

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL'S GOVERNORS

All state-funded schools in this country are required to have Governing Bodies. Their job is to provide strong strategic leadership and hold the Headteacher and senior management to account. The Head is entirely responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. Governors are there to support the Head and his colleagues. They should not get directly involved in operational matters.

St John's currently has 12 governors, including the Head. They are:

Anthony Bottrall (Chair)

Rev. Canon Rosemarie Mallett (Vice-Chair and Chair of Pupils, Parents and Community Committee)

Martin Clark (Head)

Yvonne Steel (Chair of Achievement Committee)

Chris Taylor (Chair of Resources Committee)

Hannah Abiri (St John's parish governor)

Sally Brazier (staff governor)

Michelle Haffner (St John's parish governor)

Claudette Jaggon (St John's parish governor)

Glen Mehn (Local Authority governor)

Ernest Otiemo (parent governor)

Patrick Williams (staff governor)

Governors are elected or appointed from different sources (St John's parish, Southwark church of England Diocese, parents, staff, Local Authority) for a four-year period. Their work is voluntary and unpaid. Elections for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair are held at the beginning of each school year.

The governors' most important functions are

- To ensure that the school has a clear vision, ethos and strategic direction, consistent with its close links with St John's church.
- To hold the Head to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and ensure that its money is well spent.

The single most important responsibility that governors have is to appoint the Head. As governors of a Church of England school they are also legally the employers of all staff. They also help to set the school's Admissions policy.

The full Governing Body meets formally at least three times a year. It also meets informally from time to time to discuss issues of particular importance in greater depth. Still more detailed discussions are held by the three main sub-committees:

- Achievement (to critically review reports of pupils' progress in different subject areas, both from the Head and the Local Authority's School Improvement Adviser);
- Resources (to review finances and prepare annual budgets; to receive reports on staff management; and to deal with building management issues); and
- Pupils, Parents and Community (to review pupils' attendance and behaviour; to support the School Council and promote good working relations with parents; and strengthen links between the school, the church and the wider local community).

Other committees are set up as and when required. A particularly important one at present is a committee which leads on negotiations with the Local Authority about the planning and building of the new 3-form entry school and the interim arrangements for teaching the children on the Somerleyton Road site.

Each governor is asked to take special interest in one of the subjects taught within the school and does so through regular meetings with the teachers who lead on those subject areas.

The school receives all its revenue funding from the Local Authority. Where there are significant new building costs (as in the case of the expanded Early Years Centre), governors are expected to raise 10% of the total cost. Parents are asked every year to contribute what they can to help the governors meet that cost. The 10% contribution is not required in the case of the rebuild of the new 3-form entry school, which will be 100% government-funded.