

# ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Our Lady Immaculate is a Catholic primary school where Core Values, underpin every aspect of school life. Our Mission Statement is:

*‘With God all things are possible’ (Matthew 19:26)*

**At Our Lady Immaculate Primary School, we will inspire our children to achieve Personal excellence for themselves and for the glory of God.**

## **Purpose of this Governance Statement**

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School (hereinafter referred to as the Governing Body) in compliance with our duty to report on the ways in which we have fulfilled our obligations and responsibilities relating to (i) our overarching duty to conduct the school in accordance with its Catholic character and (ii) our core functions (which are explained below) during the 2023/2024 academic year.

A list of serving governors is set out in **Appendix 1**.

## **Role of the Governing Body**

As the Governing Body of a Catholic school, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that the School is conducted in accordance with its Catholic character at all times and this overriding duty (which is also a legal duty) permeates everything that we do. Further, in accordance with our legal obligations, the Governing Body endeavours to operate at a strategic level leaving the Headteacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to us for the operational day-to-day running of the School. It is by achieving these aims that we can be sure that our School has effective governance.

The three core functions of the Governing body are:

- 1) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- 2) Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the School and its pupils, and for the internal organisation, management and control of the School, including performance management of staff; and
- 3) Overseeing the financial performance of the School and making sure its money is well spent.

As an integral part of the vision for the holistic formation of children and young people Canon Law (Church Law) also requires that Catholic schools (which includes academies) are “...at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area” (806§2) and the Governing Body are mindful of this requirement in all that we do.

## **Scope of the Governing Body's Responsibilities**

The Governing Body acknowledges that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that **Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School** has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. Such a system, however, is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve our objectives and can provide only a reasonable (as opposed to absolute) assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Governing Body has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Headteacher for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management.

## **Governance Arrangements**

### **Composition of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body is made up of 7 Foundation Governors, 3 Staff Governors (including the Headteacher), and 1 Parent Governor.

Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese in which the School is situated. The Bishop not only appoints his Foundation Governors because of their particular skills, but, more importantly, for the strict purpose of ensuring, on his behalf, the Catholic character of the School. Foundation Governors are also under important legal duties to preserve and develop the School's Catholic character. In order to ensure that the Schools' Catholic character is protected and that it is being conducted in accordance with the tenets of its Catholic designation, Governing Bodies of Catholic schools and academies must always have a majority of Foundation Governors.

The Diocesan Bishop is Canonically responsible for his schools and academies. He ensures that the Catholic ethos of the school/academy is maintained, particularly through the appointment of Foundation Governors but also through overseeing the appointment of members of staff and through Diocesan inspection, in order to ensure that the school/academy is fulfilling the objects cited in its instrument of Government/Articles of Association and the trust deed under which the school/academy was established.

Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are people who, in the opinion of the Governing Body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school/academy.

### **Governing Body's work in the academic year 2022/2023.**

The work of the Governing Body as a whole is to determine the strategic direction of the school. This is done through the use of the School Development Plan, which Governors not only support the writing of but also approve and monitor its implementation.

The full Governing body will met six times during the year. We have not cancelled a Governing Body meeting because it was not 'quorate' (the number of Governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made). Overall Governors have excellent attendance at

Governing Body meetings. Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Governing Body meetings is set out in **Appendix 2**.

Committees work this year and Governors' attendance at Committee meetings.

At Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, we have:

Committee	
Premises, Health & Safety and Finance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulating and controlling the financial affairs of the school and all policy matters relating to personnel functions</li> <li>• Setting the School's annual budget</li> <li>• Ensuring the School Development Plan correctly reflects the budget and outlines how any balances are to be used</li> <li>• Regulating all funding sources to the school</li> <li>• Obtaining best value</li> <li>• Completing a detailed three year budget plan</li> <li>• Conducting an annual review of financial arrangements</li> <li>• Completing an annual Statement of Internal Control</li> <li>• Receiving and responding to any report issued by the Audit Department following a School Audit</li> <li>• Controlling and monitoring virements between cost centres</li> <li>• Targeting devolved capital resources to address issues identified in the Asset Management Plan</li> <li>• Preparing a planned maintenance programme</li> <li>• Ensuring legislation is complied with</li> <li>• Ensuring the buildings are functional and suitable</li> <li>• Ensuring security is maintained correctly and at all times</li> <li>• Ensuring cleaning is of the highest standard</li> <li>• Ensuring site maintenance and that the school complies with Environmental Protection Act</li> <li>• Ensuring premises comply with Health &amp; Safety, including hygiene requirements</li> </ul>

Curriculum, Pupil and Personnel Related Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the School’s Curriculum Policies on regular basis to ensure that they comply with the National Curriculum, the legal requirements in relation to the daily act of collective worship, the delivery of an agreed RE syllabus and the provision of sex and relationship education.</li> <li>• Advise the Governing Body on curriculum information that needs to be uploaded onto the school’s website</li> <li>• Contribute towards and monitor the School Development Plan in respect of the curriculum</li> <li>• Assist with ensuring that the requirements of pupils with additional and special education needs are met, including those identified as gifted and talented</li> <li>• Promote and support curriculum development within the financial limitation set out by the PHSF Committee</li> <li>• Monitor assessments and testing arrangements</li> <li>• Monitor pupil performance and recommend actions</li> <li>• Monitor the impact of pupil premium funding</li> <li>• Monitor the achievement and progress of identified groups</li> <li>• Consider all matters relating to safeguarding</li> <li>• Consider all matters relating to SEND</li> </ul>
---	---

Pay Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the staffing structure and consider the financial implications of the structure on an annual basis</li> <li>• Determine staffing arrangements to be made to achieve the structure</li> <li>• Consider pay and associated staffing issues</li> <li>• Annual review of staff salaries including the annual appraisal of all teachers and the Head Teacher</li> <li>• Advise the Governing Body on the operation of the Pay Policy</li> <li>• Hear formal grievances where they have not been previously resolved</li> </ul>
---------------	---

These committees currently meet three times each year and receive reports from pertinent parties such as the school business manager, site manager, head teacher and other staff. Information received is considered, discussed and if necessary, challenged in a supportive and engaged manner.

Governors’ individual attendance at Committee meetings is set out in **Appendix 2**.

### **Governors’ Future Plans for the School**

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School Governors will, this coming academic year, continue to focus on school improvement, in particular the development of vocabulary in support of reading, speaking and listening and introducing the new EYFS curriculum and baseline assessment. Governors will also be supporting The Rosary Trust. Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents – you can ask Mrs Roche, the Head Teacher if you would like to see a copy of the minutes.

### **Review of Value for Money**

The Governing Body has improved value for money during the year by continuously reviewing, challenging and improving the use of resources and services to enable us to provide the best educational outcomes for our pupils. This has included reviewing the schools staffing structure, service level agreements and the school's improvement priorities.

### **The Risk and Control Framework**

The School's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability, where appropriate.

In particular, it includes:

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body
- Regular reviews by the Premises, Health & Safety & Finance Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecast and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase of capital investment) guidelines
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties
- Identification and management of risks
- Capacity to handle risk

The Governing Body regularly reviews the key risks to which the school is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

### **Review of effectiveness**

The Governing Body has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the systems in place in the school to identify and manage risk and plan to address any weaknesses (if relevant) and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

### **How to contact the Governing Body**

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers and the wider school community – please contact the Chair of Governors, Linda McSweeney, via the school office.

This Governance Statement is approved by the order of the members of the Governing Body  
on \_\_\_\_\_ and signed on its behalf by:

**Linda McSweeney**  
**Chair of Governors**

**Lesley Roche**  
**Head Teacher**

## Appendix 1

### Composition of the Governing Body

	<b>Governor</b>	<b>Committee Membership</b>	<b>Link Governor/additional roles</b>	<b>Service expiry date</b>
<b>Foundation</b>	Abbot Hugh Allan	Admissions	HT Performance Management RSE	30/04/2022
	Linda McSweeney (C)	Admissions Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	Safeguarding HT performance Management Long Term Planning & Strategy Pay Committee Staff Discipline - Dismissal	31/12/2023
	Tom Reilly (VC)	Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	HT performance Management Long Term Planning & Strategy Pay Committee Staff Discipline – Dismissal Training, policies & Compliance Governor Induction	12/02/2025
	Lesley Roche	Admissions Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	Long Term Planning & Strategy Staff Discipline – Dismissal Pupil Discipline	12/02/2025
	Neil Clark	Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	Long Term Planning & Strategy History & Geography, Health & Safety	24/06/2022
	Mark Catchpole	Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel	Staff Discipline – Dismissal	08/09/2024
	Richard Jowers	Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	Science	31/08/2023
	Catherine Shuttlewood	Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel	Long Term Planning & Strategy English SEND	25/06/2022
	<b>Staff</b>	Meghan Baker	Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel	
<b>Support Staff</b>	Bernie Zielinski	Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel		02/10/2023
<b>Parent</b>	Meela Williams	Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel		26/02/2024
<b>Observer</b>	Barry Owens	Curriculum & Pupil Related & Personnel Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	Long Term Planning & Strategy Pupil Discipline Staff Discipline – Dismissal IT	
<b>Observer Advisor</b>	Ursula Reilly	Premises, Health & Safety & Finance	HT performance Management Budget & Finance GDPR	
<b>Clerk</b>	Jenny Connolly			

## Appendix 2

### Governors' Attendance at Meetings 2020/21

Full Governing Body Meetings						
Governor	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Attended		Possible
Linda McSweeney	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Abbot Hugh Allan	✓	✓	✗	2	OUT OF	3
Lesley Roche	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Meghan Baker	N/A	✓	✓	2	OUT OF	2
Philip Booth	✓	✓	✗	2	OUT OF	3
Neil Clark	✓	✓	✗	2	OUT OF	3
Emma Costello	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Richard Jowers	✓	✓	✗	2	OUT OF	3
Tom Reilly	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Catherine Shuttlewood	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Meela Williams	✗	✗	✓	1	OUT OF	3
Philip Wilson	✓	N/A	N/A	1	OUT OF	1
Bernie Zielinski	✗	✓	✓	2	OUT OF	3
<b>In Attendance</b>						
Barry Owens	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Ursula Reilly	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3

Premises, Health & Safety & Finance Committee Meetings						
Governor	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Attended		Possible
Linda McSweeney	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Neil Clark	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Lesley Roche	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Philip Booth	✗	✓	✓	2	OUT OF	3
Emma Costello	✓	✗	✗	1	OUT OF	3
Richard Jowers	✗	✓	✓	2	OUT OF	3
Tom Reilly	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Philip Wilson	✗	N/A	N/A	0	OUT OF	1
<b>In Attendance</b>						
Barry Owens	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Ursula Reilly	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3



**Curriculum, Pupil & Personnel Related Committee Meetings**

<b>Governor</b>	<b>Autumn</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Attended</b>		<b>Possible</b>
Linda McSweeney	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Catherine Shuttlewood	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Lesley Roche	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
Meghan Baker	N/A	✓	✓	2	OUT OF	2
Meela Williams	x	x	✓	1	OUT OF	3
Philip Wilson	✓	N/A	N/A	1	OUT OF	1
Bernie Zielinski	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3
<b>In Attendance</b>						
Barry Owens	✓	✓	✓	3	OUT OF	3