

Roles and Responsibilities

"The governing body has general responsibility for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement including setting targets for pupil achievement, managing the school's finances, making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based, appointing staff and reviewing staff performance and pay and many more." Source: GovernorNet

The Governing Body is also generally accountable for the performance of the school to parents and the wider community. The Governing Body acts by setting overall targets and policy. For example, it decides the overall number of staff and the general allocation of the school's budget (which is required to balance). It also decides a range of policies such as the various curriculum policies, how the school manages discipline, the safety policy and so on. Although the Governing Body is the final decision-making body for these matters, at Trinity St Peter's the Governors try hard to make sure that they do consult well with staff, parents and the children themselves wherever possible. The Governors also obtain external advice wherever they feel it is necessary. The governing body has considerable discretion as to how to discharge its responsibilities but it must follow the (extensive) regulations which apply to schools. In general, too, local or national guidelines must be followed unless there are exceptional reasons not to do so. The Governing Body is required to constitute itself in line with the regulations and to appoint a chair and vice chair. It is permitted, but not required, to delegate some of its responsibilities to individual governors or committees of governors. At Trinity St Peter's, committees often do have delegated powers but individual governors generally do not. The three main committees at Trinity St Peters are General Purpose (dealing with Property and Finance), Educational Development (dealing with issues revolving around the curriculum) and Strategic Review (dealing with the strategic direction of the school). Each governor is on at least one committee.

Governors meetings take place twice a term (only one is required by law) and the three main committees would normally meet at least 14 days before the main meetings.

The Governing Body and Day to Day management

While the Governing Body sets overall policy, day to day management is entirely the responsibility of the head teacher and their staff. For staff, this means that the normal management chain is preserved and respected. For parents, it means that most matters affecting an individual child will be the responsibility of the staff and the head teacher, acting within the school's policies and procedures. It also means that the first point of contact for any enquiry is always the school. Nonetheless, some matters are referred to the Governing Body as a matter of policy. For example, permission for regular absence for special sport or other special needs provision would normally be referred to Governors, as it represents an exception to the general attendance requirements. The Governing Body may also become involved in the very rare cases where an appeal is made against a particular decision and cannot be resolved.

Individual Governor responsibilities

The Governing Body has collective authority only. Except where specific delegations of authority are made, individual governors have no authority within the school. Individual Governors, like company directors, are also required to act in the interests of the school in their role as Governors, irrespective of how they are appointed. However, individual governors often have particular responsibilities within the Governing Body. Many take on special interests to ensure that at least one Governor has detailed knowledge of particular issues. For example, many curriculum topics are 'tracked' by an individual Governor. The Governing body will also often appoint a special interest Governor to track particular initiatives (such as the implementation of new government requirements). Some specific examples at Trinity St Peter's include:

- The Link Governor, responsible for liaison between the school and local education authority on issues such as Governor training
- Each of the five areas of the every child matters agenda is monitored by one or more governors
- The Special Educational Needs governor.
- Links with the two Parishes.