



ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2023/2024

1. Introduction

The Department for Education recommends Governing Boards publish an annual statement to parents. For some years the Governing Board of St John's School has diligently published such a statement during the autumn term based on the activities undertaken in the previous school year. These statements have been circulated to parents and uploaded onto the school website. This latest statement covers the school year 2023/2024 that has finished recently and has been written in September 2024.

2. What do Governors do?

Governing Boards are key strategic decision makers and vision setters in every school and play a major part in the school's accountability. They have a vital role to play in driving up school and pupil performance by making sure the resources are used well to ensure every child receives the best possible education.

Often, visitors say of St John's School that it has a 'good feel', and this is said after only a brief time on the premises. The children are polite, confident and friendly, and they demonstrate good behaviour for learning. When issues occur, they are robustly dealt with in line with the published Behaviour Policy.

We are blessed with dedicated and hardworking staff who constantly deliver over and above the norm. Our staff are a credit to their profession and are ably supported by highly skilled learning support assistants, office/finance/caretaking/catering staff, meal-time supervisors and cleaners.

As the Governing Board of St John's School, we are proud of the school and its warm, welcoming, inclusive and strong family atmosphere. We fully support the school's aims, ethos, vision and values:

3. School Aims

- To work together and be the best you can be,
- To care for and support one another,
- To respect and value one another and the environment.

4. School Ethos

We believe that the distinctive characteristic that gives our school its 'good feel' factor is the Christian ethos which underpins and permeates all we do at St John's. It is this highly valued and widely shared ethos which makes our school special and unique to us.

5. The School Vision

The school has emphasised the following key Bible verse, vision statement and Christian values:

'I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength' [Philippians 4:13]

"Our ethos is deeply rooted in the Bible, underpinned by faith and committed to educational excellence. In our community we respect that everyone is uniquely made in the image of God. We grow together in wisdom, compassion, strength and instil a sense of hope for all to flourish. We make a difference."

- Faith - Is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see,
- Strength – God presents us with the strength to build and progress in our life and the lives of others,
- Compassion - We are fair, we care and show understanding towards others,
- Wisdom - Building confidence, discipline and knowledge to fully develop our talents in all areas of our lives,
- Hope - Coping wisely with situations that will help guide us into fulfilling our aspirations.

The RE Ambassadors (two per class from Year 1 to Year 6) have taken the words of the vision and made them into a song, even composing the melody line. All children know this song which can be viewed [here](#).

6. Purpose of Governance

In accordance with the Government's requirements, the Governing Board at St John's School provides strategic leadership and accountability in the school. It has three key functions:

- ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

School governors are all volunteers and give their time for the benefit of the children. Apart from the Rector and Headteacher who are ex-officio, all Governors are elected democratically and serve a four-year term. Governors are independent, have equal status to each other and, while they may represent the views of their appointing board, they act first and foremost in the best interests of the school.

7. How we are organised

The 'Instrument of Government' for St John's School allows for **14** governors. At the end of July 2024, the following were serving as governors:

- 2 Parent Governors appointed by ballot of the parents at the school (Edwin Afeku & Kelly Kehn)
- 1 Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority (Lysandra Dwyer)
- 1 Staff Governor appointed by ballot of the staff (Rachel Lacey),
- 1 Headteacher (Jo Hester)

8 Foundation Governors:

- 1 The Rector of St John the Evangelist, Great Stanmore (Matthew Stone)
- 2 appointed by the PCC of St John's Church Stanmore (Jon Stephan & Tracey James)
- 3 appointed by the Harrow Deanery Synod (Dan Escott, Graham Nicholson & Clemeý Pagano)
- 2 appointed by the London Diocesan Board for Schools (Claire Ingate & Abi Miranda)

- 1 Co-opted governor appointed by the governing board (Chris Tapp)

Our Governors have a wide range of skills and experience which are used fully as they discharge their duties. Any vacancies are filled promptly, but only after a rigorous selection process to ensure the best people serve the school as Governors.

8. Governing Board Changes across 2023/2024

- Clementina Pagano was appointed by the Harrow Deanery Synod to begin a four-year term on 1st September 2023. She succeeded Andrew Morgan whose term of office was ending.
- At the first Governing Board meeting of the 2023/2024 school year, Andrew Morgan was appointed as an Associate Member for a period of 12 months. He retired at the end of the summer term having served for 25 years as a governor. We thank him for his long and faithful service and wish him well in his new home in Buckinghamshire.
- John Barker's (LDBS Governor) four-year term of office came to an end on 18th March 2024. The Governing Board appointed John as an Associate Member for the remainder of the school year. John then moved to take a new appointment as Associate Priest at All Hallows-by-the-Tower in September 2024. We thank John and wish him well in his new church in Central London.
- Claire Ingate was appointed by the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS) and began a four-year term on 1st April 2024. She succeeded John Barker.
- Abi Miranda was re-elected to serve another four-year term by the LDBS. Her term of office began on 15th July 2024.

In September 2023 Matthew Stone was re-elected to serve as Chair. Kelly Kehn was elected Vice-Chair. Both work closely with the Headteacher. Amanda Adamis, a professional Clerk, was re-appointed. She organises meetings, takes minutes and coordinates the follow-up on any actions. The Clerk works closely with the Chair and Headteacher and advises on procedural matters, thus playing a pivotal role in the work of the Governing Board. One of the Assistant Headteacher and School Business Manager were reappointed as Associate Members.

9. Committees

During the school year 2023/2024 the Governing Board delegated most of its work to five committees:

- Admissions
- Christian Ethos
- Finance & Premises (incl. Pay & Review)
- Staffing (incl. Headteacher's Performance Management)
- Standards & Achievement

Governors serve on up to three committees where their skills, interests and experience enables them to have the greatest impact. This information is gathered from the completion of occasional skills audits and conversation with newly appointed governors. The Governing Board and the committees all have terms of reference in place which are reviewed annually.

Most governors are also linked with a specific subject or area within the school, many of which are connected to the improvement priorities (see below). In 2023/2024, the subject/areas were:

Early Years Foundation Stage, Equality, Environment, Health & Safety, IT, Maths, Mental Health & Well-being (for the children and staff), Music, Pupil Premium, Reading, RE with Collective Worship, Safeguarding, SEN and Writing.

10. Monitoring

The monitoring of the subject/areas is achieved through regular visits to the school where meetings are held with leaders, staff and pupils. After each visit the governor prepares a follow-up report which is presented at the next Governing Board and/or Committee Meeting. Monitoring visits are especially useful as they help governors understand more about their specific subject/area and, over time, the progress/impact can be better measured.

Governors also visit the school informally, supporting events such as assemblies, concerts, the Year 6 production, School Services held in St John's Church and Parents' & Friends' Association events.

11. Meetings

During 2023/2024 the Governing Board met routinely on five occasions (September, December, March, May and July). The Admissions Committee, Christian Ethos Committee, Finance & Premises Committee, Staffing Committee and Standards & Achievement Committees met once each term.

The Headteacher's Performance Management Committee met once during the school year in person, and the Pay Committee met once online. All committees meet during the school day. The Headteacher's Performance Management Committee is supported by an external advisor to ensure transparency and accountability. Additionally, there is a facility to bring together small panels/committees (eg exclusions) although this was not needed in 2023/2024.

The Chair of Governors met the Headteacher regularly and is willing to meet parents as and when necessary. Again, there were no formal complaints. The Chair of Governors and Vice-Chair are visible and accessible members of the school community and at no stage did any parent raise even a concern.

12. School Improvement

The Governing Board takes part in the annual cycle of school improvement by its interpretation and analysis of school data including, SATS results, Local Authority data, government data, Phonics Screening Check, Baseline Assessment, Ofsted Data Dashboard and regular internal school assessment data. Through data analysis, pupil progress and attainment are scrutinised and vulnerable groups including pupil premium children are closely monitored. Data monitoring together with external reports such as Ofsted mean that the Governors play an active role in the development of the annual School Improvement Plan.

13. Training

Governors are also expected to attend training courses to fulfil their role and enhance their contribution. During 2023/2024 various training opportunities were offered to governors including induction training run by the Local Authority. We are also able to attend training courses organised by the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

As a matter of course, all Governors undertake annual an safeguarding training course and they have all completed the Government's 'The Prevent Duty' course. All Governors have up-to-date DBS checks in place to enhanced level.

14. Ofsted

The school received a routine visit from Ofsted in July 2024 (previous inspection January 2019). Here are some highlights from the report:

"St John's is a warm and welcoming school. Relationships are respectful and pupils are safe. The school's values of 'faith, strength, compassion, wisdom and hope' permeate all aspects of school life. Pupils are polite, considerate and show curiosity in their learning. The school ensures that pupils receive helpful pastoral support when they need it."

"The school's curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. It is broad in scope and meets national expectations. It has been carefully designed to build pupils' knowledge right from the start in early years through to Year 6. Pupils have regular opportunities to revisit learning. Staff have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Pupils learn a broad and stimulating range of subjects. Inclusion is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Pupils with SEND achieve well."

"The curriculum for pupils' wider development is extensive. Pupils participate in a range of clubs and activities."

"The school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. Governors understand their statutory responsibilities and maintain effective strategic oversight of the school's work. They share the school's high aspirations for all pupils at the school to be successful in the next stage of their education."

"Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's experience at the school."

"The school is relentless in its aim of ensuring that attendance meets its high expectations. Staff have rightly identified that this is a priority and take a range of actions to promote the importance of good attendance."

The full report can be read [here](#).

To strengthen the work the school does, the inspection said, *"...in a few subject, changes to the curriculum are more recent and not fully embedded. In these instances, staff are still getting used to delivering new curriculum content and addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school should ensure that they embed the curriculum across all subjects and continue to develop staff expertise so that they can implement it with confidence."*

This action point is be addressed in the School Improvement Priorities for 2024/2025 (see page 7 below).

15. School Improvement Priorities

The Headteacher reported regularly on (and the Governing Board duly monitored) the five areas that formed the 2023/2024 School Improvement Plan:

Priority 1 - Quality of Education

- To continue to implement the new EYFS reforms and develop quality outdoor provision.
- To raise standards of Writing across the school through a focus on the analysis of internal data especially in KS1.
- Develop quality adaptive teaching to support 'Great Expectations' for all pupils.
- Continue to raise standards in Maths for all pupils especially for higher ability pupils.
- To further develop Reading skills for those middle ability pupils and those identified groups.

Priority 2 - Behaviour and Attitudes

- Develop quality playground opportunities.
- Continue to build on positive relationships between the school and wider community.

Priority 3 - Personal Development

- To increase opportunities for outdoor learning and use of forest school to support pupil progress and mental health wellbeing.
- To continue to develop mental health and well-being for all staff and pupils through the developed use of Zones of Regulation.
- Develop British Values across all curriculum areas.
- Achieve Arts Mark Status.

Priority 4 - Leadership and Management

- Develop all subject leaders as effective Middle Leaders.
- To ensure a healthy work/life balance for all.
- To encourage a culture of coaching and mentoring within the school to support growth both for adults and pupils.
- Continue to develop Pupil and Parent Voice.

The Governing Board annually approves a 3-year school budget and the Finance & Premises Committee regularly monitors the in-year budget. It works closely with the School Business Manager and the Local Authority Schools' Financial Services. Close scrutiny of the budget during the financial year 2023/2024 meant that the year-end outturn resulted in a positive balance which is a significant achievement given the pressures on school budgets.

Governors also monitored the spending (and impact) of the Pupil Premium and PE & Sports Premium.

Governors remain concerned about the falling pupil roll which negatively impacts the school budget. Whilst of little comfort, many primary schools in Harrow, in London and across the country are in the same position owing to there being an excess of reception places compared to the actual demand. As there is no additional funding to cover any shortfall, Governors (with significant help from the School Business Manager) marketed the school premises for external lettings at weekends which has been successful in generating a new income stream.

In the 2024/2025 school year the following school improvement priorities have been agreed:

Priority 1 – Quality of Education:

- To raise standards of writing across the school,
- Develop quality adaptive teaching to support 'Great Expectations' for all pupils,
- Continue to raise standards in maths for all pupils especially for higher ability pupils,
- To embed the new geography curriculum,
- Develop provision for EAL pupils.

Priority 2 – Behaviour and Attitudes:

- To improve attendance and punctuality.
- Continue to build on positive relationships between the school and wider community.

Priority 3 – Personal Development:

- To increase opportunities for outdoor learning and use of forest school to support pupil progress and mental health well-being.
- To develop mental health and well-being for all staff and pupils through the developed use of Zones of Regulation,
- Develop British Values and courageous advocacy across all curriculum areas,
- Achieve Arts Mark Status.

Priority 4 – Leadership and Management:

- Develop all subject leaders as effective middle leaders.

16. Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAMS)

In the previous school year, the SIAMS inspection took place which asks the question:

"How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?"

The inspection was robust and detailed and after a full day of interviews, observations and difficult questions, the school was given the highest mark of "excellent" in both parts of the inspection: Impact of collective worship and the effectiveness of religious education (RE). The [report](#) was so overwhelmingly positive. Do read it!

17. 2024 Results

EYFS

	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
EYFS GLD %	77%	80%	75%	76%	72%	80%

KS1 PHONICS

Phonics	2018 School	2019 School	2021 School	2022 School	2023	2024
Year 1	88%	87%	79%	65%	86%	88%

END OF KS1 TEACHER ASSESSMENTS RESULTS

	Expected Standard (Nat 2019 R 75%, W 69%, M 76%)					2024	Greater depth Standard					2024
	School 2018-	School 2019-	School 2021 unpublished	School 2022	2023		School 2018-	School 2019-	School 2021 unpublished	School 2022	2023	
KS1												
Reading	85%	72%	71%	74% (28/38)	66%	70%	39%	28%	36%	34% (13/38)	17%	26%
Writing	81%	76%	55%	58% (22/38)	57%	66%	31%	15%	20%	27% (10/38)	0%	20%
Maths	78%	79%	60%	71% (27/38)	66%	68%	34%	19%	29%	27% (10/38)	15%	20%

Cohort needs and mobility impacted the Y2 data significantly.

YEAR 4 MULTIPLICATION TABLES CHECK RESULTS

	Predictions 2024 based on mocks					
Raw score	25	24+	23+	22+	21+	20+
2024 results	51% (24chn)	73% (35chn)	77% (37chn)	81% (39chn)	88% (42chn)	88% (42chn)
2023 results	28%	45%	60%	62%	68%	76%

Awaiting the MTC National Average, this will be released in the Autumn. In 2023, it was 29%

KS2 STATUTORY ASSESSMENTS (SATS)

	Expected Standard					2024	Greater depth Standard					2024
	School 2018	School 2019-	School 2021- Unpublished	School 2022	School 2023		School 2018-	School 2019-	School 2021- Unpublished	School 2022	2023	
KS2												
Reading	72%	82%	78%	72%	77%	73% (Nat 75%)	26%	26%	35%	21%	32%	34% (Nat 28%)
Writing	75%	82%	57%	61%	79%	73% (Nat 73%)	18%	31%	17%	22%	15%	12% (Nat 13%)

Maths	66%	84%	72%	65%	85%	73% (Nat 75%)	18%	31%	22%	15%	26%	27% (Nat 25%)
SPAG	82%	84%	72%	67%	72%	76% (Nat 73%)	30%	33%	17%	25%	40%	39% (Nat 33%)
Floor	56% EXS	74%	52%	51%	66%	59% (Nat 62%) R, W&M	7%	16%	17%	7%	15%	10% (Nat 8%) R,Sp&M

*We are pleased with the outcomes, especially when comparing them to the National outcomes.
Our average scale scores were also above National in W, M & Sp but in line with R*

18. Finally...

Information about the Governors such as their attendance at meetings, business interests, photographs and biographies can be viewed on the website:

<https://stjohns.harrow.sch.uk/harrow/primary/stjohns/site/pages/ourschool/ourgovernors>



**The Revd Matthew Stone
Chair of Governors
September 2024**