



St Nicholas
Catholic Primary
School
Governors
Induction Pack

Governor Induction

Since September 2015 a revised Ofsted school inspection framework has been in operation with a greater focus on the effectiveness of governance in driving school improvement.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

1. Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management by evaluating the extent to which leaders, managers and **Governors**:
 - demonstrate an ambitious vision, have high expectations for what all children and learners can achieve and ensure high standards of provision and care for children and learners
 - improve staff practice and teaching, learning and assessment through rigorous performance management and appropriate professional development
 - evaluate the quality of the provision and outcomes through robust self-assessment, taking account of users' views, and use the findings to develop capacity for sustainable improvement
 - provide learning programmes or a curriculum that have suitable breadth, depth and relevance so that they meet any relevant statutory requirements, as well as the needs and interests of children, learners and employers, nationally and in the local community
 - successfully plan and manage learning programmes, the curriculum and careers advice so that all children and learners get a good start and are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment
 - actively promote equality and diversity, tackle bullying and discrimination and narrow any gaps in achievement between different groups of children and learners
 - actively promote British values
 - make sure that safeguarding arrangements to protect children, young people and learners meet all statutory and other government requirements, promote their welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism.

(Extract taken from the Common Inspection Framework – Ofsted September 2015).

Contents:

1. Welcome
2. What to complete before taking up your role as a governor
3. Mentor governor
4. The Purpose of Governing Boards
5. How we manage our work
6. Our Governing Board membership
7. General overview of the school
8. Governor training
9. Visiting the school
10. Meetings and top tips
11. Complaints
12. Safeguarding
13. Useful contacts
14. Schedule of meetings for the year
15. School website – other useful information

Appendices

- The code of conduct for the governing board
- Declaration of interest form
- Policy for governor visits to school
- Useful reading

Additional documents to be provided before the first meeting (email or paper copies)

- Minutes of the last governing board meeting
- Latest Head teacher's report
- The school development plan
- The latest school self-evaluation (SEF)
- Last Ofsted report
- Ofsted school data
- Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE
- Acronym buster
- GSS Information for Prospective governors

What to complete before taking up your role as a governor

In order to take up your role as a governor you need to complete and return the following.

1. Code of conduct for governors

We uphold an ethos of professionalism and have high expectations of the governors' role including observing complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the governing board, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff or students. Our agreed code of conduct is included in this pack. Please read, sign and return it to the school office.

2. Declaration of Interests

The Governing Board of each school is required by regulations made under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to establish a register which lists for each member of the Governing Board and the Headteacher, any business or personal interests they or any member of their immediate family have which could conflict with the school's interests; to keep the register up to date with notification of changes and through annual review of entries, and to make the register available for inspection by governors, staff, parents and the Director of Education and Finance or their representative.

A Governor Interest form has been included in this pack for you to complete and return to the school. You must complete this even if you have no interests to declare.

3. DBS

Enhanced DBS checks are now mandatory for governors in maintained schools. All governors now must be checked by the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) within 21 days of appointment. This replaces the old CRB checks. Please liaise with the School Business Manager ASAP if this has not already happened. This can now be applied for online. Please note – portable DBSs might be acceptable but again you will need to check with the SBM.

4. Skills audit

The Department for Education's Competency Framework requires Governing Boards to carry out regular skills audits, to identify skill and knowledge gaps and which both define recruitment needs and inform a planned cycle of continuous professional development (CPD) activity including appropriate induction for those new to governance or to the board.

Mentor Governor

Being a new governor can sometimes be a bit overwhelming. We therefore give all our new governors a mentor governor, that they can email or speak to with any questions.

Your mentor governor is **XXXXXX**.

Contact details are:

Email - **XXXXXXX**

Telephone **XXXXXXX**

Please contact them to arrange to meet with her before our next governing board meeting to familiarise yourself further with our school and your role as a governor.

Date of initial meeting with your mentor:

Meeting with the mentor governor to include:	
Contact details of all other governors and key staff	
How the full governing board and committee meetings are conducted	
Background to the school	
Current issues facing the school	
Visiting the school	
An overview of the governor's role	
School email address for governor and login if appropriate	
Current issues facing the school – strengths and areas of development	

Why we have Governing Boards

Making a difference

“Governing boards have a significant degree of autonomy in our increasingly school-led system. They are the vision setters and strategic decision makers for their schools. They play a vital role in ensuring the best possible education that takes every child as far as their talents allow. Crucially, that means creating robust accountability for executive leaders by using and being familiar with objective data on the performance of pupils, teachers and finances to ask the right questions. “

John Nash - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools
Governance handbook - January 2017

All schools have a Board of Governors that provides strategic leadership. It is responsible for driving up standards, ensuring money is well spent and the strategic vision. Being a school governor is a fantastic opportunity to have an impact on education and positively influence children’s lives. Governors are not responsible for the day to day running of the school. This is the job of the Headteacher.

Core purpose of governance

All boards, no matter what type of schools or how many schools they govern, have three core functions:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
- 2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.**

[The Governance Handbook](#) (January 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Governing board powers

The governing board is recognised in law as a corporate board, which means it has a legal identity separate from that of its governors.

It also means that individual governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the governing board except where the whole governing board has delegated a specific duty to that individual. The governing board can also decide to delegate certain responsibilities to committees that it has established.

Governors will, therefore, take collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the governing board to publicly support decisions.

How we manage our work

As a Board we are all responsible for all decisions. However, in order to make our work manageable we delegate specific responsibilities to committees and individual governors.

Full Governing Board meetings

The whole Board meets X times a year for a formal business meeting which looks at current issues within the school, takes a report from the Headteacher and feedback from the committees. At least 50% (rounded up) of governors need to be present in order for the meeting to be quorate (have the authority to make decisions).

Committees

We have X main committees which each meet three times a year. They have the following key responsibilities:

- **Teaching and learning** – Curriculum, standards, quality of teaching
- **Pupil support** – Inclusion, safeguarding, attendance, Special Educational needs
- **Resources** – Finance, HR and Premises
- **Performance Management and Pay panel** – Head’s performance management and approval of staff pay awards

The quorum for each committee is three governors.

Members are allocated according to their skills.

The agenda for the meetings is drawn up by the chair of the committee in consultation with the Head teacher and clerk; minutes are taken by the clerk to the governors.

Governing board membership

The full governing board consists of

Names: Jane Burns	Head teacher/ Principal
Nicolas Fox	Staff governor
Angela Richardson	Parent governor
Martin Gunby (Chair) Anna Pickup (Vice Chair) Marie Forde Judith Putsman	Foundation Governors
	LA Governor

Specific responsibilities and committee membership

Responsibility	Governor
Chair and performance management	Martin Gunby (Chair) Judith Putsman
Vice Chair and performance management	Anna Pickup
Chair of the teaching and learning committee	
Chair of the pupil support committee	
Chair of the resource committee	
Child protection governor	
Training link governor	
SEN governor	

General overview of the school

- numbers on role: 295
- attendance information
- demographics
- staffing structure
- school data

etc. ...

Governor training

There is a wide range of training and support for governors provided by the school and local authority. Governors are encouraged to discuss their training needs with the training governor and Head teacher.

New governors should complete induction training. The Business Manager in the office can book this for you.

A complete programme of Local Authority training can be found at <http://www.leedsforlearning.co.uk/>

Governor visits to school

In order to carry out your role responsibly and effectively, it is important for you to know the school well. One way to achieve this is through school visits. Visits provide an opportunity to develop a good awareness and understanding to help them in their strategic role as well as to develop teamwork with school staff. In order that visits are effective and well-planned,

The Board has agreed a governor visits policy which is provided in this pack. This includes a visits form, to be completed after each visit.

Meetings

The timetable for governing board and committee meetings is provided in this pack. Agendas for governing board meetings are despatched at least seven days in advance of the meeting. If you would like to ask for an item to be included on the agendas of either the governing board or a committee, please contact the Chair or the clerk prior to the meeting.

Top tips for new governors:

- Read the agenda and papers before the meeting.
- Make notes or highlight points you wish clarified.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Talk to your governor mentor to discuss any concerns you may have
- Don't feel you have to understand and get involved in everything all at once. Participate in those areas which you are interested in.
- Consider governor training opportunities.
- Ask to see the school improvement plan, a recent head teacher's report and a copy of latest Ofsted report.
- Get to know the school strengths and areas for improvement
- If you have any personal concerns discuss them with your mentor governor outside of the meeting

Dealing with complaints

The school has procedures for dealing with complaints that tries to ensure that they are dealt with at the lowest appropriate level e.g. the pupil's teacher. Sometimes that might not be enough and a meeting with the Head teacher may be necessary.

The complaints policy should be published on the school website. Governors approve the policies and it is crucial that they put them into practice.

Should a parent wish to take the complaint further, it should be put in writing and addressed to the Chair of the governing board who will deal with the complaint in accordance with the governing board's procedures.

The best advice is that if you receive a complaint from a parent direct him/her to the school in the first instance!

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in school. It is:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection aims to keep children safe where there is serious risk of harm. Serious risk of harm many arise from a single event or a serious of concerns over time. Often the terms 'Child Protection' and 'Safeguarding' are used synonymously, but they are quite distinct. Safeguarding refers to all children, whilst Child Protection refers distinctly to children at risk of harm.

All governors must read part 2 of the DfE's 'Keeping children safe in education'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

Useful Contacts

- The school - telephone
- Governor Support Service - telephone 0113 3785213, email: education.governors@leeds.gov.uk
- The Chair/Vice Chair email or telephone number
- Headteacher email
- School website address

Dates of full governing board and committee meetings

Date	Meeting name	Purpose of meeting
17 September 6pm	FGB	<i>For administration and opening business for the year, including setting committee members, setting up link governor visit dates, annual forms for completion and policy approvals</i>
	Resources committee	
	...	

Supporting information that can be found on the school website

School Website: www.stnicholasprimaryleeds.org.uk

- Aims and mission statement
- School policies
- Term dates
- Latest newsletters
- Admission arrangements
- Pupil premium information
- School prospectus
- Staff lists
- Life of the school – what else do we do?
- Further information on the Governing Board
- Links to DfE Governance Handbook and Competency Framework
- Link to Ofsted

And much more!

Appendices

Policy for Governor's Visits to School

Insert school policy here

Include visits template for governors to complete as evidence of monitoring and impact.

A code of conduct for the governing board

Insert your code of conduct – all governors should be asked to read and sign, and return to the school

Declaration of pecuniary interests

Insert your declaration of interests form – all governors should be asked to read and sign, and return to the school

USEFUL READING

Competency Framework and Governance Handbook

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Common Inspection Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>

Keeping Children Safe in Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Ofsted

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Find and Compare schools

<https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>