

Annual Governance Statement
St.Francis' Catholic Primary School
2024

Purpose of this Governance Statement

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of St.Francis' Catholic Primary School, Goosnargh in compliance with our duty to report on the ways in which we have fulfilled our obligations and responsibilities relating to (i) our overarching duty to conduct the school in accordance with its Catholic character and (ii) our core functions (which are explained below) during the 2023-24 academic year.

A list of serving governors is set out below.

Role of the Governing Body

As the Governing Body of a Catholic school, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that the School is conducted in accordance with its Catholic character at all times, and this overriding duty (which is also a legal duty) permeates everything that we do. Further, in accordance with our legal obligations, the Governing Body endeavours to operate at a strategic level leaving the headteacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to us for the operational day-to-day running of the School. It is by achieving these aims that we can be sure that our School has effective governance.

The three core functions of the 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, and for the internal organisation, management and control of the School, including performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the School and making sure its money is well spent.

As an integral part of the vision for the holistic formation of children and young people Canon law (Church law) also requires that Catholic schools (which includes academies) are "...at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area" (806§2) and the Governing Body are mindful of this requirement in all that we do.

In exercising their functions, the governing board shall

- Act with integrity, objectivity, and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
- Be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.

Our governing board has a Code of Conduct which is reviewed and agreed annually. All governors and associate members are obliged to abide by this code

Scope of Governing Body's Responsibilities

The Governing Body acknowledges that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that St.Francis' has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve our objectives, and can provide only a reasonable (as opposed to absolute) assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Governing Body has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the headteacher for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management.

Governance Arrangements

Composition of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is made up of Foundation Governors, Staff Governors (including the headteacher), Parent Governor(s), Local Authority Governors(s) and Co-opted Governor.

Who volunteers on the school's governing board?



ST.FRANCIS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Name	Governor Category	Term of Office Ends	Committee Membership	Position of Responsibility	Register of Interests
Miss Sarah Deakin	Headteacher	N/A	ALL	Headteacher	Member of staff
Mr Michael Blair	Foundation	20/10/2024	ALL	Chair of Governors Safeguarding Lead	
Mr Chris Moran	Foundation	31/10/2026	Curriculum		
Mr Andrew Dickinson	Foundation	16/02/2025	Business & Finance		
Mr Robert Coupe	Foundation	20/10/2024	Business & Finance		
Mrs Louise Coupe	Foundation	01/09/2026	Business & Finance		
Mrs Alison Holden	Co-opted	23/11/2023	ALL	SEND Governor	
Mrs Jenny Rossall	Staff	01/04/2026	Curriculum	Year 6 Teacher	Member of staff
Mrs Mary Doran	Foundation	01/09/2024	Curriculum	Vice-Chair of Governors Curriculum Chair	
Dr Christopher Gunn	Parent	01/09/2026	Curriculum		Parent
Mrs Amy Dewhurst	Parent	21/05/2025	Business & Finance	Chair of Finance Committee	Parent

The Clerk to Governors is	Val Morris
The Chair of Governors is	Mr Michael Blair
The Vice Chair of Governors is	Mrs Mary Doran

Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese in which the School is situated. The Bishop not only appoints his Foundation Governors 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 Catholic character. In order to ensure that the School's Catholic character is protected and that it is being conducted in accordance with the tenets of its Catholic designation, Governing Bodies of Catholic schools and academies must always have a majority of Foundation Governors.

The Diocesan Bishop is Canonically responsible for his schools and academies. He ensures that the Catholic ethos of the school/academy is maintained, particularly through the appointment of Foundation Governors, but also through overseeing the appointment of members of staff and through Diocesan inspection, in order to ensure that the school/academy is fulfilling the objects cited in its Instrument of Government/Articles of Association and the trust deed under which the school/academy was established.

* Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are people who, in the opinion of the Governing Body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school/academy. On our Governing Body 1 of the Co-opted Governors are members of the local community.

Governor Meetings

At St. Francis' Catholic Primary School, members of the governing body are dedicated, passionate and highly skilled at driving the school forward. The current governors, who are all listed on the website, are all volunteers, giving up their own time to fulfil the roles for the benefit of our children.

We have held three termly full governor meetings over the year 2023 – 2024 with three Standards, Education and Curriculum (SEC) meetings and three Business and finance meetings held over the year.

Governor attendance has, as always, been of a very good level, with any absences having been fully explained and accepted and approved by the governing body. There are no causes for concern at the level of commitment shown by any member of the governing body. On the website, the governor's section highlights governor attendance at meetings.

We have a very experienced clerk that helps us to ensure all the topics we are required to discuss each year are covered, and we have a number of sub-committees that perform much of the detailed work in accordance with their terms of reference.

The Work of The Governing Body 2023-24

Our work is driven by our overall Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and our Annual School Development Plan. This sets out our vision ethos and long-term direction for the school. We evaluated and

updated the impact made on a termly bases for all areas of key priority listed below. This plan is used to inform decision-making and to assess progress against our priorities. We also approve, evaluate and monitor the School Development Plan (SDP) to challenge and support the strategic improvement of the school during the full governor meetings.

Skilled governors are linked with classes and also subjects. Visits are purposeful and support the overall monitoring, continued development of staff and work of our senior leadership team. Subject leaders are spoken with at length. Book looks, walk throughs, display analysis, subject leader evaluations, data analysis, external sources, speaking with parents, children and the community alongside other accountability checks aim to ensure governors know our school and that we challenge and support the headteacher.

Attendance

The governing body receives regular reports from Miss Deakin, once per half term in governor meetings and also shared with our chair of governors during weekly phone calls.

We work alongside our attendance officer, liaising with county when we feel children's attendance is a cause for concern. Positive strategies are put in place throughout school and persistent absence is low.

Safeguarding

Governors receive regular reports and understand how school keeps children safe in many areas. Section 175 safeguarding audits are shared with governors and 7 minute briefings/other relevant safeguarding information is sent to governors from the headteacher to keep updated throughout the school year.

A whole school safeguarding review was completed and an overview of effective school practice was produced by the headteacher.

School liaises with many outside agencies: NSPCC, Place2 Be, Barnados, Winston's Wish, CFW services, MASH, Encompass, Anna Freud, CES, other schools to ensure we support the children and families we serve and Early Help Assessments are undertaken when necessary to get early help and soon as it is needed.

School staff use CPOMS to log any concerns. The headteacher keeps a full list of signpost and pathway guidance to support children and families. The staff room has safeguarding boards for reference and scenarios are discussed throughout the year alongside 7 minute briefings for staff. Children have a post box to post any problems and the website has a contact page to report concerns to the headteacher. Staff all know how to make a referral and they have this information on their lanyards as part of good practice.

Online safety support can be found on the website safeguarding section and school teaches online safety using HRSE materials, NOS documents, Safer School APP and associated training for staff and parents and other relevant lessons throughout the whole school year. There is a clear policy in place. Education for a Connected world is used as a reference of age related expectations and we use Purple Mash to support teaching and learning on a weekly basis.

Online safety week is celebrated in school and parents are invited in to see the children's work on this subject matter. Monthly online safety newsletters are emailed to parents. School purchases this through Knowsley City Learning Centre.

School Development Plan (SDP)

Governors work co-operatively with the head teacher and head of school in writing and monitoring the School Development Plan. The School Development Plan sets aims for the forthcoming year. The SDP for 2023/24 was based on priorities identified from data, school self-

evaluation and Ofsted priorities. The SDP is set out with clear aims, the key tasks which will be completed in order to achieve these aims and the success criteria in order to measure outcomes. The SDP is monitored and reviewed termly, with an evaluation overview being completed and presented to governors alongside the Head Teacher report.

Key Priorities for 2023-24
1. Begin the implementation of the new RED and respond to the new Catholic Schools Inspectorate expectations for the Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education and quality of Collective Worship in our schools.
2. To ensure the same standards are reached in writing as with other core subjects.
3. To develop leadership at all levels.
4. To continue our commitment to the highest levels of staff and pupil wellbeing.

Examples of the impact of these visits include

Co-operative working to fully understand and oversee teaching and learning in classrooms by a skilled class governor. Development of policies and effective practice throughout school has continued to raise standards and ensure teachers and staff are constantly moving forward with curriculum development.

Data analysis

The headteacher's report to governors is thorough and highlights data for all subjects in the curriculum. Data is made available to governors through termly meetings with verbal and written presentations followed by question and answer sessions with the headteacher and head of school. By doing this the governors are able to benchmark their data against similar schools, the Local Authority and schools nationally to ensure the schools standards and expectations are high and are able to be closely scrutinised.

Particular scrutiny is placed on pupil progress across all ability groups including vulnerable groups and on the effective use of the Pupil Premium. We have a live document to monitor pupil premium spending and all groups of learners.

Policies

Governors review all relevant policies on a programmed basis to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date.

Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list and the Local Authority recommended list.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Mrs Holden meets with Mr Gilmour, our SENDCO, annually to discuss our policies, provision maps, waves of intervention, support staff and progress and attainment.

The accessibility plan and school offer can be found on our website.

Equality Act and protected characteristics

Our duty statement-this can be found on our website:

Public bodies such as schools have a duty, under the 2010 Equality Act, to ensure they promote equality within their organisation and this statement sets out how we endeavour to achieve this.

As a Catholic school, we believe in the right of every single person to be treated with equal dignity and compassion alongside equal legal protection is fundamental to the ethos which underpins everything we do in school. Our constant aim is for all to feel valued, included and recognise their beauty, purpose and contributions to the world in which we live.

The equality duty has two main parts: the 'general' equality duty and 'specific duties'. The general equality duty sets out the equality matters that schools need to consider when making decisions that affect pupils or staff with different protected characteristics.

This duty has three elements. In carrying out their functions public bodies are required to have 'due regard' when making decisions and developing policies.

The Curriculum

EYFS

Our intent is to give each unique child a high-quality early education with high quality care. This is delivered within a safe and nurturing environment which makes a powerful contribution to children's wellbeing, development and learning.

Play, both indoors and outdoors, is rich and we aim to ignite curiosity, awe and wonder of the world to develop the whole child. We provide a stimulating environment that provides exciting opportunities, promotes challenge, exploration, adventure, inclusion and a real love of learning for every child to feel success and happiness.

Every child is recognised as a remarkable individual with a diverse range of experiences and starting points. We celebrate and welcome differences within our school community and we work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that our first experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling us to develop a lifelong love of learning. We plan with the children and adapt our environment by discovering new lines of development together (PLOD planning) to keep learning exciting and engaging.

The curriculum is flexible, ambitious and carefully sequenced. Adults 'scaffold' children's learning, modelling new skills and by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently. Teaching and exploring new vocabulary has high importance and stimulating experiences develop their communication skills. As such, there is a strong emphasis on the Prime Areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language.

Whole school

Subject leaders link with governors and visits are purposeful and challenging.

Revised intent, implementation and impact statements were created with due regard to best practice in adaptive teaching and ambition for all children as a focus. These can be found on our website.

Our curriculum continues to be ambitious, broad and take into account cultural capital in order to prepare children to be confident, positive and achieve their full potential in all areas of learning and development. We have focused on diversity in life and our children's future aspirations. Big thinking questions allow children to have a voice and to explore youth social action and care for our world. We continue to ensure children, staff and families are emotionally secure and supported.

Outcomes and progress

EYFS

At the end of the year 2023-24, 80% children at the end of the EYFS achieved standards in line with National average or well above national average. The average for a Good Level of Development (GLD) was 80%. This means children achieved the expected level in all prime areas/Literacy and Mathematics.

National average for end of year 203-2024 was 67.7%.

Year 1 phonics screening check

93% met the standard again and we had no Year 2 retakes due to 93% pass rate the previous year. Year 2 retake 1 pupil 0%

KS1 teacher assessments

Reading 80% age related

Maths 80% age related

Writing 53%

KS2

Reading 83%

Writing 75%

Maths 75%

Well-being

- A wealth of information on our website to support families and children.
- Visitors throughout the year to support children's personal development.
- Play leaders, CAFOD club, Sport leaders, Eco council, librarians and many roles in school for children and prefects provide opportunities to be thoughtful and independent future citizens.
- Mental health and wellbeing week, Place 2 Be and online safety newsletters with the Safer Schools App support many issues and areas of being healthy and happy.

- Staff access anti bullying alliance resources and the Life Education Bus visits school to support personal development.
- Plenty of enrichment opportunities throughout the school year to promote wellbeing
- Pupil questionnaires are analysed
- HRSE is of huge emphasis
- My Happy Mind and other initiatives have been embedded.

Religious Education

We are delighted to report that we were recognised as outstanding in all areas of the Catholic Inspectorate. We give our thanks to all staff who work incredibly hard in our small school to teach with love and skill.

Our vice chair of Governors, Mary Doran, was pivotal in representing governors alongside Mr Blair when speaking to inspectors. Thank you very much to both for supporting school and continuing to cement links with our parish and community.

Health and Safety & Premises

Workplace inspections are regularly completed. Lancashire County Council review our future needs through planned and unplanned PROP and we are awaiting works on our septic tank.

Risk assessments for all areas of school were updated in Summer Term 2024 and governors have had sight of risk assessments for classroom areas/activity areas and general risk assessments for equipment. Mr Blair and Miss Deakin undertook a whole school workplace inspection and scrutinized all health and safety plans, risk assessments, files for compliancing and training of staff and governors.

The health and safety policy is reviewed by the headteacher annually and the asbestos, fire, evacuation, emergency plans and contingency plans are seen by governors. In the previous year, the headteacher was subject to HSE asbestos inspection and she was highlighted as one of the schools who impressed the HSE inspector with sound knowledge of systems. The file was reported to LCC as being of high quality the inspector was very pleased with the systems we have in place.

Moving forward, we are due to use the energy grant for schools on improving KS2 classroom windows.

The headteacher reported that thumb locks for all classrooms were to be installed in the new term for extra security of lockdown procedure.

SLT have regular health and safety training through LCC and other credited courses. They liaise with LCC for support/general advice and for asbestos and legionella training.

Finance

This committee meets six times a year, with a focus on: - Ensuring that the school's resources are being managed in the most efficient and effective way to support its strategic aims.

- Providing support and challenge to strategic investment decisions, making sure that they deliver good value both in the near and longer term.

- Monitoring income streams and looking ahead to potential opportunities or challenges that may be on the horizon.

- Benchmarking the school budget against similar schools locally and nationally.
- Reviewing staffing levels and the management structure to ensure that we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right roles.

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents -if you would like to see a copy of the minutes please ask at the school office.

The Risk and Control Framework

The School's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability, where appropriate. In particular it includes: –

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body;
- Regular reviews by the Business and Finance reports which indicate financial performance against the forecast and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- Identification and management of risks.

Capacity to handle risk

The Governing Body regularly reviews the key risks to which the School is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

Review of effectiveness

The Governing Body has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the systems in place in the School to identify and manage risk and plan to address any weaknesses (if relevant) and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Governors' Future Plans for the School

We are looking ahead to monitor the updated curriculum cycles and knowledge maps across all subjects.

We will continue to monitor EYFS numbers and the success of our pre-school.

Class link governors will continue to be regular visitors in school.

We will focus on the key priorities on this year's school development plan

Key Priorities for 2024/25
1. To review our foundation subject knowledge overviews using KAPOW to enhance teaching and learning sequences.
2. To review our English key texts and writing planning within our half termly topics.

3. To review SEND provision across the school with quality first teaching and adaptive teaching strategies within all curriculum subjects.

For the past five years, we have no significant data trends due to small cohorts. Writing across the curriculum remains a mindful focus and we will be holding half termly writing moderations across both schools and internally. LCC consultant training will remain within our Cluster of schools and training for Year 2 and 6 teachers will continue. Cluster writing moderation across the 14 schools for every year group from EYFS will continue. We purchased Grammasaurus to support teaching and learning within day to day teaching. We are part of the English Hub and the English subject leader, headteacher, attends and coordinates training for all staff.

We have established our creative curriculum and we are now reviewing our curriculum offer for foundation subjects. What are the key things we want children to learn and remember? Are there half termly topics that can be combined to study deeper? Is all current content relevant? Do we need to adapt plans and create new content within our ever changing world? We have purchased KAPOW to enhance our subjects and ensure well planned and cohesive lesson content is supported with this excellent planning resource. Big Thinking questions, quizzes, hooks, skickability and youth social action continue within our half termly curriculum maps to give children the greatest toolkit of cultural capital and care for our common home and each other.

Music, HRSE, PE and the arts will remain held to high esteem to support children's mental health and wellbeing. Both schools will be attending the Preston cluster of sports events, entering children from EYFS in competitions throughout the whole school year. Many events will be held on Whitechapel grounds. We will focus on our online safety aspect of our computing curriculum to support safeguarding and behaviour requirements.

Ambition for all:

Research tells us that children thrive in an inclusive classroom and we have reviewed what adaptive teaching strategies can look like within the different subjects for all children to achieve.

Enrichment opportunities:

We will continue to develop the whole child and provide excellent enrichment opportunities for all children to enjoy learning and live life to the full.

Impact of our Governing body 2023-24

- Scrutiny and analysis of data within the context of the school
- Monitoring the implementation of the school development plan.
- Ensuring the continual updating of the SEF and reviewing impact made.
- Successfully appointing new members of support staff to our team.
- Supporting the continued development of SSP and early reading with another year of high phonics pass rate in Year 1 screening check
- Reading success in Year 6 SATs meant another year of 50% greater depth and 75% meeting expected expectations.
- Joint collaboration training with governors from St. Mary's.
- Meeting with our school adviser for external validation of our school priorities being achieved.
- Supporting and creating community events where school is involved.
- Monitoring the implementation of the computing curriculum and monitoring our online safeguarding procedures

- Ensuring compliance with website statutory requirements.
- Monitoring changes in pupil numbers and the implications for both budget and staffing.
- Budget setting and monitoring and review of school finances and monitoring of SLT movement across our collaboration to ensure needs are met when they arise across both primary schools.
- Review of school policies and documentation.
- Monitoring of the school's performance management cycle.
- Overseeing the continual compliance in school with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- Completion by all governors of the NGA Skills Audit, results collated and shared anonymously with the governing board.
- Completion of the SFVS Financial Management Skills Analysis.

How to contact the Governing Body

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers and the wider school community – please contact the Chair of Governors, Mr Michael Blair: Michael.blair@st-francis.lancs.sch.uk

This governance statement is approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on and signed on its behalf by:

5th September 2024

Mr M Blair

Chair of Governors

Miss S Deakin

Headteacher

