Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of

Balshaw's Church of England High School

School Year *2025-2026*

Role of the Governing Board

The role of the governing board in a local authority maintained school is set out in education law, namely to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement'. The board also has a legal responsibility to promote pupil wellbeing. It does this by:

Setting Strategic Direction	**-**Ensuring clarity of vision and ethos -Engaging with stakeholders -Making sure statutory duties are met
Creating Robust Accountability	-Accountability for teaching, achievement, behaviour and safety -Strengthening and supporting school leadership -Performance managing the Headteacher -Contributing to school self-evaluation -Contributing to school self-evaluation -Holding Performance Leaders to account
Ensuring Financial Probity	**-**Making sure the school's money is well spent -Monitoring the use of the Pupil Premium grant and other resources to overcome barriers to learning

Governance Arrangements

The governing board is made up as follows:

- **Foundation: 5**
- **Parent Governors: 2**
- **Staff Governor: 2 (including the Headteacher)**
- **Co-opted Governors: 10**
- **Local Authority Governor: 1**

The full Governing Board meets four times a year, once a term for general school business and once early in the autumn term to consider governing board arrangements and protocols for the forthcoming year. Governors also meet at least termly in 4 separate committees to consider various aspects of the school in detail. At **Balshaw's CE High School** we have the following committees:

- Resources Committee (finance, staffing, premises, health and safety)
- Curriculum and Standards Committee (Quality of education, intent, implementation and outcomes as well as the wider curriculum breadth and effectiveness.)

- Student Welfare and Ethos Committee (Pastoral care and provision, Safeguarding, Child protection, attendance, behaviour, inclusion, SEND, Pupil premium, Children Looked After and the impact of our Christian distinctiveness, welfare of staff, culture and ethos.)
- Strategy Group meets three times per year, one month prior to the termly Full Governors meeting. The group comprises Chair and Vice-Chair of governors, chairs of the above committees and one governor with oversight of the school's Christian distinctiveness and ethos.

Governors also have links to **specific subjects and departments (e.g. Maths, RE, English, Science).** They visit school regularly to meet students and staff to gather Pupil Voice and speak to members of the departments with which they are linked. This ensures good lines of communication, positive relationships for active governance and deepens understanding of the implementation and impact of School Development Plan and Priorities. In addition to this a subset of Link Governors are able to monitor specific aspects of the curriculum or key areas such as SEND, Safeguarding and the Pupil Premium Strategy across all subject areas as common threads throughout all school development strategy.

There are also committees that meet, if required, to consider pupil discipline, staffing appeals and complaints and specific Governors are highlighted to represent the Governing Board on these committees.

A list of Governors, their terms of office and positions of responsibility is published on the school website.

Governors' Attendance Record

Governing boards make decisions collectively, though they may choose to delegate responsibility to committees, or individuals (including the Headteacher). Attending Governing Board meetings is an essential part of a governor's role and the attendance record for the governors of our school is ***good*****.** This ensures that all governors receive the necessary information all at the same time and therefore important and informed decisions can be made as and when necessary, on all aspects of the school, staff and pupils.

The Governing Body utilises a hybrid approach to meetings to allow governors with their own work commitments to be able to attend meetings that they may not otherwise have been able to make with the journey time to school. All repeated non-attendance at meetings is followed up rigorously by the Chair.

The attendance record for all governors is published on the school website.

Assessment and Impact of the Governing Board during *2025-2026* School Year

The Governing Board has maintained a strong focus on its three core functions to ensure effective and supportive governance. The school's distinctive Christian vision underpins and drives all aspects of decision-making related to robust accountability and financial probity. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of all our staff and students is paramount and we continually strive to develop as an inclusive, welcoming place in which all can learn and flourish.

Resources Committee

The committee's role is to oversee the effective use of resources to:
Ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education, including those with SEND, the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Plan, discuss and agree the effective use of the school's budget over the next financial year, with a focus on school improvement. Monitor how the budget and financial resources are spent at termly meetings.

Governor Impact – Resources Committee
Governors' scrutiny and decisions have supported the school's theologically-rooted vision by ensuring that financial, staffing and premises resources are responsibly stewarded to enable all students and staff to flourish.

This has included:
Ensuring value for money through careful scrutiny of budgets, grant expenditure and financial forecasts, while strengthening financial controls and safeguarding against fraud.

Supporting a safe, inclusive and well-resourced learning environment through oversight of premises, health and safety, estate works, ICT infrastructure and the laptop scheme.
Exploring opportunities such as the Irene Ogden Memorial Trust to widen access and enable students from all backgrounds to flourish and pursue their future pathways.

Responding effectively to staffing challenges, including the short-notice absence of the Head of PE, so that there was minimal impact on staff and students.

Maintaining a strong focus on staff wellbeing, staffing capacity and SEMH provision.

Strengthening oversight of risk, behaviour and safeguarding, ensuring that governors remain attentive to the wider wellbeing and character development of students.

Supporting an environment in which every young person, of faith and no faith, can grow in wisdom, confidence and compassion, reflecting Christ's love within the school and wider community.

Overall, the committee's work demonstrates responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to the school, helping to create the conditions in which the whole school community can flourish.

Curriculum and Standards Committee

The main functions of the committee are to:

- *Review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum*
- *Recommend the SEF and SIP to the Governing Board*
- *Develop and review policies*
- *Ensure that special needs requirements are met*
- *Ensure that all children have equal opportunities*

To monitor and evaluate:

- *Provision for all students*
- *The impact of the school development plan.*
- *The effectiveness of leadership and management*
- *The impact of the quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement by underachieving groups and vulnerable students.*
- *The impact of continuing CPD on improving staff performance*

Governors' scrutiny and challenge have supported the school's theologically-rooted vision by ensuring that all pupils are given the opportunity to flourish academically and personally through a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum. This has included:

Challenging senior leaders on GCSE outcomes and progress against targets, including differences between subjects such as English and mathematics, to ensure appropriate action is taken where progress is below expectation.

Supporting the move to full-course GCSE Religious Education for all pupils, recognising its importance within the distinctive provision of a church school.

Reviewing the quality of teaching and quality assurance processes to ensure that teaching remains consistently strong and supports pupils' progress.

Monitoring the impact of the School Development Plan and pupil outcomes to ensure school improvement priorities are delivering the intended impact.

Scrutinising curriculum developments and national changes, including Progress 8, KS3 assessment and triple science, to ensure that decisions promote equity, aspiration and effective use of resources.

Ensuring appropriate support and challenge for disadvantaged, SEND and higher-attaining pupils, so that all pupils are enabled to achieve their potential.

Considering the digital strategy and ethical use of AI, encouraging the school to approach new opportunities with integrity, wisdom and responsibility.

Overall, the committee's work has strengthened governors' assurance that the curriculum and quality of education reflect the school's Christian ethos, valuing every individual and seeking to enable all young people to grow in knowledge, confidence, character and faith.

Student Welfare and Ethos Committee

The main functions of the committee are to:

- *Monitor attendance, behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding and student welfare*
- *Promote the key features of the school's church distinctiveness*

- *Promote the school as an inclusive church school respecting people whatever their faith or world view*

Governors' oversight and challenge have supported the school's theologically-rooted vision by ensuring that the wellbeing, inclusion, spiritual development and flourishing of every student remain at the heart of school life.

This has included:
Strengthening the leadership and effectiveness of the committee, drawing on appropriate church school and RE expertise to ensure its work remains aligned with the school's Christian vision.

Ensuring that worship and spiritual development remain inclusive, invitational and inspirational, including consistent use of Thought for the Day and Prayer for the Day, enabling students to engage with Scripture and reflect on its significance.

Supporting the development of regular Eucharist for Year 7 pupils, providing an early foundation for understanding and experiencing the Christian faith and encouraging students to live out Christ's vision beyond school.

Challenging leaders on the adequacy of SEND provision and staffing, ensuring that learning is effectively adapted and that all students have the support they need to flourish.

Strengthening oversight of attendance, behaviour, safeguarding and student wellbeing, while recognising and encouraging staff whose work is making a positive difference.

Celebrating the school's achievement of School of Sanctuary status, affirming its commitment to inclusion, welcome and enabling people from all backgrounds to flourish.

Maintaining a focus on cultural capital, personal development and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that opportunities to flourish extend beyond academic achievement.

Ensuring that the school's Christian ethos is evident in practice, through worship, community events and a nurturing approach to students and families.

Overall, the committee's work has helped ensure that the school's Christian vision is not simply articulated but lived out in the daily experience of students—promoting inclusion, wellbeing, spiritual growth and a sense of belonging, so that every young person is enabled to flourish.

Agreed by the Governing Board on: September 2026

Signed by the Chair: *Rev Paul Robinson*