



Chair's Statement

As Chair of the Full Governors Board at St. Thomas CE Primary School I'm pleased to share our Annual Governance Statement with you.

How have governors fulfilled their responsibilities, especially in relation to core functions.

Governors have three core strategic functions, these are:

- 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

We fulfil these functions by meeting with the Head, and other senior leaders, on a termly basis. We examine the longer-term plans that the Head has for the school and what the priorities are, and check that the plans are realistic and will deliver the outcomes that are needed. At our termly meetings we receive reports from the Head and others on a range of subjects and ask him about how school and the children are performing. We might drill down into the information that has been provided: - for example, by asking whether there are specific groups or ages that are performing poorly, and how any shortfall in performance will be addressed. We check how school is performing against its own targets and against the performance of other schools locally, within the borough, and across the country. We are especially interested in the Attendance of pupils – we recognise that if children are not in school they can't learn – we receive regular reports from the Head on how he is addressing Attendance across the school. Our role is a strategic one, we have an overview and do not engage in operational management of the school or staff. We do not receive any information about individual pupils, all data we receive is anonymised.

School had an Ofsted Inspection in January 2025. These Inspections are designed to check the quality of education at a school. Inspections can be stressful for everyone in the school community. We were pleased to receive a 'Good' judgement after our Inspection.

Ofsted said in its 2025 report:

"Pupils flourish and thrive at this lively, welcoming school."

"The school has high expectations for pupils' learning... Children in the early years are well prepared for key stage 1, while pupils in Year 6 are ready for their next steps."

"The school provides a range of opportunities that enhance pupils' personal development."

"Pupils know how to stay safe online and maintain a healthy lifestyle, including looking after their mental well-being. Pupils demonstrate a mature knowledge of the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships. "

The overall judgement, and the comments highlighted above, showed us as that the Head and senior leaders were doing a good job and that we were providing appropriate challenge and support for the school leadership. School has used a number of external agents to audit performance and provide feedback to leaders and governors. The Ofsted judgement was a vindication of this approach. We thank those colleagues from other schools who provided their time and expertise to help us become a better school.

Each child is important to us and we believe that all of our children are supported to achieve their true potential through excellent teaching alongside the strong pastoral and safeguarding teams

The next big external challenge for school will come in the form of a SIAMs Inspection. These are inspections by the Church of England to evaluate the impact of a school's Christian vision on pupils. We are a family of faith and fellowship where everyone thrives and will welcome the opportunity to share how we deliver these values with the inspectors.

An assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the board especially in relation to any particular challenges that may have arisen

As governors we reflect on how well we're doing our job at the end of each meeting and assess whether we have provided the appropriate amount of challenge and support to the Headteacher. We believe that our relationship with senior leaders means that we work together, as critical friends, for the good of our children.

Governors bring a wide range of professional skills, knowledge, expertise and experiences to their role. They undertake an annual assessment of their governor skills and complete high-quality training from a range of providers to address any shortfalls. Some governors have specific responsibilities (such as Safeguarding) and visit school and consider the processes in place and check that policies are being adhered to. Reports about these visits are shared with other governors. There is also a programme of termly visits to school, which all governors are invited to attend. Governors receive reports on specific areas, meet the School Council and talk to subject leaders.

I extend my thanks to all of the school staff who have devoted so much time and energy to supporting and educating our children. I'd like to pay special tribute to our Headteacher, Matthew Boyle, who has steered the St. Thomas ship through some choppy seas this year – well done on the Ofsted judgement! Thanks also to my fellow governors who have given up their time to support the school. Thanks especially to two departing governors: Vikki Semple and Josie Smith, who have been governors for many years and who will be greatly missed.

Governance arrangements, including attendance at meetings.

Governors: September 2024 – July 2025

Name	Governor Type	Start of term of office	Term of office expires
P Blackburn	Foundation Governor	15.01.2023	14.01.2027
A Booth	Foundation Governor	25.10.2023	24.10.2027
M Boyle	Headteacher	Not applicable	Not applicable
W Cathie	Foundation Governor	01.02.2024	30.09.2028
A Davies (Chair)	Foundation Governor	04.10.2021	03.10.2025
C Fernie	Staff Governor	07.10.2022	06.10.2026
Fr W Mitchell	Foundation Ex-officio Governor	22.10.2024	
V Semple (Vice Chair)	Local Authority Governor	01.07.2023	30.06.2027
J Smith	Foundation Governor	16.01.2023	15.01.2027
N Speight	Parent Governor	21.07.2023	20.07.2027
K Unsworth	Foundation Governor	10.03.2023	09.03.2027
A Waldron	Parent Governor	08.12.2023	07.12.2027

Meeting dates for academic year 2024-2025.

	Date	Time	Venue
Autumn Term			
FGB – Autumn 1 – Business Meeting	Monday 23 September 2024	5.00pm	School – In person
Pay Committee	Wednesday 09 October 2024	1.00pm	Virtual
Curriculum and Standards Committee	Monday 04 November 2024	4.30pm	Virtual
Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee	Monday 04 November 2024	6.00pm	Virtual
<i>Governors Day</i>	<i>Tuesday 03 December 2024</i>		
FGB – Autumn 2	Tuesday 03 December 2024	5.00pm	School – In person
Spring Term			
Curriculum and Standards Committee	Tuesday 28 January 2025	4.30pm	Virtual
Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee	Tuesday 28 January 2025	6.00pm	Virtual
<i>Governors Day</i>	<i>Tuesday 25 March 2025</i>		
FGB	Tuesday 25 March 2025	5.00pm	School – In person
Summer Term (Easter Sunday is 20 April 2025)			
Finance -Budget Setting	Monday 28 April 2025	10.00am	Virtual
Curriculum and Standards Committee	Monday 19 May 2025	4.30pm	Virtual
Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee	Monday 19 May 2025	6.00pm	Virtual
<i>Governors Day</i>	<i>Tuesday 01 July 2025</i>		
FGB	Tuesday 01 July 2025	5.00pm	School – In person

Governor attendance September 2024 – July 2025

	FGB Autumn One	FGB Autumn Two	FGB Spring	FGB Summer	Curriculum Committee Autumn	Curriculum Committee Spring	Curriculum Committee Summer	Finance Committee Autumn	Finance Committee Spring	Finance Committee Summer	Finance Committee Budget Set	Pay Committee
P Blackburn	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					Apologies
A Booth	✓	Apologies	✓	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
M Boyle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
W Cathie	Apologies	✓	✓	Apologies				✓	✓	Apologies		
A Davies	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	Apologies	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
C Fernie	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	✓	Apologies	Apologies					
Fr W Mitchell *		✓	Apologies	X								
V Semple	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	Apologies	✓	Apologies	Apologies	✓	✓	✓
J Smith	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
N Speight	Apologies	Apologies	✓	✓				✓	✓	Apologies	✓	
K Unsworth	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apologies	✓	Apologies					
A Waldron	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

* Appointed 22 October 2024

Governor Training September 2024 – July 2025

Governors attended a range of training, including:

The School Financial Value Standard: Governors’ Roles and Responsibilities (Maintained schools only)
Headteacher's Performance Management (Maintained Schools)
Handling Complaints in Schools and Trusts
The Governance of SEND
Safer Recruitment
Essential Safeguarding for Governors and Trustees