

Induction Pack
**For those appointed to
governance roles in the
Diocese of Chester**

An introduction to governing church schools

Thank you for agreeing to take on a governance role in the Diocese of Chester. The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) is very grateful for your commitment and hope that you find the role rewarding.

Due to the different types of schools in the diocese there are a range of governance roles that are undertaken:

In maintained schools such as voluntary aided or voluntary controlled schools this would mean being a member of a Governing Board.

In an academy trust this may be as a Member, Trustee/Director or member of a Local Governing Body/Committee (LGB/LAC). These roles have varied responsibilities and delegated powers so its important that you are given a copy of the academy trust's articles and also any scheme of delegation published by the Trust.

In this document when it talks about the board of governance or Governing Board it relates to a Governing Board in a maintained school, a Board of Directors/Trustees of an academy and also a Local Governing Body/Committee in a Multi- Academy Trust (MAT) although its powers are delegated and ultimate accountability rests with the Trust's board of directors/trustees which means that the role may be slightly different in each Trust.

In essence any board of governance in education is a corporate body with a range of duties and powers. This means it works as a single body and, although there may be a difference of opinion within the board, the majority decision stands and those on the board must abide by it.

The Department for Education (DFE) states that the three core functions of a board of governance are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Additionally the Church of England's vision for education states that church schools should be 'deeply Christian, serving the common good', 'educating for life in all its fullness' (Church of England, Education Office, 2016) and governance is key to ensuring this.

Foundation governors of maintained schools, in law, are appointed in order to ensure the Christian foundation of the school is preserved and developed and that it is conducted within the rites and practices of the Church of England.

In an academy the Trustees/Directors need to uphold the objects of the charity which includes ensuring any church academies in the Trust are conducted within the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England.



As each church school would be expected to have a distinctive Christian vision, and clarity of vision is the first core function of governance, it would be expected that the whole governing board would take an equal interest in developing and championing a vision that is distinctive to the church foundation. The foundation governor, however, is best placed to support and challenge the governing board in creating, developing and monitoring this vision within its theological concepts and thus outcomes.

In order to fulfil all of its functions the governing board has a number of duties which include, developing and promoting a Christian vision, holding the staff to account for the attainment and achievement of pupils, managing the school's finances, making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based, appointing staff, reviewing staff performance and pay, and more. This pack is to help you understand your role as a governor within your own school and the wider church school family.

What is a church school?



The Church has been involved in education for many centuries. Some church schools in this Diocese are older than the Diocese itself. However, most Church of England (C of E) schools came about through the drive to provide mass provision of Christian education for the poor in the early and middle years of the 19th century. “The National Society for Promoting the

Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church,” was created in 1811 with the mission of founding a Church school in every parish in England and Wales. In this Diocese an organisation was established shortly afterwards with a similar objective. By the time of the national census of 1851, forty years later, the Church of England had established 17,000 schools.

State provision for public education came with the 1870 Education Act by supplementing the churches’ provision. This Act demonstrated the partnership between the state and the church in education, which has continued to the present day.

The 1944 Education Act gave Church schools the option of increased State funding and control as ‘Voluntary Controlled schools’ or lesser State support and greater independence as ‘Voluntary Aided schools’. This Act also required all schools to have a daily act of collective worship and religious instruction.

The 2010 Academies Act gave good and outstanding schools the option to convert to academies whilst maintaining their Church of England foundation.

In this Diocese there are a similar number of voluntary aided and controlled schools plus an increasing number of academies.

Church schools today

Across the country, one quarter of all primary schools are Church of England schools with a smaller number of secondary schools. Church schools pride themselves in providing an education for the whole child in a Christian environment. They seek to ensure that all children and young people achieve the best of which they are capable in a caring atmosphere that recognises the special gifts of each individual. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all is fostered within a Christian environment. They enable children and their families to explore the Christian faith, to develop spiritually and morally, and to have a basis for choice about any faith commitment. They are places where the beliefs and practices of other faiths and those of no faith are well respected and celebrated.

The Church of England's vision for education has a clear expectation that our schools will educate for life in all its fullness by educating for:

- Wisdom, knowledge and skills
- Hope and aspiration
- Community and living well together
- Dignity and respect

And governing boards should keep in mind this purpose as they make decisions.



Types of Church schools

The types of church school within the state education sector are voluntary controlled, voluntary aided and foundation schools, all maintained by the Local Authority (LA), and academies. The categories, aided and controlled, refer to a schools' relationship with the LA rather than the church.

In a controlled school, the Church appoints some of the governors, and collective worship is in accordance with the teachings of the Church of England. Religious Education follows the same syllabus as for community schools, although parents can request teaching in accordance with the teachings of the Church of England. Church trustees normally own the buildings, but the LA is responsible for maintaining them. The LA employs the staff and controls admissions.



In an aided school, the Church appoints the majority of the governors, collective worship and Religious Education is in accordance with the teachings of the Church of England. The governing board of the school is responsible for the buildings (which are normally owned by Church trustees), they employ the staff and are responsible for setting the admissions criteria.

Academies are independent schools and their structures and RE teaching generally reflects their prior category as a maintained school.

Chester Diocesan Board of Education

Chester Diocesan Board of Education is the education authority for the Church of England Diocese of Chester.

The Diocese covers an area of 1017 square miles, approximately the old Victorian County of Chester, and includes all of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral Local Authorities and parts of Derbyshire, Halton, Tameside, Trafford, Stockport, and Warrington. The Diocese is the third largest in the Province of York, and the ninth largest in England. Chester Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) supports 115 schools across 9 Local Authorities.

Diocesan schools are supported by a small team, including the Diocesan Director of Education, Mr Chris Penn. The Board of Education is a group of appointed members that acts essentially as a governing board supporting and challenging the Director and his staff in the work that they do to support church schools.

The map below shows the extent of church schools in the diocese.



Constitution

Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary aided schools

Each Local Authority (LA) maintained school governing board's constitution is written up in a legal document called the **Instrument of Government**; this sets out the number of members in each category and in a church school contains an ethos statement which confirms that the school has a Christian foundation. The governing board may decide to review and alter the Instrument of Government from time to time. Any Instrument must comply with relevant education law and the approval of the DBE is needed for any change. The LA officially makes any new Instrument.



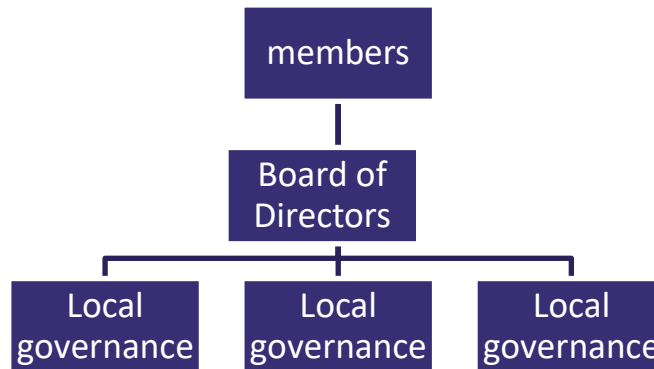
The governing board includes **foundation governors** who may be appointed by the local church, the Diocese and, occasionally, by charitable bodies connected with the original foundation of the school. In Voluntary Aided (VA) schools the foundation governors must be in a majority of two. In

Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools, there must be at least two foundation governors but they must make up no more than a quarter of the governing board. Usually an ex officio post is in place that is reserved for the local vicar who is automatically a governor unless they cannot or choose not to be. In these cases, or where there is an interregnum, the archdeacon appoints a replacement. The other governors of maintained schools are made up of elected parents, a local authority (LA) representative, the headteacher, a staff member elected by the staff of the school, and co-opted governors (not in all VA schools). All schools may also have associate members who are not named in the instrument of government and have limited voting rights but who can make a valuable contribution to the work of the governing board.

Academies

Depending on whether the Trust is a Single Academy Trust (SAT), a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and also when it converted the structures and constitution can be varied. It is important that, if you have been appointed to an academy, you understand the structure of the Trust and what this means for your role and the responsibilities that come with it. The important documents that you would need sight of are the Articles of association which sets out the structure of the Trust and who appoints to what level, the Supplemental Funding Agreement (SFA) for the school which sets out how the school should operate and generally reflects its prior category and the Scheme of Delegation in a MAT which identifies which powers and responsibilities stay with the Board and which (if any) are delegated to any local governance such as Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) or Local Governing/Advisory Committees (LGC/LACs).

Every academy trust has at least two levels of governance with MATs often having three: Members, Directors and Local Governing/Advisory Committees.



Members – These are akin to shareholders and have a financial liability of £10 if the Trust is wound up. The DBE is a Corporate Member on each C of E Trust, the Chair of the Directors is a Member and the link between the Board and Members. Others will be named individuals. They do not get involved in the day to day governance of the Trust but they are responsible for a number of activities:

- Amending any articles or looking to merge with another Trust or close the Trust down
- Appointing Directors (the number depends on the articles)
- Receiving the accounts
- Appointing the auditors
- Removing the Board if the Trust is not fulfilling its charitable objects

Thus the members have quite far reaching powers which they can use if necessary. They should meet at least annually for an AGM but in practice members should meet more frequently to receive updates about the work of the Trust and allow for Director appointments as required throughout the year. Earlier academy Trusts may well have appointed people as both Members and Directors. It is important to note that this is no longer allowed under ESFA rules and must be amended if the situation is still in place.

Directors/Trustees – The two terms are mentioned here although throughout this document we refer to Directors. Members of the Board are both Directors of the Company and Trustees of the Charity (an academy trust is both). In government literature they are generally referred to as Trustees but in church academies the term ‘Director’ is preferred as the land on which church academies sit will have Trustees and this is to ensure a distinction between the two.

Local Governors - Local governance is often used by Multi-Academy Trusts to manage individual schools. The delegated powers depends on the size of the Trust and its structure. Some local governance is used as a local link with the school and its community; forging relationships, looking at teaching and learning and its impact on the children and feeding back local views to the Board. For larger trusts more powers may be delegated to local governance with regards to curriculum, budget planning and managing staff but with the clear understanding that the Board of Directors is the body ultimately accountable for all matters in each school and may choose to remove delegated powers if local governance is judged to be ineffective. Some articles set out the structure of a local governing body but most allow the Board to structure their committees (including local governance) as they choose. It is important that if you are appointed to govern locally you understand the scheme of delegation under which you will be working.

Qualifications

Governors do not need any formal qualifications and are not expected to be experts in everything however it is important that the governing board includes a variety of skills and a regular skills audit should take place to support training and when appointing new governors. Governing any school will involve a considerable commitment; the list of responsibilities can be daunting



but they are shared by the whole governing board. It is vital, therefore, that each governor plays his/her part and that a sensible and fair distribution of the work is made. All governors are able to offer something whether it is a particular skill, such as organising committee meetings, interviewing, or simply experience as a teacher, builder, surveyor, counsellor, personnel officer, youth leader, social worker, or parent. Equally important are the skills of being able to listen and offer encouragement and appropriate challenge to the senior leaders of the

school. The most important attribute is the willingness to learn and to attend training to develop skills and knowledge of the education sector.

Making Decisions



No matter how they are appointed or elected, all governors bring a valid perspective to the governing board. The responsibility for the decisions made at governing board meetings does not rest with any individual governor, or a small group of governors, but with the **whole** governing board. Responsibility for decisions is, therefore, a corporate matter and it is important that governors understand that decisions are taken on behalf of the board.

A governing board or committee must be quorate in order to make decisions and governors should try to reach a consensus wherever possible, otherwise decisions will be made by a simple majority vote with the chair having a casting vote, if necessary. The chair of governors (or in his/her absence, the vice-chair) has power to act on behalf of the governing board but **only** in cases of urgency where inaction would be detrimental to the interests of the school, its pupils, parents or employees. Any such action must be reported at the next meeting of the full governing board.

Meetings

Governing boards are required to meet at least once a term: in practice, most governing boards meet more often. Governing boards sometimes have a number of committees which deal with specific issues, such as, personnel, finance, admissions, curriculum, ethos and premises. This enables the workload to be shared equitably and any skills, experience or interests that individual governors may have, to be put to best use. Meetings of church school governing boards should open with prayer. All formal meetings and committees have an agenda which indicates the business to be discussed. The issues that might be discussed at a full governors' meeting will vary, but some items will be standard, e.g. minutes of the previous meeting and any matters arising, the headteacher's report, the school development plan, reports from committees, reports from the Diocese. The Chair of Governors will conduct the meeting and should ensure that everyone is encouraged to contribute and keep the meeting focused. The clerk to the governors takes the minutes of the meeting, records those present

and advises on procedural matters. Every governor should prepare for the meeting by reading the papers and noting any points they want to make or wish to clarify before they attend (governors should not read the paperwork at the meeting).

New governors should expect some help to enable them to understand their role and the issues facing the school. As a minimum, new governors should meet with the headteacher and chair of governors and be given access to relevant information about the school and the work of the governing board. They should also have access to relevant governor training provided by the LA and the Diocese. Many governing boards provide a mentor to new governors who can guide them through the meetings as well as help them get to know the school.

Getting to know your school

It is vital that governors get to know their school in order that decisions made at governors' meetings can be based in first-hand knowledge of the school at work. It is helpful to read the school prospectus and other documentation about the school but there is no substitute for a school visit. One of the enjoyable aspects of being a governor is



being involved with the pupils during the school day to see how decisions at governor level impact the experience of pupils in the school. However, any visit must be carefully planned in consultation with the headteacher and any member of staff whose class you are to visit. The visit should be purposeful and it is good practice for a proforma to be completed and then shared with the whole governing board as part of the monitoring role.

Governing boards should have a governor visit policy or protocol which must be followed.

Types of schools in Diocese of Chester

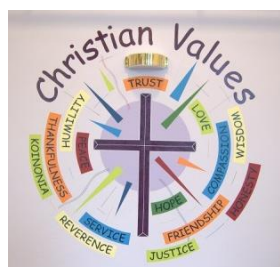
There are three main types of church schools in the Diocese of Chester which have various responsibilities. It is a good idea to find out which type of church school you are serving so that you are aware of the rights and responsibilities of your particular governing board.

	Voluntary Aided (VA)	Voluntary Controlled (VC)	Academies
Buildings	Owned by trustees. Capital building work is the responsibility of the governors (supported by a grant from the DfE up to 90% of approved expenditure). Playing fields are usually provided by the LA.	Owned by trustees. All building works funded by LA.	Owned by trustees. Playing fields usually leased to Academy Trust. Capital work funded directly from the Education Funding Agency (EFA)
Staff (a) Teaching	Employed by the governing board. Governors may seek evidence of Christian commitment from applicants for teaching posts.	Appointed by the governors, employed by the LA. Governors are bound by LA appointing policies. Governors may satisfy themselves that a candidate for the post of headteacher is suitable to support and develop the ethos of the school.	Employed by the Academy Trust. The SFA will set out if evidence of a Christian commitment may be used for applicants for teaching posts. This usually reflects the previous category of the school.
Staff (b) Support	Employed either by governors or contractors.	Employed either by LA or contractors. LA employees usually appointed by governors.	Employed either by Trust or contractors.

Worship	Reflects the Anglican tradition and can include worship in the parish church.		
RE	Governors determine a syllabus that reflects the Anglican traditions. They usually make use of the diocesan guidelines.	The school must follow the LA syllabus unless the parents request denominational RE. The foundation governors have rights in the appointment of staff to teach denominational RE (called reserved teachers).	Which syllabus is used will be stated in the SFA. This usually reflects the previous category of the school.
Membership of the Governing board/Board of Directors	Church (foundation) governors have a majority of two over all other governors. Parish priest is often an ex officio member of the governing board.	Church (foundation) governors are in a minority. The parish priest is often an ex officio member of the governing board.	Depends on documentation agreed with DfE and if it is a single or multi-academy Trust but generally it reflects its previous category.
Funding	LA LMS formula. Governors' costs for building work from locally raised funds. The DBE assists cashflow for building work.	LA LMS formula.	Funded directly from the EFA based on LMS formula.
Admissions	Governors determine the policy as the admissions authority. They must consult the LA and all other schools in the area on any changes. The LA co-ordinates normal round admissions.	The LA is responsible for admissions, but must consult the governing board if they propose any changes.	The Trust determines the policy as the admissions authority (this may be delegated to a Local Governing Body in a MAT). They must consult the LA and all other schools in the area if they propose changes. The LA

			administers normal round admissions.
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Church school ethos and distinctive Christian Vision



All maintained church schools have in their Instrument of Government an ethos statement. In the Diocese of Chester it includes the following statement:

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

The statement serves a specific purpose as part of a legal document rooting the school in its Christian foundation; it is only found in those schools which have a religious character.

In academy articles the Trust's Objects are stated in the following way:

'The Company's object ("the Object") is specifically restricted to the following: to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing Academies which shall offer a broad and balanced curriculum

and which shall include: (i) Church of England schools designated as such which shall be conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England both generally and in particular in relation to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship, and having regard to any advice issued by the Diocesan Board of Education;

Which similarly explicitly requires the Board to ensure its C of E schools are rooted in their C of E foundation.

Each school will have a school vision statement that reflects its key aims and values of the school. In a church school this will be Theologically rooted reflecting the school's context and core Christian purpose. This context and purpose is created and influenced by factors both inside and outside the school community. As these factors change, so the vision of a school must be dynamic and open to review and appraisal. Schools exist in a changing society and are required to respond appropriately to its needs and expectations and the response of church schools will reflect their Christian foundation. The principles which govern the school's response to society's changing face are those which make for a loving, caring, accepting community that acknowledges the unique



value of each individual both within the school community and society at large. Support in developing this vision is provided by the Diocese.

The Church of England's Vision for Education

'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good'

The full document can be found using the following link

https://cofefoundation.contentfiles.net/media/assets/file/Church_of_England_Vision_for_Education_-_2016_jdYA7EO.pdf

The vision is subtitled as 'Deeply Christian, serving the common good' and is worked out theologically around four core elements described as wisdom, hope, community and dignity.

1. Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills

Summary: Enabling discipline, confidence, and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge and developing talents in all areas of life.

'Good schools foster confidence, delight and discipline in seeking wisdom, knowledge, truth, understanding, know-how, and the skills needed to shape life well. They nurture academic habits and skills, emotional intelligence and creativity

across the whole range of school subjects, including areas such as music, drama and the arts, information and other technologies, sustainable development, sport, and what one needs to understand and practise in order to be a good person, citizen, parent, employee, team or group member, or leader.'



2. Educating for Hope and Aspiration

Summary: Enabling healing, repair, and renewal coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons, and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.

'In the drama of ongoing life, how we learn to approach the future is crucial. Good schools open up horizons of hope and aspiration, and guide pupils into ways of fulfilling them. They also cope wisely with things and people going wrong. Bad experiences and behaviour, wrongdoing and evil need not have the last word. There are resources for healing, repair and renewal; repentance, forgiveness, truth and reconciliation are possible; and meaning, trust, generosity, compassion and hope are more fundamental than meaninglessness, suspicion, selfishness, hardheartedness and despair.'

3. Educating for Community & Living Well Together

Summary: A core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities, of character that enable people to flourish together.

'We are only persons with each other: our humanity is 'co- humanity', inextricably involved with others, utterly relational, both in our humanity and our shared life on a finite planet. If those others are of ultimate worth then we are each called to responsibility towards them and to contribute responsibly to our communities. The good life is 'with and for others in just institutions' (See Paul Ricoeur). So education needs to have a core focus on relationships and commitments, participation in communities and institutions, and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.'



4. Educating for Dignity & Respect

Summary: The basic principle of respect for the value of preciousness of each person treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

'Human dignity, the ultimate worth of each person, is central to good education. The basic principle of respect for the value of each person involves continual discernment, deliberation and action, and schools are one of the main places where this happens, and where the understanding and practices it requires are learned. This includes vigilant safeguarding. It is especially important that the equal worth of those with and without special educational needs and disabilities is recognized in practice. For the first time in history, there is now something approaching global agreement on the worth of each person through the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and

its successor declarations, covenants and conventions, including that in 2006 on the rights of persons with disabilities. How that is worked out in each nation and each school is a massive task that calls on the inspiration and resources offered by each tradition of faith and belief.

Governing boards should make themselves familiar with this vision and use it to inform the distinctive vision they will have for their own school. This is particularly important when it comes to the denominational inspection of the school, SIAMS.

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

By law church schools must undergo a denominational inspection at least every five school years.

Denominational inspection for the Church of England was developed into a national framework by The National Society (the body that supported church schools nationally) into a process known as the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) which is now overseen by the Church of England Education Office.

Inspectors are trained by nationally and are fully DBS checked. They must undertake regular update training to maintain their inspector status.

The SIAMS reports will provide a different but complementary perspective on Church of England schools in relation to Ofsted's findings.

From September 2018 the inspection framework was based around the Church of England's vision for education in terms of its structure but it is designed to inspect the impact of school's individual vision based on their Christian foundation and local context. In a MAT they would expect to see a distinctive vision for each individual school in the MAT that they may lead back and be linked to a central Trust vision.

Effectively the inspection answers one question:

How effectively does the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, enable its pupils and adults to flourish?

With a grade given of Excellent, Good, Requires Improvement or ineffective.

There are 7 strands that lead to the judgement which are:



1. Vision and leadership
2. Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills
3. Character Development: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy
4. Community and Living Well Together
5. Dignity and Respect
6. The impact of Collective Worship
7. The Effectiveness of Religious Education

The expectation is that the school is a 'Good' school and the inspection process will confirm this. There would need to be clear evidence to start to look at other possible judgements such as Excellent, Requires Improvement or ineffective.

In addition a separate grade for collective worship will be given for all schools and the teaching and learning of RE for voluntary aided schools.

What about governors?

Governors will be involved:

- in developing a distinctive vision for the school, theologically rooted and reflecting its context and the community that it serves
- in the school's self - evaluation as a church school;
- in ensuring this self-evaluation is fed into the school's development plan;
- in supporting the headteacher and staff in developing the school's Christian character through decision making and resourcing;

- in the development of an effective collective worship policy;
- in ensuring that RE is viewed as a central focus in school and that it is well resourced, led and taught;
- by ensuring that all policies take into account the school's distinctive vision and that the community is clear about its Christian character
- on the day of inspection through support of the school and in discussions with the inspector.

The Diocese provides support and training for schools and governors on SIAMS and information is available on the Diocesan website.

Governor training



and its performance.

Governors play a key role in the life of a school – the job is demanding of time, skills, energy and commitment. The new inspection framework for schools places a still greater focus on the important role of governors in the school; on their knowing the school, its strengths and areas for improvement

With so many expectations and challenges facing governors and schools, training and development for governors has never been as important as it is now. Governors rightly recognise the importance of training for staff in schools yet frequently forget that they too are key players in the business of raising standards and need it just as much.

Governors of church schools have the additional responsibility of ensuring the Christian ethos of the school is developed and consistently monitored and evaluated. Aided schools and academies will find that there are a number of areas (for example admissions, buildings and staffing) where practice is different to controlled and community schools.

The Local Authority (LA) and Diocese provide training for governors and it is imperative that governors attend and constantly keep updated in a field where new policies and requirements are published on an almost daily basis. The Local Authority will provide training on general educational aspects and the Diocese provides training on issues that are either specific to church schools or where church schools may want to take an alternative view. It will also provide support for individual governing boards as necessary and can provide general training either alongside LA colleagues or alone.

Diocesan training events are advertised through via the schools bulletin which is sent out electronically and on their website. Headteachers are asked to forward our schools bulletin to all governors. If you do not receive a copy please contact your headteacher.

The regular programme of training is free to governors whose schools subscribe to the Diocesan 'Family of Schools'.

Schools may also buy in bespoke Diocesan training for their governing board either as an individual school or as part of a cluster or MAT.

Details of LA training can be found on their websites.

The role of a foundation governor

In voluntary aided (VA) schools, the foundation governors must be in a majority of two. In voluntary controlled (VC) schools, the foundation governors number at least two but no more than a quarter of the total number of governors.

The usual term of office for a foundation governor is four years; this will be stated in the instrument of government.

There are various routes by which a foundation governor may be appointed to a Chester Diocesan church school governing board:

- by virtue of being an incumbent of a parish;
- by the Parochial Church Council (PCC);
- by the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE);
- by a foundation body relating to the trustees, or the original founders of the school.
- by the Board of Directors or Members in consultation with the DBE

Priests of parishes with a maintained church school are normally **ex officio** foundation governors, that is, they are members of the governing board because they hold office (this is not necessarily the case in academies). It is hoped that all parish priests whose parish includes a Church of England school will feel able to take up his or her ex officio position on the governing board; however there may be occasions when they feel that they would best serve the school in a way other than being a governor. Regardless of this the church school is very much part of the local worshipping community and should be served as such. If the parish priest does not wish to be a governor, the DBE should be informed as alternative arrangements can be made. We would expect that if a parish priest chooses not to be a governor they will continue to act as link with the church and be involved in worship and other aspects of the school's life.

Roles and responsibilities

Statutory legislation sets out the specific responsibility of foundation governors for ensuring the character of the school as a Church of England voluntary school is preserved and developed. Therefore foundation governors should have a particular concern for the school's ethos, religious education and collective worship. They should also seek to maintain and develop the links with the local church.

Church schools do not have the monopoly on loving and caring relationships; nevertheless the church school is institutionally rooted in the Christian faith and is thus different from any other school. In seeking to preserve the character of their schools, foundation governors will want to contribute to sustaining, developing and nurturing the school's distinct Christian vision.

Foundation governors, however, should be careful of focusing only on this aspect. The education and development of the pupils must be the prime focus of all governors and in the church school this is within the context of a Christian environment. Similarly, as the school's Christian vision drives the work it does, every governor should have a concern for this. Foundation governors are appointed for their specific understanding of this aspect and to help inform the wider governing board but each governor should be focused on developing and supporting the school's distinctive vision of education for its pupils.

Expectations of a Foundation Governor

As a foundation governor you will be expected to:

- be an active member of a Christian worshipping community;
- be committed to the work of effective education within a Christian context;
- be willing to uphold the Church of England foundation and ensure its development is a priority;
- be enthusiastic and active in promoting school and parish links;

- have the capacity to be an active and committed member of the governing board.

As a governor you will be expected to:

- take a full active role in the work of the governing board;
- attend all full governing board meetings and committee meetings as necessary;
- act as part of a corporate board;
- be prepared to challenge professionals as appropriate to ensure the best outcomes for the children in the school;
- know the school in terms of its strengths and weakness and be able to articulate this;
- attend Diocesan, Local Authority and school based training in order to develop governor skills and knowledge;
- ensure confidentiality and act at all times with integrity;
- be willing to undertake any required safeguarding checks.

As a foundation governor you will be expected to:

- ensure the Christian ethos of the school is preserved and developed;
- ensure updates are regularly provided for the PCC on the work of the school, with particular regard to the development of its Christian foundation and to encourage church/school links;
- report back to the Diocesan Board of Education any issues that may arise in the school;
- ensure that the school provides an act of collective worship for all children every day and that it is in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England;
- in voluntary aided schools ensure the RE syllabus is based on Diocesan guidelines;
- inform the full governing board of any Diocesan advice and guidance;

- ensure that the School Development Plan includes strategy for the development of areas reflected in the SIAMS inspection schedule;
- inform the Diocese when headteacher posts become vacant and invite a representative of the Diocesan Director of Education to attend the appointments procedure;
- be prepared to offer challenge and support to the school and parish as they strengthen their links;
- regularly promote the school through the parish events/magazines/newsletters and promote the parish through school newsletters/events etc.

DBE Contact Details

The DBE is always here to help and can be contacted below

By mail:

The Diocesan Board of Education
Church House
5500 Daresbury Park
Daresbury
Warrington
WA4 4GE

Phone 01928 718834

Director of Education

Chris Penn

Deputy Director of Education

Sue Noakes

School Effectiveness Officer

Mark Whitehill

Christian Character and CPD Officer

Jen McIlveen

Buildings and Finance Officer

Simon Geddes

Administrator in Education

Charlotte Somers

School Administrative Assistant

Linda Boys

School Assets Administrator

Sandra Jones