



ST JOHN PAYNE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Governing Body Impact Statement

2024 /25

The Governing Body at St John Payne is made up of a group of dedicated volunteers who use their skills and experience to act as a critical friend to the Headteacher in their challenging role and to ensure that the school is well managed and is providing the best for all students. Governors support the Headteacher and their staff to shape the strategic direction of the school.

The Governing Body is measured by 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 the money is spent well

We do not become involved in the day-to-day management of the school – this is the Headteacher's responsibility; however, we do hold the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school.

The aim of this statement is to give you an overview of how the Governing Body is structured and to share with you what has been achieved during the 2024-25 academic year.

The Governing Body at St John Payne

The Governing Body at St John Payne comprises 18 governors:

- 10 Foundation Governors (appointed by the Diocese)
- 3 Co-opted Governors (appointed by the Governing Body)
- 2 Parent Governors (appointed by Parents)
- 1 Staff Governor (appointed by Staff)
- 1 ex officio Staff Governor (the Headteacher)
- 1 Local Authority Governor (recommended by the Local Authority and appointed by the Governing Body)

The Governing Body meets once a term and in addition there are three main committees – the Finance and Premises Committee which oversees the financial activities of the school; the Welfare Committee which oversees staff and pupil welfare including SEND, Pupil Premium and safeguarding and, finally, the Curriculum and Personnel Committee which oversees the

curriculum, student behaviour and non-welfare staff related issues. In addition, there are sub committees and working parties which concentrate on specific areas including the Admissions Committee, the Health and Safety Committee and the Careers Working Party. In addition, individual governors have designated link roles which may comprise of specific functions including the catholic life of the school, safeguarding, cyber security, GDPR and so on as well as subjects such as English, maths, sociology, music etc. This enables the governors to achieve an independent view of the school. Reports by governors of their visits to the school are distributed to the governing body.

Governors are allocated to a committee based on their interests and previous experience. This ensures robust challenge at meetings and promotes knowledge sharing. Each Governor attends at least two meetings per term in addition to their link visits.

OFSTED AND CATHOLIC LIFE INSPECTIONS

There have been two inspections during the 2023-24 academic year. The reports are available on the school website - [SJP-CLI-REPORT-APRIL-2024.pdf](#) and [SJP-SECTION-8-OFSTED-REPORT-JUNE-2024I.pdf](#)

The inspections went very well and feedback from both inspections was excellent.

Areas for focus following the Catholic Life Inspection were:

- Develop planning in religious education to narrow the attainment gap for boys and disadvantaged students.
- Ensure consistency of pace, challenge and adaptive teaching across all key stages in religious education.
- Enhance the student experience of form time prayer by ensuring consistency of quality, variety and reverence.

Areas for focus from the Ofsted inspection were:

- in some subjects, staff do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils do not always gain the depth and breadth of knowledge they need to achieve highly. The school should ensure that all staff set work that meets the ambitious aims of the curriculum.
- The school's careers, education, and guidance (CEIAG) does not provide pupils with enough high-quality encounters with employers, or with opportunities to experience the world of work. This means that pupils are not always aware of the opportunities ahead of them and how to access these. The school should ensure that its CEIAG programme is developed and implemented, and its effectiveness evaluated fully, so that pupils build their knowledge and take part in meaningful work experience.

The Governing Body is prioritising these areas for discussion across its committees and at full governor meetings and providing challenge where necessary. A full update will be given in the 2025-26 statement - this will give sufficient time for improvements to be embedded.

The table below outlines areas where the Governing Body has had an impact over the past academic year.

What have we done?	What impact have we had?
Reviewed and monitored the School Development Plan.	Governors review the School Development Plan at Full Governing Body meetings. This helps focus governor challenge and supports continuous school development.
Monitored, reviewed and approved approximately 30 statutory, non-statutory and curriculum policies.	Policies ensure that our school's values are applied consistently, define clear expectations, and help provide a framework for staff and students. They cover everything relating to school work and life. Policies must be compliant with relevant regulations, kept up to date and be accessible to parents and carers where relevant.
Recruited governors into vacancies and changed the status of some governors so that their skills could be retained	This ensures that the governing body has the right skills to carry out its responsibilities.
Updated our committees' terms of reference and schemes of work and appointed new Chairs for all Committees.	The revised terms have provided a sharper focus for meetings and the revised schemes of work have eliminated duplication across committees. The appointment of new Chairs brings a fresh approach to meetings and promotes governor progression and succession planning
Undertaken Governor Link visits across the school,	Visiting the school is an essential part of the governor role. Feedback and learning from visits allow the governing board to monitor how its strategies are being implemented, how policies are working in practice and to identify strengths and areas for development. This ensures continuous improvement across all areas of the school. Visits also make governors more visible and accessible to staff and promotes stronger interaction and collaboration. 'Pupil voice' is sought at every opportunity during visits.

What have we done	What impact have we had?
Considered and approved residential, overseas and adventurous trips for the school year 2024-25.	This ensures that trips meet the required safety and safeguarding standards and curriculum needs. It also ensures that trips remain affordable and accessible for all students in the school.
Our Safeguarding Governor took part in the Local Authority Safeguarding Audit of all our safeguarding processes and structures.	This has helped ensure the safety and wellbeing of our school community through adherence to statutory processes and best practice.
Our Safeguarding governor has undertaken regular checks of the SCR	This ensures that safeguarding processes and procedures are followed to ensure student and staff safety
Undertaken governor safeguarding and PREVENT training in line with statutory requirements	This ensures governors are up to date with safeguarding and related national requirements.
Carried out our annual appraisal of the Head Teacher, reviewing his objectives and setting new ones for the year ahead.	The Headteacher Performance Management Panel along with an external advisor met with the Headteacher to set challenging objectives The performance management process ensures accountability while helping to support the Headteacher's wellbeing and professional development needs
Our Finance and Premises Committee meets 6 times across the academic year. The Headteacher is a member of the committee and the School Business Manager also attends meetings.	Senior Leadership attendance at meetings ensures those who are responsible for budget preparation and monitoring are available to answer any questions governors may have. Through working closely with the School Business Manager and Headteacher, the Finance and Premises Committee has supported the school and held it accountable to ensure effective budgeting and good use of the school's money.
Monitored pupil premium (PP) spending	The Finance and Premises Committee approve the planned spend of PP funding each year and challenge the Headteacher and senior leaders on the impact of the spending. Governors scrutinise evidence of impact on the outcomes for PP students with the aim of closing the gap between PP and non PP students.

What have we done?	What impact have we had?
Approved capital and other expenditure to ensure that school buildings are safe and provide a good learning environment	Provision of a good physical learning environment is an important part of student attainment. The Finance and Premises Committee ensures that all expenditure on premises is carried out within financial regulation guidelines. The school has been included in the government's school rebuilding programme, and the committee will continue to work with the SLT to ensure that the project best suits the school's needs in terms of implementation and design and will monitor expenditure to ensure the project is within budget.
Monitored Health and safety in the school to ensure that the school is in line with legislative requirements and provides a safe environment for students and staff	Our Link Governor and SBM work with the Site Manager and an external consultant to ensure that legislative guidance is adhered to. The Health and Safety Committee meets once per term to monitor health and safety issues and there are regular walks around the school. An annual report is prepared for scrutiny by all governors.
Carried out internal reviews on insurances, school trips, school uniform, insurances and policy management	This ensures that internal processes are being followed and allows for suggestions for improvements. It also gives governors who are carrying out the reviews a better understanding of how the school's systems and processes work and builds good relationships with staff working in the teams.
Supported and approved the Young Carer initiative and the Healthy Schools Initiatives Award and appointed a Young Carer Link Governor to support the programme	This promotes the school's strong commitment to inclusivity and raises awareness of the challenges faced by young carers in education
Approved the annual SEND report and monitored SEND students' progress through the year	Governors are committed to narrowing the gap between SEND and non-SEND students.
Set up a Careers Working Party to ensure that DfE career guidelines which come into effect on 1st September 2025 are adhered to. This also links in with Ofsted recommendations regarding the school's Careers provision.	This will ensure that the school has a robust careers programme, in line with DfE guidelines, which meets the needs of all our students.

What have we done?	What impact have we had?
Reviewed the results of staff and pupil surveys	This provided rich insight and feedback with key areas identified for development which governors have monitored as part of their committee and full governor meetings.
Attended School events such as assemblies, mass services and celebrations fundraising events, sports day, school productions.	This demonstrates to the school community that governors are engaged and eager to support and find out about school life. Governors are also able to observe student engagement outside of the classroom. Being visible encourages interest in becoming a school governor and promotes questions and feedback from students/parents/carers
Approved the SFVS (School's Financial Value Standard)	The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is a framework that helps the schools and governing boards ensure they are meeting basic standards for good financial health and resource management and provides a focus for areas where the standards are not being met or require improvement.
Governors have attended relevant training events and passed on key learning points to their peers on the Governing Body.	This has ensured that the Governing Body remains up to date with current legislation and recommendations from the Local Authority.
We have carried out our annual website audit to ensure the school is compliant with statutory legislation	This ensures the school's governance information is up-to-date and information is readily available to all stakeholders
Carried out a GDPR policy review and attended GDPR training	Governors are responsible for ensuring the data protection policy is in place and is adhered to by staff, governors and students. Governors ensure the school has a Data Protection Officer (DPO). Governors ensure training is undertaken as required by legislation working closely with the School Business Manager.
Catholic Life, Religious Education Directory, and Prayer & Liturgy Directory.	Governors have reviewed and supported the school's progress in addressing recommendations from the 2024 Catholic Life Inspection. The school has successfully implemented the new Religious Education and Prayer & Liturgy Directories.

What have we done?	What impact have we had?
Carried out a governor self-evaluation/skills audit	This is carried out annually and ensures that governors have the appropriate skills to carry out their roles. Skills gaps have been identified and provide a focus for governor recruitment needs.
Introduced a revised induction programme	This ensures that governors are equipped to carry out their role as governor as quickly as possible.
Carried out Exclusion and Complaints Panels.	The school is fortunate in that very few complaints or exclusion panels are carried out during the year.

The Governing Body is grateful to the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team and all staff for their continued hard work and dedication.

Being a governor is hard work but incredibly rewarding. Please do not hesitate to contact the Chair of Governors Richard Barber, gov-rba@sjp.essex.sch.uk or any member of the governing body if you are interested in becoming a governor and would like more information.

September 2025