



## Annual Governance Statement

Academic Year: 2021-2022

### **Purpose of this Governance Statement**

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of **St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School** (hereafter referred to as the Governing Body) 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 [2021-2022] academic year.

A list of serving governors is set out at **Appendix 1**

### **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" and the Governing Body are mindful of this requirement in all that we do.

### **Scope of Governing Body's Responsibilities**

The Governing Body acknowledges that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that St Edmund Arrowsmith CHS 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 [7] Foundation Governors †, [2] Staff Governors (including the Headteacher), [2] Parent Governor(s), [1] Local Authority Governors(s), [1] Associate Member and [0] Co-opted Governor(s)\*.

† 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.

### **At St Edmund Arrowsmith CHS we have the following Committees:-**

#### ▪ **Finance, Premises and Personnel (FPP)**

##### REMIT:

##### Financial Reporting:

- To monitor the budget throughout the year, authorising changes to the way the agreed budget is spent in relation to changes in priorities.
- To receive an annual report on and ensure that delegated funds in respect of Devolved Formula Capital spending are appropriately utilised and ensure value for money.

##### GDPR

- To ensure compliancy under GDPR and to monitor breaches of data.

##### Premises

- To monitor and review all revenue and capital expenditure above £20k (as per SOFA delegations) in relation to school premises, maintenance, infrastructure and ICT and ensures value for money within the allocated budget.

##### Personnel Duties

- To approve the school staffing structure annually for the fulfilment of the school's development plan and the effective operation of the school.
- To consider staff well-being including a satisfactory work-life balance for leaders and teachers is achieved and to ensure steps are taken to reduce unnecessary workload.
- To ensure that there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is appropriately trained.

- To ensure the suitability of all adults working with children and young people on the premises at all times (including contractors, visitors and external groups as reflected in the Lettings Policy).
  - To ensure the SENCO is a qualified teacher working at the school. A newly appointed SENCO who has not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months must achieve the National Award in SEN Co-ordination within three years of appointment.
  - To ensure that all Staff and Governors undertake the appropriate level of Safeguarding and Child Protection awareness training.
- **Pay and Performance (P&P)**  
REMIT:
- To identify any staff requiring support or improvement to achieve targets.
  - To assess if targets have been achieved and make recommendations.
  - To review the performance management and remuneration of the Headteacher and set objectives in conjunction with the external advisor.
  - Performance review and remuneration of all other staff through the Appraisal process.
- **Quality of Education Committee (QEC)**  
REMIT:
- To challenge and monitor educational, behavioural and pastoral standards.
  - To consider, review and approve all related policies, and to monitor the implementation of these policies.
  - To feed into and implement the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
  - To monitor achievement towards the objectives of the SIP.

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Committee meetings can be found at **Appendix 2**.

### **Governing Body's work this year and Governors' Attendance at full Governing Body meetings**

*[The Governing Body must set out the purpose of the work undertaken by the Governing Body as a whole as well as any particular issues they encountered and how they were dealt with.]*

- The full Governing Body has met 5 times during the year.
- We have not cancelled a Governing Body meeting because it was not "quorate" (the number of Governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made).
- Overall, Governors have excellent attendance at Governing Body meetings. Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Governing Body meetings can be found at **Appendix 2**.
- The work of the Governing Body has been particularly challenging due to the restrictions that continued to be placed upon education during the Covid-pandemic. However, the FGB were able to maintain regular contact and attend all meetings. The Clerk ensured that correspondence was sent to governors electronically and the school's Governor Portal was used to download documents securely in advance of meetings.
- 3 new Governors were provided with an induction training day and a New Governor Handbook to ensure that they felt confident with the responsibilities of school governance and could contribute to meetings effectively from the outset.

- A Governing Body Strategy Meeting also took place on 28 April 2022 to provide the full governing body with the opportunity to discuss and devise a strategy for school improvement following the Ofsted inspection which took place on 16 & 17 November 2021.
- The decision to reconstitute the sub-committee structure of the Governing Body has strengthened the support for the school's strategic aims. The Quality of Education Committee reports directly on the aims outlined at the strategy meeting and provides the sub-committee with the progress against the desired outcomes.
- The Governing Body are satisfied that the Quality of Education provided for the pupils of St Edmund Arrowsmith is of a very high standard and that the pastoral care and support provided is also of an extremely high quality.
- The management of the school budget is very well maintained by the School Business Manager who continues to provide the Finance, Premises and Personnel sub-committee with highly detailed and accurate budgetary figures. The school remains in a balanced budget position for another year, which is a remarkable achievement in these very difficult times.
- The school was the subject of a cyberattack in December 2021, which could have had a potentially more damaging impact upon the data retention and storage capabilities of the school. However, due to the robust nature of the existing cybersecurity systems in place, the 'hackers' were not able to obtain access to any data for the purpose of criminal or fraudulent activity. Instead, however they deleted the existing school information management system (SIMS) and the functionality of all networked systems. This extended beyond the confines of St Edmund Arrowsmith High School network, as it affected the 5 primary schools that have their IT management outsourced to the school's IT Department.

The school's operational capability was severely disrupted, however was able to continue to remain open to students throughout the repair period due to the use of Synergy for child attendance/safeguarding purposes. The impact upon parents/carers was minimal, apart from the loss of the facility to purchase food via the Wisepay system.

- Due to the covid restrictions, the link visit schedule was postponed for a term, however a large number of visits have taken place throughout 2021-2022.
- Governors have attended school events wherever possible throughout the academic year.

## **Governors' Future Plans for the School**

- On 16 & 17 November 2021 the school was visited by Ofsted and the outcome of their visit can be read via their report [[Ofsted | St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School](#)]. The inspection acknowledged that the *“Governors, leaders and staff at St Edmund Arrowsmith continually reflect, learn and improve. Since the previous inspection, they have collaborated well to further strengthen the quality of education that pupils receive. They carefully nurture a culture where pupils strive to behave well in lessons and around school.”*

Following the Ofsted visit and subsequent report, a **Governing Body Strategy Meeting** took place on **28 April 2022** to ensure that school leaders were addressing the improvement areas outlined in the report, ie ***“What does the School need to do to improve?”***

This was an excellent opportunity for the Board members to meet and raise questions regarding the strategies being implemented by school leaders to ensure that the school obtains an improved Ofsted outcome at a future inspection, ie a move from Good to Outstanding.

The strategy meeting provided detailed information relating to the 3-year School Improvement Plan (SIP), the focus on longer-term goals over this time period and the implementation of measures across the school to ensure that outcomes across all departments are consistent, so that the overall progress score is raised.

The Governing Body will seek to ensure that the new strategies implemented by school leaders as outlined in the School Improvement Plan, are successful and show evidence of progress and a move towards Outstanding. Also, that the pupils continue to receive an excellent education and high levels of pastoral care.

- As part of the strategy meeting, the subject of the potential academisation of Catholic schools in the Liverpool Archdiocese was discussed. The Chair of Governors has attended a preliminary presentation but has not yet had sight of the Consultation Document that was due to be sent out following the meeting. Obviously, this has major implications for the running of the school and must be included in future discussions for the Governing Body and stakeholders.
- The meeting schedule will ensure that the Full Governing Body works cohesively with the sub-committees reporting into the FGB at the end of each term.
- The FGB will continue to follow the Agenda items provided by Wigan's Governor Services, as this ensures that all relevant items for discussion are incorporated into the process. The Clerk will also bring relevant matters of interest to the Chair's attention for inclusion when appropriate.
- Members of the FGB will continue to attend relevant training courses to enhance their knowledge and understanding of school governance.
- Those governors who are aligned to Departments/specific areas of responsibility will ensure that they carry out link visits and report their findings back to the FGB.

## **Minutes of Governing Body and Committee Meetings**

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents and if you would like to see a copy of the minutes you can ask The Clerk to Governors, Mrs Pamela Lennon (01942 728651 x 2223)

[PLennon@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:PLennon@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk)

## **Review of Value for Money**

The Governing Body has used its resources to provide good value for money during the academic year and has assessed where value for money can be improved including the use of benchmarking data where available.

The Governing Body has delivered value for money during the year by ensuring that the School Business Manager has been able to report with transparency, providing support and advice where appropriate. The school has been able to maintain the setting of a balanced budget for the forthcoming academic year 2022-23, which is remarkable given the current difficulties regarding school funding.

## **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 [Finance, Premises & Personnel Committee] of 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.

## **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 Stephen Westhead via email [SWesthead@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:SWesthead@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk) or via The Clerk to Governors, Mrs Pamela Lennon (01942 728651 x 2223)

[PLennon@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:PLennon@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk).

This governance statement is approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on 21 June 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

[SIGNED]



**Stephen J Westhead**  
Governor

[SIGNED]



**Mark J Dumican**  
Headteacher

## Appendix 1 – Full Governing Body 2021-2022

Names of Governors	Type of Governor	Term of Office	Date of Appointment	End date for appointment	Date of resignation (if resigned in the last 12 months)	Appointing Body
Mark Dumican	Headteacher	4 yrs	01.10.2014	n/a		Headteacher
Jim Bryne	Foundation	4 yrs	01.09.2021	31.08.2025		The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Clare Brophy	Staff	4 yrs	15.10.2019	14.10.2023		Elected by Governing Body
Andrew Connellan	Foundation	4 yrs	22.02.2020	21.02.2024		The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Joanne Farrimond	Foundation	4 yrs	06.01.2021	05.01.2025		Elected by parents
Jayne Harrald	Parent	4 yrs	17.12.2019	16.12.2023		Elected by parents
Catherine Hopkins	Foundation	4 yrs	01.09.2020	31.08.2024		The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Paul Jensen	Local Authority	4 yrs	04.12.2018	03.12.2022		Wigan Council *(appointed by Governing Body)
Stephen Westhead	Foundation	4 yrs	01.10.2020	30.09.2024		The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Peter Whitfield	Foundation	4 yrs	01.09.2020	31.08.2024		The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Peter McGhee	Foundation	4 yrs	01.09.2021	31.08.2025		The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Lisa Boardman	Parent	4 yrs	01.11.2021	31.10.2025		Elected by parents
Andrew Wilkinson	Parent	4 yrs	01.11.2021	31.10.2025		Associate member

## Appendix 2: Governing Body Meeting Attendance Record – 2021-22

Name of Governor	21/09/2021		07/12/2021		07/01/2021		22/03/2022		21/06/2022	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
	Stephen Westhead (Chair)	X			X*	X		X		X
Andrew Connellan (V-Chair)		X	X		X		X		X	
Mark Dumican (H/T)	X		X		X		X		X	
Clare Brophy	X		X		X		X		X	
James Byrne		X	X				X		X	
Lisa Boardman			X			X*	X		X	
Jayne Harrald	X		X		X		X		X	
Cathrine Hopkins	X		X		X		X		X	
Paul Jensen	X		X					X*		X*
Peter McGhee	X		X		X		X		X	
Peter Whitfield	X		X		X		X		X	
Joanne Farrimond	X		X			X*	X		X	
Andrew Wilkinson (Associate Member)			X		X		X		X	
<b>SEA: SLT/Observers</b>										
Suzanne Chapman	X			X			X		X	
Annemarie Doolan	X		X				X		X	
Ann Morgan	X		X				X		X	
Gillian Morris	X		X				X		X	
Louise Payne	X		X				X		X	
Dean Cullen	X		X				X		X	
Stephen Doyle	X		X				X		X	

\* Apologies received / \*\* Apologies not received

Name of Governor	Dates of Quality of Education Committee (QEC)					
	05/10/2021		01/02/2022		07/06/2022	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Mark Dumican	X		X		X	
Lisa Boardman			X		X	
Clare Brophy	X		X		X	
Andrew Connellan	X		X		X	
Joanne Farrimond (VC)	X		X		X	
Peter McGhee	X		X			X*
Peter Whitfield (Chair)	X		X		X	
<b>SEA: SLT / Observers</b>						
Suzanne Chapman						
Annemarie Doolan	X		X		X	
Ann Morgan	X		X		X	
Gillian Morris	X		X		X	
Louise Payne	X			X*	X	
Dean Cullen	X		X		X	
Stephen Doyle	X			X	X	
* Apologies received / ** Apologies not received						

Name of Governor	Dates of Finance, Premises & Personnel (F.P&P)					
	30/11/2021		08/03/2022		03/05/2022	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
James Byrne	X		X			X*
Jayne Harrald	X		X		X	
Cathrine Hopkins	X		X		X	
Paul Jensen	X		X			X*
Mark Dumican	X		X		X	
Andrew Wilkinson (Associate member)	X		X		X	
Andrew Connellan			X		X	
<b>SEA: SLT / Observers</b>						
Suzanne Chapman	X		X		X	
Annemarie Doolan		X		X		X
Ann Morgan		X		X		X
Gillian Morris		X		X		X
Louise Payne		X		X		X
Dean Cullen		X		X		X
Stephen Doyle		X		X		X
* Apologies received / ** Apologies not received						

Name of Governor	Pay and Performance (P&P)					
	19/10/2021		15/02/2022		24/05/2022	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Mark Dumican	X		X		X	
Andrew Connellan (Chair)	X		X		X	
Jayne Harrald (VC)	X		X		X	