TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2019 - 2020
Introduction to the role of the Board of Governors:

“The Governing Body has a strategic role. As agent of accountability, on behalf of the Catholic community and the community of the school, the governing body decides what it wants the school to achieve, in order to secure its mission, and sets the framework for making sure those intentions are realised.” (Source: Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham, governor code of practice).

The Department of Education explains that governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

(i) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
(ii) Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and the performance management of staff; and
(iii) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent – (Source: “Governors Handbook” January 2015”).

“Serving at all times as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ” (Source: Diocese of Portsmouth “Chairs Handbook” July 2015).

1. Membership

The full Governing Body consists of 12 governors and includes 7 foundation governors, 2 elected parent governors, 1 local authority governor, 1 staff governor and the Headteacher.

The current members of the Governing Body are listed below:

Foundation Governors: John Apicella, Anthony Battrum, Sinead Hall, Elizabeth O’Keefe, and Vacancies;
Local Authority Governor: Stephen Wasko;
Staff Governor: Michael Robinson
Parent Governors: Aaron Dsouza and vacancy.
Acting Headteacher: Kelly Bosher.

Governors are volunteers, parent governors are appointed by election of parents/carers of the school, foundation governors are appointed by the Bishop, staff governors are proposed by staff and appointed by the Headteacher.

The governing body has appointed a Clerk to Governors who is currently Rachael House Gemmell.

2. Governors’ Responsibilities:

These terms of reference apply to the Governing Body of St Joseph’s school and references to “school” include St Joseph’s school, St Joseph’s school before and after school club (known as the “Link Club”) and, on and from September 2019, the St Joseph’s on-site nursery.

The full Governing Body decides on all policy matters concerning the management of the school, taking into account the requirements of legislation. The Governing Body may delegate any of its statutory functions to a committee, a Governor or to the Headteacher, subject to prescribed restrictions.
2.1 The following functions may be delegated to a Committee but cannot be delegated to an individual.
- Functions relating to the alteration, closure or change of category of the school (from its current voluntary aided status);
- Functions relating to the approval of the first formal budget of the financial year;
- Functions relating to school pupil discipline policies;
- Functions relating to the exclusion of pupils (except in an emergency when the Chair has the power to exercise these functions);
- Functions relating to admissions;
- Functions relating to the annual School Profile;
- Functions relating to the approval of the School Development Plan;

The Governing Body will review the delegation of functions annually. The Governing Body will remain accountable for any decisions taken, including those relating to functions delegated to a Committee or individual. A table of delegations will be kept by the Clerk. Any decisions or actions must be reported back to the full Governing Body.

2.2. The Governing Body only, must decide on the following:
- Election or removal of the Chair or the Vice-chair;
- Appointment of Clerk;
- Suspension of Governors;
- Establishment of Committees;
- Delegation of Functions;
- Constitutional decisions; and
- Appointment or removal of associate members of the Governing Body.

3. Committees Structure

There will be Committees to cover the following areas:
- Catholic Ethos and Admissions
- Staffing, Performance Management & Safeguarding
- Finance & Premises
- Standards & Curriculum
- Appeals, Complaints & Grievances
- Pupil Discipline
- Headteacher Pay and Performance Management

Each committee will have full delegation powers to implement the decisions of the full Governing Body without further reference to the full Governing Body except when legislation demands. In such cases the Committee will make recommendations to the full Governing Body.

Each Committee will review the competence and experience of its members on at least an annual basis and will identify any necessary training for its members in liaison with the Chair and the Clerk.

4. Meetings:

The full Governing Body meets normally five times a year with an additional sixth meeting to set priorities at the start of the academic year.

The Staffing, Performance Management & Safeguarding Committee, Standards & Curriculum Committee and the Finance & Premises Committee will meet at least every term but may meet more frequently as necessary. These committees must meet at least one week before the full Governing Body meeting.

The Headteacher’s pay and performance management Committee will meet annually. The Catholic Ethos & Admissions Committee will meet at least three times a year to handle the admissions process. Other Committees will meet as and when necessary.
At the start of the academic year the Clerk to the governors will circulate a list of proposed meeting dates for the year for full Governing Body and Committee meetings.

Seven clear days' notice must be given of a meeting, however shortened notice may be given provided that all persons entitled to attend and vote at the meeting agree to such short notice.

5. Voting & Quorum:

A quorum of six members of the Governing Body or 50% of the membership rounded up to the nearest whole number is required at each full Governing Body meeting.

For Committee meetings a quorum of three members of the Committee is required at each meeting or 50% of the membership rounded up the nearest whole number, whichever is the greater and voting may not take place unless a quorum of Governor members of the committee entitled to vote is present at the meeting.

Only Governors may vote at meetings. Associate Governors may not vote unless approval is given to do so by the full Board of Governors.

6. Communication and Minutes:

Dates and times of Governing Body and Committee meetings will be published on the Governor’s page of the school website.

The Minutes of the full Governing Body are public documents and published on the Governor’s page of the school website except for any items on the minutes that contain separate confidential minutes (for example where individual staff, pupils, families, governors can be identified from the minute). Confidential minutes are not available outside of the governing body but the existence of confidential items are listed in the public minutes.

Full Governing Body and Committee meeting minutes must detailing those present, decisions taken and actions recommended, and will be produced by the Clerk to Governors or the clerk to the committee in question, and circulated to all members of the Governing Body normally within ten days of the meeting. The agenda and documents for meetings will be circulated at least five days in advance of a meeting.

Minutes of the full Board of Governors will be made publically except for minutes that contain confidential items and information where public access is restricted. Such minutes will be recorded as separate “Part 2: Confidential Item Minutes”.

The Governors contribute monthly to the school’s newsletter they also attend school events to communicate with and get feedback from parents/careers. Each year the Governors will provide pupil and parents/carers with a questionnaire based on an Ofsted questionnaire to gain valuable feedback. Governors may also communicate with pupils via the School Council and when on school visits.

Governors can be contacted via the Clerk to Governors via the School Office.

7. Review Arrangements:

All Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually in the summer term and approved at the first full Governing Body meeting of the Academic Year.

8. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:

The election of a Chair to the Governing Body and Vice-Chair will typically take place at the first main (not planning meeting) of the full Governing Body meeting of the Academic Year. They will be elected from among the voting members of the Governing Body and must not be an employee of the School. In the case of the resignation or removal of the Chair or Vice-Chair during the academic
an election will take place at the next full Governing Body meeting following notice of such resignation or removal.

9. Committee Membership and Special Area Governors:
Governors may volunteer to serve on specific committees and as special area governors as fits with their skills, experience and with due regard for their availability to attend the relevant committee meetings. Committee membership and special area governors appointments will be reviewed annually at the first full Governing Body meeting and/or as necessary following the resignation or removal of any member of a committee from the full Governing Body.

10. Pecuniary/Financial Interests:
Each Governor will complete an annual written declaration of interests form stating any business and/or other interests they or their close family or close acquaintances may have with the school. All Committees will ensure that at the start of any meeting any interest is declared and recorded in the minutes. The Chair and/or the Chair of a Committee will determine if the declared interest is a conflict of interest with regards to any decision or vote to be taken during the meeting. If the Chair/Chair of Committee considers that the Governor who has declared their interest is conflicted they will ask that governor to abstain from taking part in the decision and/or vote at the meeting.

11. School Policies:
In addition to specific policies mentioned in the Terms of Reference, the Full Governing Body and all committees will review the policies assigned to them in the Index of School Policies and in accordance with the School Policies Review Timetable.

Date Approved by Full Board : 17th September 2019
To be reviewed : Annually in the Autumn Term — next review Autumn Term 2020