



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

1 INTRODUCTION

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is governed by a Governing Board constituted under a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are maintained.

Under the Articles the governors may delegate to any governor, committee, the Headteacher or any other holder of an executive office such of their powers or functions as they consider desirable to be exercised by them. Any such delegation may be made subject to any conditions the governors may impose and may be revoked or altered.

Where any power or function of the governors has been exercised by any committee, that person or committee shall report to the governors in respect of any action taken or decision made with respect to the exercise of that power or function at the meeting of the governors immediately following the taking of the action or the making of the decision.

The governors may establish any committee to exercise powers and functions of the governors. The constitution, membership and proceedings of any committee of the governors shall be determined by the governors. The establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of the governors shall be reviewed at least once in every twelve months. The membership of any committee of the governors may include persons who are not governors, provided that a majority of members of any such committee shall be governors. The governors may determine that some or all of the members of a committee who are not governors shall be entitled to vote in any proceedings of the committee. No vote on any matter shall be taken at a meeting of a committee of the governors unless the majority of members of the committee present are governors.

The Governing Board should exercise its powers and functions with a view to fulfilling a largely strategic leadership role in the running of the school, addressing such matters as:

- policy development and strategic planning, including target-setting to drive school improvement;
- ensuring sound management and administration of the school, and ensuring that managers are equipped with relevant skills and guidance;
- ensuring compliance with legal requirements;
- establishing and maintaining a transparent system of prudent and effective internal controls.
- management of the school's financial, human and other resources
- monitoring performance and the achievement of objectives, and ensuring that plans for improvement are acted upon;
- helping the school be responsive to the needs of parents, Holy Church and the wider community and making it more accountable through consultation and reporting;
- setting the school's standards of conduct and values;
- assessing and managing risk (including preparation of a statement on the school's risk management for its annual report and accounts).

2. SCHEME of DELEGATION

2.1 GENERAL

In accordance with the Academies Academy Trust Handbook the Governing Board is required to agree a formal schedule of matters reserved for its decisions, i.e. those which should not be delegated within the school.

These are specific areas which the Governing Board will oversee:

- Approval of the development plan;
- Approval of policies developed by committees (e.g., related to the curriculum, procurement, finance, risk management etc.)
- Approval of the annual budget;
- Determining levels of expenditure to be approved by the Governing Board itself and levels to be delegated.

Beyond this, the Governing Board has established separate committees to deal with specific areas of school business and has determined the delegated responsibilities to be assigned to those committees, to ensure that matters can be dealt with in appropriate detail and with sufficient frequency. Accordingly, the Governing Board has established a Resources and Audit Committee separate from the Governing Board to deal with finance, premises and property, health and safety, human resources, employee relations and workforce planning and audit.

The Governing Board has also established a Standards and Achievements committee to deal with attainment, standards, teaching and learning, attendance, special educational needs and the curriculum.

Each committee has its own Terms of Reference approved or re-affirmed annually by the Governing Board.

Where the Governing Board has decided to delegate matters for consideration by committees, each committee will be chaired by a governor. The membership of the committee may include persons who are not governors provided that a majority of the members are governors. All members of the committee, including those who are not governors, are entitled to vote at committee meetings unless the Terms of Reference for the committee otherwise state.

The Governing Board will ensure that it receives adequate feedback on the work of those committees and is able to consider their decisions formally.

The Governing Board accepts that the establishment of a Resources and Audit committee does not lessen its overall responsibility to manage the finances of the school.

2.2 GOVERNORS' MEETINGS

Meetings of governors are regulated by the Articles of Association. In accordance with Articles, the Governing Board will hold at least three meetings in every school year. No business will be conducted at any meeting unless a quorum is present.

Governors will appoint a clerk to the Governing Board, who must be someone other than a governor or the Headteacher.

Each meeting of the Governing Board will consider:

- a report of the financial position of the school, including its income and expenditure and financial commitments;
- whether adequate financial monitoring of the school's budget and activities is being undertaken;
- progress on any action identified to improve financial arrangements at the school;
- significant contracts proposed to be entered into by the school;
- details of any significant matters affecting the school's staff;
- details of any significant matters affecting the pupils' welfare or education;
- details of any significant matters affecting the school's assets e.g. computers, cars, whiteboards etc.

Matters that will be considered by Governors at least once a year are:

- the school's goals and how they are being met;
- review of the management structure to ensure it is operating effectively;
- review of the performance of external providers e.g. bankers, services provided under SLAs;
- review and approval of the school's annual accounts and report of the trustees;
- review and approval of the financial budget for the following year;

- review and approval of the levels of insurance cover for the school's assets;
- findings made by both the external and internal auditors and the auditor's management letter, and any other financial reviews, and consideration of what actions should be taken arising from their recommendations;
- review of the risks to which the school is exposed and determination of whether systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

The Governing Board will also ensure that procedures are in place to ensure that employees of the school are paid for work done in accordance with their contracts of employment with the school.

In addition, the Governing Board must ensure the school has adequate insurance cover to support its activities as an employer, such as employers' liability insurance, fidelity insurance, trustee indemnity, public liability insurance and so forth.

The Governing Board may decide to delegate responsibility for specified matters, where it has power to do so, to individual members or committees of the board. Decisions taken by individual members or committees of the board under delegated powers should be recorded in written minutes available to the board as a whole.

In 2021/2022, the school's internal auditors are Knill James and the external auditors are Azets.

2.3 ACCOUNTING OFFICER and HEADTEACHER

The Funding Agreement requires each school to identify the Headteacher as the Accounting Officer who will also be the senior executive leader. The governors have appointed Mrs Isobel Vassallo as the Headteacher and she will act as an ex-officio governor.

The governors delegate such powers and functions as they consider are required by the Headteacher for the internal organisation, management and control of the school (including the implementation of all policies approved by the governors) and for the direction of the teaching and curriculum at the school.

This post confers responsibility for financial and administrative matters. This is a vital role, as the Accounting Officer is personally responsible to the Governing Board for:

- ensuring regularity, propriety and value for money;
- prudent and economical administration;
- avoidance of waste and extravagance;
- efficient and effective use of available resources; and
- the day-to-day organisation, staffing and management of the school.

The Accounting Officer may delegate, or appoint others to assist in these responsibilities, for example to the School Business Manager.

Within the framework of the school development plan as approved by the Governing Board the Headteacher has overall executive responsibility for the school's activities including financial activities. The Headteacher still maintains responsibility for:

- approving new staff appointments within the authorised establishment, except for any senior staff posts which should be approved by the Governing Board;
- authorising contracts and/or ordering supplies in a single order of up to £5,000; contracts above £5,001 will need to be approved in accordance with the Procurement Policy;
- signing cheques up to £5,000 in conjunction with other authorised signatories according to the bank mandate (as approved by the governors). Two signatories are required on all cheques. Where a cheque is for an amount over £5,000, one of the signatories should be either the Chair of Governors or the Chair of the Resources and Audit Committee.

In accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook the Governing Board recognises also that the Headteacher has the following specific responsibilities:

- a personal responsibility to Parliament, and to ESFA's accounting officer, for the financial resources under the

school's control. Accounting Officers must be able to assure Parliament and the public of high standards of probity in the management of public funds;

- for value for money - this is about achieving the best possible educational outcomes through the economic, efficient and effective use of resources. A key objective is to achieve value for money not only for the school but for taxpayers generally;
- regularity - dealing with all items of income and expenditure in accordance with legislation, the terms of the school's funding agreement and the Academies Academy Trust Handbook and compliance with the school's internal procedures - this includes spending public money for the purposes intended by Parliament;
- propriety - the requirement that expenditure and income should be dealt with in accordance with Parliament's intentions and the principles of parliamentary control - this covers standards of conduct, behaviour and corporate governance.

The Governing Board recognises that the Headteacher is accountable for the school's financial affairs, for keeping proper financial records and for the management of opportunities and risks. The delivery of the school's detailed accounting processes will be delegated to a chief financial officer, who will perform the role of finance director, business manager or equivalent.

The Governing Board recognises that the Headteacher must take personal responsibility (which must not be delegated) for assuring the Governing Board that there is compliance with the Academies Academy Trust Handbook and the funding agreement. The Headteacher must advise the Governing Board in writing if, at any time, in her opinion, any action or policy under consideration by them is incompatible with the terms of the articles, funding agreement or the Academies Academy Trust Handbook.

Similarly, the Headteacher must advise the Governing Board in writing if the Governing Board appears to be failing to act where required to do so by the terms and conditions of the Academies Academy Trust Handbook or funding agreement. Where the Governing Board is minded to proceed, despite the advice of the Headteacher, the Headteacher must consider the reasons the Governing Board gives for its decision. If, after considering those reasons the Headteacher still considers that the action proposed by the Governing Board is in breach of the articles, the funding agreement or the Academies Academy Trust Handbook, the accounting officer must notify ESFA's accounting officer immediately, and in writing.

2.4 SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER

The main responsibilities of the School Business Manager are:

- the day to day management of financial matters including the establishment and operation of a suitable accounting system;
- the management of the school financial position at a strategic and operational level within the framework for financial control determined by the Governing Board;
- the maintenance of effective systems of internal control;
- ensuring that the annual accounts are properly presented and adequately supported by the underlying books and records of the school;
- the preparation of monthly management accounts;
- ensuring forms and returns are sent to the DfE in line with the timetable in the DfE guidance and signing such forms as necessary.

2.5 RESOURCES AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Governing Board has established a Resources and Audit Committee to cover finance, premises and property, health and safety, human resources (employee relations and workforce planning), personnel and audit.

The Chair, members and Clerk of the Committee shall be non-executive members and shall be appointed by the Governing Board. The Chair of Resources and Audit shall be a non-executive member of the Governing Board other than the Chair of Governors.

Governors who are not members of the Resources and Audit Committee have the right of attendance. The Clerk will circulate minutes of meetings of the Resources and Audit Committee to all members of the Governing Board.

The Headteacher in her role as Accounting Officer and the School Business Manager will normally attend meetings of the Committee.

The Committee will meet at least termly but additional meetings will be held if required. The external auditor may request a meeting if one is considered necessary.

2.5.1 Authority

The Resources and Audit Committee is an advisory body with no executive powers. However, it is authorised by the Governing Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference and to seek any information it requires from staff, who are requested to co-operate with the Committee, in the conduct of its inquiries.

The Resources and Audit Committee is authorised to obtain independent professional advice if it considers this necessary.

2.5.2 Duties

The specific duties of the Resources and Audit Committee are listed in its Terms of Reference. In general these can be said to be the following:

- review the annual budget in detail and to make recommendations to the Governing Board
- review the school's internal and external financial statements and reports to ensure that they reflect best practice;
- discuss with the external auditor the nature and scope of each forthcoming audit and to ensure that the external auditor has the fullest co-operation of staff;
- consider all relevant reports by the School Business Manager and/or the appointed external auditor, including reports on the school's accounts, achievement of value for money and the response to any management letters;
- review the effectiveness of the school's internal control system established to ensure that the aims, objectives and key performance targets of the organisation are achieved in the most economic, effective and environmentally preferable manner;
- review any report in relation to the operation of the school's buildings and grounds;
- review new and existing policies relating to the employment and conditions of staff at the school and make recommendations to the Governing Board;
- review and monitor the Health and Safety Policy statement in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of students, employees and visitors to the school, and to make recommendations to the Governing Board;
- review the operation of the school's code of conduct for Governor members and code of conduct for staff;
- delegate to a discrete Pay Committee the review of the recommendations of the Headteacher as to salaries particularly any discretionary awards.

The committee will consider any other matters where requested to do so by the Governing Board and report at least once a year on the discharge of the duties listed above.

2.5.3 Internal Audit

In accordance with the Academies Academy Trust Handbook, the Governing Board needs to consider how it monitors and checks the operation of the financial management arrangements that have been established and are operated by officers of the school. To assist in this they will have appointed a recognised professional organisation or company to have specific responsibility for overseeing the financial arrangements on their behalf. The Governing Board has appointed Wilkins Kennedy to fulfil the role on the understanding that appropriate checks and balances exist to ensure no overlap between the activities of Wilkins Kennedy as external auditors and internal auditors.

The internal audit role is intended to provide an independent oversight of the school's financial affairs. The main duties of the internal auditor are to provide the Governing Board with on-going independent assurance that:

- the financial responsibilities of the Governing Board are being properly discharged;
- resources are being managed in an efficient, economical and effective manner;
- sound systems of internal financial control are being maintained; and
- financial considerations are fully taken into account in reaching decisions.

Termly reviews will be undertaken to ensure that financial transactions have been properly processed and that controls are operating as laid down by the Governing Board. A report of the findings from each visit will be presented to the Resources and Audit Committee.

2.6 STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Governing Board has established a Standards and Achievement Committee.

The Chair, members and Clerk of the Committee shall be non-executive members and shall be appointed by the Governing Board. The chair of Standards and Achievement shall be a non-executive member of the Governing Board other than the Chair of Governors.

Governors who are not members of the Standards and Achievement Committee have the right of attendance. The Clerk will circulate minutes of meetings of the Standards and Achievement Committee to all members of the Governing Board.

The Headteacher or delegated member of the Strategic Leadership Team will attend meetings of the Committee.

The Committee will meet at least termly but additional meetings will be held if required.

2.6.1 Authority

The Standards and Achievement Committee is an advisory body with no executive powers. However, it is authorised by the Governing Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference, and to seek any information it requires from staff who are requested to co-operate with the Committee in the conduct of its inquiries.

The Standards and Achievement Committee is authorised to obtain independent professional advice if it considers this necessary.

2.6.2 Duties

The specific duties of the Standards and Achievement Committee are listed in its Terms of Reference. In general these can be said to be the following: -

- monitor pupils' attainment and quality of learning;
- monitor the achievement and progress of children attracting the Pupil Premium and any other children whose characteristics would be identified in the school's Equalities Information;
- monitor children's attendance;
- focus on Pupil Premium, SEND and disadvantaged children;
- ensure the curriculum offer is relevant and appropriate for all pupils;
- make all curriculum decisions other than those which are identified as delegable;
- advise the Governing Board on the school's curriculum statutory obligations;
- review any proposals from the Headteacher for changes to the curriculum and to consider the implications for staffing;
- contribute towards the review, revision and monitoring of the School Development Plan;
- review the policy and provision for collective worship and religious education and make recommendations to the Governing Board;
- review the policy on charging for curriculum activities and make recommendations to the Governing Board;
- review the policy and provision for Relationships and Sex Education and make recommendations to the Governing Board;
- review and approve relevant non-statutory policies;

- review any report from the SIP (School Improvement Partner) in relation to the standards and achievement of the school;
- ensure the school website is up to date and compliant.

The committee will consider any other matters where requested to do so by the Governing Board and report at least once a year on the discharge of the duties listed above.

2.7 DELEGATION TO OTHER COMMITTEES

The Governing Body recognises that it may need to delegate duties to a Committee other than the Resources and Audit Committee and the Standards and Achievement Committee in due course and will amend this document accordingly.