

FOUNDATION GOVERNOR HANDBOOK

2026-27

JOINT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Contents

Introduction	Page 3
A Short History of Church Schools	Page 4
The Role of the Governing Board	Page 5
The Role of the Parish	Page 6
Christian Distinctiveness in Church Schools	Page 7
Categories of Church School	Page 8
Categories of Governor	Page 11
The Role of the Foundation Governor	Page 13
What do Foundation Governors do in practice?	Page 14
SIAMS	Page 15
Religious Education	Page 16
Ex-Officio Foundation Governors	Page 17
The Appointment Process	Page 18
Disqualifications	Page 19
Removal of Foundation Governors	Page 20
Governor Training Requirements	Page 21
Further Information Useful Publications	Page 22
The Diocesan Education Team	Page 23
Contact Details	Page 25

Introduction

I would like to start by thanking you for agreeing to become a Foundation Governor. The role of Foundation Governor is a vital role within church schools to ensure that we continue to maintain our church vision and ethos. Being a school governor is such a rewarding role and all our schools need our support now more than ever.

Joshua Watson had a vision back in 1811 that the poor of the parish should all have access to education. He wanted to see a church school in every parish in England. Today we have over 4600 church schools across England all continuing with Joshua Watson's vision of providing an education that 'transforms outcomes for young people by combining academic rigour with a rounded approach to personal development, rooted in the worship and other shared practices that characterize life in their community'. (Church of England Vision for Education 2016:3) Today there are over 22,500 Foundation Governors across England, all ensuring that the vision is being carried out.

Being a Foundation Governor means that you have taken on the role of ensuring that the Christian ethos of the school is secure; that the school is adhering to its trust deed. Church schools are also subject to additional inspections called SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspections which take place every 5 years. Governors play an important role in this process and have responsibility for ensuring that their school is ready for inspection.

The Education team here at the Diocese of Portsmouth and Diocese of Winchester are here to help and support you carry out your role as a Foundation Governor and are here to support your governing board and school leadership team in ensuring that you are doing the very best for your pupils.

This booklet will provide you with a range of information that will be useful in your role as a governor and will also provide links to other sources of information. Please use this as a starting point. You will find a range of training available from both your local authority and the diocese to support you in your role. You can also contact me at any time using the contact details below if you need any advice or support.

Thank you so much for agreeing to be a Foundation Governor. I really do hope that you enjoy your role which will be both challenging and rewarding. You will receive regular updates from the Education Team and please don't forget to become familiar with our websites which will contain documents and information that you will find useful.

[Diocese of Portsmouth](#)

[Diocese of Winchester](#)

Hannah

Hannah Inglis

Diocesan Education Advisor and School Governance Coordinator

hannah.inglis@portsmouth.anglican.org

schoolgovernance@portsmouth.anglican.org for Portsmouth Diocese

schoolgovernance@winchesterdiocese.org for Winchester Diocese

A Short History of Church Schools

The Church of England has been committed to providing education for the past 200 years. The founding of the National Society in 1811 led to a flourishing of provision of education for the poor in parishes (www.churchofengland.org/education.aspx). By the time of the national census of 1851, forty years later, the church had established 17,000 schools.

State provision for public education did not come until the Education Act of 1870 and it operated by supplementing rather than replacing voluntary provision. At the time of the outbreak of the Second World War, after seventy years of state provision, the churches were together still providing schooling for nearly a third of the children of school age.

The Education Act of 1944 provided a new deal in which church schools were offered the option of increased state funding and control becoming Voluntary Controlled Schools, or lesser state support and greater independence becoming Voluntary Aided Schools. There is a third category, Foundation schools, which are often the former Grant Maintained schools. There are also Church of England Academies, church schools that have chosen or have been required to convert to academy status. Any school converting takes the church status with it and will still be expected to be the best church school it can be. Regular Inspections will also take place to ensure that Church schools maintain this.

Today there are over 4600 Church of England schools and academies across England which make up over 20% of all state funded schools. Over 26% of Primary Schools are church schools and 6% of Secondary schools.

(Vision for Education, 2016)

In 2016, the Church of England released its Vision of Education, *'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good'*.

'This is a Vision not just for Church of England schools, but for a Church of England Vision for Education. The Vision embraces spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. A vision of human flourishing for all that embraces excellence and academic rigour as well as a wider framework. It has identified 4 basic elements which permeate the vision –

- Wisdom
- Hope
- Community
- Dignity

'The Church of England aims to deliver excellence in education and want the best outcomes for children and young people so that they can achieve their fullest potential' (Vision for Education, 2016) Church schools were set up to provide education for the poor of the parish for all faiths and none.

As a Foundation Governor, please take some time to look at the [Church of England Vision for Education](http://www.churchofengland.org/education.aspx) which can be found on the Church of England website.

The Role of the Governing Board

The Purpose of Governance

The Purpose of Governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.

All boards, no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern, have 3 core functions.

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

In addition to these all Church Schools have an addition function –

- Upholding the Christian Foundation of the school in accordance with the trust deed.

Effective Governance is based on 6 key features –

- Strategic Leadership
- Accountability
- People
- Structures
- Compliance
- Evaluation

Strategic Direction -This involves setting the organisations overall strategic framework, including its vision and strategic priorities. It includes responsibility for setting and modelling its culture, values and ethos.

Accountability - This is about creating robust accountability for executive leaders. This means holding them to account for both educational performance and for financial and organisational performance, ensuring that money is well spent.

People – The effectiveness of a board depends on the quality of its people and how they can work together with executive leaders. Boards must build an effective team.

Structures - There are specific structures for maintained schools and academies in how governing boards must be constituted and maintained.

Compliance - The board has a range of key duties and responsibilities that they must adhere to and ensure that they are reviewed.

Evaluation – Regular monitoring and evaluation should be carried out by the board to ensure the effectiveness of governance and the performance of the school(s).

Please ensure that you become familiar with the DfE Guidance documents: [Governance Guide for Maintained Schools](#) or [Academy Trusts: Governance Guide](#) which will inform you further about the role of the Governing Board.

The Role of the Parish

In the 19th century the incumbent was usually the chair of governors. With the workload of modern incumbents, we do not recommend incumbents take on the role of chair. However as a mark of how important it is to have the very best people serving on the governing body of your church school and how important a church school is for the mission to the church, parishes should be looking to nominate people who have sufficient time, skills and commitment that they would be highly desirable to be elected as the chair.

It is vitally important the governing body of a church school conducts regular (usually annual) skills audits and communicates with the parish (the incumbent and the PCC); sharing with them the skills needed for their particular governing body. The incumbent and the PCC can recruit from the parish, the congregation and beyond, suitably skilled people and only nominate people of the highest calibre to the diocese for appointment. Governance is also an expression of Christian service to the community.

- Governing boards must communicate fully what is involved to anyone considering nomination as a governor.
- The parish must talk to the school (headteacher and the governing board) to find out what skills are needed on the governing body.
- The parish must search the community (the parishioners and beyond) for people who have the time and skills to ensure their church school is the best school it can be and the best church school it can be.
 - The parish may need to consider the school as the top priority when asking parishioners to serve the parish.
 - The parish may look to other neighbouring Anglican churches, for suitable people to nominate.
 - The parish may look to other Christian denominations in the local community for suitable people to nominate.
- The parish must recognise that their church school is a place of mission and offer pastoral and spiritual support to the pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- The parish should consider its church school a vital part of the parish profile and include the work of school in any clergy appointments. Many parishes ask candidates to lead a collective worship in the school as part of the clergy appointment process.

Christian Distinctiveness in Church Schools

The Christian ethos of the school should run like a thread through every element of school life, so one of the 'easy' questions for governors when looking at any policy is: "Is our ethos showing?", and if it isn't then how can we make changes to ensure that it does? It really should be a question for every policy and every event, not just those relating directly to RE or to collective worship. To model the distinctively Christian nature of the school in every area of school life is something which all governors sign up to corporately when they take on the role of governor at a Church school, and of course the way in which people interact with each other is the cornerstone on which everything else is built.

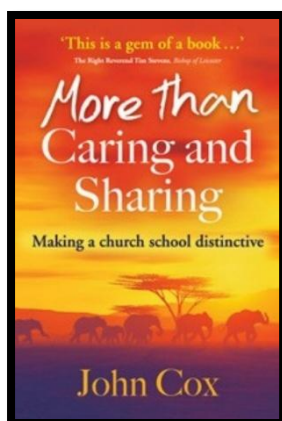
Trust, mutual respect and Christian love should underpin conversations, discussions and debates, and set within this context people are able to have a truly robust and constructive discussion without risk of upset or offence. Governors should be asking questions:

- Why are we doing this?
- Why are we doing it like this?
- Is this reflecting that we are a church school?
- How does this fit into our school development plan?
- Are we being distinctively Christian in how we do/handle this?
- Are our principles and values shared and owned by the whole school community?
- Are our values inclusive?
- Do all members of the school community have a respect for faith and cultural diversity?
- Do our activities and displays encourage reflection?
- Are we proud to be a church school?

More Than Caring and Sharing

Church schools are different not because they are exclusive but because they are distinctive.

This book seeks to help all concerned with education in church schools to explore what makes a church school distinctive. John Cox, a retired Diocesan Director of Education, suggests that even Christian values are not enough – it is the beliefs that underpin these values that makes the real difference: belief about God, about what it is to be human, about the Church and about the world. This is worked out in terms of the Kingdom values such as justice, forgiveness, gratitude, generosity, truth and love.



Available from Kevin Mayhew www.kevinmayhew.com

Categories of Church School

	Voluntary Aided schools	Voluntary Controlled schools	Foundation schools	Academies
Buildings	Owned by the by trustees: The trust deed determines the basis on which the school is run. New buildings and repairs are the responsibility of the governors (supported by grants from the Education Funding Agency, up to 90% of approval expenditure). Playing fields are usually provided by the LA.	Owned by the by trustees. The trust deed determines how the school shall be run where the law does not make this clear. All replacement, repairs and other building costs fall on the LA. Playing fields are usually provided by the LA.	Owned by the by trustees. The trust deed determines the basis on which the school shall be run where the law is silent. Playing fields are usually owned by the Governing Board. All building works funded from LA.	Owned by the Trustees. All building costs and repairs are the responsibility of the Academy Trust. Playing fields are in long-leasehold ownership for the Academy Trust.
Worship	Distinctively Christian; reflects the Anglican tradition and can include worship in the parish church.	Distinctively Christian; reflects the Anglican tradition and can include worship in the parish church.	Distinctively Christian; reflects Anglican tradition and can include worship in the parish church	Distinctively Christian; reflects Anglican tradition and can include worship in the parish church.
Funding	Local Formula Funding	Local Formula Funding	Local Formula Funding	Academy Trusts receive their funding directly from the Education Funding Agency and retain a % of funding before devolving remaining funds on a monthly

				basis to the academy.
Admissions	The Governing Board determines the policy and make the decisions in accordance with the requirements of the Admissions Code. They must consult the LA, the diocese and all other admission authorities in the area before making any changes.	The LA is responsible for admissions but must consult the Governing Board each year.	The Governing Board determines the policy and make the decisions in accordance with the requirements of the Admissions Code. They must consult the LA, the diocese and all other admission authorities in the area before making and changes.	The Academy Trust is the admission authority. The policy is determined and implemented by the Trustees. Academy Trusts can add or remove this criteria on any future policies once an academy joins a trust in their role as the Admissions Authority.
Advice	LA has certain rights to attend governor meetings to give advice. Diocesan Directors or their representative of Education have parallel rights.	LA has certain rights to attend governor meetings to give advice. Diocesan Directors or their representative of Education have parallel rights.	LA has certain rights to attend governor meetings to give advice. Diocesan Directors or their representative of Education have parallel rights.	The Academy Trust is directly responsible to the Secretary of State. The LA would not be invited to attend post-conversion meetings and have no involvement in the academy. They should not be contacted to provide advice unless an SLA has been procured with the LA for this service. The Articles of Association will state whether the diocese will be represented as a corporate member and have a right to attend meetings

				and to give advice.
Inspection	OFSTED inspectors scrutinize school's self-evaluation. SIAMS inspectors inspect Church School Distinctiveness, including leadership, RE, worship, spiritual and moral development and school ethos.	OFSTED inspectors scrutinize school's self-evaluation. SIAMS inspectors inspect Church School Distinctiveness, including leadership, RE, worship, spiritual and moral development school ethos.	OFSTED inspectors scrutinize school's self-evaluation. SIAMS inspectors inspect Church School Distinctiveness, including leadership, RE, worship, spiritual and moral development and school ethos.	OFSTED inspectors scrutinize school's self-evaluation. SIAMS inspectors inspect Church School Distinctiveness, including leadership, RE, worship, spiritual and moral development and school ethos.
Governors	Foundation Governors outnumber other governors by 2	Foundation Governors make 25%.	Foundation Governors make up, up to 25%. This can depend on the trust deed.	As determined by the Articles of Association if it is a standalone academy. For the MAT Trustees to determine if an academy within a MAT. There could be Local Governing Boards but the trust determines their constitution.

The majority of schools in the Diocese of Portsmouth and Diocese of Winchester are Voluntary Controlled or Voluntary Aided Schools. We have a number of Stand Alone Academy Trusts and schools who have joined Multi Academy Trusts including our own Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Academy Trust. (P&WDAT)

We have very few Foundation Schools.

Categories of Governor

[The 2012 Constitution Regulations](#) identify the different categories of governor that a governor can be in a maintained school. The regulations summarise the provision made for each governor type.

The Governing Board for maintained schools must not be smaller than 7 governors and must include:

- at least 2 parent governors
- The headteacher (unless the headteacher resigns as a governor)
- One staff governor
- One Local Authority governor
- As many co-opted governors as the board feel is necessary.
- For Voluntary Aided church schools, they must have a number of Foundation Governors as to outnumber all other governors by up to 2.
- For Voluntary Controlled schools, they must have 25% Foundation Governors.

(Note, separate rules apply for academy trusts.)

Parent Governors – Elected by the parents of the school. The method of election and appointment is set out in the Constitution regulations. Parent governors can in exceptional circumstances be removed from the governing board by the governing board. They are usually elected and appointed for a term of 4 years.

Staff Governors – Any paid member of staff can be elected as a staff governor. They are usually elected and appointed for a term of 4 years. If they cease to be employed by the school, then their role as a governor also ceases.

Headteacher – The headteacher is a member of the governing board by virtue of their office. Some headteachers choose to resign as a governor. If this happens then no one can take their place.

Local Authority Governors – Nominated by the Local Authority but appointed by the governing board. They are usually appointed for a term of 4 years.

Foundation Governors – They are nominated by the parish and appointed by the Diocese Board of Education. (DBE) The term of office is usually for a term of 4 years. A Foundation Governor is someone who in the opinion of the parish and the diocese has the skills to carry out all the governing boards functions and to

- Ensure that the schools character is preserved and developed.
- That the school is conducted in accordance with the foundations governing documents – In the case of church schools, the Trust deed.

The Ex-Officio governor is usually the incumbent of the parish connected to the school. The Ex-Officio comes under the umbrella of Foundation Governors.

Co-opted Governors – These are appointed by the governing board. They are people who in the opinion of the governing board have the skills and experience needed to support the board with its governance functions. They are usually appointed for a term of 4 years.

Associate Members – These are not governors. They are people that have been invited to serve on the board as they have a specialist skills set or knowledge set. They have no voting rights.

One thing to note is that regardless of the category of governor that you are, the core function of governance is the same for everyone. All governors have a responsibility to ensure that the strategic direction of the school is clear and that leaders are accountable for the performance and progress of the school.

In Academies, the total number of governors from different categories is identified in the 'Articles of Association'. Generally all are labelled academy local governors, although for church school academies the 'Articles of Association' will state the number of Foundation Academy Governors that are required.

The Role of Foundation Governors

In church schools, Governors are guardians of the vision, keeping it alive and ensuring that it is implemented. Governors are also responsible for ensuring that the school upholds its Trust Deed which sets out exactly what it means to be a church school.

The expectation is that your church school will seek to offer excellence in education and will above all be concerned to develop the whole human being in a place where the Christian faith is lived on a daily basis. As a Foundation Governor, you will be ensuring that this is happening. Foundation Governors have a particular role in monitoring the Christian and spiritual aspects of the school. You must be familiar with the requirements of a SIAMS inspection and be aware of when your last inspection took place.

Foundation Governors should be familiar with the following important documents –

The Instrument of Governance – This is individual to each school and a copy should be available from your clerk. This is a legal document which sets out the composition of the governing board and other related matters. The clerk, Headteacher and diocese will all have a copy which for church schools should include an ethos statements.

Exactly how this ethos statement is developed within the life of the school is different for each context but it often starts with a set of 3 core Christian values that are used to underpin all the work of the school. These values not only enable children to be the best they can be academically but also support their wellbeing. Spiritual development will be carefully planned and delivered enabling all to become fully human. For some children they will be enabled to develop a personal relationship with God. Please see the SIAMS Inspection Schedule to learn how a distinctively Christian approach to education is assessed.

The Trust Deed and Terms of Union – Governing boards are required to review the Terms of Union each year. It cannot be changed but should be upheld, which is what the review should be checking. The Trust Deed is a different document and is more a historical record of the sale of land to the parish covenanting educational purposes; the Terms of Union translates this into what current practice should reflect in the school in order for its ethos to be distinctively Christian. The 'Terms of Union' document should be displayed in the entrance to a diocesan school.

Terms of Reference – Every Governing Board should have Terms of Reference, this is a document that sets out the role of the Full Governing Board. If your governing board has separate committees, then each committee will have its own Terms of Reference. (Your clerk should have a copy of these.) They should be reviewed annually.

Code of Conduct – Every governor is required to sign a code of conduct each year. The Code of Conduct sets out the expectations in terms of professionalism and behaviour for governors.

What do Foundation Governors do in practice?

Foundation Governors are unique to schools that have a religious character, such as Church of England schools. The National Society stated in 1996 that Foundation Governors are there to 'explore with their partners on the governing board ways in which the church's role in the school may be more fully and positively implemented'. (Green 2016:16)

All Foundation Governors have a particular purpose to safeguard the character of the school and ensure it is conducted in accordance with any founding documents.

Foundation Governors should:

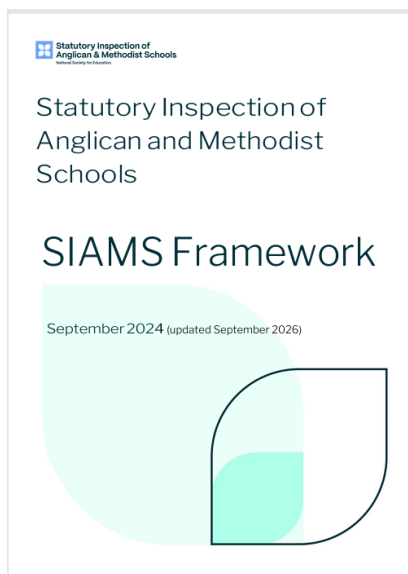
- Understand the distinctive nature and history of the Church of England
- Protect and develop the distinctive Christian character of the school
- Make sure that the school is conducted in accordance with the Trust Deed
- Be a member of the governing body team and play a full and active part
- Liaise with the parish, PCC and incumbent in promoting links between church and school
- Initiate discussion on how the local church can support its school
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship on pupils and staff
- Monitor and evaluate the impact religious education has on the distinctive Christian character of the school and
 - in a Voluntary Aided School or Academy the quality of teaching and learning in religious education
- Ensure that the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Board of Education is informed of any important changes that occur at the school, for example, the resignation and appointment of a headteacher
- Play a full part in the selection of a new headteacher
- Support school leaders in preparing for and be part of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican/Methodist Schools (SIAMS)
- Be a member of the group that appraises the headteacher in the Performance Management process
- Be willing to attend governor training

As part of your role as a governor you will be involved in monitoring what happens in school. This might involve:

- Attending worship
- Sitting in on RE lessons
- Meeting pupils and talking to them about school
- Looking at books
- Looking at planning
- Reviewing progress and attainment data.

This is not about making judgements on the performance of individual staff or pupils but does ensure you are well informed about the school. You will be better placed to ask the right questions to support and challenge the leaders of the school and you will be more confident in taking far reaching strategic decisions.

SIAMS



SIAMS inspection focuses on the impact of the Church school's Christian vision on pupils and adults. This involves looking at the impact of the school's Christian vision, the provision the school makes because of this vision and how effective this provision is in enabling people to flourish. Church schools will employ a variety of strategies and styles appropriate to, and reflective of, their particular context in order to be distinctively and effectively Christian in their character and ethos. SIAMS inspectors therefore do not look for a set template of what a Church school should be like, but rather take the particular context of the school into account and base their evaluation on the impact of the provision within the school's context. The inspection will result in an overall judgement of whether or no the school is living up to its foundation as a Church School.

This is explored through six or seven IQs (Inspection Questions):

1. How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enable pupils and adults to flourish?
2. How does the curriculum reflect the school's theologically rooted Christian vision?
3. How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?
4. How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision create a culture in which pupils and adults are treated well?
5. How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision create an active culture of justice and responsibility?
6. Is the religious education curriculum effective? (with reference to the expectations set out in the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement for RE)
7. What is the quality of religious education? (Voluntary Aided Schools or former Voluntary Aided Schools)

The inspection will result in one of two judgements:

Judgement 1 (J1): The inspection findings indicate that the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Judgement 2 (J2): The inspection findings indicate that the school has strengths, but that there are also issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority.

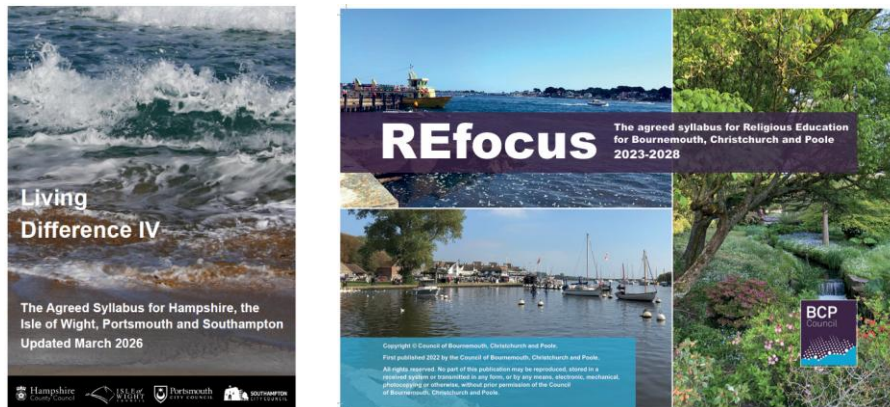
Notable strengths and key development points will be identified as part of the inspection process. The written report will include a narrative evaluation against each of the inspection questions.

Regardless of where a school is on their cycle of inspection, we recommend that school leaders and Governors make regular use of the SIAMS Inspection Framework as a tool for evaluating its effectiveness as a Church School. Our Education Team can provide training for Governors on SIAMS and on preparing for Inspection.

Religious Education

Legally all children have to receive Religious Education (unless they are withdrawn by their parents or carers) and in VC schools this has to be in line with an agreed syllabus. VA schools and Academy Trusts are free to choose their own syllabus, but the diocese advises them to follow the locally agreed syllabus. Schools in Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight use [Living Difference IV](#) as the locally agreed syllabus.

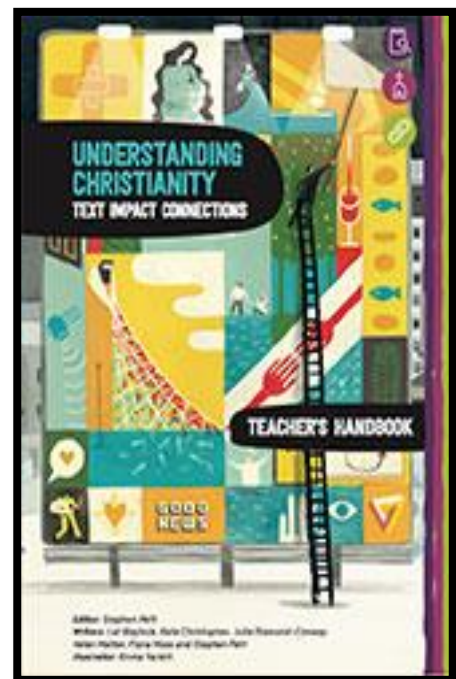
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) schools generally follow either the [BCP SACRE Agreed Syllabus](#) or Living Difference syllabus.



Church of England schools are also encouraged to use the [Understanding Christianity](#) resource, which was commissioned by the church to promote religious literacy in schools. The materials explore core concepts such as Creation, Fall, Incarnation and Salvation. There is more information on their [website](#)

A locally agreed syllabus should reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are mainly Christian, while taking into account the teachings and practices of the other main religions in the country. The locally agreed syllabus must not try to convert pupils or try to promote a particular religion or belief.

Governors and headteachers have a responsibility to ensure that RE is being taught and that the annual report to parents gives details of pupils' progress in RE. Foundation Governors have a particular concern for RE, for example making sure it is well resourced; they may be asked to observe RE lessons and to work with the school's RE coordinator.



Ex-Officio Foundation Governors

The Ex-Officio Foundation Governor is usually the incumbent of the parish in which the school is situated. This is written into the instrument of government as the “principal officiating minister in the parish”. The incumbent automatically becomes the Ex-Officio Foundation Governor when he/she is appointed to the parish. There is no Ex-Officio role in Academy Trusts unless the Articles of Association or local governance determined by the Academy Trust specify an ex-officio role.

The church school is part of the Ex-Officio’s parish responsibilities and within church schools there is an expectation that the incumbent will take a pastoral role for the care of staff, children, parents and fellow governors. It is also an expectation that a member of the parish clergy team will lead at least one collective worship in the school each week.

Church schools also visit the church for worship on a half termly basis as well as at festivals and the start and end of term. Worship was seen as an essential element in the establishment of the Church school and the duties of the “parochial clergyman”.

There is no fixed term of office for an Ex-Officio. They remain in post for the duration of their role as incumbent of the parish.

For schools that serve more than one parish, they may have more than one Ex-Officio on their governing board.

The Appointment Process

Ex-Officios

Ex-Officio Foundation Governors have a position by nature of being the incumbent of the parish. There is an Ex-Officio acceptance form which must be completed by any new incumbent who will be taking up the Ex-Officio Foundation Governor role.

The governance co-ordinator will contact newly appointed incumbents to discuss and provide them with the acceptance form, which should be returned to the governance coordinator by email.

Other Foundation Governors

Foundation Governors are nominated by the parish. They must complete a nomination form, which needs to be signed by the Parochial Church Council and Vicar who confirm that they are happy with the nomination. The nomination form should then be returned to the governance coordinator, who will process the form and issue a formal letter of appointment. The term of office is usually 4 years.

Re-appointment of Foundation Governors

Towards the end of their 4-year term of office, the governance co-ordinator will contact all foundation governors to advise them that they need to complete a re-appointment form if they wish to serve a further term. This will need to be signed by a representative of the local Parochial Church Council to confirm that they are happy with the nomination and returned to the governance co-ordinator. A formal letter of re-appointment will then be issued.

All of the above forms can be found on the diocese website as well as forms for appointing governors in Stand Alone Academy Trusts and Multi Academy Trusts.

DBS Checks

It should be noted that in all cases, it is for the school to carry out safeguarding checks in line with their own policy. The diocese does not keep a keep a record of DBS checks.

Clerks

Governing board clerks are expected to keep an up to date list of governors showing their terms of office. The clerk is required to inform the governance coordinator when a Foundation Governor leaves office and to ensure that the appropriate forms are completed for new nominations. Electronic signatures are perfectly acceptable on all of the above forms in order to ensure that the process can be administered electronically and avoid delays through misplacement of paper forms.

Disqualifications

Several disqualifications criteria exist under the current legislation and prospective governors are asked to consider this before completing the nomination form.

Any governor whose circumstances change and becomes disqualified during their term of office, must notify the clerk in writing who will in turn inform the Diocesan Board of Education.

A governor may become disqualified following a prolonged period of absence from full governing board meetings. Where apologies are sent to the clerk prior to the meeting, the minutes must record whether the governing board consent to the absence. Meetings missed with the governing boards consent do not count for disqualification. Absence from governing board meetings cannot be used to sanction an Ex-Officio governor.

Further Information on Disqualification of Governors in maintained schools can be found in the [Constitution of Governing Bodies](#) Guidance. For Academies and Multi Academy Trusts, trustees and members of local governing committees will be disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as trustee or local governing committee member, on the following grounds:

- They are under the age of 18;
- They are currently a pupil at the academy;
- They have failed to attend meetings within a six month period without apologies being accepted by the trustees;
- They are subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order ; interim bankruptcy restriction order; a debt relief restrictions order; an interim debt relief restrictions order; or they have been declared bankrupt and/or their estate has been repossessed for the benefit of creditors and the declaration or seizure has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- They have been disqualified as a company director or failed to make a payment under a county court administration order;
- They have been disqualified as a charity trustee; found to be unsuitable by the Secretary of State; or ceases to be a trustee under any provision in the Companies Act 2006;
- They have been removed as a charity trustee on the ground of misconduct or mismanagement;
- They have been convicted of any criminal offence except for those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, or those for which the maximum sentence is a fine or lesser sentence unless they have been convicted of an offence outlined in Section 178 of the Companies Act 2011;
- They have not provided an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to the chair; or where they have, the chair, chief executive officer or principal or Secretary of State determines that their unsuitability to work with children renders them disqualified;
- They become incapable by reason of illness or injury of managing or administering his own affairs.

A disqualified person must give written notice of their disqualification to the clerk whether or not they are currently in office, or due to be appointed.

Unlike maintained schools, all categories of trustees in academies are subject to the same disqualifications as one another – there are no further disqualifications applied in the model articles with respect to parent or staff governors. Although, individual articles should be referred to.

Removal of Foundation Governors

The appointing body (for Foundation Governors, the Diocesan Board of Education) is able to remove a Foundation Governor. This would happen only in exceptional circumstances and the Diocesan Director of Education would expect to be involved in the early stages in order to resolve a problem in whatever way would be appropriate.

If the governing board request the removal of a Foundation Governor, then the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Board of Education (through the Diocesan Director of Education) would expect the full governing board to have met to discuss the reasons for the proposed removal and to have passed a resolution, which must have been confirmed at a second meeting not less than 14 days later.

Both resolutions must appear as agenda items. Reasons for the proposed removal request must be clearly stated and the individual concerned given an opportunity to respond. All governors should be involved and a two thirds quorum is needed for the resolution to be carried.

The Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Board of Education would consider this request in writing and make a decision based on all the facts.

Where the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Board of Education considers a person unsuitable to continue his/her term of office as a Foundation Governor, then the board would obtain all the relevant facts from the governing board and the individual concerned, meet to discuss and consider these, and make a decision whether to remove the individual or not.

In both these situations, the board would inform the governing body and the individual concerned in writing of the decision. There is no right of appeal.

Governor Training Requirements

The DfE [Governance Guide for Maintained Schools](#) set out the **features of effective governance**:

- scrutinising data
- providing challenge and support
- ensuring value for money

The [Academy Trusts: Governance Guide](#) sets out 'Trust Quality Descriptions' for the pillar of 'Governance and Leadership.' [The Academy Trusts Handbook](#) (DfE) provides an overarching framework for financial governance, management and other controls, for academy trusts in England.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

All those appointed and elected to the governing board should fulfil their duties in line with the 7 principles of public life. (The [Nolan Principles](#).)

1. Selflessness
2. Integrity
3. Objectivity
4. Accountability
5. Openness
6. Honesty
7. Leadership

Governors are required to attend regular training in order to stay up to date with knowledge and skills to support them in their role.

It is advisable for all new governors to attend some form of induction training if available from your local authority.

The diocese also provide a range of training opportunities for Foundation Governors and church school governing boards. We run a rolling programme of online core training each term and recommend this for all new Foundation Governors and Clerks, as well as a refresher for experienced Foundation Governors and Clerks. Other Governors are also very welcome to attend:

- Introduction to Foundation Governance
- Clerking in a Church School
- Collective Worship

Please refer to our Governor Newsletters for the next training dates, or contact Hannah Inglis or Sam Powell directly. We also offer face to face or online training for individual Governing Boards, including SIAMS preparation or more bespoke sessions. Please contact Hannah Inglis to discuss any training requests for your Whole Governing Board.

Further Information

- The Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Education websites:
 - [Portsmouth Website](#)
 - [Winchester Website](#)
- The [Church of England](#) has a section devoted to church schools
- [Hampshire School Governance Team](#) has information about their Local Offer and support / consultancy for Hampshire and non-Hampshire schools
- [Governors for Schools](#) – A website that can help with recruiting new school governors.
- [Inspiring Governance](#) – A school governor recruitment site.
- [National Governor Association \(NGA\)](#)
 - This website has a wealth of information to support governance. Some areas are accessible only if your governing board is a member of NGA, however there are areas of the website that can be accessed for free.

Useful Publications

[Governance Guide for Maintained Schools](#) DfE

[Academy Trusts: Governance Guide](#) DfE

[The Academies Financial Handbook](#) DfE

[The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) regulations 2013](#)

[Education Inspection framework](#), Ofsted

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), DfE

The Diocesan Education Team

Diocesan Director of Education



Jeff Williams: Jeff leads the Education Team and oversees all of its work with schools, academies and Further & Higher education. He works alongside and advises the Bishop of Winchester and the Bishop of Portsmouth, and the Diocesan Board of Education in the formation of strategy and all aspects of education policy. Jeff represents the diocese at regional and national level in any aspect of education. He represents the diocese at our Anglican Foundation University in Winchester on its Foundation Committee and is a Trustee at the University's Multi Academies trust.

Deputy Diocesan Director of Education



Rob Sanders: Rob's key responsibilities include deputising for and representing the Director at a regional and local level and managing the day to day organisation and related work of the office-based Education Team. He supports the Director in monitoring and ensuring efficiency across the team's work and with advising on diocesan vision and strategy for education. Rob takes an active role in supporting and promoting a distinctively Christian, community focused vision for education that serves The Common Good.

PA to the Diocesan Director of Education and Team Administrator



Sam Powell

Sam supports all aspects of the running of the team and provides PA services to the director of education. She will often be a first point of contact for enquiries.

Schools Advisers



Sue Bowen and Hannah Inglis

The Schools advisors lead on support for schools and parishes on the development of Church school distinctiveness and values, collective worship, spirituality, RE, SIAMS and school standards. They offer training for governors on headteacher appointments and support schools in the process and supports schools on general pastoral issues. **Hannah Inglis also acts as the schools governance co-ordinator**

RE and Spirituality Consultant

Jane Kelly



Jane takes the lead on all aspects of Religious Education (RE), providing personal and professional support and challenge to schools and academies.

School Buildings Officer

Susan Hine



Susan supports Voluntary Aided schools in relation to building issues and government-funded building projects. The School Buildings officers are also central to advising on the building of new church schools.

Contact Details

Education Team

Diocese of Portsmouth
First Floor
Peninsular House
Wharf Road
Portsmouth
PO2 8HB

schoolgovernance@portsmouth.anglican.org
schoolgovernance@winchesterdiocese.org

Portsmouth Website – portsmouth.anglican.org
Winchester Website – winchesterdiocese.org

(Updated – September 2026)