

St John's Church of England School, Church Street, Blackpool

Governing Board Annual Statement 2024-25

The following observations were recorded by OFSTED following their last visit to our school on 29th and 30th April 2025:

- The school has designed a curriculum that is broad, balanced and commensurate with the national curriculum. It has identified the knowledge for pupils to learn, which is ordered logically, so that pupils build on what they already know. This curriculum thinking begins in the early years, where children get off to a flying start to their education.
- Staff benefit from a comprehensive package of training and coaching that helps them to develop their subject knowledge.
- The school identifies pupils' additional needs quickly. It works closely with external agencies, parents and carers to support pupils with SEND to learn well alongside their peers. Pupils with SEND are included in the full life of the school.
- Pupils' enjoyment of reading is fostered by the school.
- Staff have had training to help them to deliver the phonics programme typically well.
- Pupils are mostly well mannered and polite. In the early years, children learn quickly how to share and take turns. Staff foster children's self-care skills and independence well, to enable them to learn successfully through their play. Pupils typically attend school regularly.
- The school works with external professionals to support pupils and their families to improve levels of attendance.
- The school provides pupils with a well-thought-out programme to enrich their personal development. Pupils learn about safety outside of school, including how to be safe online and when near open water. Older pupils learn about responsibility in their roles as school councillors, prefects, worship wardens and eco-councillors. To support the community, pupils raise money for local charities and donate to a local foodbank.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well, with a focus on supporting and challenging the school to encourage continual improvement.
- Staff are positive about working at the school. They appreciate the open and supportive culture that exists. Staff are given the time that they need to undertake their roles well.

The following observations were recorded in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report 16th November 2024:-

- The Christian vision is deeply embedded in all aspects of daily life at St John's. This is well supported by the school's Christian values that inspire adults and pupils to 'do to others what you would have them do to you.'
- Relationships and the wellbeing of everyone are a key focus for school leaders. Through the Christian vision, this creates a nurturing culture where pupils learn to respect and value one another.
- The school's curriculum is shaped by the Christian vision.
- The wide range of experiences provided by the school enables pupils, including the vulnerable, to find learning irresistible and flourish in their studies.
- Well-planned collective worship emphasises the school's vision and values. Pupils and adults value the daily inclusive opportunities to come together for celebration, reflection and prayer. This is enhanced further by the strong relationship with the local church.
- Effective leadership in religious education (RE) ensures that learning is challenging and engaging for pupils. As a result, they have a good knowledge of world religions including Christianity.

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the 3 core strategic functions of the Governing Board of St John's C of E School 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 performance management of the staff;**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

This Annual Statement is prepared in accordance with current Department of Education guidance which states:

"It is good practice for the Governing Board to publish an annual governance statement to explain how it has fulfilled its responsibilities"

Publication of Governance Arrangements

In the interests of transparency, a school/academy must publish on its website up to-date details of its governance arrangements in a readily accessible format. This statement therefore is to explain how the Governing Board has fulfilled its responsibilities as defined by Government supported by the Local Authority and Blackburn Diocese.

Publishing Arrangements

Governors received the annual report to assure the Board that the school website is compliant with statutory requirements of information to be published on the website, including publication of governance arrangements. Arrangements were made to address any areas of non-compliance.

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Hayley Aris was appointed as Chair in November 2024 for the coming two academic years. Jo Hirst was appointed Vice Chair in September 2023 for the coming two academic years.

Membership

- John Booth was appointed parent governor on 27 February 2024. Term of office from 27 Feb 2024 to 26 Feb 2028.
- Billy McGurk was appointed Foundation governor on 14th March 2025. Term of office from 14 Mar 2025 to 13 Mar 2029.
- Tom Swallow was appointed Foundation governor on 11th July 2024. Term of office from 11 Jul 2024 to 10 Jul 2028

Register of Business/Pecuniary Interests

Governors completed the annual review of their business interests. This is published on the school website

The Governing Board normally holds six full Governing Board meetings a year. The impact of the Governors' role in the school ensures that the budget is managed effectively and improvements are effective and continuous. Governor expertise – the Governors bring a wide variety of expertise to the school and this helps to ensure the school is moving forward. Annual skills audits are completed together as a Governing Board alongside effectiveness questionnaires. Actions put forward to develop the Board. The next one planned is Autumn 2025.

Presentations by strategic staff members to the Governing Board

Headteacher delivered the School Development Plan - October 2024

Headteacher delivered School Vision and strategy presentation - 18th November 2024

Headteacher delivered update on the School Development Plan - 27th January 2025

School Development Action Plan (SDP)

We agreed the school development priorities that have been set from an analysis of data which highlights areas to improve. The SDP is shared with us and progress towards key milestones is checked every term. The 2024-2025 targets for the school development plan were:

- Priority 1 - Early Years - Firm Foundations - To implement and support a range of strategies to improve outcomes.
- Priority 2 - Irresistible Curriculum, Do less, Better - To consolidate, change and adapt the Curriculum reflecting on the previous year.
- Priority 3 - Writing - So what? Now what?
- Priority 4 - A Shared Vision

Progress of the SDP is reported back to the Full Governing Body where it is closely monitored.

Budget Monitoring

Reports received from the School Business Manager, including variance reports, end of year statement and Statement of Commitments. The Governing Board approved the budget for 2024-2025.

Safeguarding Annual Report

Governors received the annual report on safeguarding, to assure the Board that robust arrangements are in place and for them to support consideration of whether any additional training/amendment to policies and procedures is required. Chair and Vice Chair discuss Safeguarding with the Headteacher ongoing throughout the year.

Get Information About Schools (GIAS)

Governors noted that the requirement for GIAS (formerly EduBase) is done by School Business Manager and kept up to date.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024

Governors confirmed that they had read this document and understood the contents.

GDPR

Governors received regular summary reports from the School Business Manager, assuring the Board that robust arrangements were in place.

Policies

Governors have reviewed, and revised as necessary, any relevant policies using the Governing Board Policy Review and Delegation Planner as recommended by the Local Authority. See below for the policies reviewed/revised in 2024-2025.

• Attendance Policy
• Appraisal Policy
• Admissions Policy
• Behaviour Principles
• Behaviour (Relationships) Policy
• Best Value Statement
• Capability Procedure
• Clerk Statement of Internal Control
• Disciplinary Procedure
• Equality in Employment Procedure
• Grievance Policy LA Model
• Health & Safety Policy

• Internal Control Framework (Financial)
• Pay Policy
• Relationships Policy
• Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and Procedures
• School's Financial Value Standard (SFVS)
• School's Pay Policy
• Special Education Needs
• Staff behaviour
• Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
• Uniform Policy

The Governing Board has reviewed the following documents and reference guides again this year which set out and aid how we operate:

- **Instrument of Government** - Outlines the constitution of the Governing Board, as agreed by the Diocese and Local Authority.
- **Code of Conduct** - this sets out the expectations on and commitment required from Governors and Trustees in order for the Governing Board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.
- **Procedures for the Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**
- **Delegation Planner/Scheme of Delegation** - this outlines the key roles and functions of the Governing Board, and determines where these have been delegated to a Local Governing Board/committee or individual in line with Governance regulations.
- **Policy Review Planner** - this details the statutory policies requiring consideration by the Governing Board, and where these have been delegated to a committee or individual in line with Governance regulations.
- **Committee Terms of Reference** - this outlines the procedures and functions delegated to Committees established by the Governing Board.
- **Committee Membership and Nominated Governor Roles** - this confirms the appointment of nominated Governor Roles and Membership on each established Committee of the Governing Board.

Linked Governor Roles/School Visits

All governors have responsibilities delegated to them to act as a 'specialist' governor for certain functions, including the statutory roles of SEND Governor and Safeguarding Governor. The Governors visit the school as part of their monitoring of the SDP and in coordination with their specific Linked Governor Roles. These are a valuable opportunity for Governors to be able to work closely with staff members across all aspects of school. The Link Governors follow a yearly cycle and report back to the Full Governing Board Meetings with their roles and responsibilities being clearly defined. This is under review currently so that the Link Governor Roles and School Visits link into the School Development Plan and School Vision. Please see the school website for more information on our Governor roles.

Governor Strategic Development Plan

This enables the Governing Board to demonstrate its focus on the three core strategic functions as stated at the beginning of this statement, linking in with the School Development Action Plan, training requirements and any requirements arising from the Ofsted inspection.

We are developing a more personalised skills audit for Governing Board members to complete. The evaluation of this means that we can look for specific skills when recruiting new Governors.

Governor Training

During this academic year Governors have received training in a range of subjects including:

- **Chairs Briefing - Chair and Vice attend updates.**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Developing the Vision of the school led by School Advisor Paul Duckworth**

Contact us

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from staff, parents, carers and other members of the community.

You can contact the Chair of Governors, via the school office and find information about the Governing Board on the school website at: www.stjohnsblackpool.co.uk