

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

Governing Board Annual Statement 2023-2024

The following observation was recorded by OFSTED following their last visit to our school on 11th March 2020:

- "Blackpool St John's is a warm and welcoming school. The pupils said that they are happy and love school. They attend regularly. They said that they feel safe and can talk to staff if they have a worry and staff look after them properly. Staff teach pupils how to stay safe online and when outdoors."
- "Pupils achieve well because leaders and staff have high expectations."
- "The headteacher, supported by a new leadership team and capable governing body, leads Blackpool St John's very effectively. Leaders know the pupils well. Leaders have an accurate view of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further. Leaders' plans for improvement are clear and precise."
- "Leaders and staff focus clearly on developing pupils' personal development, including their well-being and resilience."
- "All staff enjoy working at Blackpool St. John's. They value the help and guidance that the headteacher and governors give them."
- "The arrangements for safeguarding are effective"

The following observation was recorded in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report 9th February 2017:-

- "The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Blackpool St. John's as a Church of England school are **outstanding.**"
- "The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is **outstanding** at meeting the needs of all learners."
- "The impact of collective worship on the school community is **outstanding.**"
- "The effectiveness of religious education is **outstanding.**"
- "The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is **outstanding.**"
- "The Christian vision of the headteacher, senior leadership team and the governors drives the school forward."

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 2022 for the coming two academic years. Jo Hirst was appointed Vice Chair in September 2023 for the coming two academic years.

Membership

- Lauren Blackburn's Term of Office as Foundation Governor ended on 24th January 2023 and she was subsequently reappointed to this post by the PCC for the term of 24.01.23 to 23.01.27.
- David Blacker's Term of Office as Local Authority Governor ended and he was subsequently reappointed to this post on September 1st 2023.
- Sarah Smith resigned her position in July 2024.
- Mr John Booth-Young was appointed on 27th February 2024 to 26th February 2028 as a Parent Governor.
- Ms Rachel Critch was appointed on 30th January 2024 to 29th January 2028 as a Staff Governor.
- Tom Swallow was appointed as a Foundation Governor on 11th July 2024 to 10 July 2028.

Register of Business/Pecuniary Interests

Governors completed the annual review of their business interests.

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 and actions put forward to develop the board. The next one planned is September 2024.

Presentations by strategic staff members to the Governing Board

Headteacher delivered the School Development Plan - 26th September 2023

Deputy Headteacher delivered Diversity in our curriculum Governors 26th September 2024

Headteacher delivered School Vision presentation - 30th January 2024

Assistant head delivered presentation on Assessment - 21st May 2024

Senco and Assistant Senco delivered presentation on Inclusion 9th July 2024

Headteacher delivered presentation of new attendance guidance 9th July 2024

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 2023-24 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- To further develop and embed Assessment - So what? Now what?

Priority 4- Embed the culture and ethos of the school - 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 end of year statement and Variance Report. 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, Jill Hicks and kept up to date.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023

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

GDPR

Governors received a summary report 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 2023-2024.

- Capability of Staff
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Pay Policy
- SEND Policy
- Charging and Remission Policy
- Internal Control Framework
- Appraisal (Teachers)
- Capability of Staff
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Whistleblowing

We have 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. 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 Linked 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 in to the School Development Plan and School Vision. Please see the school website for more information on our Governor roles.

Governor 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**

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