

# Governance Handbook

## 2025-26



# St John the Baptist Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

*Prepare the way*



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# Welcome to our Trust

**Thank you for volunteering your time and expertise as a school Governor or Director in St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust. Your commitment to the role is essential for the Trust.**

In your governance role, your overarching aim is to ensure that our schools provide an outstanding education, within our Catholic ethos, so that all the children and young people in our schools truly flourish and achieve to the very best of their ability.

This handbook is part of your induction, giving you an introduction to our Trust and to the role of Local Governor, or Director.

St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust is now a well-established, respected Catholic multi-academy trust. The Trust was originally set up in 2016 and is currently a family of eleven schools in Norfolk, Suffolk and Peterborough: one secondary and ten primaries, with almost 4,000 pupils. We have a mixture of types and sizes of schools, including coastal, inner-city and small rural schools. Whilst each school is anchored in its own community, our shared Catholic mission, vision and values bind us together as one Trust.

As schools have joined St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust they have each brought additional knowledge and skills, enhancing our collective capacity.

We are a growing Trust and anticipate that two more Catholic schools in Peterborough (one secondary and one primary) will join the Trust in the near future.

The Julian Teaching School Hub and Norfolk Research School are also key parts of our Trust. These greatly benefit our schools, enhancing our professional development offer and enabling us to nurture talent and future leadership.

There are many abbreviations and specific terms in use in education and academy trusts, so an abbreviation and jargon buster is provided in Appendix B.

Effective governance, is essential in our Trust and our schools and we hope that you use this handbook as a starting point to access the resources and support available, gain confidence and develop your skills in the role.

*“The board and executive leadership team anchor the trust’s strategy in the needs of its schools, the communities they serve and the wider educational system in line with its charitable objects.”*

DFE Academy Trust Governance Guide



# Our Mission, Vision and Values

Inspired by the life of Christ we provide an exceptional education in our Catholic schools which enables our children:

- to fully embrace all possibilities
- to flourish
- to develop their faith

and therefore to choose a path that enables them to be a positive influence upon our world

## Mission

## Vision

Our values and the distinctive ethos of our Trust of Catholic schools will enable every child and young person to receive the very best education, so that they are empowered to grow, learn and achieve.....

The values which guide us all as children and adults:

- **Loving care** - forgiveness, empathy, inclusion, kindness, compassion
- **Learning together** – growing, leading, aspiring, enabling, understanding
- **Growing in faith** – Christ at centre, service, stewardship

## Values

Central to our Mission is our desire to provide an exceptional education, within a Christian environment, ensuring that every child and young person that we are responsible for gets the very best opportunities we can offer.

Our children and young people are at the centre of everything we do, their spiritual and personal development and well-being prioritised at every stage. We are passionate about providing children with inspiring and safe places to learn, where they feel respected and where they can truly thrive and lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.

We aim to instil the ambition and the desire in every young person to discover and achieve their personal best, overcoming any challenges they may face, equipping them with the knowledge and skills that they will need to develop into morally responsible, happy and successful adults.

Our Catholic faith is at the heart of everything we do. This is what makes our Trust unique. Our Gospel values underpin and inform how we do things, guiding how we care for one another, how we pray, learn and work together and how we put our faith into action.

We strongly believe in the power of purposeful collaboration and the importance of establishing a connected way of working, which helps bind schools together to achieve more. We aim to be greater than the sum of our parts, working together, pooling our knowledge and sharing our expertise for the greater good of all children in our schools.

We will continue to seek ways of working together and really harnessing the benefits of being in a Trust.





Notre Dame High School			
Surrey St, Norwich NR1 3PB			
Secondary (11-18 years)			Ofsted Grade: Good
NOR: 1581	PP: 13%	SEND: 11%	EAL: 29%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.</i>			

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School			
Sporle Rd, Swaffham, Norfolk PE37 7HL			
Primary (4-11 years)			Ofsted Grade: Inadequate
NOR: 101	PP: 40%	SEND: 30%	EAL: 17%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>Serving God and others through Love, Faith and Hope.</i>			



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School			
Tollgate, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 9XD			
Primary (3-11 years)			Ofsted Grade: Good
NOR: 212	PP: 16%	SEND: 20%	EAL: 54%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>Together we live and learn, we play and pray.</i>			

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School			
West End, Old Costessey, Norwich NR8 5AG			
Primary (3-11 years)			Ofsted Grade: Good
NOR: 303	PP: 11%	SEND: 19%	EAL: 46%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>We try to follow Jesus by loving each other and caring for God's world.</i>			



St Benet's Catholic Primary School			
Ringsfield Road, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9PQ			
Primary (4-11 years)			Ofsted Grade: Good
NOR: 77	PP: 38%	SEND: 23%	EAL: 10%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>We see Christ in everyone as we journey together, teaching and learning. We believe every day matters, as we challenge ourselves to be all that we can be.</i>			

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School			
St Mary's St. Bungay, Suffolk NR35 1AY			
Primary (4-11 years)			Ofsted Grade: Good
NOR: 73	PP: 34%	SEND: 19%	EAL: 12%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>We see Christ in everyone as we journey together, teaching and learning. We believe every day matters, as we challenge ourselves to be all that we can be.</i>			



# Schools in our Trust



St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School			
Jessopp Rd, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 3QB			
Primary (4-11 years)			<b>Ofsted Grade:</b> Good
<b>NOR:</b> 431	<b>PP:</b> 11%	<b>SEND:</b> 23%	<b>EAL:</b> 49%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>Learning and growing together in God's love.</i>			

St Martha's Catholic Primary School			
Field Lane, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE30 4AY			
Primary (4-11 years)			<b>Ofsted Grade:</b> Good
<b>NOR:</b> 412	<b>PP:</b> 10%	<b>SEND:</b> 11%	<b>EAL:</b> 63%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>Be the best you can be.</i>			



St Mary's Catholic Primary School			
Kirkley Cliff, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0DG			
Primary (4-11 years)			<b>Ofsted Grade:</b> Good
<b>NOR:</b> 183	<b>PP:</b> 16%	<b>SEND:</b> 14%	<b>EAL:</b> 22%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>As God's family we are STARs within a loving and thriving community, celebrating our diversity. We ignite lifelong learning where everyone becomes a positive influence on our world.</i>			

St Mary & St Peter Catholic Primary School			
East Anglian Way, Gorleston, Norfolk NR31 6QY			
Primary (3-11 years)			<b>Ofsted Grade:</b> Good
<b>NOR:</b> 228	<b>PP:</b> 22%	<b>SEND:</b> 12%	<b>EAL:</b> 41%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>Our learning adventure will see each and every one of us thrive in God's love as we set sail for success.</i>			

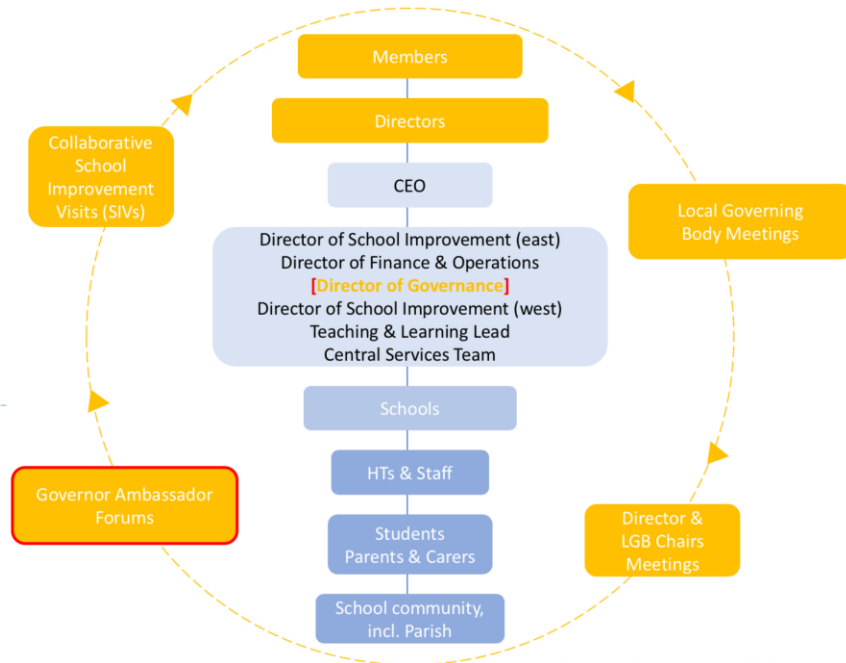


St Thomas More Catholic Primary School			
Park Lane, Eastfield, Peterborough PE1 5JW			
Primary (4-11 years)			<b>Ofsted Grade:</b> Good
<b>NOR:</b> 413	<b>PP:</b> 33%	<b>SEND:</b> 18%	<b>EAL:</b> 63%
<b>Our Mission Statement</b>			
<i>A community working through prayer, celebration and learning, to achieve excellence.</i>			



# The Governance Community

## Trust Structure



**Members** are the guardians of the governance of our Catholic Multi Academy Trust Company. The Bishop is a member, with four other members appointed by the Bishop, including the chair of our Trust, the Diocesan Director of Education and two other Diocesan representatives. Members are signatories to the Memorandum and Articles of Association and are akin to shareholders in a company.

**The Trust Board** is comprised of **Directors**. Directors manage the business of the Trust and are accountable to the Bishop and the Members, and in law, for the Trust as a whole. Directors are responsible for preserving and developing the Trust's Catholic character, and this overriding duty permeates everything that they do. The Board sets the overall direction for the Trust, encapsulated in a Strategic Plan, operationalised by the Executive Team.

**The Senior Executive Leader (CEO)**, appointed by Directors, leads an Executive Team of professional leaders who are responsible for delivering the Board's mission, vision and values, including efficient and effective operations and high quality and inclusive education. The CEO is also the Accounting Officer for the Trust, with personal responsibility for assuring compliance with the **Academy Trust Handbook**, the Funding Agreement and all relevant aspects of company and charity law.

**Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)** are committees of the main Trust Board. Each LGB has oversight of one school (or federation) and is a vital link with the local community for that school and for maintaining communication between the school and the Directors. Governors are accountable to the Board, with many delegated duties, outlined in the Trust's **Scheme of Delegation**.

**Headteachers** are responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. Headteachers belong to the **Heads Operations Committee (HOC)**, set up to provide a focus for the setting of policy, to facilitate communication between the Board and to foster purposeful collaboration and the dissemination of good practice.

**The Governance Professional (Clerk)** is appointed by Directors and provides independent governance advice, guidance and administrative support to the Board and the LGBs. The Clerk supports Directors and Governors in understanding and fulfilling their legal roles and responsibilities and supports the flow of information throughout the governance structure.



# Who's who in SJB CMAT

## The Directors



**Mary Sparrow**  
*Interim Chair of the Board of Directors.*

*Company Director of a local leisure company*

Wide experience in the education sector at both primary and secondary phases.

**Fr Alan Hodgson**  
*Dean of the Cathedral of St John the Baptist*

Fr Alan is the Dean of the Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist and represents the bishop in the running of the Cathedral Church. Fr Alan studied at the Pontifical College Beda in Rome, was ordained in 2019 and previously served as assistant priest at St Mary's in Ipswich and Our Lady of the Assumption and the English Martyrs in Cambridge. Fr Alan was appointed as a new ecumenical canon of the Anglican cathedral in June 2024



**Phil Beecher**  
*Chief Operating Officer at a The Active Learning Trust, previously CFO at Broad Horizons Education Trust*

Qualified as a chartered accountant at Pricewaterhouse Coopers. Specialism in accounting and audit with wider skills and experience including strategy, risk management, governance, procurement, IT and HR which have been built up working across the private sector, the NHS and education. Track record of delivering organisational improvement at senior management and executive level, having spoken at regional and national conferences on use of the apprenticeship levy to support this.

**Mark Welsh**  
*Head of Education and Employability at English Football League Trust.*

Previously Project Manager at NCC Children's Services with extensive experience as an education leader for a variety of colleges, training providers and charitable trusts within Adult and Youth Offending (13-19) and SEMH provision. A proven track record of transforming education and skills provision for vulnerable people.



**Julie O'Connor**  
*Retired Director of the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia's Diocesan Schools Commission*

Nineteen years' experience as Diocesan Schools Director advising on Catholic ethos, strategy and senior appointments across East Anglia, and supporting schools and the Diocese. Previously Chair of Notre Dame High School's Governing Body.



# Who's who in SJB CMAT

## The Directors



### **Dan McKeown**

*Headteacher of Coltishall Primary School, with extensive experience of leadership coaching and development.*

Supported the development of middle leaders in the Norfolk 'Do Different' cluster, as a coach for the National College of School Leadership. As a Specialist Leader of Education, linked to Eaton Hall Teaching School, provided leadership support to several schools. Previously a parent governor at St Francis of Assisi Primary School.

### **Neville Kyrke-Smith**

*Retired National Charity Director*

Neville was the National Director of Aid to the Church in Need UK for 31 years. He was awarded the Papal Knighthood of St Gregory in 2021 in recognition of his work at ACN for suffering Christians. He is a parishioner at St Benet's, Beccles, and involved with a number of charities.



### **Lorraine Prince**

*Head of networks for the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership*

Lorraine Prince is the Head of Networks for The Church of England Education Office, focusing on EDIJ, SEND, Trauma, Courageous Advocacy, and Flourishing Schools. She co-leads the Archbishop of Canterbury's Difference Course for Secondary Schools, helping pupils develop peace-making skills and bridge divides. Lorraine also co-leads the BAMEed Eastern region network, ensuring diverse representation in the education workforce

### **Josie Barnett**

*Recently retired following extensive management experience across business, public and charity sectors.*

Josie has experience of planning, executing and supervising projects to meet the wide range of strategic objectives of an organisation. Senior Management roles at Norfolk County Council involved establishing strong UK and European networks across multiple stakeholders to deliver Central Government schemes for sustainability projects. Recently serving on the Diocesan Board of Education, Josie developed knowledge of establishing and supporting the development of other Multi Academy Trusts.



# Who's who in SJB CMAT

## Trust Executive Team



**Joe Richardson**  
*Chief Executive Officer (CEO)*

Wide and successful experience in school leadership across both primary and secondary school settings. Led the growth of a Trust from 3 to 17 schools, driving improvement across the Trust community through a focus on ensuring support for leaders to be highly effective in their settings. Significant experience as both Headteacher and CEO, guiding schools to outcomes significantly above national averages and with great strength across both Ofsted and Catholic School Inspection.

**Roger Higgins**  
*Director of Trust Improvement*

Has a range of experience in roles focussed on improving teaching and learning. As Director of the Julian Teaching School Hub, led the provision of high-quality training for teachers at key stages of their careers as well as quality assuring the induction of Early Career Teachers in a range of settings. As Director of Norwich Research School, provided support for school leaders in the use of evidence to improve outcomes, particularly for Disadvantaged pupils. Previous roles include Assistant Headteacher and Head of Science at Notre Dame High School. Prior to working in Education, gained experience of large change projects through working in Information Technology for Financial institutions.



**Peter Pažitka**  
*Director of Finance and Operations*

Trust Chief Financial Officer since April 2018. The senior non-teaching professional involved in determining the strategic direction of the Trust, taking the lead in the effective and efficient development, provision and operation of the Trust's business functions, ensuring best practice, financial stability and growth. Experienced finance professional with over 15 years of education-specific expertise in mergers, governance, accounting and project management. A fellow member of the Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants (FCCA).

**Ben Serruys**  
*Acting Director of Professional Development (including the Julian Teaching School Hub)*

Has a range of experience as a teacher and leader in primary schools. Previously, was the Head of English and an Assistant Headteacher in a large school in Norwich, installing effective teaching & learning systems for Reading & Writing across all year groups. Has experience as a Writing Moderator both for the Local Authority and across Multi-Academy trusts. More recently, within the Teaching School Hub, has led high-quality training for teachers and leaders at all stages of their careers, in particular ECTs, and, as an Appropriate Body Lead, supported and challenged schools to ensure that ECT induction processes are robust.



**April MacQueen**  
*Teaching & Learning and CPD Lead*

Very experienced in teaching and leadership in primary schools. Facilitator for the Julian Teaching School Hub - provides coaching for ECT mentors across Norfolk. Previously, governor at 2 junior schools for 4 years and member of the Improvement Panel. As Trust Teaching & Learning and CPD Lead, provides professional support and challenge, modelling and coaching, for primary school leaders and staff. Works collaboratively with leaders to accurately evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their school, and its strategies for improvement. Designs and implements training and support packages, for improved performance and outcomes. Facilitates Professional Learning Networks across the Trust.

**Cat Randall-Smith**  
*Head of HR*

HR professional with over 8 years' experience across IT, health and education sectors. Led transformational HR initiatives during periods of rapid organisational growth, successfully implementing DEI strategies and modernising HR practices from compliance functions to strategic drivers of performance. Specialist expertise in staff development, organisational change management, team leadership and creating high-performing, inclusive cultures. Brings strategic HR perspective to support Trust governance, focusing on outstanding outcomes, staff wellbeing and organisational effectiveness. Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).



# Trust Governance

All documents referred to here are listed in Appendix A, with further information.

## The Purpose of Governance

In academy trusts, the purpose of governance is to provide:

- strategic leadership
- accountability and assurance
- strategic engagement ([Academy Trust Handbook](#) and [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#))

## Trust Board

The Trust is both a company limited by guarantee and (an “exempt”) charity, regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. The Board of Directors act as both charity trustees and the directors of the company (the academy trust). The task of governance is set out in the **Articles of Association**; those responsible for governance must ensure that it is effective, accountable and ethical.

The Trust Board has a focus on ensuring the Trust delivers an excellent education to all pupils while maintaining effective financial management and ensuring compliance with:

- the Trust’s charitable object
- regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements
- the Trust’s funding agreement

The Directors are accountable to the Bishop to ensure that the schools within the Trust are conducted as Catholic schools in accordance with Canon law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Directors preserve and foster the Trust’s Catholic character and inclusive culture, as well as setting and championing the Trust’s **Strategic Improvement Plan**. Directors also have strategic and statutory responsibility for safeguarding and SEND arrangements within (and across) the Trust, ensuring the promotion of pupil welfare and for keeping the Trust estates safe and well-maintained.

The Board delegates many of its governance functions to other layers of governance, including to the Board committees, Trust Executive Team, Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) and Headteachers. The **Trust Scheme of Delegation** defines these responsibilities.

## Local Governing Bodies

In developing the Governance structure, the Trust has sought to ensure the responsibility to govern is as much as possible vested in those closest to the impact of decision making. The local tier of governance is absolutely essential to effective governance in a complex organisation such as a multi-academy trust and so the Trust has established a local governance committee for each school, called Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). LGBs seek to retain the distinctive Catholic character and individuality of each school.

The LGB is accountable to the Board and must will comply with any relevant policies, protocols and procedures adopted by the Trust which, in turn, reflect national and Diocesan directions and guidance. However, Governors are the Trust’s ambassadors in the local community and hold deep knowledge of the community and their specific needs. They can most readily involve parents, schools, communities and parishes to ensure decision making is supported by meaningful engagement. Each Local Governing Body acts as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the Board.

Like Directors, Governors are also responsible for fulfilling a largely strategic role in the conduct of the school in conjunction with the Headteacher, who is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school. The purpose of the LGB is, on behalf of the Trust Board, to support and challenge the school senior leaders in relation to delivery of the Trust and school’s priorities, drawing on local knowledge of the school and its community. The focus of each LGB is on the Catholic character and ethos of the school, the quality of education, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Each LGB typically comprises: up to 2 parents, the Headteacher, up to 2 staff, and a majority of +2 Diocesan-appointed Foundation Governors. The responsibilities and powers delegated to each LGB are set out in detail in the **Trust Scheme of Delegation**, which is published on the Trust website. **Terms of Reference** and a **Schedule of Tasks** set out the constitution of LGBs and how the LGB will operate, and are published on GovernorHub.



# Trust Governance

## Key Features of Effective Governance

Effective governance is based on six key features:

- **Strategic leadership** that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
- **Accountability** that drives up educational standards and financial performance.
- **People** with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
- **Structures** that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- **Compliance** with statutory and contractual requirements.
- **Evaluation** to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

For more information about these features, the core functions and governance as a whole, see the DfE **Academy Trust Governance Guide**.

## Principles of public life

All those elected or appointed to governing boards of any type are expected to fulfil their duties in line with the seven principles of public life (the Nolan principles):

- Selflessness
- Objectivity
- Openness
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Honesty

These features set out the way in which those responsible for governance undertake their role, guide their purpose, and direct how governance is organised, develop and improved. Governance is a collective responsibility and each person contributes according to their individual skills-set, knowledge and experience.

*“The board, accounting officer and executive leadership team create a culture of ethical leadership, and follow the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the ‘Nolan Principles’.”*  
DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide



# Getting started - Induction

## Induction

There are various things that you must do before being confirmed in your role and some things you are encouraged to do so that you can become effective as soon as possible. Some of these are procedural requirements, some are to familiarise yourself with the role and others are to get to know the Trust or school. These are listed in the induction checklist below.

Induction Checklist	Completed
Induction meeting with Chair of Board or LGB /CEO/ Diocesan Director / Headteacher	
Initial School/Trust familiarisation (e.g. websites, school visit)	
Complete application form, (including priest's reference for foundation roles)	
Receive login to GovernorHub	
Complete declarations: Pecuniary Interests; CES & Trust Codes of Conduct (on GovernorHub)	
Complete DBS	
Meet with assigned mentor/buddy	
Read essential documents listed in Appendix A	
Complete online training modules via 'The Knowledge' on GovernorHub, including Safeguarding	
Receive schedule of dates for meetings	

## Expectations

Governors and Directors are expected to act in good faith and in the best interests of the Trust and the schools within the Trust.

### In order to fulfil their role, each LGB and the Trust Board should:

- respect the professional expertise of staff
- work in partnership with the Headteacher and Trust executive team for the benefit of the school and Trust and its pupils
- demonstrate its commitment, both collectively and individually
- act and take decisions that are in the best interests of the school/Trust and not those of self, individuals or groups
- support the school/Trust in its relationships with parents, community and parish
- recognise the need for both induction and ongoing training and development

### Individual Directors and Governors should:

- prepare for each meeting by checking the agenda, reading accompanying documents and posing questions in advance via GovernorHub
- send apologies to the clerk should they be unable to attend a meeting
- participate in self-evaluation or review of the effectiveness of governance
- attend an induction session and such training and meetings as is reasonably required to update and improve the knowledge and skills available within the LGB/Board. This includes annual safeguarding training.

### For LGB meetings and visits, Governors should:

- attend as many LGB meetings as possible
- visit the schools as part of planned monitoring visits, as determined by the Headteacher
- join interview or appeal panels, as appropriate
- attend opportunities to enable governors to meet school staff and engage with parents, in agreement with the Headteacher, e.g. part of INSET days, open days. Parents' evenings
- attend some school events, e.g. assemblies, sporting events



# Getting started (continued)

## Information and questioning

You will use information from a range of sources to ensure you and other Governors/Directors know what is happening in the school/Trust, the strengths and areas for development, the planned actions and the progress and impact of those actions. This information will come from the Headteacher/Executive Team, other staff, data, reports, visits and external audits or reviews.

You will be presented with data on aspects of school or Trust performance such as pupil attainment and progress, attendance, quality of teaching and the budget. Staff will help you to interpret this, but you will be expected to ask questions about it as part of your core role of holding leaders to account.

It is for the LGB or Board to determine what information they would like to see, and they can request additional information or for a member of staff to present on an area they lead. However, such requests should be reasonable, and you should aim to use reports and data that are already produced if possible. You should also ensure you are trained or briefed so that you can make best use of information presented to you.

A useful thing to remember is to ask 'so what' questions, for example:

- Last term we agreed to the school spending £5,000 on new ICT equipment: what has been the impact of this?
- The data show that there is an issue with underperformance of boys' writing. Have you identified reasons for this and what steps are you taking to address it? Then follow up at the next meeting to ask about the impact of any actions.

## Communication

The Trust uses an online platform called **GovernorHub** to organise and share resources and communicate with Governors and Directors.

## Support, advice and guidance

Anyone involved in SJB CMAT governance can access support, advice or guidance from the Trust Compliance Manager, Trust clerk or members of the Executive Team.

There is also a wide range of information, support and advice on GovernorHub, including weekly news briefings, articles and top tips.

## Training, development and review

Each Governor and Director is required to attend an induction session, to introduce them to the school/Trust and their role. Everyone involved in governance has to complete annual safeguarding training.

The Board, LGBs and individuals are encouraged to identify their training and development needs. These may be met by accessing online or face-face training, attending governance events, being briefed by appropriate staff or reading up on that area.

The chairs of the Board and LGBs meet twice a year. These provide opportunities for sharing ideas, effective practice and information.

Online training is available through **Knowledge** on **GovernorHub**. This gives Governors unlimited access to expert advice, guidance and training, all in one place.

The Trust carries out regular reviews of the effectiveness of governance across the Trust.

Keep up to date  
via **The Hoot**



# Safeguarding and SEND

These are key areas of which governors and directors should have an understanding. The following is a brief introduction. Further information and training can be accessed via GovernorHub. All Governors and Directors will have training on safeguarding as part of their induction and are expected to have regular safeguarding training.

## Safeguarding

Our Trust and schools have a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm. Safeguarding means: protecting children from abuse and maltreatment; preventing harm to children's health or development; ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care; and, taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) sets out statutory guidance for schools and the responsibility of governing bodies, and it is updated annually. The **Trust Safeguarding Policy** is updated annually so it aligns with KCSIE. Each school has their own safeguarding Policy, aligned to the Local Authority procedures within which the school is situated. LGBs should review their school's policy annually.

The Board and each LGB have oversight of the effectiveness of safeguarding across the Trust/school. The Board has a Safeguarding Director and each LGB has a Safeguarding Governor. These individuals will have more detailed oversight of safeguarding, but every Governor and Director should have an understanding of safeguarding and the responsibilities of the Board/LGB. They are all expected to attend safeguarding training and to read KCSIE each year. Each LGB should review data on safeguarding incidents and should receive an annual Safeguarding Report.

Regular safeguarding audits are carried out in each school and are shared with the Board and LGBs.

## SEND

Inclusion is a top priority in our Trust and we have developed a set of principles, within our **Trust Fundamentals**, that set out our expectations with regards to inclusion and are the lenses through which we quality assure provision in our schools.

SEND can affect a child or young person's ability to learn in many different ways, for example their behaviour or ability to socialise; their reading or writing; their ability to understand things; concentration levels; or, physical ability.

There are legal requirements for schools, including having a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND; ensuring that pupils with SEND get the support they need and engage in the activities of the school; and, working in partnership with parents and families. Each school in the Trust has a SEND Policy and a special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo). SENDCOs meet together regularly as a SEND Professional Learning Network (PLN) to share effective practices.

All governing boards have legal duties in relation to SEND, basically to ensure that schools comply with their duties. In SJB CMAT, in practice, these functions are delegated to the LGBs and the Executive Team, who carry out SEND Reviews. We have also set up a Trust SEND Implementation Team, which includes SENDCOs, Headteachers and Executive Team to oversee improvements in provision for SEND across the Trust.

However, every Director and Governor should have an understanding of SEND and the responsibilities of the LGB/Board and should evaluate the educational outcomes of pupils with SEND.

*"We welcome all pupils, enabling them to flourish in an environment that promotes the intrinsic worth and human dignity of each child. Trust Inclusion Fundamentals*



# Key Information *provided to Governors and Directors*

The schools and the Executive Team produce a number of key documents during the year that may be presented at meetings to support Governors and Directors in their strategic, accountability and assurance roles.

These include:

- **Trust 3 Year Strategic Improvement Plan (TSIP):** This encapsulates what we are striving to achieve across the Trust, and how to plan to achieve it. It outlines and expands on the strategic aims, defining the key goals and performance measures that will demonstrate our successes and impact. This plan informs each school's individual **School Improvement Plan (SIDP)**. School leaders review the impact of implementations on a termly basis, by annotating their SIDPs. This is reported to LGBs. SIDPs are written to align with Trust strategic aims and KPIs.
- **Trust Strategic Improvement Plan (TSIP) Reviews:** The executive team uses the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) outlined in the Trust's Strategic Improvement Plan to review impact of implementations and progress towards our strategic aims each term, reporting to Directors at Board and/or TLS meetings. The Directors receive a report (dashboard) in the spring and summer terms of each academic year.
- **School on a Page (SOAP):** On a termly basis, Headteachers will update their SOAP document in advance of School Improvement Visits. The SOAP contains key contextual and performance data about the school.
- **SOAP Dashboard:** On a termly basis, the Executive Team will provide a dashboard for Directors, summarising information in individual SOAPs on a single page.
- **School Improvement Report (SIR):** On a termly basis, a summary report for each school will be written by the Executive Team, with Headteachers contributing to these. The report and SOAP will then be reported to LGBs and subsequently Directors, with both levels of Governance scrutinising these. (These have replaced the Headteacher Report to Governors)
- **SEF:** Self-evaluation is a crucial part of our schools' ongoing cycle of review and improvement planning. For schools expecting Ofsted, the Trust provides a self-evaluation summary template which enables schools to draw together an evaluation of different aspects of their work leading to an evaluation of the quality of education provided overall. School leaders update these regularly and share with LGBs, as well as the Trust Executive Team.
- **Executive Team Reports:** The CEO and Deputy CEO write a joint report at key points in the year, reviewing progress towards the Trust Aims and Ambition, for Directors' scrutiny. These reports are supplemented by the Strategic Improvement Plan Review, SOAP Dashboard and school-level documents where appropriate.
- **Other Reports:** Headteachers, members of the Executive Team or other school leaders will present other reports, for example:
  - **Data Dashboards** - which capture an up-to-date record of progress and attainment of cohorts and key groups of pupils, as well as an analysis of the data and any next steps planned to improve progress or close gaps.
  - **Finance Reports** – including Management Accounts
  - **Reports on specific aspects of provision** – for example, subject leader or SENDCO reports



# Appendix A - Key Governance Documents

## SJB CMAT documents

- **Master Funding Agreement (MFA)** is the legal contract between the Secretary of State (SoS) and the Trust, setting out the conditions on which the Trust receives its funding. It is administered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- **Supplemental Funding Agreement (SFA)** is the legal contract between the SoS and the Trust, setting out the conditions under which each school in the Trust receives its funding. There is an SFA for each school.
- **Memorandum of Association** is the document signed by members to form the Trust as a company.
- **Articles of Association** set out the charitable objects of the Trust along with its governance composition and overarching procedures
- **Scheme of Delegation** sets out the powers and responsibilities for the following individuals and groups: Members, Trust Board, Executive Team, LGBs and Headteachers. (+ useful summary table)
- **Local Governing Body Constitution and Terms of Reference** sets out the constitution of a LGB, the process for appointment and removal of Governors and how the LGB will operate.
- **Role Descriptions** set out the roles and responsibilities of each Governor role
- **Schedule of Tasks** sets out the key termly tasks for LGBS.
- **Governors' Toolkit for Effective Questioning** provides governors with guidance to support them in their 'critical friend' role.
- **Trust Policies** have been developed to ensure compliant and consistent practice across the Trust. They cover a wide range of areas such as finance, HR, safeguarding, health and safety, admissions and complaints. These are published on the Trust website. Individual schools have their own policies for areas such as behaviour, curriculum, teaching and learning, attendance, home learning and uniform.
- **Trust Annual Report and Financial Statements** have to be published each year on the Trust's website.

All documents referred to here can be accessed via the [SJB CMAT website](#) or in the [Resources](#) folder on **GovernorHub**

## Diocesan & National documents

- **Christ at the Centre** provides a framework for understanding and promoting Catholic education in schools. It emphasises the central role of Christ in shaping the ethos, values, and identity of Catholic schools, and it outlines the purpose and mission of these institutions within the wider context of the Catholic faith
- **Academy Trust Handbook** is issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and sets out the financial framework and governance requirements from Academy trusts, reflecting their status as companies, charities and public bodies. It is a key document for everyone involved in governance in SJB CMAT.
- **The Charity Commission:** The Essential Trustee sets out (for Directors) the legal requirements that Directors (trustees) must met, and the good practice that they need to follow, to operate effectively and to comply with their duties.
- **DfE Academy Trust Governance Guide** is a reference document for those involved in trust governance. It provides essential information from a range of sources on the trust boards roles and legal responsibilities.
- **Governing a School Trust** is a Confederation of School Trusts (CST) document that outlines key guidance for effective governance in School Trusts. it's a valuable resource for anyone seeking to improve the governance of schools and trusts, ensuring both compliance and positive impact.



# Appendix B - Glossary

## (Summary) Glossary of Governance Terms

<b>Academy</b>	Academy	A publicly funded school that operates independently of the local authority and is overseen by a governing body or trust.
<b>Academy Trust Governance Guide</b>	Academy Trust Governance Guide	Outlines the core roles in academy governance and provides a summary of all the legal duties of trust boards. It is updated regularly to reflect changes in the law and education policy. (DfE)
<b>Academy Trust Handbook</b>	Academy Trust Handbook	Government guidance that “describes the governance and financial responsibilities of academy trusts reflecting their status as charitable companies acting in the public interest” Compliance with the handbook is required by The Trust’s funding agreements.
<b>AO</b>	Accounting Officer	The Trust’s senior executive leader. The AO signs a personal undertaking to the Secretary of State to be personally responsible for the sound financial management of the academy (or Multi Academy Trust) – value for money, regularity and propriety.
<b>Articles of Association</b>	Articles of Association	The legal governing document for an academy that sets out its rules for operating, including the composition of the governing board
<b>Board</b>	Board of Directors	The governing board of a multi-academy trust (MAT) – the accountable body, operating at a strategic level.
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer	The senior executive leader in a multi academy trust (MAT). They are held to account by the trust board for all aspects of the MAT as a whole.
<b>CFO</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Their role is to have strategic oversight of the financial performance of each academy within the trust.
<b>Chair</b>	Chair	Chair of the Board of Directors or Chair of the Local Governing Body
<b>Charitable objects</b>	Charitable objects	The academy trust’s purpose, set out in the Articles of Association
<b>Co-opted Governor/Director</b>	Co-opted Governor/Director	Appointed by the governing board, generally on the basis of their skills.
<b>Director (Trustee)</b>	(Known as Directors in our Trust)	Individuals responsible for the governance and strategic direction of a MAT. They are accountable for financial performance, ensuring educational quality, and setting policies.
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education	The government department responsible for education and children’s services in England.
<b>ESFA</b>	Education and Skills Funding Agency	Government agency accountable for funding education and training
<b>Executive Team</b>	Executive leaders	Those held to account by the Board for the performance of the schools. This may be the CEO, as well as other senior employees/staff, depending on the structure of the organisation.
<b>Foundation Governor/Director</b>	Foundation Governor/Director	Appointed by the Bishop with the purpose of preserving and promoting the religious character.
<b>Fundamentals</b>	Trust School Fundamentals	Aspects of provision, broken down into measurable criteria the Trust considers essential for schools to provide exceptional education.
<b>GAG</b>	General Annual Grant	The main source of revenue funding for academy trusts.
<b>IDSR</b>	Ofsted’s Inspection Data Summary Report	Tool used by Ofsted to provide a summary of performance data for school
<b>KCSIE</b>	Keeping Children Safe in Education	Statutory guidance from the DfE which tells schools how to keep children safe from harm.



Summary) Glossary of Governance Terms continued		
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicators	Metrics used to measure the success or performance of a school or MAT, including educational outcomes, attendance, and financial stability.
<b>LGB</b>	Local Governing Body	A committee of a trust board for an individual academy within a MAT. See 'academy committee'.
<b>MAT</b>	Multi-academy Trust	A MAT is a single legal entity. A charitable company with a board of Directors (trustees) that is accountable for all schools (academies) within the trust.
<b>Members</b>	Members	Members sit above the Directors in the governance structure. They are the “guardians” of the trust and have powers to change the articles of association and appoint Directors. They also hold the Directors to account, for example at annual general meetings (AGMs).
<b>Ofsted</b>	Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services, and Skills	Ofsted inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, as well as those providing education and skills training.
<b>Register of Interests</b>	Register of interests	Records the relevant business and pecuniary interests of all governors, directors and senior staff that have served over the past 12 months. All boards must create one.
<b>Risk Register</b>	Risk Register	A tool used by the board of trustees to identify and manage risks to the MAT’s performance, finances, and operations.
<b>RSC</b>	Regional Schools Commissioner	A DfE-appointed official responsible for approving academy conversions, intervening in underperforming schools, and overseeing the growth of MATs in a particular region.
<b>Scheme of Delegation</b>	Scheme of Delegation	A document defining the lines of responsibility and accountability in a MAT, sometimes referred to as a roles and responsibilities document.
<b>SEND</b>	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	A term used to describe students who require additional support due to learning difficulties or disabilities
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Safeguarding	Measures taken to ensure the safety and well-being of children, including protection from abuse or neglect
<b>SFA</b>	Supplemental Funding Agreement	The legal contract between the Secretary of State and the Trust, setting out the conditions under which each school in the Trust receives its funding. There is an SFA for each school.
<b>SLT</b>	Senior Leadership Team	The key leaders within a school, such as the headteacher, deputy head, and heads of department, who manage daily operations.
<b>SLA</b>	Service Level Agreement	A formal contract between the MAT and service providers outlining the expectations, responsibilities, and quality of services provided (e.g., IT, HR).
<b>Staff Governor</b>	Staff Governor	An employee of the school who is also a governor.
<b>Trust</b>	(Multi-academy) Trust	A legal grouping of academies, responsible for producing annual audited accounts and for the effective running of its component academes.

More terms can be found in the SJB CMAT Governance (detailed) Glossary accessed via **GovernorHub** in the **Resources Folder** and online glossaries: [The Key Glossary](#) and NGA [Governance Glossary](#)





**When our people flourish,  
our children flourish**





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