

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of
St Leonard's Catholic School 2015**

School Vision/Mission Statement

In the Catholic community of St Leonard's everything we do is for the greater glory of God and the service of others.

At St Leonard's we...

- Pursue excellence in all and for all
- Take Christ as the model for life
- Strive to create community

The Governing Body of St Leonard's Catholic School has a strong focus on its three core strategic functions:

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

Governance arrangements

The School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 (as amended) required that all governing bodies of all maintained schools in England must be reconstituted under The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012. As part of the reconstitution process we reviewed our membership in terms of size and composition. This was assisted by having completed a skills audit prior to the review. The following membership was agreed effective from 1st September 2015:-

1 x Local Authority Governor
2 x Co-opted Governors
1 x Head Teacher (ex officio)
2 x Parent Governors
9 x Foundation Governors
1 x Staff Governor

This represented a reduction of one governor in each of the following categories:-

Parent Governor, Foundation Governor and Staff Governor.

The revised Sealed Instrument of Government was received from the Diocese with effect from 1st September, 2015.

The full Governing Body meets twice in each term. There are two main committees, 'Resources' and 'Achievement and Well-being' which also meet twice per term.

	<p>Other committees meet as required and include Pay Review, Appeals, Capability, Capability First Appeal, Capability Final Appeal, Personnel, Performance Management and Site Issues. All Governing Body and Committee meetings are well attended, have agendas and minutes.</p> <p>An Annual Review of Committees and Delegated Powers is carried out in the final meeting of the summer term.</p> <p>The Budget is effectively overseen and monitored by the Resources Committee using budgetary control statements and questioning the Business Manager. The school contributes to Consistent Financial Reporting Benchmarking Data.</p>
<p>Key Issues faced and addressed by the Governing Body</p>	<p>One key strategic issue has dominated the work of the Governing Body in 2014/15 that of the pressing need to replace or rebuild the school. A Site Issues Group has met regularly for the past two years to discuss courses of action and to review progress.</p> <p>A substantial bid was put through the Government's Priority School Building Programme funding (PSB 2) The outcome of which was extremely disappointing having previously had a delegation meet with the then Minister for Schools prior to making the application.</p> <p>There have been numerous meetings with elected members and officers of Durham County Council, whilst these have been cordial and supportive the local authority is not in a position to help the school with capital finance.</p> <p>Work has been done in partnership with a property development company looking at alternative ways of funding new buildings.</p> <p>Discussions are currently ongoing designed to produce a new strategy to take forward to the next stage.</p> <p>A Special Governing Body meeting was held on October 2014 to consider the School Development Plan in detail. This provided an opportunity for Governors to debate the issues and to contribute to the final outcome in a more effective way.</p> <p>Examination results – Consistently over time the school achieves results well above national averages and floor targets.</p> <p>In 2015 67% of pupils gained 5 or more A* - C including English and Maths. There were lower results in English and Maths which contributed to this fall from previous years. A Level and Level 3 results were again high with 100% pass rate and 67% A* - B grades. A broad curriculum also</p>

	<p>enables high proportions to gain the English Baccalaureate; 48% in 2015.</p> <p>In 2014 74% of pupils gained 5 or more A* - C including English and Maths. Proportions of pupils making expected progress or better were higher than national figures for most groups. Results at A Level and Level 3 were high with 73% of grades at A* - B.</p> <p>Governors received a detailed report from the Education Development Partner (EDP) regarding the schools preparedness for an anticipated Ofsted inspection. The report covered the following areas:- Session Observations, Behaviour, Progress, Assembly, Student Voice, SEN, Sixth Form, NQT's, Middle Leaders, Governors and Recommendations. Governors were also able to discuss the findings on Governance with the EDP. In general the report was positive although there were a few areas highlighted for further development.</p> <p>The Governors Resources Committee approve the budget plan annually that is presented by the Head Teacher and Business Manager, and this is subsequently approved by the Full Governing Body. It has been increasingly difficult in recent years to set a realistic, viable budget plan in the face of funding reductions, especially in Post 16 education, home to school transport for Voluntary Aided schools and exacerbated by the poor condition of the fabric of the buildings, and two major water leaks.</p> <p>Changes to banking arrangements. Due to the Co-operative Bank withdrawing from local authority banking, Durham County Council awarded the contract for banking services to Lloyds Bank. The school is now operating its Petty Cash account through Lloyds Bank, and is also fully compliant with revised arrangements that have been introduced for the banking of money through Loomis Secure Cash Collections.</p>
<p>Assessment of Impact</p>	<p>Wherever performance dipped or was below Governor's expectations action plans were requested from Heads of Department setting out how continuous improvement was to be brought about.</p> <p>The Data Dashboard for 2014-15 shows gaps to be smaller than national or narrowing in most measures for disadvantaged pupils.</p>

	<p>To help Governors understand data, a course has been run internally to help Governors use and understand Raiseonline</p> <p>Link Governors have been appointed for all key subjects in the school</p> <p>The School Development Plan continues to evolve with the inclusion of departmental action plans, helping to monitor the effectiveness of any change.</p> <p>HoD updates in meetings of the full governing body allow for questions, challenge and the monitoring of progress.</p>
<p>Future plans for the Governing Body</p>	<p>The site and school buildings will have to be the highest future priority as the fabric and services continue to deteriorate.</p> <p>Budget issues will also dominate as we try to address the issue of the school being amongst the lowest spending secondary schools in the County.</p> <p>The issue of Academy conversion and Federations may need to be reconsidered.</p> <p>Governors will re-visit the skills audit as they strive to ensure that the Governing Body remains fit for purpose.</p>
<p>Contact Details</p>	<p>The Governing Body welcomes suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents/carers. Please contact the Chair of Governors c/o the school office.</p> <p>Details of the full Governing Body are on the school website.</p>