

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

<p>In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the 3 core strategic functions of the Primary School Governing Board are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent. 	
<p>Governance arrangements</p>	<p>The Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School, re-constituted in 2014, is now made up of 1 staff governor (not including the Headteacher), 3 Parent Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor, 3 Foundation governors and 6 Co-opted governors, (we currently have 1 co-opted governor vacancy and will have a further vacancy from November for an LA governor). Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Board and are people who, in the opinion of the governing Board, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. All of the Co-opted governors are also either parents of children at the school or former pupils of the school and are from a diverse range of professional and vocational backgrounds who bring valued skills to the governing Board.</p> <p>The Full Governing Board usually meets 4 times a year and we also have two committees to consider different aspects of the school in detail. At St Chad's Primary we have a Pupils and Standards committee, which looks at the provision for pupils and the standards they achieve, as well as other related aspects such as safeguarding and attendance; a Resources and Staffing Committee, which focuses on finance (including school budget), premises and some personnel matters. We also have smaller committees that are formed for specific functions throughout the year. Additionally, Governors have individual responsibilities for key aspects and subject monitoring to provide stronger links to the school and staff.</p>
<p>Attendance and training record of governors</p>	<p>Governors have a history of excellent attendance at meetings and this year has been no different. This shows the commitment all governors have to their role and the school. Committee meetings moved online during the pandemic and have remained virtual. This works well for shorter, focused meetings. However, FGB meet mostly in person so that governors can maintain that all important face-to-face contact.</p> <p>Governors have, as always, also kept themselves updated by attending training, much of which takes place online - another legacy from the pandemic. Please see the appendix for details.</p>
<p>The work that we have done on our committees and in the governing board</p>	<p><u>Preparation for the coming year</u></p> <p>We are overdue a visit from Ofsted who last visited our school at the end of 2018 (when we were confirmed as a solidly good school with outstanding elements). We expect to be visited again by Ofsted this academic year and governors have ensured they understand the current Ofsted framework.</p>

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

Our last SIAMS inspection (and the first for the school under the new, more rigorous grading scheme) in 2020 saw St Chad's achieve the top 'excellent' judgement which is extremely hard to attain. This demonstrates how well the school is thought of by their regulating bodies.

Finance

Budgeting constraints due to reductions in LA and central government funding continue to impact all schools and St Chad's is no exception. SEND funding cuts are especially challenging however, careful management of the school budget by the school and R&S committee and exceptional skill on the part of the staff and SENCO means every individual child is supported in the most appropriate way. This includes altering education provision, learning environment and staff in school to address each child's specific needs as well as liaising carefully and tirelessly with parents and external agencies to find the right support. It's a huge credit to the school that they are so highly regarded in the community for SEND provision. However, the budget cuts from government have hit hard so FGB are working with the school to challenge this by writing to the LA and local MPs. In the meantime, FGB continue to support the school in making difficult financial decisions in order to ensure that every child can still access every aspect of their primary education. Once again, the extremely hard work of the staff and their creative solutions has made FGB's support role far easier than it would otherwise have been and the staff of St Chad's are to be credited for this. The addition of a part-time business manager to the school this year for a day a week has further supported SLT and the office team in making every penny count!

Learning

The school curriculum has been widely redeveloped over the last few years and continues to be an organic process which sees it under constant review as staff strive to provide the very best education for all children. Governors have been able to question decisions around this and develop their understanding of the school's pedagogy and processes. Data in the traditional sense has only just started to become available for scrutiny and the school children in years 2 and 6 have taken their SATS exams for the second time since 2019. Results are really encouraging given that the pupils taking these exams have missed so much of their preparation for them and the school is to be credited for the 'catch up' work and support provided to help pupils achieve in these tests.

Monitoring

This year, members of FGB have been able to attend many different events in school. This has included EYFS parent's information evenings, curriculum evenings, SEND and safeguarding training events and school assemblies such as the Children's University

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

ceremonies, Year 6 leavers assemblies, sports day and Harvest Festival as well as events in St Chad's Church like the UKS2 leavers play and Christmas carol service. This allows us to strengthen links with the wider school community and support the school and to see all the hard work of staff and pupils in action.

In school, governor monitoring has also kept us busy this year including link governor meetings with teacher subject leads, learning walks, book looks, pupil conferencing and collective worship and SEND reviews. Our foundation governors continued to do a great job supporting the children's religious, spiritual and moral journey through the school in the absence of a school vicar for most of the year. However, we have now been joined by Reverend David **Brae** who has already attended various school and governor meetings/events and is looking forward to working with us next year. FGB are certainly looking forward to supporting the school in strengthening links with St Chad's church in the coming academic year.

School Improvement and The Bridge Collaboration

School improvement is always a focus and FGB review the School Development Plan and the school curriculum regularly to check the strategy of targets and foci are appropriate, measured and measurable. Also, to check progress towards those targets. This year much of this has been done in conjunction with a group of school which St Chad's work with as part of the Bridge collaboration of schools. St Chad's have worked with 5 other schools for a number of years to share best practice for staff and SLT and so each aspect of running a school is supported. Staff have seen many benefits from this collaboration and, following the recent government White Paper which proposed all schools looking at academisation by 2030, these schools have been conducting due diligence regarding what that might look like for them. Although, the legal impetus for academising has fallen away (for now) the White Paper still informs school decisions in this area. St Chad's therefore continue to be a part of the Bridge collaboration of schools and a Steering Group was set up last year made up of all headteachers and governor representatives from the schools involved. The purpose of the Steering Group being to look at how the schools might work together in the future if the decision was taken to academise or indeed the government mandated this. Meetings of the Bridge Steering Group are productive as are meetings of the staff and SLT and FGB support this process by interrogating each proposal/decision, reviewing documentation, carrying out due diligence with other trusts and schools (both with the Bridge leaders and independently as governors). More will follow in 2023/2024 now that an interim leadership team has been appointed by governors to develop the Bridge further. With this in mind, a sub-committee has been set up comprising 3 governors to ensure St Chad's interests are protected at all times. Any decision to academise will be made by FGB in consultation with staff and all stakeholders including parents, the LA and the diocese and no decisions have been taken as yet.

Committees

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

The work of our long-standing committees continues to support the school as follows:

The Resources and Staffing Committee continue to monitor many aspects of the school including; annual and mid-year budget setting, monthly expenditure reviews, policy reviews, staffing issues, health & safety matters, and the school development plan. They also oversee the headteacher's performance reviews.

The school has continued to invest in maintaining and improving its buildings and environment this year. Thanks to Local Authority funding and grants, all windows in the school were replaced at the start of the academic year. A new trim-trail was also installed this year, paid for by fundraising from the Friends of St Chad's. FGB would like to thank the Friends, parents/carers and pupils of St Chad's who supported and contributed to the Friends' events – this would not have been possible without your support.

Budgets continue to be challenging for the school. The rise in energy prices and general inflation experienced over the last year has led to a significant rise in all costs compared to previous years. This has also come at a time when falling pupil numbers (due to low birth rate and excess of primary school places) have adversely affected the income that St Chad's receives. Additionally, the reduced funding of EHCPs and SEND support by the local authority coupled with deficits in funding for staff costs linked to statutory pay rises has left a significant gap in the budget, which the school has needed to fill using its remaining reserves. It is only due to the tireless work and vigilance of Mrs Jenkins, the Senior Leadership Team, and the administrative team that the school has managed to submit a balanced budget for the next academic year. Budget setting has become extremely difficult, with hard choices needing to be made and very little provision being available for any unexpected expenditure. The Governing Board is thankful to Mrs Jenkins and the Senior Leadership Team for their resilience and determination in the face of very difficult circumstances. We are hopeful, though not optimistic, that Government funding will increase in due course and are supporting the school in engaging with South Gloucestershire Council on the subject of EHCP funding.

The Pupils and Standards Committee's main function is to monitor and evaluate the standards of teaching and learning at the school, review the attainment and progress of pupils and the impact of the education provided. This includes ensuring that pupils of all abilities have access to a good standard of education which provides not only for their specific learning needs, but also their welfare and physical, social and emotional development. Pupil attendance levels, with a proven link to higher attainment, are also closely monitored by this committee with school policies in place to ensure robust and consistent controls which meet central government expectations in these areas. The committee reviews and approves relevant policies which support pupils in all aspects of their learning including the academic aspects but also safeguarding and wellbeing aspects of school life. The committee also monitors the provision for pupils with special education needs and vulnerable groups to ensure that the school's education

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

provision is inclusive and that every child can access that education. The committee continues to meet online on a bi-annual basis. Our business of reviewing policies and KPIs (where available), attendance, safeguarding activity and pupil monitoring continues to ensure that the high standard of education is maintained. It has been clear that St Chad's continue to place the pupils at the heart of every decision with their wellbeing and education being in safe hands as always despite the obstacles that they have to overcome. Both committees have updated terms of reference and committee membership has been reviewed to ensure that, from September 2022, each governor attends/reports into the committee most appropriately linked to their individual responsibilities.

Strategic reviews

This year, FGB have continued to support St Chad's and the SLT through the review and approval of key policies, holding of FGB and committee meetings, attendance at Local Authority, SEND and budget reviews and EYFS strategy meetings and reviewing and approving risk assessments at various stages of the academic year. Safeguarding and health and safety checks by FGB have taken place in school as required as usual within government guidelines.

Through virtual and face to face meetings, email discussions and staff support, the Governing Board has continued to not only support the school, but also challenge the Headteacher, SLT and staff to ensure that the children benefit in all aspects of school life. Ensuring the very best educational journey for every single child at St Chad's remains the driving force behind the Governing Board in all that they do. We are all passionate about ensuring every child's educational, social, moral and physical development and this drives the work of the Governing Board and is evident from the broad and rich curriculum offered by St Chad's.

The Governors' role includes the ongoing review and approval of school policies, and this year we have considered a number of key policies to ensure that they are topical and meet the necessary statutory requirements. We also continue to implement the Attendance Policy and to support the school in driving excellent attendance as an embedded ethos for the school given the clear links between strong attendance and good educational progress for children.

Staffing and governors

Staffing this year has seen some changes. We sadly say goodbye to Mrs Harvey, a long serving teacher at St Chad's, excellent SENCO and much valued staff member who was also staff representative on FGB (and will be replaced by Ms Katherine Legg). We also say goodbye to Mrs Medway who has made a valued contribution to the school through her teaching and role on SLT. HLTA, Kate **Robinson** also leaves us and caretaker David Woodard. We wish them all well and they will be much missed. Miss Pitt also bids us a temporary farewell as she goes on maternity leave. We hope to welcome her back in the new academic year and wish her well with her new arrival. We welcomed back Mrs Pryce from maternity leave and have been joined by Mrs Oliver in year 3 and Miss Powell in

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad’s Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

	<p>year 5 who have made great starts to their time at St Chad’s and are welcome additions to the staff team. We also welcome Greg Bryant (our new caretaker) and Olivia Wearing as a SEND teaching assistant.</p> <p>FGB has welcomed 2 new governors this year, Stewart Mockridge (parent governor) and Suzie de Maillard (co-opted governor) who will be an asset in the coming academic year. We also welcome back a governor from previous years, Kate Kelly who will rejoin the team in the new year and will be a great addition bringing years of relevant governance experience to FGB. This year, we also said goodbye to a relatively new governor, Lisa Hyland (due to work commitments) and wish her well. The coming academic year will then see some further governance changes as 2 governors (Tom Partridge and Chris Wright)’s terms of office end and they have chosen not to renew. We will, as always, be recruiting new members of the team so that we can continue the work of FGB effectively.</p> <p>Please note that the minutes of Governing Board and Committee meetings are public documents – you can ask at the school office if you would like to see any of the minutes of our meetings from across the year. You can also see the full list of governors; their attendance at meetings; and other information about what we do in the file in the foyer and in Appendix 1 below.</p>
<p>Future plans for the governors</p>	<p>As stated above, we will lose 2 governors this coming academic year so we will continue to recruit new team members.</p> <p>Ofsted will likely be visiting this coming year so St Chad’s will be readying themselves for this and will continue to develop their school offering both in terms of core education, partnerships with other schools and the community and pastoral care for all children as is always the aim.</p> <p>Work with the Bridge schools will continue with further due diligence regarding academisation involving all stakeholders (including parents/carers) will be a focus. School improvement for the benefit of the children remaining at the heart of everything.</p> <p>Mrs Stephanie Jenkins continues to lead the school from strength to strength and her warmth and care for every child and staff member is a shining example. We are lucky to have her. She is ably assisted and supported by her SLT in Mr James Ridd – who will take on the SENCO role from September and step back from teaching to focus on this and his Deputy Head duties. The rest of SLT (Ms Legg as head of KS2 and Mrs Ives, head of KS1) provide invaluable support and drive the direction of education for the school under Mrs Jenkins’ expert leadership and the whole staff of St Chad’s demonstrate daily the core values and aims of the school through their teaching and care of the pupils. FGB continues to have every faith in the SLT and staff at St Chad’s they will always do their very best for every child. We trust Mrs Jenkin’s extremely sound judgement whilst still seeking support from the LA, colleagues and other outside agencies where appropriate. The Governing Board has supported, and will continue to support the staff of St</p>

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

	<p>Chads and SLT with their day to day role by providing sounding boards for key decisions, scrutinising, guiding and challenging choices made by Mrs Jenkins and her team.</p> <p>The excellent management employed by SLT and all staff has put the school in a strong position for the coming academic year. The Governing Board are ready to continue their support of the school in September to ensure that the existing high standards currently demonstrated at St Chad's are sustained and further developed moving forward.</p>
A note to parents from governors	<p>We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that, if you are entitled to register for Pupil Premium (sometimes known as Free School Meals, even though it is much more) you are urged to register. This will open up a whole range of benefits for your child to support them in a wide range of areas in school. We have agreed that each registered child will be granted £100 to spend during their time at St Chad's, to be used for education purposes i.e. uniforms, school trips etc. You can find more information on the 'Pupil Premium' tab underneath 'About us' on the home page of the school website.</p> <p>Finally, we would ask that each and every parent supports their children to attend school every day (unless illness or exceptional circumstances prevent attendance). This is so important not only for their educational development but also their social and emotional development and wellbeing. As we approach September, we would all ask that you encourage your children's love of school and governors and staff at St Chad's will continue to do everything in our power to ensure that the richness of the curriculum being taught, the vibrant learning environments and the sense of community within the school fosters that enjoyment of being a St Chad's child.</p>
How you can contact the Governing Board	<p>We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the Chair of Governors, Becky Moyce in writing via the school office or by email at admin@stchadsprimaryschool.co.uk. If you are interested in joining FGB then you can also express your interest using this email.</p>

The Governing Board is running efficiently. In turn the teaching and the outcomes for pupils have continued to improve and we are confident that moving forward, St Chad's can produce results which will be securely above the national and local authority averages. We are proud of the education we provide here at St Chad's and we will do everything in our power to continue to build on our successes to create an even better school. We thank you for your support along the way.

I also thank all the governors for their continuing hard work and the support that they have given the school (and me) over the last year and for the time they give up to ensure the success of St Chad's and every child.

If there are any queries you have after reading this report, please contact me in the ways described above.

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

Wishing you all well for the academic year.

Becky Moyce, Chair of Governors.

On behalf of the Governing Board

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

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* FGB = Full Governing Board, PS = Pupils and Standards Committee, RS = Resources and Staffing Committee, SMG = Strategic Monitoring Group Governors can attend and observe all committee meetings								
<i>Left the Governing Board during the year</i>					<i>Joined the Governing Board during the year</i>			
Mrs Laura Ash	Co-opted	Governing Board	02/02/25		FGB	Parent	Joined FGB on 03/02/21 3/4 FGB 1/3 Committee Meetings	Safeguarding in Schools - An Introduction for Governors Education Learning and Skills (ELS) - Governor Briefing
Mrs Shirin Borgall	Foundation	Governing Board	29/11/27	Impact of collective worship, RE	FGB, PS	Parent	4/4 FGB 2/2 Committee Meetings	Prevent Duty Training SIAMS: What to Expect DBE Conf- Being a Courageous Advocate: Making Change Happen!
Ms Lisa Hyland	Co-opted	Governing Board	02/02/25		FGB	Parent	Joined FGB on 03/02/21	Induction for governors
Mrs S Jenkins	Associate Non Voting	By Position	-	Headteacher	FGB	Member of Staff		Various school training
Mrs Liz Merritt	Co-opted	Governing Board	02/10/26	Child Protection/Children in Care, Safeguarding, GDPR	FGB, P&S	Parent	4/4 FGB 2/2 Committee Meetings	Safeguarding in Schools - An Introduction for Governors Safeguarding Governor - Roles and Responsibilities

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

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<i>Left the Governing Board during the year</i>					<i>Joined the Governing Board during the year</i>			
								Governance Surgeries – Online Drop-in Session Governor Monitoring
Mr Kudakwashe Makombe	Foundation	Governing Board	21/08/24		FGB	Parent	4/4 FGB 3/3 Committee Meetings	
Mrs Rebecca Moyce	Co-opted	Governing Board	04/02/24	Chair of Governors English Learning Walks Pupil Premium (Impact)	FGB	Parent	4/4 FGB	Safeguarding update with Stonewall. Prevent online LA training Network Meeting for Chairs and Clerks - Daytime (Online Session) Education Learning and Skills (ELS) - Governor Briefing The Equality Act 2010 - How we apply it and how can we go further? Governance Surgeries – Online Drop-in Session Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) - Update

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

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Left the Governing Board during the year					Joined the Governing Board during the year			
								Maintained Architecture Board (MAB) - (Academisation) Update – Chair and Headteacher Session
Mr Douglas Osei-Appauh	Parent	School Parents	06/05/24	Staff Recruitment, SEN, PE/Sports	FGB, PS	Parent	2/4 FGB 1/2 Committee Meetings	
Mr Thomas Partridge	Co-opted	LEA Appointment	13/11/23	Vice Chair of Governors LA Governor Chair of Resources & Staffing Finance Pupil Premium (Finances)	FGB, RS, SMG	Parent	2/4 FGB 2/3 Committee Meetings	
Mr James Ridd	Associate non-voting	By Position	31/08/23	Deputy Head	FGB	Member of staff	3/4FGB	Various school training
Mrs Vanessa Harvey	Staff governor non-voting	School	31/07/2023	Staff governor SENCO	N/A	Member of staff	All	Staff training recorded elsewhere
Mrs Suzie de Maillard	Co-opted	FGB		Bridge sub-committee Attending P&S and R&S committees in first year	Attending P&S and R&S committees in first year FGB	Parent	New to FGB for AGM which was attended	In new academic year

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

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Mr Stewart Mockridge	Parent	School		Attending P&S and R&S committees in first year	Attending P&S and R&S committees in first year FGB	Parent	New to FGB for AGM which was not attended	In new academic year
Mr Christopher Douglas Wright	Co-opted	Governing Board	04/02/24		FGB, RS	Parent	3/4 FGB 3 Committee Meetings	Safeguarding in Schools - An Introduction for Governors Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) Chairing Committees Effectively Finance for School Governors - Session 3 Finance for School Governors - Session 2 Finance for School Governors - Session 1

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St Chad's Patchway CE VC Primary School

September 2023

Governor expenses

Total Claim for period = £0.00

Diocese Training £0.00
Refreshments for Governor meetings £0.00
Stationery and Admin £0.00