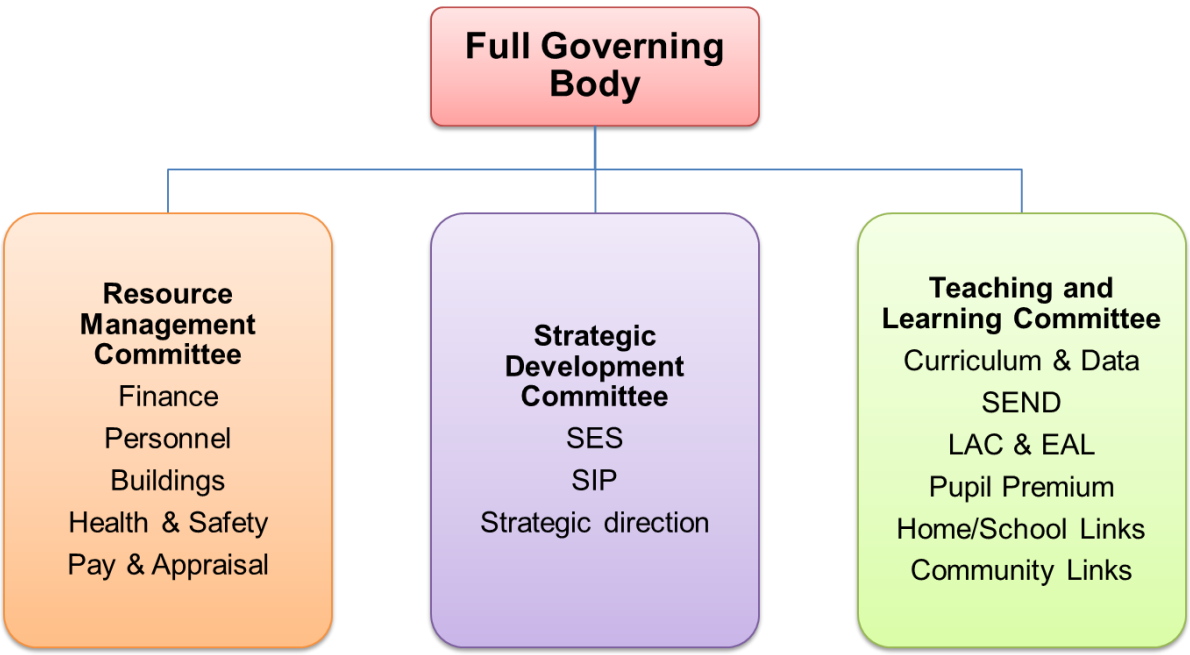
Of these members each year a Chair and a Vice Chair are elected in July ready for the following academic year.

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.

At the beginning of the school year we had two sub-committees, as shown in the diagram below, but part way through the year we switched to a flat structure with only the Full Governing Board (FGB). However, the diagram can still be used because the business of the two committees has been subsumed into the FGB.



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 2023/2024 was as follows:

Governor	Category	Term of office expiry/end date
Mr Bruce Levitan (Chair)	Foundation Governor	16/02/2026
Mrs Amanda Cornwall	Headteacher	n/a
Mr Joel Singleton	Foundation Governor	26/02/2028
Mrs Judith Shaw	Foundation Governor	01/09/2025
Mr Jon Hinett	Staff Governor	03/07/2027
Mr Tim Ibbotson	Co-opted Governor	03/05/2026
Mr Mic Taylor	Co-opted Governor	22/06/2024
Mrs Halina Billingham	Co-opted Governor	31/04/2024
Mr Phil Thomasson	Parent Governor	13/10/2026
Mrs Melanie Flynn	Parent Governor	03/07/2027
Mrs Kirsten Gayle	Parent Governor	29/01/2028
Mrs Sarah Neill	LA Governor	03/07/2027
Vacancy	Co-opted	
Vacancy	Co-opted	

We have two governors whose term has ended this year, Halina Billingham 31/04/2024 and Mic Taylor 22/06/2024, we thank both of them for their dedication, support and invaluable input over the years that they have been Governors. We wish them all the very best for the future. We now have two vacancies for Co-opted governor roles.

During the year we welcomed one new parent governor – Mrs Kirsten Gayle and one new Foundation governor - Mr Joel Singleton.

We will, as a school and governing board support them in any way possible.

Attendance record for 2023/2024

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	Committee meetings
Mr B Levitan	6/6	1/1
Mrs A Cornwall	6/6	2/2
Mr J Hinett	6/6	1/1
Mr M Taylor	5/5	1/1
Mrs J Shaw	6/6	1/1
Mr T Ibbotson	4/6	0/1
Mrs H Billingham	3/3	1/1
Mr P Thomasson	4/6	1/1
Mr J Singleton	3/5	n/a
Mrs M Flynn	5/6	1/1
Mrs S Neill	4/6	0/1
Mrs K Gayle	5/5	n/a
Mrs E Powell (Clerk)	5/5	n/a

This year's work

Overview

The school's complement of pupils fell from around 220 last year to around 210 – a downward trend which is due to demographics rather than any failure to attract pupils. This has an impact on school finances, and the school's Business Manager and SLT have worked very hard - with support from governors – to ensure financial stability without loss of teaching quality and related quality of support.

The government has focussed on school attendance in recent months due to issues with attendance nationwide. However, the school's attendance levels (95.06% up to March 2024) remain above the both the county (93.2%) and national averages (93.4%)[i]. We believe this reflects the positive ethos of the school and the supportive environment we provide for all our children.

We have had a number of issues with the buildings, part of the inheritance that goes with older estate. Over the Easter holiday the "new" block was badly flooded due to problems with the flat roof and blocked outflows – the library and the two year 6 classrooms were affected, and whilst the classrooms were back up and running within a week with temporary fixes, the remedial work is planned for the summer holiday. There have also been problems with heating – an ongoing issue that we are trying to resolve. On a more positive note, the middle block's windows are finally being upgraded and replaced with tinted glass windows. This has led to some disruption, but the work should be finished soon (at the time of writing).

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.

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.

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 our PE teacher, Mrs Trigg, and she provides a wide-ranging, fully-inclusive, challenging and enjoyable curriculum of sports and physical fitness activities including after school clubs such as dance and gymnastics. This included a dance show in November, where pupils displayed their talents both in solo and ensemble pieces, and a visit to the Buxton Dance Show in March.

We are very proud of our Forest School provision via Mrs Clare Thompson, and children have been involved in tree planting working with the Tree Council, and rewilding, working with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. Our Tree Ambassadors visited the Expo at the Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool on 27th March – as we are a Beacon School for the Tree Council - and our Tree Ambassadors took an active part in this.

At the time of writing the SATS results from this year have not yet been released (release date is in July).

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 PP/SEN pupils, around 6% above the national average[ii]).

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.

We receive regular reports on our buildings and monitor repairs and maintenance. Major works revolving around the main building which we had hoped would start during summer 2020 have been deferred yet again by the LA. We were hoping they would take place during summer this year, but this now seems unlikely.

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. 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 70 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.

Our SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection took place in April, and we are pleased that the inspectors found the school to be following its foundation requirements (SIAMS does not rate schools in the same way as Ofsted: you either "pass" or "fail"). The SIAMS report made many complimentary observations about the school, and can be found on our website[iii].

Governors

Changes to the Governing Board have been noted above, and for a short period we had a full complement, but recently faced a reduction by two due to in-year resignations of co-opted governors. 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, as well as the gaps created by successive lockdowns. 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 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).

We have an exceptional Headteacher and staff who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment during the pandemic and beyond, and have maintained excellent morale throughout (this includes TAs and support staff as well as teachers). This has had a positive impact on the children, who feel happy, cared for and thrive on good teaching.

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 SIAMS inspectors. We hope to develop an outdoor MACAWS facility which the children are involved in designing. We will apply for grant funding to support this, and we are also running a crowdfunding initiative for this[iv].

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 2024

[i] Sources: National - https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-attendance-in-schools and by County - https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/pupil-attendance-in-schools/

[ii] Source: https://www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk/school/112869/st-andrew's-cofe-junior-school/absence-and-pupil-population

[iii] https://www.standrewshadfield.org/diocese-siams-report/

[iv] https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/st-andrews-junior-school-wellbeing-garden/