



## St John's C E Primary School Governors Impact Statement 2019-20

The role of the Board of Governors is an intrinsic part of the leadership of the school, although often unseen by parents and other community stakeholders. **This annual impact statement is one way in which the Board attempts to articulate its role in school leadership and the impact that it has had on school improvement during that year, and to be transparent about its activities.**

*Business as usual (Sept 2019-20th March 2020)*

The Governor Handbook published by the Department of Education clearly sets out three core functions of the Board of Governors:

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 the performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

In a normal year, the entire work of the Board of Governors is focused on meeting the requirements of these functions. The outcome is that the Board knows the school well, is confident that all statutory and legal requirements are met, ensures that issues within school are addressed in a timely and effective manner, and contributes to a strategic plan that will ensure the school is effective in the long term.

*Governance during Covid-19 (March-July 2020)*

During the Covid-19 epidemic the DfE and NGA gave clear guidance that Governing Bodies should ensure they continued to meet using video conferencing but with a changed focus:

- Conducting essential governance business (e.g. budget approval, ratifying key appointments) only
- Monitoring how the school is continuing to provide care for children who are vulnerable, children with EHCPs, the children of key workers, associated risks, issues etc.
- Monitoring the wellbeing and welfare of pupils, staff and stakeholders
- Dealing with any issues arising from how the building is currently being used, remote working for staff and how to reopen schools safely
- Monitoring support being given to parents and carers to help them educate their children at home

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## What have we done for the school in the academic year 2019/20?

### 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

- We have collectively agreed and followed a strategy to create a sustainable future for St John's, through pursuing a partnership and also through maintaining a close focus on all costs and income.
- We have reviewed and monitored, via robust challenge and support, the Senior Leadership Team's proposed School Improvement Plan (SIP). This is evidenced in meeting minutes.
- We have re-elected new Chair, Vice-Chair and chairs of committees and reviewed the Terms of Reference for all committees.
- We have actively sought new members of our Governing Body from outside our parent body, so that our Governing Body reflects a wide range of opinions, views and professional expertise.
- We have continued to review school policies and we have ensured that this process is as efficient as possible.
- We have created a Governance Action Plan for the year, which is monitored termly, and ensured governors receive appropriate training.
- We have continued with termly Governor Newsletters & Governor Drop In sessions to communicate well with parents.
- We have started to prepare for our next Ofsted visit, originally due anytime from September 2020.

### 2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff

- We have ensured robust and rigorous monitoring by SLT of staff performance through regular updates to the whole Board.
- We have conducted the Headteacher Appraisal together with an external consultant, setting further objectives for the next review period.
- While school was open, we monitored school life regularly by conducting termly sessions during the school day, which included lesson observations and book scrutinies and having discussions with children to hear the "pupil voice". Pupil voice means listening and talking to the children to understand how the school and their learning works for them.

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- We continued to scrutinise school data, with thorough monitoring of all pupils (including groups of pupils i.e. SEND, disadvantaged, gender gaps) to ensure appropriate progress is being made and attainment standards raised in all core subjects, including RE.
- We have continued to monitor how the school teaches and promotes diversity and have been closely involved in the introduction of the new RSE curriculum.
- We have continued to provide a robust challenge to both Pupil and Sports Premium funding to ensure all pupils benefit from the monies being spent.
- We have continued to monitor school life to ensure that our pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum, through trips, sport and music.

### **3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent**

- The Board have continued in their robust reviewing and challenging of the budgets, outturn reports, forecasts and 3 year plans.
- Due to the ongoing funding crisis, we have continued to ensure that our Finance Committee provides detailed challenge and support. Every financial decision is thoroughly discussed and made with the best interests of the school.
- As a Board we constantly discuss ways we can improve the school's financial situation and have collectively made a number of decisions which have helped to improve it (including lettings in the school, pursuing the partnership, prioritising essential expenditure, analysing the staffing structure).

### **4. Supporting school leaders during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure all children, staff and the wider community are supported both in their learning and work and also mental health**

- The Board has actively supported the senior leadership through an unprecedented situation by regular phone calls, emails and video meetings.
- This included organising mental health training for staff when the school re-opened.
- The Board limited the number of meetings to Full Governing Body meetings only with a focus on essential business, to allow senior staff more time.
- Governors have undertaken training on governing through Covid-19, via webinars.

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- A small team of Governors was fully involved in the reopening of school and the signing-off of the risk assessments involved. A slow and phased return to school to support staff and minimise risk of transmission was proposed by the Governors.
- The Governors have continued to work towards a sustainable future for St John's while school has been closed.

## Training Attended

All governors have undertaken specific training for governors in this academic year and participation is set out below.

- Director of Education & Skills Briefing for Chairs & Vice Chairs (*Imogen Hall*)
- Discussion Forums for Chairs & Vice Chairs (*Imogen Hall*)
- *Governing through Covid-19 Webinar (Imogen Hall)*
- *Promoting anti-racism in school as governors (Imogen Hall)*
- *Safer recruitment (Imogen Hall)*
- *Prevent (Rinret Leks)*
- *Governor Induction (Carolyn Black, Jeremy Brough)*
- *The new Ofsted Framework (Imogen Hall, Jaime Goumal)*
- *School Financial Management for Maintained Schools (Jeremy Brough)*
- *Recognising and Preventing FGM (Jeremy Brough)*
- *Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE): The Governor's Role (Jaime Goumal)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education update (full board)*

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