

## **Introduction:**

In July 2024, St. Michaels Governing Board (hereinafter 'the board') consisted of ten governors. They are:

- Jenny Jones (headteacher) and Alan Jenner (local authority governor and chair of the governing board)
- Kevin Davies and Kevin Walters (parent governors); Alwyn Pereria (foundation governor); Nathan Edwards (staff governor); Lucy Purdy, Gareth Morgan Jonathan Porter and Rachel Woodhouse (co-opted governors)

Once again, the board decided not to establish any committees during the year, apart from the statutory headteacher's performance management and pay committees. Instead, the full governing board met nine times in total, one of which was a training day with the school's senior leadership team.

During 2023-24 the board carried out its three statutory core functions with enthusiasm, diligence and considerable skill. These functions include but are not limited to ensuring:

- that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined
- that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school
- the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

Governors also took on link roles. These included governors meeting individual subject leads to monitor how pupil premium money is spent and what provision is being made for specific groups such as pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. Governors have also reviewed the impact of the new behaviour policy and monitored closely the attendance of pupils. Governors have also looked at how learning about different cultures is part of the curriculum and how the school supports children to be more independent, resilient and develop greater confidence.

## **The Successes:**

The most important achievement last year was that the school is officially full. Numbers for September 2024 are 384 and there is a waiting list for some year groups. This demonstrates strong support for the school within the local community.

The governing board has had a successful year too. Its main achievements are as follows:

1. **Worked strategically with school leaders.** Examples of this include:

St Michael's Controlled Junior School  
Governing Board Annual Statement  
September 2024

- Helping to formulate then regularly monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school improvement plan;
  - Governors reviewed the school's vision (*Be the very best we can be*) and values (*respect, courage and resilience*) and considered how they are reflected in our practice;
  - Appointed a link governor for diversity, equality and inclusion;
  - Carrying out our statutory duties efficiently. These include: appraising the headteacher's performance; ensuring all policies and practices around safeguarding are regularly reviewed;
  - Reviewing and updating regularly, where necessary, all other school policies.
2. **Held the headteacher to account** by regularly and consistently having discussions about key aspects of the school's work and thereby asking questions that seek clarification but importantly also to challenge. The board has also made some decisions. This year these have included:
- Ensuring all meetings focus on what leaders are doing to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics so that all children are on track to meet if not exceed national standards;
  - Challenging the school's self-evaluation;
  - Triangulating what governors are told and have read by carrying out termly monitoring visits focusing on the key priorities in the school improvement plan.
  - Additionally, link governors have also monitored other key aspects of the school such as safeguarding, health and safety of the site and the school's budget.
3. **Ensured the financial probity of the school:**
- Monitored regularly the monthly budget forecasts to ensure spending is in line with forecasts;
  - Have examined key financial management information, data and reports.
4. **Worked Together Effectively:**
- The full governing board met nine times during the year, three times each term. In this way, all governors are familiar with all the work of the board;
  - We continued to update our induction processes for new governors by allocating a school's Designated Safety Lead (DSL) to meet with them;
  - At every governing board meeting, we contribute actively to discussions, ask questions and challenge routine practices;
  - The board has also evaluated its practice and impact. Every board meeting concludes with members reflecting on what has worked well and what could be better next time.
  - Governors' development continued apace. This has been repeatedly demonstrated throughout the year. One governor reported that: '*A growth in my understanding of SEN and the impact of speech and language*'; Another felt that '*as an experienced governor, I believe I have contributed across the*

*areas for which governors are responsible such as finance'; One governor believed that 'The experience of having a full year of being a Governor was extremely useful. I had a better understanding of the operating environment for schools and how the performance framework fits together. I was more focussed during monitoring and that meant there was better evidence following these visits'; Finally, another governor appreciated the 'monthly meetings of Governing Body which provided an opportunity to question and challenge the senior leadership team'.*

## Next Steps

The governing board is responsible for setting the school's vision and the strategy to achieve that vision. What will St Michael's Junior School look like in three years' time. The intention for 2024-25 will be:

- The areas of focus for the coming year will be: raising attainment for all pupils, and especially those children who are SEND, EAL or in receipt of Pupil Premium; ensuring children and staff report good levels of wellbeing; that children continue to develop good social skills; the schools develops as a hub thereby enabling all children to have their basic needs met which in turn impacts on learning.
- The governing board is constantly mindful of the many and various contextual challenges, both local and national, which are relevant to the future of the school. The main challenge continues to be the ever-increasing burden on the school finances.
- The governing board firmly believes that parents, by engaging positively in partnership with the school, can support it to achieve its strategic aims. The board will conduct surveys of the pupils, staff and parents/carers to ascertain what the community thinks of the school and how it might improve.
- The governing board will continue to be both supportive of school leaders but also committed to asking challenging questions of school leaders. It believes that it needs to develop further its ability to have those courageous conversations in the interests of the children.
- The governing board remains keen to build networks with other schools and boards to share good practice.
- Finally, the biggest challenge this year will be to find a suitable replacement for the current headteacher who is taking early retirement from Easter 2025. Rest assured that the governing board is fully committed to finding a new headteacher and work has already started with both the local authority and Diocese to do just that.

Finally, if parents would like to provide feedback to the governing board then please email the chair at the following address [chairofgovernors@st-michaels-jun.hants.sch.uk](mailto:chairofgovernors@st-michaels-jun.hants.sch.uk)

Alan Jenner  
Chair of Governors  
September 2024