



ST. MARTIN'S CE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

GOVERNING BOARD IMPACT STATEMENT 2017-18

The Governing Board continued to support the ongoing progress of the school during the academic year 2017-2018. The purpose of this statement is to outline the structure of and summarise the overall effectiveness of the Governing Board. To give additional context, areas of particular significance are explained in more detail through the document.

Composition and Attendance

The Governing Board consists of the following:

Two staff governors
The Headteacher
Two parent governors
One Local Authority-approved governor
Seven Foundation governors

Our school also has one Associate Member, appointed by the Governing Board on the basis of the skills and experience they can bring to the role. Our current Associate Member supports the Board through being a panel member if required for formal hearings (e.g. exclusions, complaints, staff matters etc.)

Foundation governors are appointed by the Governing Board and as well as being aligned with the Christian ethos of the school, have, in the opinion of the Governing Board, the skills and experience required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

The full Governing Board meets twice each term. All governors are members of at least one of the four Committees, which are:

- Resources (Finance, Health and Safety, Premises and Staffing matters)
- Teaching and Learning (Parent and Community Links, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Inclusion, Safeguarding, School Improvement)
- Leadership and Teachers' Pay
- Admissions

Our committees effectively and efficiently consider different aspects of the school in detail. We also have committees that meet if required to consider pupil discipline and staffing matters.

St Martin's School is now in its sixth year, and is still the only school in Cranbrook which is open to children in years 5 and 6. As Cranbrook is a growing town all through the school year children are arriving at school and the staff have worked very hard to integrate new children in to the St Martin's ethos and ways of learning.

Although our measurable results still are not at the standard we hope to achieve, when OFSTED visited the school last year we were awarded "Good" – a result that the Governors are immensely proud of. It demonstrates that both staff and Governors can tell the story behind the results and that we are aware of the where the focus needs to be in order to see every child making significant progress.

We have once more seen a turnover in terms of Governors and needed a temporary Chair after our previous Chair had to step down suddenly for personal reasons. However we believe that we are now a strong Governing Board. Our temporary Chair helped to steady the ship and a new permanent Chair volunteered readily. Indeed the current Board is full of people who are willing to volunteer to take on roles. Morale is high, meetings are well attended and everyone contributes to them.

After a review process we decided to actively recruit potential Governors from the community and local businesses. This has worked well, resulting in there being only one vacancy, which is about to be filled. We are hoping for a period of consolidation for the Governing Board.

See Appendix 1 for details of all of our current Governors

See Appendix 2 for details of individual governors' attendance at meetings.

Summary of Governor Activity

Governance Development Action Plan

In order for the Governing Board to be "the best we can be for ourselves, for each other and for God's world", we have an action plan that is reshaped and worked through regularly to give support and clarity to both Governors and the School.

1: Membership, recruitment and training

The impact of this for 2017-18 can be evidenced by the competence of the current Board. A new mentoring and induction process has worked well. Governors are encouraged to ask questions if they do not understand something in a meeting. Succession planning is being worked on currently.

2: Leadership

Both the temporary and the current Chair of Governors have shown strong leadership alongside a Vice Chair whose long-term experience with the school has proved invaluable in shaping our direction. We are spending time thinking about the best way to work as a Board, whether to keep the current committee system or move to a Lead Governor with Portfolio governance structure. This demonstrates our willingness to be flexible and explore what best suits the needs of the school. Succession planning of key posts is ongoing.

3: Strategy, support and challenge

1: This year has seen a change in both the School Improvement Plan monitoring form and how the monitoring happens. A very successful evening was spent with staff and Governors discussing their various areas together, which has informed the subsequent monitoring and follow up questions. This year there have been more learning walks and opportunities to visit the school to look at key areas of work. Governors seem more confident in their interrogation of the School Improvement Plan.

2: Four of the Governors, along with staff attended ASP (Analyse School Performance) data training, which has proved beneficial as there is now more competence in analyzing the data at meetings. The training also highlighted the fact that both staff and Governors are well aware of the issues that the data emphasizes and have already put in place strategies to improve results. Whenever the trainer said "Governors should be aware of and asking questions about"... we are already doing this.

3: This year there have been two long discussions about issues that would significantly impact the school with which the Governing Board have been involved and which exhibit the Boards growing confidence in terms of being strategic and offering support and challenge. After major consultation and debate neither of these plans are going forward. In both cases it is because both Board and staff have emphasized that the needs of our current cohort of pupils are paramount and, although

these ideas were attractive, there was a risk that they would take focus away from them or be detrimental to their long term learning

4: This year two Associate Members have assisted and supported the Governors. One in particular has modelled appropriate challenge/question asking for the Board, which will help us to challenge the school – a key facet of Governance. Governors are increasingly able to ask searching questions at Board Meetings to discern if the right actions are happening

4: Ensuring accountability

This year work has been done to raise the profile of the Governing Board within school and amongst parents and carers. A Governor has regularly attended the Parent Voice group to gain insight into their discussion items and to feed back where appropriate. The staff Senior Management Team now have opportunities to ask questions of governors at SIP Review Day as well as being encouraged to direct questions to specific committees. Whether there is a role for Governors at Parents Evenings is still a work in progress.

Other Governor Impacts

1: Raising SEN issues

This year there has been a significant change in funding streams for children with special educational needs which has led to a dramatic loss to our SEN budget. The Governors objected strongly to both the way that this occurred and the lack of speed in which the replacement EHCP's are being rolled out which is to the detriment of individual pupils and the school as a whole. To that end, in conjunction with the staff the Governors wrote a strongly worded letter to the relevant bodies in Devon County Council.

The lack of any response is disappointing and staff and Governing Board are looking at mechanisms to take this further, including working in conjunction with Cranbrook Education Campus who are facing the same issues.

2: East Devon Church Schools Collaboration

The Governing Board have agreed the move to create a formal collaboration with Withycombe, Tipton and Feniton schools. This will create a better support network, a better opportunity of success with grant bids, and opportunities to share practice development.

3: Policies and budget review

The Governors, through work in the various committees review all policies on a regular basis. This is not a tick box exercise; rather each policy is given careful scrutiny and updated as needed. In all our work but particularly in this area our impact has been all the greater thanks to having an excellent Clerk to the Governors, Jacqueline Brooks, whose record keeping and reminders enable us to function as a Governing Board.

Examples this year of the impact of the scrutiny:

- Governors have questioned the budget monitor and are exploring possible alternative income streams
- Governors have reviewed staff absence. From now on a Governor will join any second absence meetings held to demonstrate the Board's support for ensuring the absence process is followed thoroughly and to demonstrate that the Governing Board recognises the importance of staff attendance.

4: Financial management and care for buildings

Governors receive half-termly budget monitoring statements from the School Business Manager, as well as information on financial benchmarking. These statements are closely scrutinised by governors, and the Business Manager regularly attends meetings to answer governors' questions. The Finance Governors also works with the Business Manager to produce the annual Schools Financial Value Statement. The

impact of the governors' role in the school ensures that the budget is managed effectively and improvements are effective and continuous. A healthy financial position has been maintained throughout the year.

The Governing Board's Resources Committee regularly monitors issues concerning buildings and maintenance. This includes an annual site "walkabout" by governors to identify particular priorities. A rolling programme is maintained. This year Governors have led on discussions around actions to rectify the faulty pipe system, and have provided expertise that would not otherwise be held by the Headteacher.

5: Governor visits and input to the school

As well as the visits linked to School Improvement Plan, governors have been encouraged to come in at other times to see what is happening in school. Take up varies, simply because many Governors are in full time work, but it is effective.

Several Governors volunteer at the school in various ways every week (e.g. class support in maths, leading Collective Worship) which helps to keep us all grounded in the everyday life of the school and help to see what changes are needed. Three of the Governors are involved in the Mentoring Scheme and others plan to join in. This is a wonderful way of supporting individual children and gaining insights into the needs of the pupils in general.

Increasingly, Governors are bringing their work skills and attributes to the fore in enhancing St Martins School. For example, links with the Healthy New Towns NHS initiative leading to the local Church working with the school and community on a mental health project; another Governor is an EYFS specialist and her advice and support, particularly in thinking about pen holding this year has proved invaluable.

School Christian Ethos

As a VA school we are also tasked with maintaining the Christian ethos of the school. Every Governing Board meeting and committee begins with prayer and ends with the question "How has this meeting benefited our children and contributed to the Christian distinctiveness of the school?". Having to answer this question reminds the Governors of their particular role in improving this.

Responses recorded in recent Governing Boards are, for example:

- Governors visiting children in their classes promotes positive learning experiences and opportunities for the children to develop relationships with other adults and share their learning
- Within conversations about working with families, both staff and governors do not judge parents but are understanding and seek to find ways of encouraging parents to flourish. Even issues with challenging families are talked about with love and care.
- We have made Safeguarding improvements and had a discussion of strategies to address Speech & Language difficulties
- The plan to hold a strategic visioning evening to ensure the Governing Board is fulfilling its function and strengthen leadership at the school

Conclusion

Through all of the Governing Board meetings, our actions and questions, reviewing of policy and creating new School Improvement Plans we are clear that the children are the centre of everything at St Martin's. The Governors believe that our best impact can be seen through a school that has an ethos of care, a foundation of faith and that strives to support and encourage children – and staff and families – to be the best they can be.

Appendix 1

St. Martin's Primary & Nursery School Governing Board – Key Information June 2018

Current Governors							
	Name	Type of Governor	Appointing Body	Office	Term	Committee(s)	Registered Interests
1.	John Clements	Parent	Directly appointed as sole nominee	Chair of Governors	11/10/17 – 10/10/21	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	None
2.	Sheila Watson	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Vice-Chair of Governors Chair of T&L Committee Joint Lead Governor for Safeguarding Lead Governor for SEND & Inclusion	08/02/15 – 07/02/19 08/02/11 - /07/02/15	Teaching & Learning Admissions	None
3.	Tania Beard	Staff (Headteacher)	Automatic appointment as Head		01/09/11 - present	Teaching & Learning Resources	
4.	Caren Flicker	Staff	Appointed directly by staff as sole nominee	Chair of Resources Committee	22/03/2016 – 21/03/2020	Resources	None
5.	Mel Turl	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Lead Governor for Parent & Community Links	30/07/15 – 29/07/19	Teaching & Learning	None
6.	Andrew Wood	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Lead Governor for Premises and H&S	11/12/17 – 10/11/21	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	None.
7.	Danielle Hamilton	Parent	Directly appointed as sole nominee	Chair of Leadership & Teachers' Pay	11/10/17 – 10/10/21	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay Admissions	DCC Employee, Healthy Towns Initiative
8.	Sheena Wright	Foundation	Appointed by the Diocese of Exeter	Lead Governor for School Improvement Planning	10/09/15 – 15/01/17 (Co-opted) 16/01/17 – 15/01/21	Teaching & Learning Headteacher Appraisal Admissions	None
9.	Rick Walker	Local Authority	Appointed by GB, approved by the LA	TBC	26/03/18 – 25/03/22	Teaching & Learning	None
10.	Lythan Nevard	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Ex-officio Deputy Lead Governor for Safeguarding	31/10/2016 – 30/10/2020	Teaching & Learning	None
11.	Vicky Keating	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Lead Governor for Finance	11/10/17 – 10/10/21	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	None
12.	<i>CJ – Application in process</i>	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter				
	Iain Grafton	Associate Member	Appointed by the GB		17/09/17 – 16/09/18	1 st and 2 nd Committees	Associate Member at Woodlands

							Park Primary School, Member of DCC Schools Admissions Appeals Panel
Resignations in previous 12 months.							
	Declan McGowan	Associate Member	Appointed by the GB	Lead Governor for Premises and Health & Safety	17/09/17 – 16/09/16	Resources	None
	Mark Maries	Associate Member	Appointed by the GB	Lead Governor for Finance	06/02/17 – 05/02/18	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	None
	Marc Kastner	Foundation Governor	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Chair of Governors Lead Governor for Staffing	06/03/2017 – 05/03/2021	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay Headteacher Appraisal	Governor at Chances. DCC Employee
	Meg Privett	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Joint Lead Governor for Safeguarding	10/11/12 – 09/11/16 10/11/16-20/10/17	Teaching & Learning Admissions Headteacher Appraisal	None
	Declan McGowan	Foundation	Appointed by Diocese of Exeter	Lead Governor for Premises and Health & Safety Joint Lead Governor for Early Years Provision	Resigned to be Associate Member 11/07/16 – 13/09/2017	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	None
	Dominic Morgan	Local Authority	Approved by LA, appointed by GB	Chair of Governors Joint Lead Governor for Effectiveness & Management of the School Lead Governor for Finance	Resigned 06/02/17 – 05/02/21	Resources	None
	Ian Norton	Parent	Elected by parental/carer vote	Vice-Chair Chair of Leadership & Teachers' Pay Committee Lead Governor for Staffing Joint Lead Governor for Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare	Resigned 03/09/15 – 17/07/2017	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	Wife is supply teacher at school
	Owen Golightly	Parent	Elected by parental/carer vote		Removed from GB due to non-attendance 18/03/14 – 17/07/2017	Resources Leadership & Teachers' Pay	None

