



# ST ANNE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Information for prospective Governors

### Governing Bodies of Schools

All schools have a governing body whose job is to work with the Headteacher, the local education authority and the Diocese (for St Anne's) to ensure that the pupils receive the best possible education.

Governors are accountable for;

- Setting targets for pupil achievement
- Managing the school's finances
- Making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based
- Appointment of staff
- Reviewing staff performance and pay
- In the case of St Anne's, supporting the ethos of the Catholic Church

Governors and the governing should;

- Help the school to set high standards by planning for the school's future and setting targets for school improvement.
- Ensuring that there is a focus on school improvement.
- Provide an independent external view
- Be a critical friend to the school, offering support and advice
- Help the school respond to the needs of parents and the community
- Make the school accountable to the public for what it does
- Work with the school on planning, developing policies and keeping the school under review
- Exercise its responsibilities and powers in partnership with the Headteacher and staff
- Not intervene in the day-to-day management of the school unless there are weaknesses in the school, when it then has a duty to take action.

Governors once appointed are holders of public office and should be prepared to work to the same principles as any paid public official. They should be able to demonstrate; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

(The Seven Principles of Public Life. From the *Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life* – The Nolan Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> May 1996).

## **Becoming a Governor.**

Governors share responsibility and work as a team. A school's governing body is a corporate body. This means it has a legal existence separate from that of its individual members. As long as governors have acted honestly, without ulterior motive, and reasonably, within the law and regulations, the governing body can't be held to account as individuals for any liabilities incurred by the governing body.

There are no formal qualifications required to become a governor and a diverse make up of a governing body is essential. Governors do need to be able to offer the following skills and qualities:

- Time (see workload)
- Commitment
- A willingness to learn
- A listening ear
- The ability to assimilate information, make judgements and take decisions
- Flexibility
- Tact & confidentiality
- Ability to work as part of a team

There are certain disqualifications from being a school governor and all applicants for appointment or election must sign a declaration stating that they are not disqualified. In addition all governors must sign a declaration of interests at the start of the school year. Current legislation also requires that all new governors apply for an Enhanced CRB check.

## **Membership of the Governing Body at St Anne's Catholic Primary School.**

All governors other than the two *ex officio* positions held by the Headteacher and Parish Priest (of the church of St Anne's) are appointed or elected for a four year term. There is no restriction on the number of times a governor may re-stand.

St Anne's governing body was reconstituted and new instrument of Governance drawn up 26<sup>th</sup> April 1999 by order of Cheshire County Council and the Diocese of Shrewsbury. Under this constitution the governing body comprises of;

- 7 Foundation governors – appointed by the Diocese (including the Parish Priest).
- 2 Staff Governors (including the Headteacher).
- 1 Local Authority Governor.
- 2 Elected Parent Governors.
- Plus a number of co-opted governors who support the full governing body in certain specialist areas. These are determined on an annual basis.

## **Governing Body Meetings.**

The Full Governing Body usually meets 4 times per year at twice in the autumn term and once in the spring and summer terms. Additional meetings may be called as necessary. The chair and vice chair are elected by the governors at the first meeting of each academic year or as required. Much of the workload is delegated to sub- committees and St Anne's currently has 3 main sub-committees;

Leadership, Management and Curriculum – covers the areas of staffing, management, teaching, learning and performance.

Pastoral, Community and Environment – responsibility for pastoral matters, links to the local community and the school premises/buildings

Finance – Budgets, Finance and Financial audit.

Other Committees are established as and when required. The full governing body may appoint the chairman of any committee or may delegate this power to the committees themselves. Meeting dates are generally set up for whole academic year. Minutes for meetings are taken by the Clerk to the governors.

### **Governors' Work Load**

Governors should expect to spend at least 2 hours per week, attending meetings, reading papers, visiting school, attending courses and writing reports.

All governors are expected to:

- Attend the regular and special meetings of the full governing body.
- Attend the regular and special meetings of at least one of the main sub-committees.
- Work as a member of the governing body (not as an individual) in the best interest of the school.
- Show an interest in school activities.
- Be prepared to become well informed about education.
- Be prepared to become familiar with the rules of school governance.
- Attend the necessary training courses.
- Keep governing matters confidential until the appropriate time

Further information may be found on the internet and the following sites may be useful

[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

[http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/education\\_and\\_learning/schools/school\\_governors.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/education_and_learning/schools/school_governors.aspx)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance>

<http://www.governor.net.co.uk/>