

THE PAINSLEY CATHOLIC ACADEMY



The Painsley Catholic Academy Better Together

Governors' Code of Practice
April 2019

PAINSLY CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Governors' Code of Practice

1. Rationale

1.1 The purpose of this code of practice is to enable the Local Governing Body (LGB) representatives to contribute to the school securing its mission and sustaining its ethos as a Catholic school, as well as ensuring the school provides a quality educational experience for all its children and achieves high standards.

1.2 The mission of Painsley Catholic Academy is:

"In our Multi-Academy Company, we value and respect every person as a child of God, as we grow together in faith, knowledge, understanding and love to serve the community"

As a Catholic Academy gospel values are at the centre of our Academy community. The Mission Statement reflects our commitment to living and developing Painsley as a faith community. Our aim is to provide the highest quality of education in order to develop and fulfil the potential of all students in our care. The faith development of our students is of paramount importance and whilst we strive to live in a faith community, we also ensure opportunity for the development of religious belief and religious literacy to ensure the foundations of faith in all our students.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 The LGB is a corporate body. LGB representatives have no authority to act individually. The powers and authority of the LGB are only those delegated by the Board of Directors of Painsley Catholic Academy.

2.2 All LGB representatives have equal status, and although representatives are appointed and elected by different groups, the central concern must be the welfare of our Academy as a Catholic Academy, conducted in accordance with the Diocesan Trust Deed.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 LGBs are the critical friend to the Principal at a local level. The role of the LGB, which is appointed for each school, is to make sure that the school is well run. To do that the Governors follow all the guidance provided by relevant government agencies, the DES and the MAC Directors. Their key functions are:

To receive feedback on individual school concerns from the substantive Principals including:

- Catholic ethos, curriculum, student performance (including KPIs), numbers, development plan updates etc.
- To appoint staff for individual schools (with the exception of senior leaders as Directors and the DES must be involved with such appointments)
- To receive parental voice and student voice reports
- To review budget levels within the individual schools for recommendation to the Resources Committee
- To nominate a named governor for the following areas: SEND, safeguarding, pupil premium, health and safety and financial matters, and to hold that member to account
- To conduct a 360° review on the Chair
- To monitor the impact of the Behaviour Policy
- To review pupil attendance and absence and report the findings to the MAC Directors.
- To monitor the impact of the pupil premium and sports premium in the school
- To immediately notify the MAC Directors of any complaints or issues that could bring into disrepute the Catholic character of the school.
- To notify the MAC Directors at least termly of any formal complaints received by the LGB under the complaints policy.

- To support the MAC Directors and the Principal in the extended provision in the school
- To monitor any activities designed to generate business income. These should be undertaken in consultation with MAC Directors and in accordance with any advice or guidance received from the DES.
- To ensure the effective implementation in the school of the data protection and freedom of information policies set by the MAC Directors.
- To ensure systems in place at the school are in line with the MAC's policy for effective communication.
- To develop and maintain a website for the school that meets all statutory requirements and is in line with MAC policy
- To monitor what happens at the school in order to make sure that the school provides an excellent Catholic education to all its pupils.
- To make sure that the school follows any and all guidance from the DES to secure, protect and improve the provision of Catholic education and the Catholic ethos.
- To ensure that policies put in place by the MAC Directors for the MAC are put into practice in the school.
- To give the Principal of the school support in the recruitment, selection, grievance, disciplinary and exclusion processes as appropriate.
- To develop and maintain the building and estate management plan.
- To regularly inspect the premises to identify essential maintenance work.
- To develop links with the parish or parishes near the school and with the wider community.
- To develop the School Development Plan in conjunction with the Principal, ensuring that it reflects MAC-wide strategies
- To ensure the School Development Plan is put into practice.
- To appoint a clerk.
- To review annually the contributions made by the Governors.
- To support and work with other LGBs in the MAC.
- Carrying out the annual self-evaluation of the LGB.
- To submit to any inspections pursuant to S.48 and any additional canonical inspections and visitations of the Archbishop.
- To submit to any other education inspections as required by law
- To comply with the requirements of the MAC Directors in relation to the management of funding delegated to the school and the adoption of appropriate financial risk management policies.
- To monitor the income, expenditure and cash flow of the school and report any issues to the MAC Directors.
- To ensure any variances from the budget are reported to the MAC Directors or their relevant committee.
- To ensure proper financial controls are in place at the school.
- To maintain a register of business interests of the Governors.
- To monitor provision of free school meals to those pupils meeting the criteria.
- To ensure the MAC's disaster recovery plan and business continuity plan for the school is adhered to and remains fit for purpose.
- To ensure that the school is compliant with all current regulations and legislation.

4 Commitment

4.1 We acknowledge that being an LGB committee member (governor):

- Involves committing significant amounts of time and energy.
- Involves participating fully in the work of the LGB so that individuals accept a fair share of the responsibilities and duties, including as 'Link governors'.
- Requires regular attendance at meetings of the full LGB. Apologies should be submitted to the clerk at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- Requires getting to know the school well and responding to opportunities to visit and get involved in school activities.

- Requires considering seriously our individual and collective training and development needs and using any designated funds to address them.
- Requires knowledge and understanding of our role within school procedures.

5 Confidentiality

5.1 We understand that being an LGB Governor requires that we:

- Observe confidentiality routinely as a matter of course, but particularly when explicitly asked to do so, for example regarding matters concerning staff, children or their parents/carers.
- Keep discussion about decisions confidential even when decisions themselves are made public through the minutes of meetings.
- Exercise prudence when invited to respond in discussions and informal talk outside LGB meetings, and instead of passing individual comment, encourage issues to be brought to the attention of the principal, the LGB or Board of Directors (depending on the nature of the issue) through the proper channels.
- Exercise care that any discussions do not prejudice any formal procedures.

6 Relationships

6.1 Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the LGB members will strive to develop effective working relationships with:

- The Principal
- Staff
- Children
- Parents
- The board of directors
- The wider MAC
- The Diocese (i.e. Diocesan Education Service)
- Multi-agency representatives
- Our parish and local communities
- Other local schools, including Catholic and other VA, VC and Community schools and Academies.
- Local educational organisations/businesses etc.

6.2 In forming, building and sustaining good working relationships LGB members will strive to:

- Remember that we are typically representative of the *category* of LGB member to which we are appointed or elected. We are not representatives *OF* those *groups*, e.g. a parent representative expresses their views using their experience as a parent, they are not representing the views of the whole parent body of the school.
- Work as members of a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted, forming the LGB which functions with corporate responsibility and accountability.
- Develop an open and honest relationship with the Principal and all school staff, acting as 'critical friend' to the school, ensuring a balance is struck between offering challenge and support.
- Ensure that effective relationships are built on trust and opportunities to network effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure that Gospel values underpin the relationships between LGB member and with other stakeholders. The LGB will draw on the guidance offered in 'Christ at the Centre' that whilst not definitive, the core values based on the Beatitudes may be summarised as follows:
 - Faithfulness and integrity
 - Dignity and compassion
 - Humility and gentleness
 - Truth and justice

- Forgiveness and mercy
- Purity and holiness
- Tolerance and peace
- Service and sacrifice

7 Conduct

7.1 Governors have a duty to act with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness honesty and leadership¹, in the best interests of the school at all times. Drawing on the model of the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the LGB will strive to behave professionally at all times.

- LGB members will aim to discharge their duties in a manner that maintains and develops the Catholic ethos of the school and its reputation in the parish, local community and wider educational community. Member's actions at all times should reflect our responsibility to secure the Catholic ethos of the school.
- LGB members should consider at all times, how we exercise stewardship, both as individuals and as a corporate body, which should manifest and be faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, and Gospel values.
- LGB members should reflect on how we are perceived by stakeholders in all we say and do, both as individual LGB member and as a corporate body.
- LGB members should consider carefully how our decisions and actions might affect others, whether they are individuals employed by the school; children or adults who are part of the school community; the parish; other schools in the locality; or the wider community.
- LGB members should express views openly at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the LGB or any individual member delegated to do so.
- LGB members will not speak out against majority decisions in public or in private outside the LGB. The intention is to protect the reputation and authority of the LGB and the school in the public domain.
- LGB members, through their minutes, must be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular be prepared to explain their actions and decisions to interested parties.
- LGB members will only speak or act on behalf of the LGB when they have been specifically authorised to do so.
- LGB members will respond to criticism or complaints about the school and / or its staff by referring to the school's Complaints Procedure adopted by the MAC for the correct procedure to be followed, and will advise the complainant accordingly.
- LGB members will record in the register of pecuniary interests any pecuniary interest we might have in connection with the LGB's business.
- LGB members will be expected to declare an interest in any item of business and withdraw from the meeting while it is under discussion.
- LGB members will always undertake visits within the framework established by the LGB and agreed with the Principal. (See Section 10)

8 Structure of the LGB

8.1 The LGB must appoint a clerk with a view to their efficient functioning and must have regard to advice from the clerk as to the nature of LGB functions.

¹ The 7 principles of public life.

- 8.2 The LGB will work efficiently and effectively in the best interests of the school so that it can fulfil its statutory responsibilities, including ensuring the statutory right of appeal, through appropriate full delegation of powers and statutory functions to either:
- The LGB
 - an LGB member or
 - the Principal.
- 8.3 The LGB will be structured as follows:
- Safeguarding link governor
 - Pupil premium link governor
 - Health & Safety link governor
 - SEND link governor
 - Finance link governor
- Admissions Committee
- 8.4 There is an expectation that all committees will function with a view to securing the Catholic ethos of the school, as well as ensuring the school provides a high quality educational experience for all its children. Catholicity will not be viewed as a 'bolt-on' extra to be considered separately, instead the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church and Gospel values will underpin all the aspects of the work of the LGB.
- 8.5 Full delegated powers, including delegated decision making powers, will be given to the subcommittees enabling them to be fully effective.
- 8.6 The LGB must review the delegation of its statutory functions annually.
- 8.7 The subcommittees will have clear terms of reference.
- No vote on any matter may be taken at any meeting of a subcommittee unless the majority of members of the subcommittee present and voting are LGB members.
 - Observers will be allowed to attend meetings in order to promote a willingness to serve the community as an LGB member, or to extend the professional development of middle and senior managers. Observers are not members of the committee and will not be allowed to vote.
- 8.8 There is an open-door policy for subcommittees. Any LGB member who has an interest in any specific matter being discussed may attend any meeting with the agreement of the chair of that subcommittee. Whilst this option is useful, it is important to avoid a situation where most LGB members attend all or most subcommittee meetings. This defeats the benefits of the smaller debating forum that subcommittees provide.
- 8.9 Chairs of subcommittees will be subject to a skills audit at the first meeting of the Autumn term of the full LGB committee. The LGB committee has the power to remove chairs of subcommittees.
- 9 Meeting Structure and Management**
- 9.1 By working through an effective and efficient structure the LGB will strive to keep the number of full LGB meetings to the minimum of three per academic year, which in normal circumstances will be one a term.
- 9.2 An annual meeting plan (for the LGB, Admissions Committee and Link Governors) which identifies all planned meetings; dates and times; expected items in line with the annual cycle of business (e.g. policy review, results, budget setting) will be published in advance of the start of each academic year.
- 9.3 Thought will be given to the timing of meetings, including holding them during the working day or at the end of the school day, rather than the evening.
- 9.4 Whilst aiming for a tight regular meeting structure the LGB retains the flexibility to hold additional full LGB committee meetings in special circumstances (for example, Ofsted, etc.).

- 9.5 A clerk to the LGB must be appointed. The LGB will use the services of a professional clerk at the meetings of the full LGB. The investment in professional clerking is viewed as a way to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the LGB as a whole by ensuring that meetings are properly organised and supported. (Note: staff representatives including the principal, cannot be appointed as clerk to the LGB. They can however, clerk the 'odd meeting' in the absence of the clerk.)
- 9.6 The clerk will have a clear job description, a contract for sufficient hours and will be appropriately trained. The role and hours of the clerk will be reviewed annually.
- 9.7 The clerk will produce minutes for meetings.
- 9.8 The clerk will send out agendas, minutes and any reports or other papers to be considered at the LGB meeting at least seven clear days in advance to appropriate people
- 9.9 The chair of the LGB meeting, the Principal, all other LGB members and the clerk will subscribe to the following expectations so that the LGB members, working corporately will achieve informed, collective decisions in an effective and efficient manner that meet the legal requirements.
- There will be an expectation that the chair of the LGB manages the meeting to keep discussion focused; matters in proportion; draw on all members' contributions; and with due attention to the following points.
 - In advance of full LGB meetings the CEO will set the agenda before it is published by the clerk, giving 7 day's notice of the meeting.
 - In order to be effective meetings need to be quorate. The quorum for an LGB meeting is 50% of the membership (not including vacant positions), the majority of those present should be Foundation Governors
 - Apologies will be considered at full LGB meetings, not simply accepted.
 - All meetings will have a maximum length of 2 hours.
 - LGB members will be expected to be punctual and meetings will start at the agreed time.
 - The latest finish time for evening meetings will be 9.30pm
 - All LGB members must properly prepare for meetings by reading papers in advance and giving thought to the issues to be discussed. All papers circulated in advance of the meeting should be taken as read.
 - There will be a '15 minute' limit for discussion of each agenda item, unless the LGB agree otherwise for a specific agenda item.
 - Where any LGB member is unavoidably late, agenda items should not be re-run.
 - Items for discussion under 'Any Other Business' should be forwarded to the Chair of the committee at least 48 hours in advance. No other business should be raised at the meeting.
 - LGB members will be expected to make relevant and purposeful contributions; understand how to challenge others in a constructive way; listen to others; and accept collective responsibility, even in relation to decisions individuals do not personally agree with.
 - Decisions will be taken by vote on a simple majority.
 - The decision of the LGB to allow alternative arrangements for LGB members to participate or vote at meetings remotely by telephone, conferencing or other prescribed methods must be strictly adhered to.
 - In full LGB meetings there will be no rehearsing the debate.
 - Minutes will record key matters discussed; summarise the key points discussed; record decisions and / or agreed actions accurately. The detail of the discussion and how individual LGB members vote is confidential. The minutes will be made available, in draft form, within 7 days of the meeting, thus ensuring they are proof-read with a good recollection of the meeting. Confidential matters should not be recorded in minutes that are published in the public domain.

- Minutes will be reviewed, amended as necessary and signed by the Chair at the next meeting.

Visiting the School

9.10 School visits are an essential part of the LGB member's role. Effective and well organised visits can provide the LGB with a strategy for monitoring the effectiveness of policies.

9.11 Before the visit it will be important for the LGB member concerned to:

- Clarify the purpose.
- Use the agendas provided by the CEO/CFO
- Make sure that the date is suitable for the purpose identified.
- Receive and discuss with the Principal any supporting information, e.g. OFSTED report, SEF, School Improvement Plan, performance data, relevant lesson plans.
- Discuss with the class teacher integration into the lesson.

9.12 During the visit it will be important for the LGB member to:

- Be aware of the timetable for the visit and aim to adhere to it, but be flexible.
- Decide with the teacher how they will be introduced and their role in the classroom.
- Be sensitive to the fact that the teacher is there to teach, so talk to the teacher when it is appropriate.
- Remain focused on the purpose of the visit in conversation with the teacher.
- Be discrete in your note taking, it can be disconcerting.
- Be courteous and polite, not critical.

9.13 After the visit it will be important for the LGB member to:

- Discuss what was observed with the class teacher and use the opportunity to clarify any matters.
- Make notes as soon as possible while they are fresh in the mind.
- Discuss what was observed with the Principal.
- Be prepared to take on board others comments and explanations.
- Reflect on what was observed and experienced.
- Complete the visit proforma, and share it with the Principal for uploading to the PDS.
- Remember to communicate a personal 'thank you' to the teacher concerned.

9.14 The written report, using the standard proforma, will include:

- Who made the visit, when and why.
- The purpose of the visit and observation.
- Who they met and what was observed.
- Any observations relevant to the functions and policies of the LGB.
- Any positive comments.

10 Implementing the Code

10.1 There is an expectation that anyone serving as LGB member will adhere to this Code of Practice.

10.2 In the unlikely event of a serious breach of this Code of Practice, by behaving in a manner that would be inconsistent with the school or multi-academy ethos, the LGB or the Board of Directors have the right to hold an individual LGB member to account (The LGB should seek advice from the Diocesan Education Service).

Agreed on: _____

Review on: _____

Final copies distributed to:

XxxSigned: _____

XxxSigned: _____

XxxSigned: _____

XxxSigned: _____

XxxSigned: _____

Signed: _____