

The role of the Governing Body at St Theresa's:

The core functions of the Governing Body.

The Governing Body is the strategic leader of our school and plays a vital role in making sure every child gets the best possible education, its purpose is to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school.

We have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

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

The Governing Body also has additional functions and responsibilities act as employers, admission authorities, or.

- Supporting, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and progress of the school.
- Ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties.
- Being a source of challenge and support to the Headteacher and leadership team.
- Setting the school's budget, deciding on staffing issues and balancing resources.
- Ensuring the school delivers the national curriculum.
- Agreeing targets and policies for the school.
- Looking after the school's premises.
- Appointing the headteacher and all teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Being accountable for the performance of the school to parents and the wider community.

This amounts to a demanding role for our governing body and we deliver this by,

- Understanding our strategic role – building a productive and supportive relationship with the Headteacher while holding them to account for school performance and taking hard strategic decisions in the light of objective data.
- Ensuring Governors have the necessary skills and commitment, including to challenge the school to bring about improvement and hold leaders to account for performance.
- Appointing an effective chair to lead and manage the governing body.
- Appointing a high quality clerk to advise them on the nature of their functions and duties and ensure the governing body operates efficiently and effectively.
- Evaluating our performance regularly in the light of Ofsted expectations and other good practice and making changes as necessary to improve our effectiveness.

Setting strategic direction

The Governing Body is the key strategic decision making body in the school. It is our job to set the school's strategic framework and ensure that it meets all of its statutory duties. This includes ensuring the school has a long-term strategic vision. In the light of this vision, the Governing Body agrees the strategic priorities, aims and objectives for the school and signs off the policies, plans and targets for how to achieve them. We check on progress and review regularly the strategic framework for the school in the light of that progress.

Foundation governors also have a specific role in preserving and developing the Catholic ethos of our school and also ensure the school is conducted in accordance with the foundations' governing documents, including the trust deed.

Holding the Headteacher and school leadership to account.

Our role is to support and strengthen the Headteachers leadership in the day-to-day running of the school, including the performance management of teachers. As such we play a strategic role, focusing strongly on holding the Headteacher to account and avoid being drawn into direct involvement in operational matters. It is essential to have skilled Governors, but equally important to emphasise that the skills required are those to create robust accountability, not to do the school's job for it. We do this by;

Asking the right questions: so as to improve the school's performance.

Analysing objective data: We ensure we have good and timely data which we review and interpret to ensure we have a correct understanding of the school's performance and finances which enables us to identify the issues that most need to be discussed.

Sources of data: There are various sources of data that the Governing Body uses including; Ofsted's school performance dashboard, the school's own performance tables, RAISEonline. And other data sources such as Fischer Family Trust.

School visits: Governors have regular visits to the school to ensure that accountability is robust and their vision for the school is being achieved by the school implementing the policies and improvement plans they have signed off and how they are working in practice. Governors are not inspectors and we are unable to assess the quality or method of teaching or extent of learning. Likewise we are not school managers and do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. Both are the role of the Headteacher.

Overseeing financial performance.

The Governing Body is responsible for making sure our school's money is well spent by constantly reviewing this with the assistance of a Business Manager and ensure that:

- We allocate our resources in line with our strategic priorities.
- We are making full use of all our assets and efficient use of all our financial resources.
- We benchmark from other schools or organisations.

- We evaluate how we can get better value for money from our budget.

Accountability of the Governing Body.

All our Governors are volunteers helping improve our school and how well we do this has a real impact on the success of our school. We are therefore held to account for our effectiveness, and this is done by;

- **Inspections:** As part of their inspection procedures, OFSTED will look at the effectiveness of the schools governance.
- **Self-Evaluation:** The Governing Body regularly evaluates its own effectiveness.
- **Personal Liability:** All Governing Bodies are corporate bodies that are legally responsible for the conduct of the school.

Enabling better governance.

Reducing bureaucracy.

New rules and regulations are being put in place that by the Government allows the Governing Body to operate more efficiently and effectively.

Support and training for Governors.

We will always have a challenging job to do and high quality induction and training is vital to equipping Governors' with the skills they need. We carry out regular audits of Governors' skills in the light of the skills and competences we need, address any gaps identified through recruitment or training. Support is available from many sources including the Diocese, the Local Authority, and various commercial Governor support organisations.

