

ST MARGARET'S CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

GOVERNOR INDUCTION PACK

"Learn to Love, Love to Learn, Strive to Serve"



Approved by:

Governors

Date: September 2025

To be reviewed:

September 2028

OUR STRATEGIC VISION

Learn to Love, Love to Learn, Strive to Serve

We are extremely proud of our school community and our overarching ambition is to provide excellent education for all children, whilst ensuring we develop the whole child, alongside an understanding of Christian values, so that our children are confident ambassadors of the world, who can make a difference to their future and the future of others.

- To provide a happy, safe and positive environment where all children feel valued and are encouraged to embrace the love of learning, knowing that they can make a difference in their community and the wider world.
- Ensure St Margaret's is a rewarding and supportive place to work where everyone is valued and where we are all encouragers.
- Through our Christian ethos and the teachings of Jesus we will endeavour to develop thoughtful, confident and resilient children, underpinned by humility, who will be equipped with the skills and knowledge to succeed in life and make a difference.
- Provide all children with excellent teaching across all the curriculum subjects so that every child is excited about learning and makes excellent progress.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum so that our pupils have the opportunity to develop expert skills and knowledge in all areas of learning. We are developing Geographers, Historians, Artists, Mathematicians, Scientists etc. for the future.
- To promote high standards of behaviour, which reinforce mutual respect and understanding of what it is to be a citizen of the school, the local, national and world community,
- Provide a well organised, stimulating and secure learning environment in which children's skills and knowledge are enhanced and challenged and where best efforts are celebrated.
- To prepare our children for the next stage in their learning- Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Secondary.
- Encourage our children to develop morally as well as spiritually to question, debate and seek clarification whilst having the confidence to retain their individuality.

Learn to Love, Love to Learn, Strive to Serve

Mission Statement

Together we build success through faith knowledge and understanding

For nothing will be impossible with God -Luke 1:37

We are a welcoming, ambitious Christian school where all faiths and cultures are respected and where everyone is a precious gift of God, created in God's image.

We believe that there are 6 Core Values which shape the life of our Church of England School.

Respect, Forgiveness, Thankfulness, Responsibility, Perseverance, Truthfulness.

Welcome to St Margaret's CE VA Primary School

Dear Governor,

We are delighted to welcome you to our Governing Body and to our school.

This pack has been put together by governors and we hope it will give you useful guidance in the early stages of your governorship and help you to become and feel, part of the team.

Today's world is very competitive and staff and the Governing Body of St Margaret's are committed to continue to raise our already high standards and in a creative, stimulating environment help our children gain the necessary skills to become happy and fulfilled adults who are equipped to make a difference in the world.

We are a Voluntary Aided church school which means that we have a Trust Deed and are the employers of all our staff. As a school we can set our own Admissions Policy and term dates. The day to day running of the school is overseen and supported by Sandwell Local Authority, SIPS partnership and Lichfield Diocese. Therefore, we are inspected by Ofsted from the Education point and by SIAMS from the faith perspective.

Some governors are Foundation Governors appointed by St Margaret's Church or the Lichfield Diocese to maintain the school's foundation but the school encourages all Governors to participate in foundation Governor training offered by the Diocese.

The full governing Body meets once each term and all governors are also members of one (or more) committee which meet at other times to discuss issues in depth and report back to the full Governing Body.

Some of the content may be very unfamiliar to you as much has changed in education since we were all in school, but given appropriate training and support from the rest of the team it will begin to fall into place.

Please remember we were all new at one time! We welcome questions and discussion points that may be puzzling to you – they may be matters we all want to know about as well, or they could be issues that we have worked out and we can explain them to you.

We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Kind Regards,

Mr Ian Simms

Chair of Governors

Purpose of this pack:

- To welcome new governors to the Governing Body and enable them to meet other governors
- To encourage new governors to visit our school to meet the staff and experience our school ethos.
- To explain the role and responsibilities of governors.
- To explain how the governing body and its committees work.

The Role of the Governor

School governors are volunteers who help to run the school and make a positive contribution in making a difference to education in their communities.

The main aim of the governing body is to maintain and improve the school's standards of education.

Its work can be divided into four key areas:

- Setting the school's vision and strategic aims, agreeing plans and policies, and making creative use of resources.
- Monitoring and evaluating performance, be a source of challenge and support to the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team to support and challenge them in managing the school.
- Ensuring that the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves, to its local community, to those who fund and maintain it, as well as to the staff it employs.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money is well spent.

Governing Body Powers

The Governing Body is recognised in law as a corporate body, which means it has a legal identity separate from that of its Governors.

It also means that individual Governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the Governing Body except where the whole Governing Body has delegated a specific duty to that individual. The Governing Body can also decide to delegate certain responsibilities to Committees that it has established.

Governors will, therefore, take collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the Governing Body to publicly support decisions.

Top tips for new governors

- Attendance at meetings, essential even if at the beginning you are just listening. This will help you know and understand the business of the Governing Body.
- Confidentiality, remember Governing Body meetings are not open to the public:
 - Visitors may attend by invitation but may be asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed.
 - Governors observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the Governing Body in meetings from their visits to school as governors. How an individual governor votes should always be regarded as confidential.
- Consider the best interests of the school.
- All governors are equal.
- Remember decision making is corporate, bring your view, but abide by the corporate decision.
- Get to know your school.
- Don't be part of decision making where a personal interest or occupation allows you to become biased declare an interest and withdraw.
- If you don't feel you have enough information to decide then say so.
- Prepare well for meetings, obvious things as follows:
 - Read the papers before the meeting
 - Prepare your thoughts and questions before the meeting
 - Bring with you a pen, your diary and your annotated papers.
- Remember the Governing Body steers, the headteacher manages the rowing and the vessel

Code of Conduct for St Margaret's CE Primary

Governing Board

This code sets out the expectations and commitment required from school governors and academy members, trustees and local governors in order for the trust/board to properly carry out its work within the school and the community. Governing Boards and Trusts are responsible for standards in their schools and are held to account for this by the Local Authority (maintained schools) Academy Sponsors (academy schools), Ofsted and DfE.

Governors and trustees make a vital contribution to the lives of children. Schools and trusts should aim to recruit, induct and continuously develop high calibre individuals with the relevant skills/experience. Skills should be reviewed on an annual basis or when relevant and all those involved in governance should demonstrate the following competences:

- a strong commitment to the role and to improving outcomes for children;
- the inquisitiveness to question and analyse;
- the willingness to learn;
- collaborative and creative;
- good inter-personal skills;
- appropriate levels of literacy in English (unless a board/trust is prepared to make special arrangements);
- sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data.

The three strategic functions of governing boards

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school(s)/trust
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets

- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the lead executive/headteacher (where delegated)
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school/s and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the lead executive/headteacher (where delegated)
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the board, we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and its strategic role.
- We understand how the role of the board differs from and works with others including the headteacher and where appropriate, executive leaders, trust boards and academy committees.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.

- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school/group of schools *and that the Christian ethos of a Church School underpins all that we do*. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.
- We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the governing board.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor/trustee/academy committee member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.

- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school/s, with all visits arranged in advance with the senior executive leader/headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor/trustee/academy committee member.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors/trustees/academy committee members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools).

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors/trustees/academy committee members, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities' any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (see annex) or which may place pupils at risk.

- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the executive leaders, staff and parents, the trust, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school/trust business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that a register of interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

Ceasing to be a governor/trustee/academy committee member

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor/trustee/academy committee member leaves office

Breach of this Code of Conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing board member, such as the vice chair will investigate

Annex - The seven principles of public life

Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations)

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

- **Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

- **Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

- **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Governor Visits

Please see the attached document

Governors are expected to visit school at least once each term with a specific focus directed by the Head.

Training

We have a named Training Governor who will coordinate the Governing Body's Training.

As Governing Body, we have purchased training provided by SIPS, Lichfield Diocese and The National Governors Association. You will receive termly copies of the training programmes from these providers.

The Governing Body encourages new governors to undertake specific training which introduces them to their new role. It provides a good all-round look at many aspects of being an effective governor and it also enables you to meet other people in the same position

Governor training is directed by completion the Skills Audit and the Meeting with the Chair of Governors as part of a yearly review of governance.

There is an expectation that governors who attend training will provide a written summary of the main points, which can be discussed and expanded on in the verbal feedback to the Governing Body.

Meetings-Full governors and Committee Meetings

We meet once each term as a full governing body, usually from 6pm until 8.30pm on a weekday. The dates of these meetings are usually planned in advance at the start of the school year.

You will be emailed an agenda and specific documents before the meeting. It is important that you read the documents sent to you prior to the meeting as we have to work through them relatively quickly to get through everything! The Full Governor's meeting is where we report back on any relevant committee decisions, we discuss whole Governing body issues and we have the opportunity to ask questions.

Committee Meetings

We ask that each governor joins a committee and it is best to select one that best suits your skills and experience following your discussion with the Chair of Governors and your Mentor.

We have the following committees:

- Teaching and Learning
- Resources (Premises, Finance, Health and Safety)

Our committee meetings are held each term and times vary from 4.30pm/5.00pm start time and last for up to 2.5 hours varying upon the agenda.

In these meetings we are focused on particular areas of school life and delve into them in greater detail. Here we make suggestions and ask more questions and ensure that our committee areas are managed effectively.

Preparing for Meetings

Preparing for Meetings:

As a new governor the following guidance may be useful:

- Be clear about the remit of the meeting.
- Read papers that are sent out before the meeting.
- Order your file to correspond to the order of the agenda.
- Make a note of any questions and areas that you don't understand.
- Ensure that you have completed any tasks that you were asked to do.
- Make a note of any involvement that you have had with the school in order to record your action within the minutes. This will demonstrate and evidence base how well the governing body know the school and reflect the level of involvement.
- Accept a share of the responsibility for work required.
- Ask challenging questions, e.g. 'What difference has this made?'

Confidentiality

Titus 2 Verse 7

“In all things you yourself must be an example of good behaviour. Be sincere and serious in your teaching.”

All Governing Body papers, including Minutes, must be open to inspection by any member of the public unless it has been determined that an item is confidential. That item will be minuted separately. Governors may, at any point, in the meeting, also request for their discussions to be confidential, which will, of course, be minuted accordingly.

Useful Sources of Information

DfE

Ofsted

Governance Handbook

National Governors Association

New Governor Induction Checklist

Please indicate when you have completed:	Completed	Date
Been welcomed to the Governing Body by the Chair		
Met with the Headteacher/ Chair for an introductory meeting and tour of the school.		
Met informally with the Chair		
Completed L1 Safeguarding		
Completed Prevent Training – Channel Awareness		
Applied for an Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate		
Completed Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests Form		
Completed a Skills Audit/review with governor		
Read the Code of Conduct for Governing Boards		
The link for: DFE Governors Handbook A Competency Framework for Governance Being Strategic- A Guide for Governing Boards and School Leaders For latest version log on to www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook		

Please indicate when you have received:	Completed	Date
Governor's Induction Pack		
Dates for Governor Meetings		
Governor Training Information from SIPS and the Diocese		
Details of Governor Body Committees (Terms of Reference Document)		
Governor Code of Conduct		
Governor Visits Policy and Visit Form		
Details of other Governors		
School Staffing List		
Ofsted Report		
Governing Body Action Plan		
Copies of last 2 full governing meetings		
Copy of the latest School Improvement Plan		

Glossary – Useful Acronyms and Abbreviations

Ofsted	Office for standards in education
SIAMS	Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools
GB	Governing Body
DfE	Department for Education
HT	Headteacher
SIA	School Improvement Advisor
CDA	Christian Distinctiveness Advisor
SAT's	Standard Attainment Tests
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan
EAL	English as Additional Language
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Classes)
ECF	Early Careers Framework (2 years induction)
ECT	Early Careers Teacher
KS 1,2	Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) Key Stage 2 (Years 3,4,5,6)
SEF	Self Evaluation Form
LSA LSP	Learning Support Assistant Learning Support Practitioner