

# Diocese of Leeds

Vicariate for Education 

## Governors Handbook for Schools

September 2017



Dear Governor,

Our Catholic schools are provided to assist Catholic parents in their duty of educating their children. Governors of our schools, and in particular foundation governors, have a responsibility to ensure that, at all times, the school is conducted in accordance with the Diocesan Trust Deed and serves as a witness to Jesus Christ in every aspect of its work.

The purpose of this handbook is to assist you in the important and valuable work you undertake in governing our schools. The information has been gathered together with the aim of raising awareness, explaining some of the requirements placed upon you in law and identifying the steps you need to consider when making decisions about the future development of the school.

The handbook provides a framework rooted in Catholic principles to offer support and guidance as you seek to embrace your responsibilities for the benefit of the pupils and staff in your care. The handbook is designed to be used by all governors and to offer guidance in the key areas of responsibility for Governing Bodies. In addition the Vicariate for Education will always seek to offer specific advice whenever required.

I am most grateful to you for your commitment to this important task. Please be assured not only of my gratitude but also my support and prayers.

Sincerely and with a blessing,

Canon Timothy Swinglehurst  
Episcopal Vicar for Education

## **Vicariate For Education**

**Address:** Hinsley Hall,  
62, Headingley Lane,  
Leeds,  
LS6 2BX

Telephone: 0113 2618034  
Fax: 0113 2618035  
Email: [evangelisation.admin@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:evangelisation.admin@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)  
Website: [www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education](http://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education)

### **Contacts:**

Episcopal Vicar for Education: Canon Timothy Swinglehurst  
[timothy.swinglehurst@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:timothy.swinglehurst@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Director for Education: Angela Cox  
[angela.cox@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:angela.cox@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Deputy Directors for Education: Caroline Hyde  
[caroline.hyde@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:caroline.hyde@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Julie Noble  
[julie.noble@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:julie.noble@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Co-ordinator for Religious Education: Christopher Devanny  
[chris.devanny@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:chris.devanny@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Admissions and Governance Officer: Angela Wicken  
[angela.wicken@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:angela.wicken@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Youth Co-ordinator: Jessica Wilkinson  
[Jessica.wilkinson@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:Jessica.wilkinson@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Youth Officer: Jade Broadley  
[Jade.broadley@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:Jade.broadley@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Administrative Assistant: Emma Nicholson  
[evangelisation.admin@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:evangelisation.admin@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Catholic schools are an important part of the church's mission in the world. Governors have a crucial role in the delivery of that mission. This handbook aims to support all governors of Catholic academies in the Diocese of Leeds by offering guidance and advice on the structures, responsibilities and relationships they will encounter in their work.

**In particular, the handbook emphasises the special responsibilities of foundation governors, appointed by the Bishop as his representative to preserve and develop the Catholic character of our schools.**

The handbook does not pretend to be comprehensive, but rather to identify the most important and challenging issues governors will face. For some subjects, the handbook will act as a signpost to further and deeper research and assistance in what is an increasingly complex area. Government guidance for governors in general is also available and this handbook is intended to put such guidance in the particular context of Catholic schools. It also should support governors' on-going development, the need to attend specific training for governors within Catholic schools and the need to keep up to date within the continually changing educational environment.

### **Governors Prayer**

**God our Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing and support as we seek to serve you.**

**Through your spirit give us wisdom and understanding as we go about our work as school governors.**

**Help us to affirm and appreciate the staff, pupils and parents of our schools.  
May everything that happens in our school bring honour and glory to your name  
and promote the growth of your Kingdom.**

**We ask these things in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen**

## 2. CATHOLIC EDUCATION

### 2.1 The Catholic Church and education

The Church has always had a profound commitment to education and Catholic schools are a major component of the education system in England and Wales. As society has changed, so have Catholic schools changed to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people.

Whilst Catholic schools appear on the surface to be like any other in the variety of activities that make up their life, there is one essential difference: Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school and the gospels and the sacraments provide it with its inspiration and strength.

### 2.2 Why do we have Catholic schools?

The four main reasons below are taken from the document *Christ at the Centre*<sup>1</sup> prepared by Rev. Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds when Director of Schools for the Archdiocese of Birmingham. We are most grateful to him for his permission to use the extract in the preparation of this handbook.

#### 2.2.1 Catholic schools assist the Church's mission

The church provides Catholic schools to assist in its mission of making Christ known to all people. Jesus Christ is 'the way, the truth and the life'. Those who profess this faith believe that in Christ the truth about God and the truth about us as human persons is revealed. The unfolding of this truth constitutes the Church's teaching. The acceptance of this truth brings true freedom and the fullness of life. Proclaiming this truth, this Gospel, by making Christ known to all peoples, constitutes the mission of the Church.

The first key reason why Catholic schools are established, then, is to be part of the Church's mission, to place Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church at the centre of people's lives. This is done diversely through the Catholic school's interaction with the local Church, families, societies and the culture they serve.

Putting Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre of the educational enterprise is the key purpose of Catholic schools. By doing this, the Church seeks to root our spiritual development, our learning and teaching, the formation of culture and our society, in Him.

The Church has, in a special way, the duty and the right of educating, for it has a divine mission of helping all to arrive at the fullness of Christian life. The fullness of life is to be found when Christ is at the centre of our lives. By placing Christ at the centre of all that they are and do, Catholic schools have the potential to promote the 'fullness of Christian life' through an educational philosophy in which faith, culture and life are brought into harmony.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Christ at the Centre: Why the Church provides Catholic Schools' - 2012 CTS publications

This means that the Church provides Catholic schools to be more than just places where pupils are equipped with learning and skills for the workplace and responsible citizenship. Rather, they are to be the communities where the spiritual, cultural and personal worlds within which we live are harmonised to form the roots from which grow our values, motivation, aspirations and the moral imperatives that inform our choices and actions as persons.

### **2.2.2 Catholic schools provide assistance to parents**

Parents are the primary educators of their children. Schools assist them in the education and religious formation of their children.

Schools, although they may have different structures and modes of operation, are to be found within nearly every society throughout the world. The establishment of Catholic schools within these different societies and cultures is considered by the Church to be a privileged means of promoting the formation of the whole person, since the school is the centre in which a specific concept of the world, of the human person, and of history is developed and conveyed.

In this context the Church teaches that among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools to be of great importance, since they are the principal means of helping parents fulfil their role in education.

Thus, the second key reason why the Church provides Catholic schools is to assist parents in the religious formation of their children. The special character of the Catholic school, the underlying reason for it, the reason why Catholic parents should prefer it, is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated into the education of the pupils.

### **2.2.3 Catholic schools serve the diocese, parish and home**

The partnership between the home, the parish and the Catholic school integrates these components of Catholic education. The parish community is a place for religious and spiritual education. School is a place for cultural education. These two dimensions must be integrated, because the same values inspire them: they are the values of Christian families who, in a society dominated by relativism and threatened by existential emptiness, intend to offer their children an education based on the unchangeable values of the Gospel.

Consequently, the fundamental partnership that should be developed and fostered is that between the school and the bishop/diocese. This partnership provides the source of a school's ecclesial foundation – its mission and communion within the Catholic Church. This fundamental partnership will, in turn, form the secure basis for the school's mission and communion with the parish and home.

Being at the service of the local Church and fostering communion within the local Church is then the third reason why Catholic schools are provided.

#### **2.2.4 Catholic schools provide a service to society**

The fourth key reason why the Catholic Church provides schools is to contribute to the creation of a society that is highly educated, skilled and cultured. For this reason the Church emphasises the contribution that Catholic schools make to the common good of society and its culture.

Although Catholic schools are provided first and foremost for baptised Catholic children, they are also very much a public good whose benefits enhance the whole community.

Catholic schools are established to facilitate the right of Catholic parents to choose a Catholic education for their child. In this sense, Catholic schools, like State schools, fulfil a public role, for their presence guarantees cultural and educational pluralism and, above all, the freedom and right of families to see that their children receive the sort of education they wish for them. This is a significant factor in contributing to social cohesion where the rights of parents are respected and educational diversity is maintained and valued.

Ethnic and racial diversity is, and always has been, a feature of the Catholic Church's trans-national identity and membership. Such diversity has found unity in common religious faith. It is shared core values, which are rooted in religious faith, that contribute to authentic social cohesion.

In a multi-faith society, shared core values that promote respect for the rights and dignity of every human person are essential for social cohesion. Thus, in Catholic schools, teaching of religion must help pupils arrive at a personal position in religious matters that is consistent and respectful of the positions of others, so contributing to their growth and to a more complete understanding of reality.

*(Christ at the Centre – Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds)*

### **2.3 Distinctive characteristics and values of Catholic schools**

In *Christ at the Centre*, Bishop Marcus provides answers to questions about the fundamental characteristics of Catholic schools, how they are distinctive and, most importantly, describes the often quoted 'Gospel Values', how they might be made manifest in our schools, and what should be the pupils' experience of a Catholic school's ethos that is derived from them. In practice, our schools should provide:

- A systematic catechesis of Catholic teaching.
- An ecclesial and cultural community.
- A rich liturgical provision.
- Good inter-personal relationships between pupils and staff.
- A concern for justice.
- A model for moral and ethical behaviour.
- Fostering for the talents of the whole school community, staff and pupils.
- A service of love, caring and serving those who have particular needs, both within the school's immediate community and those who are outside it.

As a response to 'Christ at the Centre' then Mgr. Marcus Stock was asked to lead a training day for all governors and staff to reflect upon the Catholicity of our schools. The result of their discussion were incorporated into 'Schools for Discipleship' which provides a clear and simple statement about putting Christ at the Centre of our Catholic schools.

### **2.3.1 Catholic Schools have Christ at their heart**

We believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God and is capable of knowing and loving their Creator. Each human being is precious to God and has a value and dignity that no one can take away.

We believe that God chose to reveal himself to us as our Heavenly Father by sending Jesus, his Son, into the world. As the revelation and image of the invisible God, Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God to be among us and gathered the first apostles and disciples together into one body, the Church. Christ is the Teacher above all others. In following him we enter his school of discipleship and so learn the truth that sets us free.

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the life-giving breath of God, was poured out at Pentecost to animate the newly born Church. Filled with the Spirit, the first Christians became witnesses to the Gospel message that God loves us and wants us, in Jesus, to live life in all its fullness.

God in Christ is present in us today through the Holy Spirit. As members of Christ's body we share one faith and are united in prayer and the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. We seek to live as authentic witnesses to the person and teaching of Jesus, making Christ present not merely by what we say, but also through what we do and are seen to do.

Christ is the foundation and model for the whole of the Church's life, and not least the mission and ministry of education. His way, truth and life are ours and he is the source of everything Catholic schools are about. Christ is at the heart of the Church on which our schools are built and he is at the centre of all they try to achieve.

Our schools are therefore places where everyone is valued as a child of God, where every individual is enabled to mature towards their full growth in Christ and achieve their rightful potential. It is the Spirit of Christ who brings life to Catholic schools: giving strength and hope; promoting harmony and enabling reconciliation; ensuring that, with enthusiasm and celebration, the things of God always take first place.

### **2.3.2 Catholic Schools are distinctive**

On the foundation of our Catholic faith we are able to establish a shared vision for our schools. This flows from the Bishop's responsibility as the chief shepherd and teacher in the diocese and is facilitated through his appointed representatives. Our spiritual union with the Bishop maintains our communion in the Catholic faith and links us to the Catholic Church as a whole. This is why it is necessary that senior leaders and foundation governors in Catholic schools are practising Catholics. They will be supported by well qualified staff who, with a firm grounding in doctrine and faith, will have the confidence, courage and conviction to engage with the Church's mission of evangelisation in the context of today's world.

Our vision for Catholic education is articulated through each school's mission statement and is clearly reflected in its policies, development plans and practice which uphold Catholic teaching on faith and morality. The school community will be anchored in the principles which flow from the Gospel by which we live.

The school, through its clear and visual Catholic identity, will be, for many people the place where Christ and his Church are encountered. As such, Catholic schools are evangelising communities. At its most basic, evangelisation seeks to proclaim that Jesus Christ reveals God's love and invites us to a personal relationship with him. Preaching the gospel in today's increasingly secularised world is both essential and counter cultural.

### **2.3.3 Catholic schools have a liturgical, sacramental and spiritual life**

As a community of faith, every Catholic school is also a worshipping community. The Eucharist is the Church's central act of worship and is the nucleus of the school's life of faith. It is from this Eucharistic centre that all other prayer and worship flows. Classroom prayer, year and whole school liturgies and assemblies are key to the distinctive spiritual identity of Catholic schools. This is supported visually by imagery which speaks clearly of Christ and his Gospel and is enhanced, where possible, by the use of local churches, school chapels and other places within the school and diocese designated for prayer and worship.

The liturgical year is the basis for the school's spiritual life and gives shape and rhythm to the academic calendar. Alongside the Eucharist, the liturgical seasons provide the opportunity to understand and reflect upon the major themes of Christian faith. Spiritual formation and the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, together with comprehensive programmes of retreats for pupils and staff, are integral aspects of the school year. Chaplaincy is vitally important in this regard and its profile and resourcing is a priority for Catholic schools.

The liturgical, sacramental and spiritual life of a Catholic school will be enlivened by effective liaison between home, school and parish. Appropriate co-operation in sacramental preparation and the inclusion of families and the wider community in school worship are important elements in this regard. While recognising that within a Catholic school there will be people at different stages in their journey of faith, the school's liturgical, sacramental and spiritual life will be solidly rooted in the living tradition of Catholic worship and prayer.

### **2.3.4 Catholic schools are centres of excellence for Religious Education and the wider curriculum**

In a Catholic school the entire curriculum is underpinned by, and expresses, Catholic beliefs and values. It is vital that an understanding and knowledge of the Catholic faith permeates all aspects of school life. This will ensure an appreciation of, and respect for, other religious traditions. Officers of the diocese will assist the delivery of a rich and vibrant curriculum where links to Catholicism are made across subject areas.

Religious Education is a core subject in Catholic schools as demonstrated by the priority given to it within the school timetable. Promoting excellence in the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is of paramount importance.

### **2.3.5 Catholic schools are collaborative**

Catholic schools actively promote strong and positive links with the wider community, involving the diocese, deaneries, parishes, local authorities, families and other schools. Given that parents, or those who act in their place, are the primary educators of their children, links between the home, the school, and the parish are especially significant. Good communication is fostered so that all relationships in the school community and beyond are based on mutual respect and honesty.

Working in partnerships and local clusters which benefit the schools is encouraged and facilitates an outward looking school. Faith is put into practice through charitable works and loving service towards others. The school's Catholic identity requires that it fulfils the Gospel imperative to see and seek Christ in others.

### **2.3.6 Catholic schools are essential**

Catholic schools are central to local faith communities. They actively promote social cohesion, engendering a sense of belonging for all, through the articulation of a common vision. The diversity and uniqueness of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and all children are given opportunities to succeed. High moral and academic expectations are the result of purposeful leadership and governance and good practice is shared within the school and wider community.

Where standards in a school are causing concern, the school's Catholicity is at risk. This is because the promotion of excellent education for the children in our care is a tangible indication of the value we place on realising each child's gifts and talents. The challenge is therefore to ensure that leadership, teaching and learning, at all levels, is effective so that every school is a centre of excellence making a positive contribution to the local, national and global community.

Catholic schools are places where every child matters and where safety, well-being, enjoyment, tolerance, respect and dignity are reflected in all aspects of school life. Pupils are cherished for who they are, as much as for what they achieve, and all achievement is recognised and celebrated.

## 2.4 Catholic schools within the Diocese of Leeds

All schools established by the Diocese of Leeds accept the underlying philosophy summarised in paragraph 2.1 of this handbook. This is confirmed by the terms of the Instrument of Government for each school and the Diocesan Trust Deed.

### Instrument of Government

The Education Act 2002 places a statutory duty on the governors to comply with the Instrument of Government and the Trust Deed. The Instrument of Government, has at its head the schools ethos statement. It reads:

*The school was founded by, and is part of, the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and in particular in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Leeds and in particular –*

- (a) religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;*
- (b) religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;*

*and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to make that a reality within the community and for the governors to monitor how effectively it is done.

### The Diocesan Trust Deed (Dated 26<sup>th</sup> November 1937)

All the activities of the diocese are regulated by the provisions of the Diocesan Trust Deed. While there are thirty clauses in it, only two of them relate specifically to education and schools.

#### **Clause 10 – Educational Fund**

*‘The Trustees shall apply the whole or any part of the Diocesan income...in or towards the educational maintenance or benefit of Roman Catholic students or the erection, enlargement, improvement, repair or support of any Roman Catholic colleges and schools in the Diocese, as the Trustees shall, with the consent in writing from the Bishop, from time to time determine’.*

### **Clause 3 – Trust for Schools**

*The Trust ‘...may be used for schools in connection with the Roman Catholic Church in the said Diocese as the Trustees...think necessary or desirable or for such other religious educational or charitable purposes in the Diocese as they, with the consent in writing of the Bishop, shall think fit...provided that the religious doctrines and practices to be taught and observed...shall in all respects be according to the principles of, and subject to, the regulations and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church as interpreted by the Bishop.’*

*‘The Trustees may also revoke appointment of managers so that they shall be and remain Roman Catholics.*

*The Trustees shall have full power to pull down, alter, enlarge and rebuild any school or schools...’*

These clauses outline the background of the role of the Bishop and Diocese in our schools and they make it clear that **educational provision within the diocese is under the control of the Bishop and that foundation governors have the responsibility to act as his representatives.**

This is the foundation of the Bishop’s Education Policy and in particular the status of the Catholic character of our schools, which is supported by Canon and Civil Law.

## **2.5 School status and the Catholic character**

Schools provided by the diocese either have Voluntary Aided (VA) status or operate as Academies as part of a Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT). They act as an arm of the Church in its mission under the control of the bishop.

Under the provisions of the Education Acts of 1998 and 2002, only schools which have VA status are able to guarantee their Catholic character to parents. This is because:

- Only foundation governors have the statutory legal duty of –
  - securing the (particular) religious character is preserved
  - securing the school is conducted in accordance with the Diocesan Trust Deed
- Only VA schools have an absolute majority of foundation governors. Without such a majority, parents in the local community cannot be guaranteed that our existing Catholic schools will remain Catholic in the future
- VA schools are able to control which Religious Education (RE) syllabus is taught and the number of periods that it is allocated on the timetable – these are special legal rights that are available only to VA schools with a religious character

VA schools are able to guarantee that sufficient appropriate Catholic staff are appointed. This is because:

- The governors can preference the appointment of Catholic Teachers.

- Executive Headteachers, Headteachers, Heads of School, Deputy Headteachers and Heads of RE and lay chaplains must be Catholic.

## 2.6 Catholic Education: Extracts from Canon Law (Can 793-806)

Appendix 1 outlines the articles of Canon Law that relate to the responsibilities and rights of parents, schools and governors with regards to education.

***“Education must pay regard to the formation of the whole person, so that all may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society. Children and young persons are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in a harmonious manner, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life.”*** Canon 795

In essence:

- Parents should seek a Catholic education for their children as provided by the Bishop.
- Catholic schools can only be such if designated by the Bishop and this is outlined in their instrument of governance.
- The governance of Catholic schools is always under the control of the Bishop and foundation governors should always act as his appointees.
- The teaching of RE, appointment of RE teachers and the RE syllabus is in line with the Bishop’s educational policy.
- The Bishop can issue directives to schools.
- All teaching in Catholic schools should strive for excellence and be at least as good as other schools in that area.

### **3.0 THE DIOCESE OF LEEDS – VICARIATE FOR EDUCATION**

The Diocesan Board of Trustees, led by the Bishop, is responsible for Catholic schools within the diocese.

The Vicariate for Education is an established department staffed by qualified and experienced professional officers to deliver Diocesan and CES policies in relation to the schools within the diocese. A termly newsletter is sent to schools advising on issues and actions needed as well as giving details of events and celebrations. An annual training programme of CPD is also published for schools and Governors.

The Vicariate for Education works with Department for Education, Regional Schools Commissioners, the Catholic Education Service (CES) and Local Authorities to provide Catholic schools within the diocese and ensure their long-term future. In order to fulfil this task, it gives advice and support on:

#### **Catholic school ethos:**

- Gives documentary and individual support to headteachers, clergy and governors in all matters relating to the Catholic dimension of the school.
- Gives advice and help to headteachers and governing bodies in relation to press statements and press releases affecting Catholic schools.

#### **Catholic school leadership:**

- Gives training and advice on the Catholic leadership of schools.
- Provides advice on Succession Planning for Leadership roles within our schools.
- Involved in the Recruitment and selection Process for Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Lay Chaplain and Head of RE appointments.
- Seeks to promote, in partnership with schools and other diocesan agencies, an adequate supply of candidates for senior management posts in schools.

#### **Legal and canonical issues:**

- Liaises where appropriate with headteachers to develop agreed model guidance and policy documentation.
- Consults with the Catholic Education Service (CES) and the local authority and gives advice and assistance in relation to personnel issues, competency, grievance and disciplinary procedures and associated legal issues.
- advice on policy matters in relation to child protection.
- Supports the bishop and trustees in the fulfilment of canonical requirements relating to Catholic schools.

#### **School governance:**

- On behalf of the bishop, manages the appointment of foundation governors.
- Provides on-going support, training and advice for Governing Bodies.

**Admissions**

- Is responsible for the planning of school place provision across the whole diocese
- Produces and updates model admission policies for all schools and academies in line with legal changes and government advice
- Provides training and support for the admission process
- Agrees pupil admission numbers and negotiates school place provision with Local Authorities.

**Buildings**

- Works with Diocesan Property Department to prioritise school building projects in line with increasing/decreasing pupil numbers.

**Statutory Inspection**

- Inspection of schools RE provision and Catholic Life including drafting of Diocesan protocols in line with national agreements
- Training of s48 Inspectors
- Liaison with Ofsted and RSCs and working with Local Authorities to review school standards data.

**Central and local government policies and initiatives:**

- Seeks to ensure a sufficiency of places for Catholic children, in liaison with the Department for Education (DFE) and local authorities.
- Represents the interests of the diocese and its schools by professional liaison with the eight local authorities.
- Receives, monitors, consults and responds to DFE initiatives in collaboration with the CES on behalf of the bishop and diocesan schools.

**Schools in difficulty:**

- Represents diocesan interests to OFSTED, RSC and LA
- Supports staff and governors in ensuring appropriate interventions to facilitate high quality Catholic education

## **4.0 Governance in VA Schools**

### **4.1 Governance in Catholic Schools**

The Governing Body is a corporate entity and acts as a group. Each member has a right to participate in all aspects of school governance. Although governors are appointed or elected by different groups, they are not delegates and their central concern must be the welfare of the school as a whole. However, foundation governors have specific responsibilities to the diocesan trustees.

In order to undertake strategic oversight and scrutiny, the Governing Body usually establish committees. These are smaller groups where governors work with staff to consider specific areas of their responsibilities. These usually include:

- Resources (Personnel, Finance, Health & Safety, Premises)
- Standards/ School Improvement
- Catholic Life and Pastoral
- Admissions

### **4.2 Types of Governor**

All governing bodies always have an absolute majority of Foundation Governors. Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop.

#### ***Foundation***

Being called to serve and appointed by the Bishop in a specific ministry to the Diocese, foundation governors have an absolute duty to preserve and develop the Catholic ethos and distinctive Catholic nature of the school. They have a duty to:

- Comply with guidance and directions of the Bishop and the Vicariate for Education.
- Seek whenever possible to appoint Catholic teachers who combine personal conviction and practice of the Catholic faith with the qualities and experience required for particular posts.
- Ensure that the school curriculum is rooted in the gospel.
- Ensure that the religious and liturgical life of the school conforms to diocesan guidelines.
- Take account, in addition to the interest of their own school, the interests of other Catholic schools and the interest of Catholic education generally throughout the diocese.

#### ***Parent***

Parent governors are appointed to both the governing body by an election of parents of that school.

## **Staff**

Staff governors in school are elected by the staff in that school.

The Head teacher is a member of the GB

### **4.3 Governor's Role and Responsibilities**

Governors have the responsibility, as a member of the Governing Body for the conduct of the school(s);

- Ensuring that the school is run according to the Diocesan Trust Deed and the school's instrument of government.
- Confirming that its Catholic character is preserved and developed.
- Ensuring that the school constantly bears witness to the faith in every aspect of its life.
- Striving to ensure that every pupil has excellent Catholic education that allows them to develop spiritually, morally, physically and intellectually.
- Promoting high standards of educational achievement.

The role of the governors, is to provide strategic direction for all of the schools and the wider Trust;

- Setting its aims and objectives.
- Establishing policies and targets to achieve them.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the progress of the school(s).

Governors, as members of the Governing Body of a VA school, are the employers of the staff with the legal and ethical responsibilities of good employers. They are also the legal Admissions Authority.

The role of governors at school level is to ensure that pupil, staff and parent voice are reflected in the school's development and progress.

In accepting an appointment, a governor takes on a serious responsibility and should make available adequate time and energy to discharge their duties.

- To attend meetings (including committees).
- To consider documents.
- To undertake governor training.
- To visit the school.

To facilitate excellent governance, governors are expected to work with the Vicariate for Education and undertake regular training to support this. Additional training and support can be provided by Teaching schools, local authorities, National Association of Governors (NGA) and other similar groups to ensure that their corporate skill base is comprehensive and up to date.

#### **4.4 Governors' Personal Qualities**

Governors are appointed in order to ensure effective governance. They need to be the right people with appropriate skills, experience, qualities and capacity. They need to be able to:

- Provide strategic leadership
  - A clear vision within the school underpinned by the ethos
  - Seek to provide the best Catholic education for every child
  - Willingness to challenge and initiate change
  - Support for operational leaders
  - Look to safeguarding the future provision of Catholic education
- Implement and develop efficient and effective governance processes
- Ensure compliance with the legal requirements of
  - Diocese and CES
  - DfE and wider government legislation
  - Civil Law
  - Canon Law

##### **General**

Governance in schools, as in wider society, should reflect the qualities known as the 'Nolan Principles' for conduct in public life

##### **Selflessness**

Act in the best interests of the Governing Body to which they have been appointed. In the case of Foundation Governors they must always act in the interests of Catholic education within the wider Diocese and be mindful at all times that they are the Bishop's appointee.

##### **Integrity**

Act in the interest of the Governing Body to which they have been appointed, and not for their own benefit or that of family or friends. They must avoid any conduct which might bring discredit to their office as governor, or the Trust or school to which they have been appointed. They have a duty to declare any interests which might conflict with their role. They must comply with all guidance from Government, CES and the Diocese around managing any such conflicts.

##### **Objectivity**

Act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

##### **Accountability**

Governors have a duty to comply with the law relating to their decisions, and must act in such a way as to preserve the confidence of the community served by the school to which they have been appointed. They are accountable for their decisions, and must submit to scrutiny and evaluation appropriate to their role.

### **Openness**

Governors should take all decisions in a transparent manner, giving reasons wherever appropriate. Governors should also be aware that any confidential information, including personal data, is treated with great care and in compliance with Data Protection and safeguarding legislation.

### **Honesty**

Governors should at all times be truthful.

### **Leadership**

Exhibit these principles and the principles of Catholic Education in their own behaviour. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the difference between governance and management, and respect the role of Head Teachers and senior executives.

All Governors are required to sign and adhere to the Leeds 'Diocesan Code of Conduct' which is based on CES model policy. The template should be downloaded from the CES website.

## **4.5 Specific responsibilities of Foundation Governors**

Foundation governors offer their services and are called to serve in a specific ministry. Individually and collectively, they are commissioned with the responsibility of assisting the Bishop by sustaining and developing the Catholic ethos and distinctive Catholic nature of the school which they serve, and to ensure that the school is at all times conducted in accord with the provisions of the Diocesan Trust Deed and any determinations made by the Bishop and his trustees.

Foundation governors must:

- give clear witness, as individuals and as a team, to the teachings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and assume responsibility for governing the school according to canon law, the catechism, and the teachings of the Catholic Church in general and diocesan norms in particular;
- comply with any written guidance published by the Bishop or his delegate through the Vicariate for education;
- seek to appoint Catholic teachers who combine personal conviction and practice of the faith with the qualities and experience required by particular posts;
- represent the Bishop, or his delegate, on the Governing Body, with particular reference to the Catholic ethos of the school, by ensuring that the whole curriculum of the school is rooted in an understanding of life in conformity with the teaching of the gospel and the Catholic Church. To achieve this, they must ensure that the general religious and liturgical life of the school conforms to diocesan guidelines;
- take particular care that the school follows a programme of religious and moral education approved by the diocese;
- consider not only the interests of the school in which they serve as foundation governors but to comply with diocesan policy and the interests of other Catholic schools and the interests of Catholic education throughout the diocese.

Clearly, to be eligible for appointment to such a role, candidates must be practising and committed Catholics and, since holding the office of foundation governor is a form of service or ministry in the Church, they have to confirm that they are eligible and willing to serve in accordance with the commission from the Bishop. The appointment and removal of foundation governors serving at Trusts and schools within his jurisdiction is entirely at the discretion of the Bishop of Leeds, or his delegate.

#### **4.6 Governance Skills and Competencies**

Recent guidance from the DfE suggests the following skills to be necessary for good governance. They are described below in terms of governance within Catholic Schools.

- Committed- Fully committed to Catholic education and ambitious to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people. Prepared to give time, share skills and knowledge and develop themselves and all members of the team.
- Confident- Of an independent mind, able to express opinion and to actively participate in all aspects of governance. Not to be afraid of approaching challenging conversations.
- Curious- Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach. Understanding the value of meaningful questioning.
- Challenging- Providing appropriate challenge to the status quo, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement.
- Collaborative- Prepared to listen and work in partnership with others. Understand the importance of building strong working relationships across the Trust with all schools, leaders, parents, pupils, parishes, the Diocese and the wider community.
- Critical- Understand the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support. Be self-reflective and have a desire for self and team development.
- Creative- Able to challenge and recognise the value of innovation and creative thinking in order to deliver school mission and ethos.

#### **4.7 Tasks for the governors**

The Governing Body have a largely strategic role in the following areas:

- 1 Strategic view – setting aims and objectives for the Trust school. Being aware of and responding to stakeholder views.
- 2 School improvement – establishing policies and targets designed to achieve those objectives.
- 3 School standards, pupil performance and pupil progress – monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the progress of the school.
- 4 Resources- ensuring there is best value for money and effective use of all resources.

- 5 Safeguarding – to ensure a safe environment for pupils and staff and that appropriate advice and action is taken for keeping children safe and child protection.
- 6 ‘Critical friend’ – offering challenge and support to school leaders
- 7 Governance review and audit- regular review of governance effectiveness, training needs and future planning.

#### **4.7.1 Strategic view**

The governors’ strategic view can be thought of as the broad vision that lies behind the school’s mission statement, coupled to the means by which the mission is to be achieved through the improvement plan. To develop their strategy, the Governing Body in consultation with the head teachers, will need to develop and establish policies that will ensure that each school’s religious character is preserved and developed, that they are consistent with Diocesan guidance, and will promote high standards of educational achievement.

At all times governors need to remember to maintain a strategic view and approach, remembering that operational issues are for the staff under the leadership of the Head Teachers.

In developing their strategy governors must be mindful that the school was founded by, and is part of the Catholic Church. Governors must establish policies that ensure it is conducted in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. This means, in particular, that religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church, and that religious worship is also to be in accordance with the rites, practices and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church. It is also paramount that policies should be established to ensure that every-day values, attitudes and practices across the Trust and within its schools must be a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **4.7.2 School Improvement**

The most effective way governors can ensure that they are fulfilling their role and that the school improvement plan reflect this, is by asking questions and fully understanding the documents they are approving.

Possible questions relating to school improvement:

- Does it clearly reflect the priorities of a Catholic school in the Diocese of Leeds?
- Does it identify priorities and targets for–
  - the maintenance and development of the Catholic character of the school?
  - the religious knowledge and understanding of the pupils?
  - School improvement and pupil progress for all pupils?
- Does it identify who is responsible for carrying out tasks?
- Are the targets realistic and attainable
- How does the school perform against similar schools?
- Are there targets for performance and spiritual growth?
- How will we know if the targets have been achieved?
- Does it identify costs in time and money?
- Does it represent value for money and can we afford it?

- Do all our policies support the School Improvement Plan?

#### **4.7.3 School standards, pupil performance and pupil progress**

Expectations of schools are outlined in the inspection framework which is explained in detail in the next section of this handbook.

There is now an increased emphasis on self-evaluation which places greater responsibility on head teachers and governors to develop highly effective quality assurance systems. It is therefore invaluable for schools to work together collaboratively in their evaluation. Working with head teachers, governors need to focus on 'How well are we doing?' and 'How can we do better?' Those two questions should be applied to the work of the Governing Body.

Governors should recognise that in ensuring the provision of an excellent catholic education there is a responsibility that all pupils make progress in order to reach their potential. Whilst considering performance and progress data, governors should ensure they consider how this compares for disadvantaged groups within the cohort. There should be a particular emphasis on those pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Governors and headteachers need to be able to answer these questions in order to complete the Self-Evaluation Forms (SEF) required by OFSTED and the Diocese, which form part of the inspection framework. To do so effectively, governors need to monitor the activities and outcomes of their school(s) and be able to analyse and evaluate the information they collect in order to maintain continued progress and raise standards. In a VA school, school improvement support is the responsibility of the Local Authority. Governors should ensure that there is a good working relationship and adequate support from the LA school advisor.

There is no single perfect model for governors to monitor and evaluate what happens in a school. Possible mechanisms include:

- Regular reports to the Governing Body – by the headteacher.
- analysis of Section 5 and 48 OFSTED reports.
- School to school reviews and benchmarking
- analysis of termly data, end of key stage data and exam results.
- analysis of intake patterns.
- school visits by governors – observing and talking to staff and pupils.

#### **4.7.4 Resources - Best Value and Compliance**

The so called 'business functions' or 'back office' of schools as a whole can be overlooked by governors, but are in fact a key responsibility. The non-teaching functions allow the school to deliver its aims and objectives and need to be considered as an integral part of the delivery of the best possible education to all our pupils. The DfE have provided a useful document for governors entitled 'Schools Financial Health and Efficiency' which include guidance for governors. These cover both the role and top 10 planning checks.

Governors should re-visit these and other guidance regularly to ensure our schools offer the very best in all the resources we receive.

### **Policies and Procedures**

Establishing and updating school policies are the responsibility of governors, while the head teacher is responsible for implementing them. Making sure and understanding what policies are in place and should exist, and that these policies are effective in achieving what was intended, is a shared task which needs careful and systematic planning.

Governors need to know:

- The policies they are responsible for as Governors.
- These comply with guidance and legal requirements.
- They are effective
- They are appropriately implemented.

Governing Bodies are encouraged to adopt CES model policies where they exist in addition to some Local Authority policies that may be relevant.

Governors need to ensure they maintain a strategic view and do not confuse this with operational matters.

### **Best Value**

The governor's role is to continually consider whether all resources are being used in order to achieve best value and that financial planning, use of staff and buildings is supporting the strategic and development plans of the school.

### **Budgeting and financial management**

The financial year for schools runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April. The governors' financial planning cycle therefore follows this pattern.

Finance or resources committees will regularly monitor expenditure against the budget. Governors will assist Headteachers in planning the next year's budget so that it supports the School Development Plan, strategy and aims and ethos.

This is an area that governors' individual experience and wider view can be invaluable. The Governing Body should develop ways of both asking questions and looking at innovative ways of using resources and income generation. Network meetings across schools and Diocesan Governor Briefings are an excellent way to share these ideas.

#### **4.7.5 Safeguarding**

This is dealt with in more detail in Section 9

#### **4.7.6 Acting as a critical friend**

The 'critical friend of the Headteacher', has traditionally been used as a definition of the role of governors in schools. It remains an important part of governance, particularly so in Catholic schools. Where our faith is at the heart of all we do and each Head teacher is a

leader and role model of the faith within their school community. Governors should be able to support their Head teachers in this and all aspects of their role.

The critical friend approach should underpin all governor/staff interactions from formal meetings to informal conversations. Within a school the governors will need to be a critical friend to all senior leaders.

It is important to remember that being a critical friend involves critique rather than criticism and is always supportive, respectful and constructive, thereby allowing appropriate challenge when needed.

The separate functions of governance and leadership and management should not be confused. Governance is about setting the overall strategy and policies for the school, establishing objectives, monitoring progress, determining the budget and allocating resources, being accountable for school outcomes and taking responsibility. Leadership and management is about implementing strategy and policies, developing operational plans and deploying resources for the implementation of policies and seeing they are carried out effectively.

#### **4.7.7 Governance Review and Training**

In undertaking such an important role, all governors and foundation governors in particular must ensure they are properly trained and updated in all aspects of governance.

There is an added responsibility for Foundation Governors to attend regular training regarding their role as Governors within a Catholic school. All Governors on appointment will be expected to attend induction training provided by the Vicariate. There is an expectation that governors who are re appointed will update their skills by attending the induction training session which is regularly updated.

A range of training is provided by the Vicariate, details available via CPD Booklet which is produced annually and displayed on the website. Specialist governor training is also available from teaching schools, NGA, LA's and other educational establishments. Details when available are circulated to all governing bodies.

As well as considering the performance management and development of senior leaders within the schools, governors need to be mindful of their own performance and need for development.

Governing Bodies should develop a regular review of their performance and effectiveness and develop a plan for training needs and succession planning.

There are a number of tools to assist with this process including

- Governance audit (CES and DfE documents available)
- External review of governance
- Governor to governor review
- 360 degree review of Chair of governors.

An excellent starting place is the National Association of Governance (NGA) document “20 Questions – key questions every Governing Body should ask itself”<sup>2</sup>.

Training and support for governors through this process is available through a number of sources, including linking with other governing bodies via the Diocese and support from National Leaders of Governance (NLGs).

If Governing Bodies require an external review of governance or support please contact the Vicariate who will be able to assist in finding suitable individuals/organisations who understand the context of our schools.

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<sup>2</sup> '20 Questions- Key questions every governing body should ask itself' – 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2015  
[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

## 5.0 Inspection Framework

Catholic schools and Trusts are subject to statutory inspection by 2 formats:

1. Section 48 – Inspection of Catholic life of the school and RE, legal responsibility of the Diocese
2. Ofsted- Section 5, legal responsibility of the Government

### 5.1 Section 48

As Catholic schools have been designated as having Catholic character by their Instruments of Governance and Articles of Association, schools Catholic life, RE provision and collective worship are inspected by inspectors appointed by the Diocese every 5 years. This is called **section 48 Inspection** (from the Education Act 2005).

There are 3 main areas:

#### 1. OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

Judgements are made about:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school;
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education;
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

#### 2. PROVISION

Judgements are made about:

- The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education;
- The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning;
- The quality of Collective Worship.

#### 3. LEADERS AND MANAGERS

Judgements are made about:

- How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

A school will be inspected individually and governors will be invited to talk to the inspector and attend the feedback meeting. Outcomes are defined as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate.

All schools should have a clear development plan (as part of the school development plan), covering the 3 main areas inspected and how these will be improved and monitored. Governors input into this should be noted.

The Governing Body should normally have a designated governor(s) trained and involved in this area of school life. Many governing bodies have a Catholic Life/s48 committee to help develop this.

It is crucial that governors appreciate the vital role they play, and the responsibility they have to work with the head teacher and senior leaders and managers, to implement improvement to pupil outcomes through effective promotion, monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Education. It is equally important that the Governing Body evaluates its own effectiveness and takes steps to improve its performance.

Appendix 2 shows a detailed breakdown of the 'grade descriptors' pertinent to 'Leaders and Managers'. More information on what Section 48 inspectors evaluate and the outline guidance offered to inspectors and school leaders on these areas can be obtained from the diocesan website at:

[http://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education/section\\_48/documentation.php](http://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education/section_48/documentation.php)

## **5.2 Section 5 Inspections**

Standard school inspections of maintained schools and academies are carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Details of the inspection process and criteria are set out in Ofsted's *School Inspection Handbook* and *Inspecting safeguarding in early years education and skills from September 2015*. The School Inspection Handbook includes information about the timing of inspections, notification, engagement with governors and the criteria for looking at a board's effectiveness. If governance is assessed to be ineffective, inspectors will recommend an external review of governance.

When a school is notified of a section 5 inspection, the Governing Body must take reasonable steps to notify parents of registered pupils and other prescribed persons of the inspection. When it receives the report, they must arrange for:

- the parents of all pupils to be sent a copy of it within five working days;
- the report to be made available to any member of the public who wishes to see it, at such times and places as may be reasonable; and
- copies of the report to be provided to anyone who asks.

Local Governors will be interviewed by the Inspectors and invited to the feedback session. A representative of the Vicariate of Education will also attend. It is important that schools inform the Vicariate once they receive notification of an inspection.

The *School Inspection Handbook*, produced by Ofsted and available via their website and outlines the process in detail. Outcomes are defined as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate. The handbook also outlines the evaluation schedule and grade descriptors.

The main areas are:

- Overall effectiveness: quality and standards of education
- Effectiveness of leadership and management (this includes governance). The Inspectors will ask governors about safeguarding, pupil premium and achievement of SEND pupils. See Appendix 3.
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare
- Outcomes for pupils
- Effectiveness of Early Years provision, quality and standards (if appropriate)
- Effectiveness of 16-19 study programmes

## **6.0 Governors as the Employer**

### **6.1 Staffing Catholic schools – underlying principles**

Teachers in Catholic schools have the day-to-day responsibility, through the witness of their lives and what they teach, to create the community of faith into which parents entrust their children. The nature of that community will be influenced primarily by the headteacher but also by all other members of staff, teaching and non-teaching. Within that context, the general expectations, conduct, contractual responsibilities and distinctive occupational requirements for teachers employed by it are based on the following philosophy.

The task of a Catholic school is:

*'...fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life: the first is reached by integrating all different aspects of human knowledge through the subject taught, in the light of the Gospel; the second in the growth of the virtues characteristic of the Christian.'*

**The Catholic School (1977), para.37**

This broad philosophical stance reveals a concern for an education that combines sound knowledge and skills with an overall personal development rooted in the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Such an education involves a high level of interpersonal communication and relationship between staff and pupils.

### **6.2 General expectations of teachers in a Catholic school**

In order for the Catholic character and purpose of the school to be maintained and developed, all teachers in Catholic schools have an indispensable role to play. It is expected that they:

- Accept and support the Catholic ethos and foundation of the school as formulated in the mission statement, the Instrument of Government and the Trust Deed under which the school operates.
- Develop and maintain an adequate understanding of those aspects of Catholic teaching that touch upon their subject areas and other aspects of their work.
- By their teaching and other work, and by personal example, strive to help pupils to understand, accept and appreciate Catholic teaching and values.

- Avoid, whether by word, action or public lifestyle, influence upon pupils that is contrary to the teaching and values of the Catholic community in whose name they act.
- Be committed to regular ongoing professional development and spiritual formation.
- Be suitably qualified as required by the statutory legislation and the requirements of their job description.

### **6.3 Staffing issues in Catholic schools – framework of civil law**

The advertising, selecting and interviewing applicants for a position, or dealing with staff generally, including terminating their employment, account should be taken not only of the general expectations outlined above but also of statutory regulations and the provisions of civil law. Governing bodies should ensure they follow the adopted policies and procedures and seek advice from their HR advisor and the Diocese where appropriate.

For Catholic schools, the principal statutes that apply are the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, particularly Section 60 and the Education Act 2002, in particular the Regulations and Guidance published under Sections 36. They broadly confer the following rights:

*When employing teaching staff and determining their remuneration or promotion, the school may take into account candidates' religious opinions, affiliation, practice and their willingness to teach Religious Education.*

*Any conduct by a teacher that is incompatible with the precepts, or with upholding the tenets of the Catholic Church may be taken into account by the Governing Body in connection with possible termination of employment.*

Governors should always seek early advice of the Vicariate of Education when they believe they may be called upon to consider the conduct of a teacher which appears to be in conflict with the teachings of the Church.

### **6.4 Appointing the headteacher and other senior staff**

The headteacher, deputy head teacher and head of RE in a Catholic school must be Catholics in full communion and good standing with the Catholic Church. They will, in time, be the major influence on the ethos and character of the school. Since they cannot pass on to pupils religious values, attitudes and qualities they do not have themselves and, once appointed, are likely to be in a position of such influence for some years, it is vital that the right people are appointed.

Under canon law, the bishop has a responsibility to ensure that teachers who are appointed to Catholic schools are suitable, and that the education provided by them is based on Catholic doctrine. His representatives, the foundation governors, must take great care to ensure candidates' suitability in terms of their Catholic life and as

educational practitioners. In order to help them make such judgements, governors should require candidates to apply for posts using the CES application form. The Archdiocese of Birmingham has published a useful document 'Catholic Schools and the Definition of a Practising Catholic' to support governors. Every governing body should use this as a guide, with advice from the Vicariate of Education where needed.

The appointment of a head teacher and deputy head teacher, in particular, is a critical task for governors. **Representation from the Vicariate of Education must be involved in all aspects of such senior appointments.** This is also the case in the appointment of heads of department (or co-ordinators) of RE and Lay Chaplains. **The Office must be informed as soon as any vacancies arise and will provide assistance with model job descriptions, person specifications and guidance.**

A booklet is available from the Vicariate to assist governors in this process 'Senior Leadership Recruitment – Guidance for Governors'

## 6.5 Mentoring

An essential part of a new headteacher's induction is the support of a colleague as a mentor. It is important that a Catholic head teacher is available to support the new colleague. Successful, experienced and willing head teachers have volunteered to undertake training to be able to offer structured support. Governors are asked to ensure that a new head teacher agrees to take part in this programme and that funds are made available to cover this.

The Diocese also provides confidential support to headteachers on request through the Headteacher Well Being co-ordinator who also organises conferences on topics to assist headteachers in their work

## 6.6 School Leadership Succession Planning

It can be challenging for schools to attract enough high quality applicants to head teacher posts, though devising a professional approach to recruitment is helpful. A succession planning strategy needs to be considered and should include consideration of a range of leadership roles within the Trust, including Executive Headships and Head of School, and shared appointments.

With good support and development teachers may then be given the opportunity to take on aspects of leadership in their own and in other schools and gain confidence in leading on:

- new initiatives and increasing accountability;
- the role of the head as the 'Spiritual Leader';
- understanding actual leadership roles;
- working with other schools

The diocese along with its head teachers has initiated a number of strategies to alleviate the current situation. The diocese also works in partnership with the Four Northern Dioceses (Hexham and Newcastle, Hallam and Middlesbrough) as well as the National College for Teaching and Leadership to offer a range of networking and joint courses. If

there are to be more high quality candidates applying for leadership positions in our schools, governors will need to support the diocese and their schools in:

- identifying and nurturing teachers with the potential for leadership through 'Aspiring to leadership' courses;
- enabling aspiring leaders to gain a greater appreciation of the role of a leader in a Catholic school;
- supporting head teachers in reviewing their current role and workload;
- exploring new models of school leadership and organization;
- facilitating opportunities for secondment.
- Offering support for other schools both informally and by becoming **system leaders**, such as National Leaders of Education (NLE) and Subject Leaders in education (SLE)

## **6.7 HR and Employment Policies and Procedures**

All of the staff within a VA school are employed by the Governing Body. The Governing Body must therefore have policies and procedures, including a pay policy in place.

**In schools all statutory employment policies must be CES policies, where such policies exist. These CES policies are drawn up at national level with legal documents based on national agreements and discussion and should not be altered without their approval. Please consult the Vicariate of Education for advice if needed in this area.**

Regular legal updates are circulated by the Vicariate, normally via the termly newsletter, which is sent to all governors, and Headteachers.

## **7.0 Governors as the Admissions Authority**

### **7.1 Admission to diocesan schools**

Catholic schools are provided primarily for baptised Catholic children. They should seek to be communities of faith where catechesis and evangelisation is possible. Foundation governors have a specific duty to conduct the school according to the Diocesan Trust Deed in such a way as to preserve and develop the school's Catholic character. They must resist any actions that could possibly change or circumvent that character.

To ensure that governing bodies comply with current regulations it is important that a copy of the statutory guidance for admissions authorities published by the Secretary of State issued in December 2014 entitled ***School Admissions Code*** is available in school. It is equally important that governing bodies seek advice on admissions from the Admissions and Governance Officer at the Vicariate for Education.

It is diocesan policy to provide non-selective, or comprehensive, education. The diocesan policy is firmly based in the Church's social teaching and the provisions of the Trust Deed. It is within the competence of the Diocese under both Civil and Canon Law to determine the nature and character of its schools. The Trust Deed makes it clear that Catholic schools are provided primarily for baptised Catholic children. Consequently, any decision of the Governing Body that might result in anything other than Catholic pupils having priority for admission is not acceptable to the Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese.

It may be that a school will be oversubscribed, so there must be some objective method of discriminating fairly between applicants. This must be done using unambiguous and transparent criteria, agreed by the full Governing Body each year, and published for all prospective parents to see before they apply for a school place. The criteria must enable the Governing Body to list each applicant in rank order as required under co-ordinated admission arrangements. It is strongly recommended that governing bodies use the diocesan model policy as this takes into account all of the current education legislation as well as the education policy of the Bishop, Trustees and the provisions of the Trust Deed. If an individual school has any doubt as to the suitability (in their area) of the model policy the Admission and Governance Officer at the Vicariate for Education should be consulted immediately.

### **7.2 Who admits the pupils?**

The Governing Body is the admission authority and may delegate the process of admissions to an Admissions committee. The Governing Body should ensure that the admissions policy is determined annually and also determine, through the admission criteria, which children should be admitted. It is only the administration of admissions which has been standardised through the co-ordinated arrangements. As a result of the Education Act 2002, the LA is responsible for co-ordinating school admission arrangements for all maintained primary and secondary schools within its area (including voluntary aided schools and academies) in order that only one offer of a place is given to each child.

### **7.3 Consultation & Determination of Admission Arrangements**

The Governing Body may choose to delegate responsibility for admissions to a committee and, if it does, the headteacher should be a member of the committee. **However, the headteacher cannot, and should not, make decisions about admissions on his/her own.**

As the admission authority the Governing Body of each school determines its own admission arrangements. Like the LA, the Governing Body must consult on, determine and notify its admission arrangements each year for the following academic year i.e. consultation takes place between **1<sup>st</sup> October 2016** and **31 January 2017** for Admissions **2018/19** Academic year. Unlike the LA, it is not required to do so where:

- the Governing Body consulted on the previous year's admission arrangements and does not intend to change any aspect of those admission arrangements; and
- no objections have been made to the Schools' Adjudicator about the school's admission arrangements in any of the preceding 5 years.

These exceptions were introduced within the provisions of the Education Act 2002 for admission authorities that are governing bodies.

Consultation must relate to the whole of the admission arrangements that the Governing Body proposes to determine i.e. the admissions policy; admission number and full details of the over-subscription criteria and how they will be applied (the notes section of the policy).

Governing bodies should send a written copy of their proposed admission arrangements to all those they are required to consult, inviting their comments. There must be a named person that comments are to be returned to. This can be done by e-mail to reduce the cost and burden on schools.

Who must be consulted?

The Governing Body of Diocesan schools should consult the following bodies by 31 January (each year):

- the Diocese. The Diocese should be consulted **before** any other consultation is made;
- the LA;
- the governing bodies of other voluntary aided schools, Trust Schools, Academies (4-18) (i.e. other admission authorities) in the LA.

The Governing Body must determine its admission arrangements **annually by 28 February** each year even if consultation was not required.

## **7.4 The Admission Process**

Governors should be clear that the co-ordinated arrangements do not take away from them their powers or responsibilities for admissions. The governors still decide who will be admitted, and who will not, in the event of over subscription, in accordance with their over subscription criteria.

All schemes developed by the eight local authorities covered by the diocese will be broadly similar but there are likely to be some minor local variations. The following, therefore is only a general outline of how the process works.

- Parent should complete an online application form indicating their preference (the number of preferences may differ from LA to LA) before 15 January closing date.
- Governing bodies also require a Supplementary Information Form to be completed by the closing date in order that the application can be categorised correctly. If both forms are not received then the Governing Body can place the applicant in the last category of their admission policy.
- A Governing Body meeting (or committee meeting) needs to be convened to place the applications in a rank order.
- In the event of over subscription, governing bodies must indicate on their ranked list a 'cut-off point' showing the number of pupils they are intending to admit – this must be in accordance with the Planned Admission Number (PAN).
- The rank order list is returned to the LA by the agreed date in the co-ordinated scheme.
- The LA will process the ranked lists according to the agreed co-ordinated arrangements. A final list of pupils will be sent to schools before the offer date.
- The LA will send offer letter to parents on the agreed offer date. The letter will make it clear that the offer is being made on behalf of the Governing Body since the LA is not the admitting authority.

## **7.5 Model Admission Policy**

Governing bodies are strongly advised to use the diocesan model policy. By virtue of their appointment foundation governors have a duty to ensure that this advice is followed. Should there be any exceptional local circumstances that the model policy does not address, the chair of governors should consult the Admissions and Governance Officer at the Vicariate for Education as soon as possible.

## **7.6 Admission Appeals**

Admission Appeals are dealt with under the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice 2012. Governors should familiarise themselves with their responsibilities within the code and ensure there is a copy of the Code in school.

Where a school is oversubscribed and all applicants cannot be admitted, parents have the legal right to appeal against the refusal to admit. The Admission Authority is currently responsible for organising its own appeals, many schools continue to use the LA through a traded services contract.

**A Governing Body should never make an offer of a place which will take the year group above the Planned Admission number. Once a year group is full the Governing Body MUST refuse the place and offer the parent their legal right to appeal. This action protects the school.**

### **Letters of Support**

Appeal panels must not allow representatives of schools to support individual appeals for places at their school at the hearing itself, or by providing letters of support for appellants. Such supports could create conflicts of interest and unfairness to other appellants.

### **7.7 Changes to Planned Admission Number (PAN)**

If a school wishes to increase or decrease its PAN this should only be done in consultation with the Diocese to ensure legal requirements for consultation are adhered to. Schools should seek advice from the Vicariate for Education.

## **8.0 Governors responsibility for Diocesan Buildings**

### Guidance on School Property Matters

#### **Ownership**

In the vast majority of cases, the Diocese of Leeds owns the land on which the school buildings, playgrounds and car parks sit. The playing fields are owned by the Local Authority (LA) in most cases. There are isolated instances where there are different arrangements (e.g. Diocese owning the whole site including playing fields, or the LA owning the whole site and leasing the buildings to the Diocese). The Headteacher should be able to confirm the situation at your school but if they are unsure they should speak with the Diocesan Property office for clarification.

The Diocese has responsibilities under Charity Commission law to ensure that its assets are properly managed and so it is important that we ensure that schools manage the charity's assets properly on our behalf.

#### **Permission for Alterations**

The school must gain permission from the Diocese for all alterations to Diocesan owned land and buildings. This applies to all building works, including all refurbishment, remodelling or extension work. It also applies to any alterations that could put a charge on the Registered Title of the land owned by the Diocese – e.g. the installation of solar panels, a lease to a third party, third party funding of improved sports facilities, or anything that may be subject to a Community Use Agreement.

Permission must be sought no matter how the work is being funded, including if the work is being self-funded by school, by grant application, by the LA or by DFC/LCVAP. If in any doubt contact the Diocesan Property office.

#### **Maintenance and Testing**

The school is responsible for keeping the school land and buildings in a good state of repair. It must ensure that all necessary servicing and testing work is undertaken at the required intervals. This will include testing of gas/mechanical/electrical installations and periodic inspections of water installations for legionella compliance and the condition of all known asbestos.

#### **Health and Safety**

As well as ensuring that all maintenance and testing work is undertaken at the necessary intervals, schools must ensure that all building work complies with the relevant statutory regulations.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that all contractors are competent, that they hold adequate insurance and that they work in a manner with due regard to the safety of themselves and third parties.

Schools should familiarise themselves with the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015. Where schools are employing the contractor directly, they must ensure that where necessary they appoint a Principal Designer and Principal Contractor. The CDM

Regulations also require that the design considers the safety of future users of the building and those who will have to maintain it.

Asbestos surveys focusing on the area concerned with building work should be undertaken whenever a building project is planned unless the property was constructed after the year 2000 (beyond the date when the use of asbestos was outlawed in the UK). These surveys are called Refurbishment Asbestos Surveys. This is a more detailed look at the area concerned and applies even when the whole site Management Asbestos Survey has previously found no evidence of asbestos.

In all but the simplest building projects, schools should employ a professional advisor to ensure that all building work complies with the relevant regulations and is undertaken in a safe manner.

### **Boundaries and Land Issues**

It is important that schools maintain their boundaries and ensure that land for which they are responsible is properly maintained and not lost to/unlawfully acquired by neighbouring properties.

Note that schools have sometimes positioned fences forward of the actual boundary line for practical purposes and so these may not always reflect the true line of ownership. It is particularly important in such cases to periodically maintain these areas if they are beyond the fence line. If these areas are not maintained, the likelihood of a neighbour making use of/acquiring the land is high.

Schools should make sure that rights of access are not acquired by people using school land as an informal footpath/shortcut, for dog walking or other unauthorised use.

### **Further Advice**

If any of the above applies to any building projects that your school is considering or should you require any further advice on property matters, please contact the Diocesan Property office on 0113 261 8033.

## **9.0 Responsibility for Safeguarding**

The children and young people within our school are our prime concern and keeping them safe is of paramount importance. This is the responsibility of all staff and all governors. As Catholic schools with Christ at the Centre, such considerations should be at the forefront of everything that governors do.

### **9.1 What is safeguarding?**

Safeguarding is often confused with child protection, but it is a much wider responsibility that encompasses all policies and all the ways we interact with pupils. Each school will have specific policies, but governors must also be aware of the wider responsibilities including health and safety, the teaching and building environments as well as the curriculum and pastoral support.

#### **“Keeping Children Safe in Education”**

This is the Government legislation and advice relating to safeguarding in schools and can be downloaded from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

This outlines the duty on all Governing Bodies and Academy Trust Boards in all schools to *“Carry out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children”* and

*“Have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they need to make”*.

These responsibilities will also be considered by Ofsted as part of their inspection regime. Any individual with concerns about safeguarding within any school can approach Ofsted and they have a duty to investigate.

### **9.2 Safeguarding within schools**

Each school will have its policies and procedures and all staff must undertake at least the basic training. It is strongly advised that all governors also attend this training either as it is available within their school, or through a teaching school.

### **9.3 Local Authorities**

The Local Authority is responsible for safeguarding policies, training and support, particularly around child protection, for all the schools within their area. To ensure a multi-agency approach (including NHS and the Police amongst others) the LA responsibility is for all the young people within their area, they therefore have responsibilities for VA, academies, free and private schools.

The policy and procedures within each school will therefore be drawn up with the support and guidance of the LA for that area. Training, guidance and advice are therefore accessed via each Local Authority and all our schools must adopt the appropriate Local Authority policies.

### **9.4 Safer Recruitment**

The governors in our schools are the employers of the staff. There are specific responsibilities on anyone recruiting staff to schools and these are known as “safer recruitment”. Safer recruitment training is available both on-line and via Local Authorities and all governors who are involved in staff recruitment should have undergone such training.

Within their school(s) all governors need to be aware of:

- Child protection policy and procedures, including who the designated staff are and what to do if there are any concerns regarding a child or if any disclosures are made by any of the young people in our care.
- The single central register- each school has a list of all the information and evidence regarding all staff and volunteers to ensure that all are properly vetted using DBS.  
How to deal with any allegations against staff or volunteers (all schools should have a policy)
- There is normally at least 1 non-staff governor with responsibility for safeguarding.  
Reports on the number of safeguarding issues should be made to governors on a termly basis.

### **9.5 Safeguarding Governance**

It is strongly recommended that a specific Safeguarding Governor is appointed by the GB. This should be in addition to any staff member who may be a governor, who holds safeguarding responsibilities. As stated above, it is good practice for all governors to undergo safeguarding training to ensure they understand their responsibilities both in respect of the safety and well being of pupils and staff, as well as accountability under legislation and to external agencies such as the LA and Ofsted.

All Governing Bodies should ensure an annual external audit of safeguarding is undertaken and that they review the outcomes and recommendations.

## **10. CATHOLIC EDUCATION: RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING**

Catholic schools have a specific purpose that is often minimised in many commercially produced texts. Since governors are responsible for Catholic character of the school, the following can provide useful knowledge and understanding of the nature of Catholic education. In every Catholic diocesan school there should be at least one copy of the booklets *Schools of Discipleship* and *Christ at the Centre*. Extracts are included in section 3 of this handbook but these are well worth reading in full. Further copies of the *Christ at the Centre* can be downloaded from the Diocese of Birmingham website at [www.bdsc.org.uk](http://www.bdsc.org.uk) and *Schools of Discipleship* is available from the Diocese of Leeds Office for Education and Schools.

The Catholic education service for England and Wales have developed a range of resources for schools and governors which can be accessed from their website [www.cesew.org.uk](http://www.cesew.org.uk)

## **Appendix 1 –Extracts from Canon Law**

### **CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

#### **Can. 793**

§1 Parents, and those who take their place, have both the obligation and the right to educate their children. Catholic parents have also the duty and the right to choose those means and institutes which, in their local circumstances, can best promote the Catholic education of their children.

§2 Parents have moreover the right to avail themselves of that assistance from civil society which they need to provide a Catholic education for their children.

#### **Can. 794**

§1 The Church has in a special way the duty and the right of educating, for it has a divine mission of helping all to arrive at the fullness of Christian life.

§2 Pastors of souls have the duty of making all possible arrangements so that all the faithful may avail themselves of a Catholic education.

#### **Can. 795**

Education must pay regard to the formation of the whole person, so that all may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society. Children and young persons are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in a harmonious manner, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life.

### **THE TEACHING OFFICE OF THE CHURCH - SCHOOLS**

#### **Can. 796**

§1 Among the means of advancing education, Christ's faithful are to consider schools as of great importance, since they are the principle means of helping parents to fulfil their role in education.

§2 There must be the closest co-operation between parents and the teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated. In fulfilling their task, teachers are to collaborate closely with the parents and willingly listen to them; associations and meetings of parents are to be set up and held in high esteem.

#### **Can. 797**

Parents must have a real freedom in their choice of schools. For this reason Christ's faithful must be watchful that the civil society acknowledges this freedom of parents and, in accordance with the requirements of distributive justice, even provides them with assistance.

#### **Can. 798**

Parents are to send their children to those schools which will provide for their Catholic education. If they cannot do this, they are bound to ensure the proper Catholic education of their children outside the school.

**Can. 799**

Christ's faithful are to strive to secure that in the civil society the laws which regulate the formation of the young, also provide a religious and moral education in the schools that is in accord with the conscience of the parents.

**Can. 800**

§1 The Church has the right to establish and to direct schools for any field of study or of any kind and grade.

§2 Christ's faithful are to promote Catholic schools, doing everything possible to help in establishing and maintaining them.

**Can. 801**

Religious institutes which have education as their mission are to keep faithfully to this mission earnestly strive to devote themselves to Catholic education, providing this also through their own schools which, with the consent of the Diocesan Bishop, they have established.

**Can. 802**

§1 If there are no schools in which an education is provided that is imbued with a Christian spirit, the Diocesan Bishop has the responsibility of ensuring that such schools are established.

§2 Where it is suitable, the Diocesan Bishop is to provide for the establishment of professional and technical schools, and of other schools catering for special needs.

**Can. 803**

§1 A Catholic school is understood to be one which is under the control of the competent ecclesiastical authority or of a public ecclesiastical juridical person, or one which in a written document is acknowledged as Catholic by the ecclesiastical authority.

§2 Formation and education in a Catholic school must be based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and the teachers must be outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

§3 No school, even if it is in fact Catholic may bear the title 'Catholic school' except by the consent of the competent ecclesiastical authority.

**Can. 804**

§1 The formation and education in the Catholic religion provided in any school, and through various means of social communication, is subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the Episcopal Conference to issue general norms concerning this field of activity and for the Diocesan Bishop to regulate and watch over it.

§2 The local Ordinary is to be careful that those who are appointed as teachers of religion in schools, even non-Catholic ones, are outstanding in true doctrine, in the witness of their Christian life, and in their teaching ability.

**Can. 805**

In his own Diocese, the local Ordinary has the right to appoint or to approve teachers of religion and, if religious or moral considerations require it, the right to remove them or to demand that they be removed.

**Can. 806**

**§1** The Diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of religious institutes. He has also the right to issue directives also to schools conducted by members of a religious institute, although they retain their autonomy in the internal management of their schools.

**§2** Those who are in charge of Catholic schools are to ensure, under the supervision of the local Ordinary, that the formation given in them is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area.

## Appendix 2 - S48 Grade Descriptors Leadership and Management

<b>Key Area C3. LEADERS AND MANAGERS</b>			
<b>3.1 How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils</b>			
<b>OUTSTANDING</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	<b>REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>INADEQUATE</b>
Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority. The spiritual and moral development of pupils and Collective Worship are linked to the school's development plan. Staff and pupil understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. They share its purpose and are actively involved in shaping and supporting it.	Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate a commitment to the Church's mission in education, with spiritual and moral development a priority. Pupils are able to articulate the school's distinctive mission with understanding and appreciation. Staff and pupils have a high regard for the Catholic Life of the school and Collective Worship.	Leaders, governors and managers express their support for the Church's mission in education. Pupils and staff cooperate passively with regard to the Catholic Life of the school and Collective Worship and this limits improvement in outcomes for pupils.	Leaders, governors and managers are reluctant to promote the Church's mission in education and do not monitor provision and outcomes effectively. Pupils and staff are unclear what it means to be part of a Catholic school community and outcomes in R.E are inadequate.
The school's self evaluation is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge which is well informed by current best practice in Religious Education and in education in general and raises outcomes for a majority of pupils. Outstanding use of the assessment and monitoring process results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken by the leadership of the school.	Leaders, governors and managers conduct a range of systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes. Their analysis provides a firm basis for accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development which leads to significant improvement to outcomes for pupils.	Leaders, governors and managers monitor, to some extent, the provision and outcomes. They know the school's major strengths and areas for development in respect to its Catholic character as evidenced by the school's self evaluation. There is some implementation of plans aimed at improving outcomes for pupils however there is a lack of progress. The assessment process needs further development.	The assessment process is either not in place or is ineffective. Evaluation is casual and lacks rigour to the extent that planning fails to match accurately the key development requirements of the school.
Leadership of Religious Education is informed by a high level of expertise and vision focused relentlessly on improving teaching and learning resulting in teaching that is at least consistently good or better. Religious Education has a very high profile in the life of the school, is actively involved in initiatives within the school and has a profound impact on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. Religious Education is	Leadership is well informed by current developments in Religious Education. Effective planning is founded on sound evidence and data obtained from good use of the assessment process, tackling key areas for development systematically and building on areas of strength. Action taken	Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate a limited capacity to secure improvement in the school.	There is little or no capacity for improvement.

extremely well resourced in terms of staffing, physical resources, capitation and curriculum time when compared with other core subjects in the school.	raises pupil outcomes. The majority of teaching is good /better and none is inadequate.		
The school participates fully in developing and implementing a variety of effective partnerships. The school's provision and leadership and management make an excellent contribution to pupils' good and often outstanding achievement and well-being	The school's partnership activities and the resulting improvements in the school's provision and leadership and management, make a strong contribution to what is generally good achievement and well-being of pupils.		
All canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled	All canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled	Most canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled	There is no challenge by the governors to address canonical and statutory responsibilities, areas for development in the Catholic Life of the school or Religious Education.

## **Appendix 3 – Section 5 Effectiveness of leadership and management**

**(extract from Ofsted Inspection Handbook – August 2016)**

1. The CIF sets out the overarching criteria for judging the effectiveness of leadership and management.
2. In making this judgement in schools, inspectors will consider:
  - the leaders' and governors' vision and ambition for the school and how these are communicated to staff, parents and pupils
  - whether leaders and governors have created a culture of high expectations, aspirations and scholastic excellence in which the highest achievement in academic and vocational work is recognised as vitally important
  - whether leaders have the highest expectations for social behaviour among pupils and staff, so that respect and courtesy are the norm
  - the rigour and accuracy of self-evaluation and how well it leads to planning that secures continual improvement
  - the design, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum, ensuring breadth and balance and its impact on pupils' outcomes and their personal, development, behaviour and welfare
  - how well the school supports the formal curriculum with extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding and to improve their skills in a range of artistic, creative and sporting activities
  - how effectively leaders use the primary PE and sport premium and measure its impact on outcomes for pupils, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
  - how well the school prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith
  - the effectiveness of the actions leaders take to secure and sustain improvements to teaching, learning and assessment and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
  - how well leaders ensure that the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff to deliver a high quality education for all pupils, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
  - the quality of continuing professional development for teachers at the start and middle of their careers and later, including to develop leadership capacity and how leaders and governors use performance management to promote effective practice across the school
  - how effectively leaders monitor the progress of groups of pupils to ensure that none falls behind and underachieve, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this

- how well leaders and governors engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders and agencies to support all pupils
  - how effectively leaders use additional funding, including the pupil premium, and measure its impact on outcomes for pupils, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
  - the effectiveness of governors in discharging their core statutory functions and how committed they are to their own development as governors in order to improve their performance
  - how well leaders and governors promote all forms of equality and foster greater understanding of and respect for people of all faiths (and those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics), through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community
  - the effectiveness of safeguarding
  - the effectiveness of leaders' and governors' work to raise awareness and keep pupils safe from the dangers of abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism and what the staff do when they suspect that pupils are vulnerable to these issues.
3. Where the school has received external support, for example from the local authority, academy proprietor or trust, inspectors will evaluate and report on the quality and the impact of the external support and challenge on improvement in the school.

### Sources of evidence

4. Inspectors will obtain a range of evidence from meetings with leaders and governors and first-hand evidence of their work across the school. Inspectors will use documentary evidence provided by the school, evaluating the impact of leaders' and governors' work, both currently and over time, in conjunction with first-hand evidence. Responses to the staff questionnaire and Parent View will also provide useful evidence for judging the culture that has been established in the school by leaders and managers.
5. Inspectors should consider any evidence the school has from regularly surveying the staff and how leaders and managers have responded to concerns raised by staff or parents, for example about how teachers are supported by senior leaders to tackle low-level disruptive behaviour. Inspectors will always report on the school's activity to survey staff, whether through the school's internal procedures or its use of the Ofsted questionnaire (they will do this in the 'information about this inspection' section).

### Safeguarding

6. In judging the effectiveness of leadership and management, inspectors **must** also judge whether the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective, and whether those responsible for governance ensure that these arrangements are effective. There is detailed guidance on evaluating safeguarding arrangements in 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education, skills settings'.

## Governance

7. Inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance. This includes maintained school governors, proprietors or academy trustees. In a multi-academy trust this may include members of the local governing board at school level, as well as the trustees.
8. Where a children's centre is managed directly by the school's Governing Body, inspectors will consider the impact of any judgements about the children's centre or the services and activities offered through or by the centre, in judging leadership and management.
9. Inspectors will consider whether governors:
  - work effectively with leaders to communicate the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school and develop a culture of ambition
  - provide a balance of challenge and support to leaders, understanding the strengths and areas needing improvement at the school
  - provide support for an effective headteacher or are hindering school improvement because of a lack of understanding of the issues facing the school
  - understand how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression and performance
  - performance manage the headteacher rigorously
  - understand the impact of teaching, learning and assessment on the progress of pupils currently in the school
  - ensure that assessment information from leaders provides governors with sufficient and accurate information to ask probing questions about outcomes for pupils
  - ensure that the school's finances are properly managed and can evaluate how the school is using the pupil premium, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium, primary PE and sport premium, and special educational needs funding
  - are transparent and accountable, including in recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings and contact with parents.
10. Inspectors will report on the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes reporting on the pupils in any specialist resource provision managed by the Governing Body and the extent to which the education the school provides meets the needs of these pupils.
11. Inspectors will recommend an external review if governance is weak. Under 'What the school should do to improve further', inspectors should use the following words in the report:

'An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.'
12. The school should decide how this review will take place and commission it. Reviews should be developmental. They do not represent a further inspection,

although inspectors will follow up on the review during any subsequent inspection. Full details of what might be the form and nature of such reviews can be found at: [www.gov.uk/reviews-of-school-governance](http://www.gov.uk/reviews-of-school-governance).

### **Use of the pupil premium**

13. Inspectors will gather evidence about the use of the pupil premium in relation to the following key issues:
  - the level of pupil premium funding received by the school in the current academic year and levels of funding received in previous academic years
  - how leaders and governors have spent the pupil premium, their rationale for this spending and its intended impact
  - any differences made to the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils as shown by outcomes data and inspection evidence.
14. Inspectors will recommend an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium if they identify weakness regarding the provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The form of words to be used in the inspection report is:

‘An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.’

This means that the school should seek support from an independent external system leader with a track record of accelerating disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Full details of what might be the form and nature of such reviews can be found at: [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-reviews](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-reviews), which includes a link to the revised guide to pupil premium reviews, where there are also examples of the optional template to support schools in reporting their pupil premium strategy on their website. Inspectors will follow up on the review during any subsequent inspections.

## ***Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of leadership and management***

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

### **Outstanding (1)**

- Leaders and governors have created a culture that enables pupils and staff to excel. They are committed unwaveringly to setting high expectations for the conduct of pupils and staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are exemplary.
- Leaders and governors focus on consistently improving outcomes for all pupils, but especially for disadvantaged pupils. They are uncompromising in their ambition.
- The school's actions have secured substantial improvement in progress for disadvantaged pupils. Progress is rising across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics.
- Governors systematically challenge senior leaders so that the effective deployment of staff and resources, including the pupil premium, the primary PE and sport premium, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium and special educational needs funding, secures excellent outcomes for pupils. Governors do not shy away from challenging leaders about variations in outcomes for pupil groups and between disadvantaged and other pupils nationally.
- Leaders and governors have a deep, accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness informed by the views of pupils, parents and staff. They use this to keep the school improving by focusing on the impact of their actions in key areas.
- Leaders and governors use incisive performance management that leads to professional development that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. Teaching is highly effective across the school.
- Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They feel deeply involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate in which teachers are motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for their pupils.
- The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, within this, the promotion of fundamental British values, are at the heart of the school's work.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity exceptionally well, for pupils and staff, so that the ethos and culture of the whole school prevents any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted. Pupils are listened to and feel safe. Staff are trained to identify when a pupil may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation and they report their concerns. Leaders and staff work effectively with external partners to support pupils who are at risk or who are the subject of a multi-agency plan.
- Leaders' work to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism is exemplary. Leaders respond swiftly where pupils are vulnerable to these issues. High quality training develops staff's vigilance, confidence and competency to challenge pupils' views and encourage debate.

### **Good (2)**

- Leaders set high expectations of pupils and staff. They lead by example to create a culture of respect and tolerance. The positive relationships between leaders, staff and pupils support the progress of all pupils at the school.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils and promote improvement effectively. The school's actions secure improvement in disadvantaged pupils' progress, which is rising,

including in English and mathematics.

- Leaders and governors have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education at the school. This helps them plan, monitor and refine actions to improve all key aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders and governors use performance management effectively to improve teaching. They use accurate monitoring to identify and spread good practice across the school.
- Teachers value the continuing professional development provided by the school. It is having a positive impact on their teaching and pupils' learning. Teaching is consistently strong across the school or, where it is not, it is improving rapidly.
- Governors hold senior leaders stringently to account for all aspects of the school's performance, including the use of pupil premium, the primary PE and sport premium, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium and special educational needs funding, ensuring that the skilful deployment of staff and resources delivers good or improving outcomes for pupils.
- The broad and balanced curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning. This supports pupils' good progress. The curriculum also contributes well to pupils' behaviour and welfare, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders consistently promote fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity, resulting in a positive school culture. Staff and pupils work together to prevent any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and staff take appropriate action to identify pupils who may be at risk of neglect, abuse or sexual exploitation, reporting concerns and supporting the needs of those pupils.
- Leaders protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Staff are trained and are increasingly vigilant, confident and competent to encourage open discussion with pupils.

#### **Requires improvement (3)**

- Leadership and management are not yet good.
- Safeguarding is effective.

#### **Inadequate (4)**

**Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies.**

- Capacity for securing further improvement is poor and the improvements leaders and governors have made are unsustainable, have been implemented too slowly or are overly dependent on external support.
- Leaders are not doing enough to tackle poor teaching, learning and assessment, which significantly impairs the progress of pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders are not aware of, or are not taking effective action to stem, the decline in the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- The unbalanced and poorly taught curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils.
- The range of subjects is narrow and does not prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.
- Leaders are not taking effective steps to secure good behaviour from pupils and a consistent approach to discipline.

- Leaders and governors, through their words, actions or influence, directly and/or indirectly, undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity. They do not prevent discriminatory behaviour and prejudiced actions and views.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements, or they give serious cause for concern or insufficient action is taken to remedy weaknesses following a serious incident.
- Leaders and governors are not protecting pupils from radicalisation and extremist views when pupils are vulnerable to these. Policy and practice are poor, which means pupils are at risk.

## Notes



