

A Guide to the Work of the Governing Body

What do Governors do?

The Governing Body of a school provides strategic leadership and accountability and is responsible for both the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards.

The Governing Body of our school has:

- 12 Governors appointed by the Members of the Academy Trust, including the Chair of Governors (there is currently one vacancy)
- 2 Parent Governors
- 3 Staff Governors
- 1 Governor nominated by the Local Authority
- The Dean of Carlisle is an Ex Officio Governor
- The Headteacher is an Ex Officio Governor

The three core functions of the Governing Body are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

In real terms, this involves key actions, such as:

- Approving the school budget.
- Determining the school's Admissions Policy.
- Approving the School Improvement Plan.
- Appointing and appraising the Headteacher.
- Approving key policies that regulate how the school operates.
- Ensuring that the school is compliant with legal requirements.
- Determining employment practices as the employer of its staff.

Most importantly, the Governing Body has a key duty to monitor the work and performance of the school, by acting as a 'critical friend' – a source of challenge and support to the staff – working in partnership with the Headteacher. The day to day running of the school remains the responsibility of the Headteacher, not the Governing Body.

How does the Governing Body operate?

The full Governing Body holds four meetings per year – at least one per term. At each meeting, the Governing Body will go through reports from the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team, report on the work of its various committees and approve key decisions and discuss pertinent issues relevant to the governance of the school.

The Governing Body has five committees, who meet throughout the academic year, and whose work it is to develop the strategic direction of the school, taking key decisions to the meetings of the full Governing Body for ratification. They Are:

- **Church Foundation Committee:** This committee reviews the school's Christian ethos, and its activities that support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural life of the school and its students.
- **Curriculum & Staffing Committee:** Regarding the Curriculum, Governor's review developments within school regarding the curriculum, and monitor the performance of the school in terms of the exam results, other key performance measures and the progress of key student groups. In relation to Staffing, as the employer of the school's staff, this committee reviews employment policies and practices, ensuring that the school is fully compliant with legislation and is a fair and equitable employer. In addition, Staffing Governors also form a separate Pay Committee, which approves staff pay scales and pay decisions, and forms panels as required to hear any pay appeals.
- **Finance & General Purpose Committee (F&GP), including Audit Committee:** The F&GP Committee monitors income and expenditure patterns of the school and ensures good financial management. It also approves key expenditures and works with the Headteacher and Business Manager to create the budget for approval by the full Governing Body. Regarding the Audit Committee, its purpose is to receive, review and agree action following the internal and external audit reports. The committee also identifies areas of focus for future internal audit based on details within the risk register.
- **Pastoral Committee:** The Pastoral Committee monitors the pastoral life of the school and the work of the pastoral team, ensuring that key policies are in place to meet legislative requirements and to support students in key areas such as: safeguarding and child protection, the year group system, careers guidance and work experience, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), home-school links, vulnerable groups, and uniform.
- **Premises Committee:** This committee reviews the use, maintenance and development of the school grounds, site and buildings. It also reviews and monitors health and safety practices, ensuring that the school is fully compliant legally, as well as being a safe place to visit and work.