

St Michael's CE (VA) Infant School – Governors Effectiveness Statement

We are a body of 12 governors made up of Foundation, Local Authority, staff and parent governors. Foundation governors are recruited for their skills and experience from the community and confirmed in post by either the Parochial Church Council or the Guildford Diocese. The staff representatives always include our school leadership and parent governors are elected by St Michael's parents. All governors give freely of their time and apart from the Executive Head are volunteers.

The ethos of the school is based on its historic foundation as a Voluntary Aided Church of England (CE) school and aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.

The Governance Handbook sets out our three core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of the vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and the effectiveness and efficient performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money is well spent.

The school leadership is held to account through a range of different meetings. The full Governing Board has four meetings a year, and there are two Committees which meet termly (Finance and Resources, and Learning and Teaching) each with specific Terms of Reference setting out their responsibilities and reporting to the Governing Board. We ensure that all statutory requirements are met, particularly in relation to safeguarding. We monitor the Christian distinctiveness of the school in its day to day activities and the embedding of the school aims and vision. This includes structured conversations with small groups of pupils to explore their views and understanding of safety and school values.

Strategic planning is a key responsibility for governors and we have a well established partnership with Newdigate CE Infant School based on a Memorandum of Understanding and agreement for an Executive Headship arrangement. Evidence of the effectiveness of school leadership is gathered from a range of sources and regular dialogue ensures that governors are aware of current issues, progress towards agreed targets and other concerns as they occur. Each formal meeting has an agreed agenda and minutes are kept of the questions and answers asked of the leadership team. Issues raised are rigorously pursued.

Governors maintain a good overview through regular reports, meetings and school visits. We undertake specific roles and responsibilities, have regular visits with staff to discuss curriculum developments and observe practice within the school. Each governor completes a visit record which is shared with senior leaders and the governing body. The reports are stored in the governing body's virtual office records for reference and monitoring of impact over time.

During the time of the pandemic and resultant disruption, it was necessary to conduct all governor meetings online, however, it is now possible to conduct more in person meetings, including the head and chair discussions between meetings each term. Staff with specific leadership responsibilities present information at governor meetings and are subject to questioning and scrutiny as part of these presentations. This includes monitoring and reporting on provision for pupils with Special Needs and/or supported with Pupil Premium funding.

There is a process for policy reviews which includes assessing the outcomes so that each is fit for purpose. Governors have a formal process of risk management so that risks are clearly identified and there is an appropriate focus on mitigating actions. This includes ensuring maintenance of the buildings, improvements to the fabric, and keeping all in good safe order. The school's budget and financial expenditure are scrutinised by governors to ensure the effective use of resources and value for money. As governors we have continued to undertake training to ensure we are effective and work within the Governor Competency Framework.