
St Catherine of Siena Primary School Annual Governance Statement for 2024 - 2025

(21st October 2025)

As chair of the governing board, I am pleased to present our 2024-2025 academic year Governance Statement on behalf of the Full Governing Board. The board has a collective responsibility to our whole school community to promote and enhance the Catholic education provided for all of our children.

THE FOCUS OF THE BOARD IS TO FULFIL OUR CORE FUNCTIONS, Which are :-

- **Strategic Leadership:** to ensure clarity of Catholic vision, ethos & strategic direction.
- **Accountability & Assurance:** to provide robust effective oversight of the operations and performance of the school. To hold the appropriate senior leadership to account for the educational performance and Catholic character of the school and its pupils; for pupil welfare; for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, including performance management of the staff. To oversee and ensure appropriate use of funding and effective financial performance and to keep the school estate safe and well maintained.
- **Engagement:** to provide strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders including parents, schools and communities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement.

To enable the Governing board to fulfil these functions, the governors have attended meetings and monitoring visits throughout the year. The Full Governing Board, Curriculum Committee and Finance Committee have met each term to consider many aspects of the school in detail. For example: the school improvement plan, staffing, RE and curriculum provision & outcomes, school structural and environmental issues and financial oversight. The meeting attendance logs can be found on the Governor pages on the school website and the committee's 'Terms of Reference' / Full Governing Board meeting minutes are available from the school office for you to read through.

The board membership has a four year term, so we try to recruit governors as vacancies arise. Information about our board formation, remit and individual responsibilities can be found on the governor pages on the School Website. The full compliment of the board consists of 12 governors: 7 Foundation Governors (appointed by the Archdiocese), the Headteacher, 1 staff Governor (elected by the staff), 2 Parent Governors (elected by the parents), and 1 Local Authority (LA) Governor (appointed by the Local Authority). Unfortunately, we have been

unable to recruit an LA Governor again this year and one of our Foundation Governors was unable to continue for another term when her term expired in October, which means we also have three Foundation Governor vacancies at present. We are actively seeking to recruit three Foundation Governor positions and one LA Governor position to our board in the near future.

As governors of our Catholic school, we have the responsibility to ensure school provides an education with Gospel values central to all learning, in partnership with the Archdiocese Schools Department. Along with the school community, we are involved in setting our mission statement and vision & values for the education we provide for our children. We encourage & promote our Catholic ethos in every aspect of school life and receive termly reports on the RE provision within school. We attend school Masses, 'stay and pray' events and class and school assemblies throughout the year. We support the children's charities and 'school council' activities as they demonstrate striving to make our school and world a better place. For example, fundraising for CAFOD, Care of Creation activities and support for our local parish food bank. In February we were delighted when the children were successful in achieving the CAFOD 'Live Simply Award' for school, guided by our school sustainability lead. This achievement was presented to the Wigan Governor's Forum in June, sharing the sustainability message with school governors from across the borough.

Although the Governing Board makes decisions collectively, each of our school governors has a specific responsibility assigned to a particular area, for example : monitoring school priority progress or oversight of a key area of responsibility such as Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), Health & Safety and Performance Review. (Governor role details are on the governor pages on the school's website) The governors attached to these specific responsibilities /monitoring areas have been able to meet with their senior leads over the school year to discuss curriculum provision, compliance, resources and outcomes in detail, allowing us to carry out our strategic monitoring effectively. The Governors undertake performance management of our headteacher alongside an external advisor, to set challenging targets during the first term of the year and then complete a termly review to assess achievement of the targets. Governors compile reports about their particular area of responsibility and present these to the Full Governing Board during the termly meetings so that all governors are kept informed of the strategic monitoring oversight. We carefully scrutinise the in-depth report the Headteacher compiles for us each term so that we are able to provide support and challenge to the school leadership team, promoting ongoing school improvement which is our continuous aim. Our visits into school provide us with a good opportunity to liaise with staff, pupils and families, so that we maintain a visible presence for our school community, demonstrating our care and interest in school.

The governing board is supported by Liverpool Archdiocese Schools Education Department, Wigan Local Authority and Wigan Governor Services. We purchase an annual service level agreement (SLA) from Governor Services which includes efficient clerking of the board to enhance our compliance and proficiency. The SLA includes membership of 'Governor Hub',

'Governor Knowledge' & 'Governor Services Training' and we purchase membership of the National Governance Association (NGA) to ensure we have the knowledge and understanding to provide effective and efficient governance for school. Each of us complete a skills and financial skills audit annually to identify any training needs and to demonstrate the board's collective ability.

The Following Training Has Been Completed By The Governing Board During The 24/25 Academic Year:-

- NGA Safeguarding : Essential safeguarding for school governors.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education- on line training.
- Level 2 Safeguarding.
- Cyber security training for Governors & Trustees (DfE).
- Attendance, Children missing Education & Elective Home Education.
- Wigan Local Authority Governor's Conference : Climate Action and Sustainability.
- New to Governance (Part 1 & 2)
- The Governance of SEND.
- Introduction to School Budgets.
- Governance : Complaints Training.
- Effective School Monitoring Visits.
- SEND Law & the role of the Governing Board.
- Teachers pay & Responsibility of the Pay Committee.
- Being Strategic: Effective Support and Challenge for School Governance.
- How to run an effective Review Panel.
- Liverpool Archdiocese: Care of Creation training.
- Liverpool Archdiocese Governor's Briefing.
- Governors Forum / Chair's / Vice Chair's Forum
- HR Workshop for school governors.
- An introduction to Climate Ambassadors & Climate Action Plans.
- Local Authority Officers Educational Briefing to Governors.
- Governance relationship policy & building connections.
- Mental health and Wellbeing training.
- NGA : Navigating the culture of OFSTED.
- A sustainable Estate & Climate Action planning.
- Manchester University: Big day of climate action and Carbon Literacy in Education.
- Improving School Attendance.
- School Financial Value Standards : The Governance Role.
- DfE : Prevent in Education.
- Governors for Schools.

This year, the governing board has worked closely with Mrs Leck and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), in our strategic role, to encourage continued progress and improvement of our school. We have reviewed and monitored the 'school improvement plan', concentrating on

writing and maths subject development across school again this year. We have supported the SLT in their decisions to employ particular school improvement strategies, utilising specific agencies, for example: 'Maths Hub North West' and 'literacy Pathways' to inject fresh enthusiasm and momentum to teaching and learning. Positive feedback from staff and pupils and improving attainment trends across school demonstrate successful implementation of these interventions. This year, after a lot of hard work from the children, staff and families in KS1 and KS2, we are delighted to announce that the Yr1 children achieved 100% in their KS1 Phonics test and our Yr6 pupil's KS2 SAT's test results were excellent and well above the National level again. We appreciate the efforts made by our whole school community this year and offer our sincere congratulations to everyone.

In continuing our role to ensure ongoing success of school, this next year, we will continue to encourage the good attainment trends across school for all groups of pupils, including our Pupil Premium children. We will encourage an improved outcome for the Yr4 times table test and oversee the formation of a school 'Climate Action Plan', which is required by the DfE to be established by the end of 2025. We will follow the DfE recommendations from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) Sept '25 update, which includes guidance on generative AI, as this is introduced across the educational setting.

Part of our remit is to oversee financial management of school. We scrutinise school budget spend, monitor financial benchmarking and approve a three year budget formulated by our school business manager and headteacher, to ensure wise spending decisions are made and financial viability is maintained. We oversee the structural integrity of the school building in partnership with the Archdiocese. This year, the much needed restructuring of the school entrance has finally been achieved. The work commenced at the beginning of June, changing the leaking roof and altering the office access to ensure a watertight and secure entrance area. Alongside this building work, all the windows in the school hall have been replaced to fix the many leaks we have had in some of the classrooms. New replacement window blinds have also been installed, making the hall much more comfortable to use on a sunny day. Maintenance of the school premises is ongoing and the governors will continue our oversight to ensure our school building is safe and fit for purpose.

This academic year we said "Goodbye" to Mrs Redcliffe in July, thanking her and wishing her well after 17years of dedicated service to school. She had made a decision to further her career by taking up a teaching position in a school for deaf children. We supported Mrs. Leck in staffing decisions and recruited Miss Heyes who takes up her post as Year 3 class teacher in September at the start of the new 25/26 academic year.

We are very grateful to our parents and families who support school throughout the year. The partnership between home and school is vital to ensure good outcomes for all our children. We are also very grateful for the fantastic work that the PTA do to raise funds to enhance the children's experience in school. This year, the PTA have enabled the lease of iPads across school

for a further year and purchased games for KS2 and a wooden climbing wall for the KS1 playground, which the children have thoroughly enjoyed. They have also been able to purchase a secure storage container for their own use and buy equipment for a new 'Sensory room' aimed to be available for any of the children from September.

The governing board has continued to support the attendance strategies put in place to ensure our children succeed in reaching their full potential and don't have gaps in their knowledge & learning. School attendance has improved during this year and statistical evidence in the Spring term showed our school attendance was better than both Wigan and National schools. Fixed penalty notice referrals have been issued to some families during the year, particularly for holidays taken in term time. Attendance will remain a focus for the governing board going forward.

We are very grateful to Mrs Leck and all the school staff for their continued efforts and dedication for all our children and families. The Governing Board will continue our strategic oversight throughout the new academic year and we will continue to encourage the ongoing success our school.

Christine Henshall

Chair of Governors, on behalf of St. Catherine of Siena Primary School Governing Board.