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## Annual Governance Statement 2016-2017

This report details the key areas of focus for the Governing Board for the academic year 2016-2017 and provides an overview of the work carried out in these areas. It also provides further information on the Governing Board, its members and structure.

This year the Department for Education has updated the guidelines for Governance to request that all those elected or appointed to boards should fulfil their duties in line with the seven principles of public life (the Nolan principles). They should also be mindful of their responsibilities under equality legislation, recognising and encouraging diversity and inclusion. They should understand the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people. In addition, all those involved in governance should be:

**Committed** Devoting the required time and energy to the role and ambitious to achieve best possible outcomes for young people. Prepared to give time, skills and knowledge to developing themselves and others in order to create highly effective governance.

**Confident** Of an independent mind, able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role on the board.

**Curious** Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach and 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 to and work in partnership with others and understanding the importance of building strong working relationships within the board and with executive leaders, staff, parents and carers, pupils/students, the local community and employers.

**Critical** Understanding the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support, and self-reflective, pursuing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole board effectiveness.

**Creative** Able to challenge conventional wisdom and be open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving; recognising the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success.

These principles will form the basis of how Governors will carry out their roles and in meeting their objectives set for the forthcoming year.

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Key Areas	Outcomes
Financial Management	The finance panel has met with the School Business Manager and Headteacher each term and a financial update is provided at each of the Full Governing Body meetings. The financial status of the school remains stable, however, like many schools we are facing increased pressure on our budgets and the finances are very tight. As a school we will continue to monitor our finances using robust methods. The schools financial management system provides an accurate picture of the school finances, enabling us to identify where savings or reductions in staffing costs and resources may need to be made. Governors also review the expenditure of the Pupil Premium Grant, in line with the Pupil Premium Audit, and the Sports Funding Grant. Further information about both grants can be found on the school website.

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Review of Pupil Progress	<p>Governors have received regular updates on pupil progress through presentation of termly assessment data. Data is broken down by pupil group and by term/year. This allows Governors to monitor pupil progress and understand the strategies in place to ensure that all pupils make progress throughout the year. This data also has enabled Governors to review the progress of disadvantaged learners and those in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant and with Special Educational Needs. The Governors have also reviewed the results against local and national performance tables.</p> <p>In addition Governors are able to assess progress by reviewing the feedback and reports produced by professional assessors, such as the Local Authority and Diocese School Advisors and the Challenge Partners Group.</p>
Governor Monitoring	<p>All Governors are committed to visiting school throughout the academic year to monitor and evaluate the school against a specific area of focus as indicated in the School Improvement Plan and from feedback gathered from external professional evaluations. This year the Governors have also conducted two group Learning Walks throughout the school so that we can see evidence of new school initiatives, review how the budget has been spent in and around the school and assess the overall building and grounds.. Detailed reviews also take place for Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Finance.</p>
Safeguarding	<p>Safeguarding remains of the utmost priority for the school and the Governing Board. The designated Governor for safeguarding completed the annual safeguarding audit and checks of the Single Central Record. This year all members of the Governing Board have completed online safeguarding training.</p>
Christian Distinctiveness and Ethos.	<p>The school was visited throughout the year by the Foundation Governors. The Governors ensure that the school maintains its strong Christian distinctiveness and that the Christian ethos of the school is reflected throughout the school and in day to day activities, during collective worship and where appropriate within school policies. Rev. Tweedie Smith from St Mary's, our ex-officio Governor also visits school and runs the Bible Explorers group for Year 5 pupils. Foundation Governors meet with the curriculum lead for RE and have attended school assemblies and been present at the church to welcome pupils during Harvest Festival and the Year 6 leavers service.</p>
Policy Review and Governance Guidelines.	<p>A large area of responsibility for Governors is to review policies to ensure that the school is adopting new legislation and that we remain compliant with existing policy. This year a total of 34 policies have been reviewed by the Governors. In addition to policies, Governors have reviewed guidelines for Education and Governance produced by the Department for Education, the Local Authority, the Diocese of Bristol and the National Governors Association.</p>
Strategic Direction	<p>The Governors have continued to review the possibility of converting to Academy status. This year there have been a number of changes to the Government guidance and in the conversion options available to us. We continue to review our options, both with the Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust and other academy groups, should a firm decision be made further consultation will take place with parents and staff. The Governors will continue to monitor national changes in Education and explore every opportunity that may benefit and protect the future of St Mary's school, its pupils and staff.</p>
The School Community	<p>Once again the school has welcomed parents, carers, family members and the wider community into the school on a number of occasions. In addition to the regular Parent/Carers Consultation Evenings there have been information workshops, a variety of sporting, music and dance events, Arts Week, class open mornings, cake sales and seasonal celebrations such as Harvest Festival, Christmas and the very popular PTA summer fayre. Last year the school acted on the request for more notice and produced an annual calendar of events at the beginning of the year. The same has been done for this year and this can be viewed on the school website. We hope that this will enable more of you to plan ahead and support your children and the school by attending more school events.</p>

Buildings, Maintenance and Health & Safety. The school building and grounds are checked at least twice annually by the LA Governor to monitor compliance against current Health and Safety standards. Actions from the Local Authority Health and Safety Audit along with a rolling schedule for the maintenance of the building and the grounds are reviewed and progressed with the Headteacher and School Business Manager. The Risk Register has been reviewed throughout the year and updated accordingly.

Curriculum and Extra-curricular activities. Members of staff have presented at Focus Meetings throughout the year to provide updates on the changes to the curriculum, resources that have been purchased to support pupils learning and on new initiatives that have been introduced throughout the school.

This year in addition to the regular updates we regularly receive on the core curriculum areas we have had presentations from staff on:

Special Educational Needs and Disadvantaged Learners

ICT

Safer Internet use

AIM – how we can support our more able learners

Policy Point

## The Structure of the Governing Board

The Governing Board is structured in accordance with the Instrument of Governance. There are currently 13 Governors representing the following groups:

Category	Number
Foundation (representing the Diocese of Bristol)	3
Staff	2
Local Authority	1
Parent	3
Co-Opted	4

## Governor Attendance Summary

	Governor:	Head	G Stevens	V Robinson	C Hooper	B VZ-Rice	I Tweedie-Smith	S Horsnall	M Dempsey	S Southern	A Crumbie	LOakes	J Hill	E Amos	E Wilson
Date	Meeting	Staff	Staff	Parent	Parent	Parent	Foundation	Foundation	Foundation	Local Authority	Co-Opted	Co-Opted	Co-Opted	Co-Opted	Clerk
21/09/2016	FGB	1	1					1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
13/10/2016	Focus	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1		1	1
09/11/2016	FGB	1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1
01/12/2016	Focus	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
12/01/2017	FGB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
02/02/2017	Focus	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
15/03/2017	FGB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1			1	1
06/04/2017	Focus	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1
10/05/2017	FGB/Focus	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1		1		1
14/06/2017	FGB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		1	1	1
13/07/2017	Focus	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1
Attended of possible meetings		11	11	9	9	9	1	10	9	7	11	4	8	10	11

The Governing Board are also extremely grateful to Mrs Stephenson (School Business Manager) and Mr Payne (Deputy Head) who volunteer their time to also attend these meetings.

## School Visits

In addition to attending the Full Governing Body (FGB) and Focus Group Meetings, selected Governors also sit on Finance and Staffing Panels and there are dedicated Governors roles assigned for Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Disadvantaged Learners, Pupil Premium and Whistle Blowing . Governors make further visits into school throughout the year, during and after the school day, to ensure that they are effectively motoring and evaluating overall progress and strategic areas for improvement.

School Year	Governor Visits (non staff)
13-14	77
14-15	79
15-16	91
16-17	96

## Governor Training.

It is essential that every board has Governors with the relevant skills. Training and refresher training was a focus for the Governors last year, with every governor attending at least one training course in support of their role.

A total of 32 courses were attended or completed online by governors last year, including:

Safeguarding and Child Protection  
Health & Safety  
Finance for Governors  
Social Media  
Staffing Panels  
Monitoring & Evaluation  
School Inspections – implications for Governors  
Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction  
Strategic use of primary school data  
Promoting British Values  
New Governor Induction

## We'd love to hear from you...

Representatives from the Governing Board endeavor to attend most school events. When we visit the school we all wear white security lanyards showing GOVERNOR, similar to the red STAFF ones you will see all members of staff wearing, so do stop and have a chat. Tell us how you feel about the school, what we do well and things we could improve on. We look forward to meeting you.

If you would like more information about anything contained within this report, to find out more about the role of the Governing Board or to provide any feedback on the school the Governors can be reached by contacting the Clerk to the Governors [clerk@st-marys-purton.sch.wilts.uk](mailto:clerk@st-marys-purton.sch.wilts.uk)

## Upcoming Governing Board Meetings

FGB	FOCUS
20 Sep 2017	12 Oct 2017
08 Nov 2017	07 Dec2017
10 Jan 2018	01 Feb 2018
14 March 2018	(FGB/FOCUS combined)
18 April 2018	10 May 2018
13 June 2018	12 July 2018

## Changes to the Governing Board

During the academic year 2016/2017:

- New appointments to the post of Parent Governor – Mrs Charlotte Hooper and Mrs Bonnie Van Zanten-Rice.(OCT16)
- The Governing body said farewell to Mrs Oakes as a Co-Opted Governor. (DEC16)
- Mr Steve Southern has been re-elected as the Local Authority Governor. (JAN 17)
- Mrs Glenys Stevens has been re-elected as a Staff Governor (JUL17).

This year we are delighted to welcome Mrs Karen Wright who joined the governing body as a Co-Opted Governor in September 2017.

Are you interested in applying to become a Governor in the future? Further information about the role, who can apply and what the role entails can be found at The National Governors Association [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk).