



## Governor Impact Statement Academic Year 2021/2022

<b>Academy</b>	St Mary's C of E Primary School
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	David Churchill
<b>Date</b>	2021/22

### **Governance at St Mary's within MEAAT**

St Mary's is one of two primary schools in the Mid Essex Anglican Academy Trust (MEAAT). The Trust board has a particular focus on overall vision, strategy, and finance. Each school has a local governing body (LGB). The focus and work of the trust board enables the LGB to concentrate on the matters affecting the children on a daily basis, namely safeguarding, wellbeing, curriculum, co-curricular activities, progress and development.

### **Vision**

The Trust aims to provide a safe, secure and caring Christian environment, where every individual is an accepted and respected member of the school community. The children experience a wide ranging, thematic, creative curriculum, learn to the highest standard and have fun too.

### **Organisation of LGB**

In 2021/22, the school's LGB was made up of the following governors:

#### Incumbent

Father Chris Mann – Religious education and character of the school; church links

#### 2 x governors nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford

David Churchill – Chair; Safeguarding; Broad curriculum; MEAAT rep

Rachel Patel – Vice-Chair; Maths; Wellbeing

#### 2 x governors nominated by St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Lesley Cook – English

Shefali Kulkarni (1<sup>st</sup> meeting in May 2022)

#### 2 x parent governors

Dan Brimelow – Science; Health & Safety

Jo Gurney – EYFS; Inclusion

Laura Judd (staff governor)

Sally Taggart (Headteacher)

The LGB is run without sub committees and looks to meet 5 – 6 times per year. There was 1 vacancy that was filled mid-way through the year.

### **Impact of Covid on the work of the LGB**

The change in the national picture meant that governors were able to complete a fuller schedule of visits. There was a particular focus on inclusion, as national evidence suggested that less advantaged children had been most impacted by the pandemic. The Chair continued to speak to the Head regularly, and it was evident that it was a very challenging year for staff due to high levels of sickness and absence, particularly in the spring term.

### **Work with the school's senior leadership team (SLT) to set strategic direction and to represent the academy's local community and stakeholder**

- At the start of the year, the LGB worked with the school team to set priorities for the year.
- Priorities were set out in the School Development Plan (SDP), then these priorities were monitored and RAG-rated termly to check that we were making progress against them. There was a minimal number of priorities that were RAG-rated red at some point during the year, which was mainly because work on them was scheduled to happen later in the year. The school had made progress against all priorities by the end of the year.
- Governors continued to receive the weekly school newsletter, which was a way of checking on the provision the children were getting, and to see the fantastic and fun work that the school and pupils were doing in school every day.
- The LGB supported the school to invest further money to boost the number of staff working in school.
- The parent survey carried out in Summer 2022 had over 100 responses and was extremely positive about the school and the children's experiences. There were some areas identified that we will be focussing on in 2022/23.

### **Challenge and support the SLT to improve outcomes**

- At every LGB meeting, governors asked the school team for examples of where we were progressing against the SDP.
- As well as informal drop ins and attendance at school events, such as the first summer fair for 3 years, governors carried out 16 school visits. Notes of each visit were saved on the portal, so that all governors could view them and prepare any questions for the next LGB meeting. Over the year, we looked at a range of key areas, such as the refreshed approach to reading, maths across the school, the new EYFS curriculum, history and art foundation subjects, SEND, inclusion, and the key elements needed for a successful SIAMS inspection.
- During class visits and discussions, governors were tasked with asking how specific groups of children were progressing, such as SEND and pupil premium children.
- With regular updates on the budget, the LGB saw that the school had sustained its exceptionally strong financial performance. The LGB was very supportive of any requests to the trust board to increase spending on teaching and support staff in school.
- Due to the positive impact of the chaplain's work on pupil and staff wellbeing, as well as their support for worship and R.E. provision, the governors supported their continued employment and extension of the pilot across both schools.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

- Governor visits to year groups and subject areas confirmed that through our curriculum and learning environments, we are recognising and celebrating the languages, cultures, religions and races that represent our pupils, staff and families.
- Almost all pupils took part in the wide range of activities and clubs that the school was able to put on again in 2021/22, although findings from the parent survey suggested we should do more to broadcast the excellent and extensive co-curricular offer.

<b>Other areas of Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safeguarding checkpoint and single central record (SCR) checks were carried out.</li><li>• There was trust-wide training on the new Ofsted framework with Schools' Choice, and on Unconscious Bias with experts from the University of Brighton</li><li>• The Health &amp; Safety governor ensured that all changes to coronavirus risk assessments and planning were robust and effective until these were no longer mandatory.</li><li>• Schools' Choice carried out an independent governance review for us. Overall, it was very positive about the LGB. It also made some helpful suggestions to consider, for example, regarding our links with the trust board and our long-term succession planning.</li></ul>



<b>LGB Priorities for 2022/23</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health and wellbeing of staff and pupils.</li><li>• Working with senior leaders and subject leads to ensure provision in every foundation subject is outstanding and matches the strong provision provided by the school overall.</li><li>• Ensuring children have opportunities to plan and organise their own acts of worship.</li><li>• Focusing on areas suggested by the parent survey, such as streamlining communication channels and making sure all (even though there are very few) parental concerns are addressed swiftly and effectively.</li></ul>