

Re-Introduction of The Governing Body of St Adrian's School to the Parents of Pupils

Following two very disrupted school years, because of government legislation relating to Covid 19, our governing body is now allowed to meet on the school premises and governors can again make visits to the school during the learning day. It was felt that it might help parents, especially those whose children joined the school from September 2019 onwards, if we provided all parents with some key details about the Governing Body of St Adrian's and how it fulfils its statutory duties.

During this half term, therefore, there will be short pieces added to some of Mrs Porter's weekly Bulletins that provide information about our governing body. As a voluntary aided (VA) school St Adrian's has two masters- The Diocese of Westminster and the DfE on behalf of the Government.

This week we begin by explaining the Instrument of Government of the Governing Body of the school and introduce the various roles and responsibilities that are part of the work of governors. Our Instrument at St Adrian's currently allows for up to 14 governors. As a Diocesan School eight of the members of the governing body are Foundation Governors who are appointed by the Diocese. They would normally be practising Catholics and would be expected to have a reference from their Parish Priest. Three of the governing Body are Parent Governors elected by the parents of pupils at the school. There is one Local Authority (LA)governor, one staff governor and the Headteacher may choose whether to be a governor or not. In addition, a Governing Body may choose to appoint Associate Members if specific experience or skills are required. Associate Members may attend full governing body meetings but do not have a vote. Finally, the Governing Body has, annually, to appoint a Clerk to minute meetings and ensure that all the required processes are followed correctly. Specific details of the members of the governing body and the committees/groups that they belong to are available on the school website.

It is important to begin by emphasising that governors are volunteers, there is no payment for their services to the school community. In Voluntary Aided schools, the Governing Body has three main functions:

- Giving the school a clear Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- To provide oversight and accountability - governors do not get involved in the day-to-day management of the school. The governing body holds the senior leadership to account for the educational performance and Catholic character of the school; and for the internal organisation, management and control of the school including performance management of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Governors have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given specific delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so. Governors accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that governors will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meetings.

The legal requirement is for every governing body to meet at least three times a year, usually once every term because the Headteacher is required to provide a termly report to the governing body. At St Adrian's the governing body normally meets four or five times each school year. Between meetings of the full governing body its work is shared by various Committees, Groups and individual governors with particular responsibilities, such as the Admissions and Finance Committees, the Strategy & Policy and Premises Groups and the individual Safeguarding and SEND Governors and several more.