



Annual Governance Statement

Academic Year: 2023-2024

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 [2023-2024] 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), [2] Associate Members 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. 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 4 times during the year.
- There have not been any meetings cancelled because due to insufficient or "quorate" numbers.
- 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**.
- A Strategy Meeting took place on 3 May 2024 to provide the governing body with the opportunity to discuss the financial challenges facing education and how this negatively impacts the school; the curriculum changes to be implemented to meet the needs of the learners, as well as the impact of the teacher recruitment crisis and how this impacts on GCSE results; the shift in catholic primary school education, ie less children being baptized into the Catholic faith and other matters arising.
- 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.

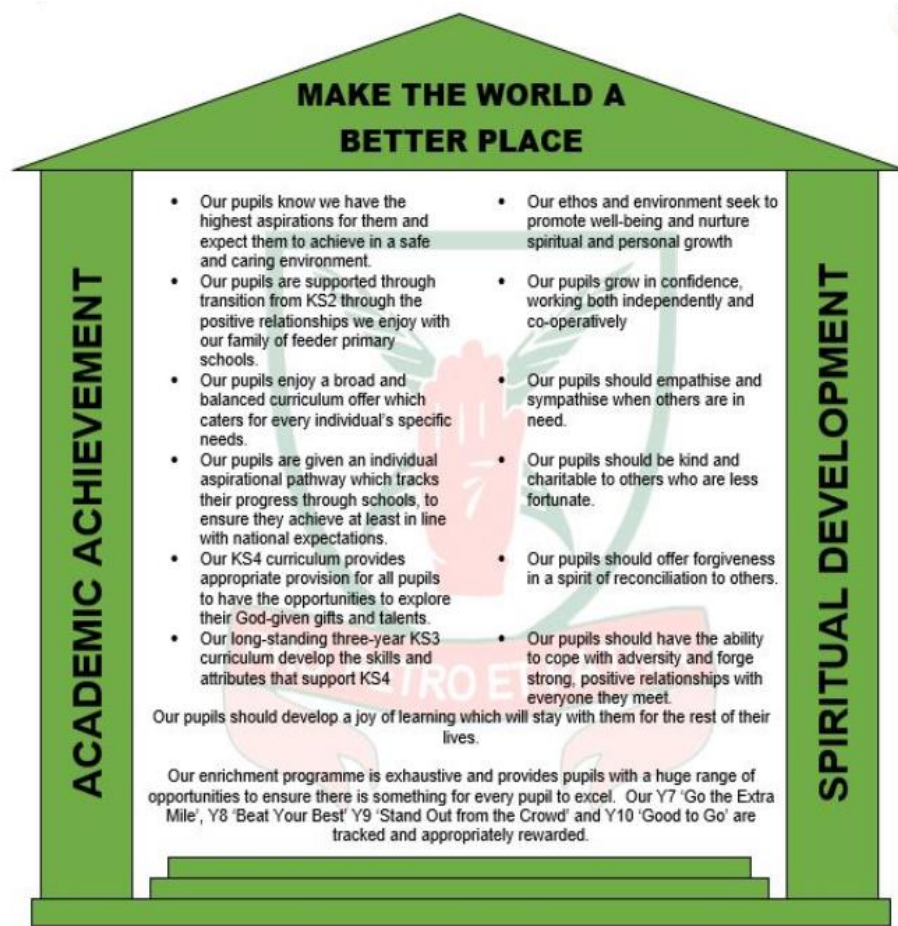
- Governors are pleased that funding from the Archdiocese allowed the large-scale repair of the school roof to take place. Also, that part of this funding was able to be allocated towards the creation of a new Pastoral Hub which will benefit the students and also that some new signage and 'branding' for the school has been put in place.
- It is worth noting that despite the funding that was received, the school building remains in dire need of modernisation as the budget has absolutely no capacity to allow for this to take place .
- Governors have attended school events wherever possible throughout the academic year.

Governors' Future Plans for the School

- The strategy meeting focuses on the financial challenges facing education and how this continues to affect the choices made by the SLT of the school.
- The focus for the strategy meeting in 2024-25 will be academisation and the decisions that have to be made in relation to this.
- The current crisis in teacher recruitment makes it increasingly more difficult to recruit, especially in certain subjects and this has an impact upon the curriculum offer.

If there is a change in Government, there may be an opportunity to increase school funding, but in the present climate, it was agreed that the decisions being made by the SLT ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the students. This will continue to be monitored through the QEC and F, P&P committee meetings.

- The number of baptised catholic children in feeder schools are reducing quite significantly in the next 5 years. Therefore, the school may have to admit a higher percentage of non-baptised students which may ultimately require a change to the school's admissions policy. There are enough students in the feeder schools to fill the school's PAN, and school leaders will have to ensure that primary headteachers are aware of SEA's commitment to the feeder school links.
- Governors were very pleased that the school received an 'outstanding' rating in the Catholic Schools Inspection and that *"the school's Catholic life and mission is vibrant and fully supported by staff"*.
- Governors will continue to be involved in the life of the school and carry out regular link visits to ensure that the strategies in place continue to meet the needs of the students. This is a crucial operation of the members and is integral to gaining a better insight into the key performance indicators of the school.



- The 3-year School Improvement Plan (SIP) continues to be reviewed to ensure that the outcomes across all departments are consistent and raise progress and outcomes for all students.
- The Governing Body will seek to ensure that the strategies implemented by school leaders as outlined in the School Improvement Plan are successful, show evidence of progress and move the school towards Outstanding. Also, that the pupils continue to receive an excellent education and high levels of pastoral care.
- The potential academisation of Catholic schools in the Liverpool Archdiocese will continue to be a topic of discussion as this has major implications for the future running of the school.
- 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.

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

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 2023-24, 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 or via The Clerk to Governors, Mrs Pamela Lennon (01942 728651 x 2223)

PLennon@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk.

This governance statement is approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on 2 July 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

[SIGNED]

Handwritten signature of Stephen J Westhead in blue ink.

Stephen J Westhead
Governor

[SIGNED]

Handwritten signature of Mark J Dumican in blue ink.

Mark J Dumican
Headteacher

Appendix 1 – Full Governing Body 2023=2024

Names of Governors	Type of Governor	Term of Office	Date of Appointment	End date for appointment	Appointing Body
Mark Dumican	Headteacher	N/A	01.10.2014	n/a	Headteacher
Lisa Boardman	Parent	01.09.2021	01.11.2021	31.10.2025	Elected by parents
Jim Bryne	Foundation	01.09.2021	01.09.2021	31.08.2025	The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Clare Brophy	Staff	14.10.2019	14.10.2023	13.10.2027	Elected by Governing Body
Andrew Connellan	Foundation	22.02.2016	22.02.2024	21.02.2028	The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Joanne Farrimond	Foundation	08.12.2020	01.09.2021	31.08.2025	Elected by parents
Catherine Hopkins	Foundation	01.09.2020	01.09.2020	31.08.2024	The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Paul Jensen	Local Authority	Not set	04.12.2018	03.12.2026	Wigan Council *(appointed by Governing Body)
Peter McGhee	Foundation	01.09.2021	01.09.2021	31.08.2025	The Archdiocese of Liverpool
David Thompson	Parent	08.01.2024	08.01.2024	07.01.2028	Elected by Parents
Stephen Westhead	Foundation	Not set	01.10.2020	30.09.2024	The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Peter Whitfield	Foundation	01.09.2020	01.09.2020	31.08.2024	The Archdiocese of Liverpool
Nicola Holland	Associate Member	01.09.2023	01.09.2023	31.08.2027	Elected by Governing Body
Cate Woods	Associate Member	20.09.2023	20.09.2023	19.09.2027	Elected by Governing Body

Appendix 2: Governing Body Meeting Attendance Record – 2023-24

Name of Governor	19/09/2023		05/12/2023		19/03/2024		02/07/2024	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
	Stephen Westhead (Chair)	X		X		X		X
Andrew Connellan (V-Chair)	X		X		X		X	
Mark Dumican (H/T)	X		X		X		X	
Clare Brophy	X		X		X		X	
James Byrne		*N	X		X		X	
Lisa Boardman	X		X		X			
Jayne Harrald	X							
Cathrine Hopkins	X		X		X		X	
Paul Jensen		*N	X		X		X	
Peter McGhee		*N	X		X			X
Peter Whitfield	X		X		X		X	
Joanne Farrimond	X		X		X		X	
Dave Thompson					X		X	
Nicola Holland (Associate Member)	X		X			X**	X	
Cate Woods (Associate Member)	X		X		X		X	
SEA: SLT/Observers								
Suzanne Chapman	X		X		X		X	
Annemarie Doolan	X		X		X		X	
Ann Morgan	X		X		X		X	
Gillian Morris	X		X		X		X	
Dean Cullen	X		X			X	X	
* Apologies received / ** Apologies not received								

Name of Governor	Dates of Quality of Education Committee (QEC)					
	03/10/2023		30/01/2024		11/06/2024	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Mark Dumican	X		X		X	
Lisa Boardman	X		X			X
Clare Brophy	X		X		X	
Joanne Farrimond (VC)	X		X		X	
Peter McGhee	X		X		X	
Peter Whitfield (Chair)	X			X*	X	
Observers						
Cate Woods (Associate)	X			X*		X
Andrew Connellan	X		X			X
SEA: SLT						
Suzanne Chapman						
Annemarie Doolan	X		X		X	
Ann Morgan		X		X*	X	
Gillian Morris	X		X		X	
Dean Cullen	X		X		X	
David Morgan	X		X		X	
Apologies received / ** Apologies not received						

Name of Governor	Dates of Finance, Premises & Personnel (F.P&P)					
	14/11/2023		05/03/2024		30/04/2024	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
James Byrne	X		X		X	
Jayne Harrald		*X				
Cathrine Hopkins	X		X			X
Paul Jensen	X		X		X	
Mark Dumican	X		X		X	
Nicola Holland (Associate member)		*X	X			█
Andrew Connellan (VC)	X		X		X	
Dave Thompson (Chair)			X		X	

SEA: SLT / Observers						
Suzanne Chapman	X		X		X	
Annemarie Doolan		X		X		X
Ann Morgan		X		X		X
Gillian Morris		X		X		X
Dean Cullen		X		X		X
* Apologies received / ** Apologies not received						

Name of Governor	Pay and Performance (P&P)					
	17/10/2023		13/02/2024		14/05/2024	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Mark Dumican	X		X		X	
Andrew Connellan (Chair)	X		X		X	
Peter Whitfield (VC)			X		X	
Stephen Westhead		X*		X*	X	
Jayne Harrald (VC)	X					
* Apologies received / ** Apologies not received						