**Governors’ Statement –Sept 2019**

St Peter’s, being a Catholic School in the Diocese of Shrewsbury, is dedicated to providing the best education possible for all the children in school, rooted in the teachings and gospel values of the Catholic Church.

The three central functions of governing boards are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its

money is well spent. *(DfE)*

As in all schools, the first priority for the Governing Board is to ensure that our pupils achieve the best they are capable of and make the best possible progress, in a nurturing learning environment, where each child is valued and all families are welcomed.

There are 12 governors:

1. 7 foundation governors (appointed by the Diocese of Shrewsbury)
2. 2 parent governors (elected by parents & guardians)
3. the headteacher
4. 1 staff governor
5. 1 local authority governor (approved by Tameside MBC)

**Mrs Summersgill**

Mrs Summersgill, our excellent, longstanding Headteacher retired from Headship at the end of the academic year, after serving for 12 very successful years, having previously been the Deputy Headteacher. Under her leadership the school was judged to be Outstanding by OFSTED in 2007 & since that point the exceptionally high standards in statutory have been maintained each year, while the development of a broad, rich & varied curriculum has characterized the school.

Under prevailing regulations Outstanding schools have not been re-inspected provided outstanding standards are maintained. The government proposes to alter that this year, so that all schools are included in the inspection cycle.

In March 2019 the Governing Board were delighted to appoint Mr Gould as Acting Headteacher & Mrs Ryan for the period Sept 2019 to Easter 2020. The appointment process for a permanent Headteacher will begin during Autumn 2019. Therefore, Mr Gould has joined the Full Governing Board & Mrs Ryan has become associate governor with full voting rights. We believe it is important that the Deputy Headteacher is close to the shaping of the strategic role of the governing body to bring leadership experience and curricular expertise to bear directly on our task at the termly meetings of the full Governing Board.

We are very confident that the leadership of the school is in their very safe & capable hands .

**RE Inspection**

In July, St Peter’s was one of the first schools in the diocese to be inspected under the new national RE inspection framework, which we knew posed tougher expectations. The judgment of Outstanding (again) was an apt outcome, setting a seal on Mrs Summersgill’s leadership & reflecting the rich & creative RE curriculum planned & delivered by the staff, which the children respond to so wholeheartedly & which nurtures their spiritual development so well. It was a privilege for governors to be able to sit in & witness such uplifting RE lessons across all the year groups.

**Governor Changes**

During 2018-19 we welcomed Mrs Marianna Meola as Foundation Governor. She is a very active member of St Peter’s Parish & is also a parent, having two children in school.

We also welcomed Mrs Gemma Kirkpatrick as Elected Parent Governor. Mrs Kirkpatrick works part –time in both St Peter’s & St Raphael’s Schools. She was herself a pupil at St Peter’s & her family has a long association with the parish.

Sadly, due to family & professional demands, Mrs Stowers decided to resign as Local Government Governor, having previously been Foundation Governor, as well as previously been a parent . We have been very grateful for her enthusiastic dedication to the role for the 7 years she served. As of September 2019, the appointment of a replacement is in process.

**Governor Training**

All governors are required to maintain & improve their knowledge & understanding of the standards & working of the school & the wider issues affecting education in England. Training courses & regular updates are provided by the Diocese of Shrewsbury & by Tameside Governors Services, both in person & online. Our governors regularly access these opportunities.

**Clerking**

We pay for the services of a professional clerk from the Tameside Clerking Service. Mrs Rachel Lees became our clerk in September 2018 & is an invaluable source of advice, information & clarification – as well as producing very clear & accurate minutes.

Listed here are examples of the activities, processes and systems that contribute to the effective leadership and monitoring of ongoing school improvement.

**School Improvement Plan (SIP)**

The School Improvement Plan is presented for approval by the headteacher at the first Full Governing Board meeting in October. The Governing Board receives updates from the headteacher on the progress of its implementation at the subsequent termly meetings and receives curricular updates from subject coordinators on a pre-planned cycle.

**Curriculum & Standards**

The Curriculum & Standards Committee meets termly. This committee scrutinizes progress data for each class in school and receives reports from the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher & from time to time, other staff, on curricular progress & developments. Though there are specific governors assigned to this committee, any governors are welcome to attend.

Assessment data is presented and explained so that governors are able to establish and maintain a firm grasp of the standards and progress achieved on a class by class basis by children throughout the school, giving an opportunity to governors to question and challenge the school’s leaders on the impact of their work and to compare the school’s outcomes against all other and similar schools in Tameside and nationally.

On planned cycles, this committee also receives curricular reports from subject coordinators and reviews and updates policies.

**Financial Management & Monitoring**

The Finance and Personnel Committee meets termly, immediately before the termly Full Governing Body meeting, to review the impact of financial planning and to scrutinize and plan the allocation of resources for the current and future years. This includes budget costs of materials, of the physical environment of the school, of running costs and staffing costs and salaries.

The Chair of the Finance Committee meets with Mrs Chadwick, the School Business Manager ahead of this meeting to scrutinize the school’s financial position.

**Other Committees**

Other committees which meet during the year are:

* Premises and Security Committee
* Admissions Committee
* Pay Committee
* Headteacher Performance Management and Review

There are committees which need to meet only as the need arises; these are:

* Discipline, Grievance & Capability & Appeals Committees (staff)
* Pupil Discipline Committee (pupil exclusions)
* Complaints Committee (parental complaints); *this would convene only after the Complaints Policy procedures have been exhausted.*
* Pay Appeals Committee
* Appointments Committee
* Headteacher Appointment Committee (this may well include all governors)

**Governor Visits To School**

Many governors are regular, and in some cases weekly, visitors to school for various purposes. All governors are encouraged and are expected to be familiar with the school, to see the school at work. This would include visits to lessons to witness teaching & learning for themselves, to see the physical learning environment of the school and to liaise with individual staff for specific information sharing purpose, for instance for Special Needs, Safeguarding, subject responsibilities or Pupil Premium programmes and outcomes.

**Governor Professional Expertise**

Although Governors work entirely as volunteers on behalf of the school, the governors have employment backgrounds in finance, sales, IT, education & training, business & leadership. Thus they bring a wide and varied range of skills & experience to the task of leading and monitoring. Many governors are current or former parents of the school, which is indicative of a high degree of understanding, commitment & loyalty.

**Staff Recruitment**

Governors participate in all staff appointments. The more senior the post, the greater the number & degree of governor involvement.

Appointments processes in all cases adhere strictly to Safer Recruitment principles and requirements.