



Annual Governance Statement for 2025- 2026

St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School

Purpose of this Governance Statement

This governance statement has been prepared and published by the Governing Body of St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School (hereafter referred to as the Governing Body) in compliance with our duty to report on the ways in which we have fulfilled our obligations and responsibilities relating to our overarching duty to conduct the school in accordance with its Catholic character and our core functions (which are explained below) during the 2025/2026 academic year.

A list of serving governors is set out at **Appendix 1**.

Role of the Governing Body

As the Governing Body of a Catholic school, our overarching responsibility lies in ensuring that the school is conducted in accordance with its Catholic character at all times, and this overriding duty (which is also a legal duty) permeates everything that we do. Further, in accordance with our legal obligations, the Governing Body endeavors to operate at a strategic level leaving the headteacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to the Governing Body for the operational day-to-day running of the school. It is by achieving these aims that we can be sure that our school has effective governance.

The three core functions of the Governing Body are:

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

As an integral part of the vision for the holistic formation of children and young people Canon law (Church law) also requires that Catholic schools (which includes academies) are at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area" and the Governing Body are mindful of this requirement in all that we do.

Scope of Governing Body's Responsibilities

The Governing Body acknowledges that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that St Wilfrid's has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise. However, such a system is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve our

objectives and can provide only a reasonable (as opposed to absolute) assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Governing Body has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the headteacher for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management.

Governance Arrangements

Composition of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is made up of 8 Foundation Governors, 2 Staff Governors (including the Headteacher), 2 Parent Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor (vacancy) and 1 Co-opted Governor.

Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese in which the school is situated. The Bishop not only appoints his Foundation Governors because of their particular skills, but, more importantly, for the strict purpose of ensuring, on his behalf, the Catholic character of the school. Foundation Governors are also under important legal duties to preserve and develop the School's Catholic character. To ensure that the School's Catholic character is protected and that it is being conducted in accordance with the tenets of its Catholic designation, Governing Bodies of Catholic schools and academies must always have a majority Foundation Governors.

The Diocesan Bishop is Canonically responsible for his schools and academies. He ensures that the Catholic ethos of the school/academy is maintained, particularly through the appointment of Foundation Governors, but also through overseeing the appointment of members of staff and through Diocesan inspection, in order to ensure that the school/academy is fulfilling the objects cited in its Instrument of Government/Articles of Association and the trust deed under which the school/academy was established.

Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are people who, in the opinion of the Governing Body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school/academy. On our Governing Body the 1 Co-opted Governor is the Deputy Headteacher of St Wilfrid's School.

Governing Body's work this year and Governor's attendance at full Governing Body meetings

The Governing Body has fulfilled and continues to fulfill its statutory duties in terms of monitoring all areas of the school's work and offering support and challenge through the agreed agendas of each committee and the agenda of the Full Governing Body Meetings. All Governors have taken part in training to ensure they are fully aware and up to date with current issues for school and have the right skills to support and challenge the Senior Leadership Team. Governors have monitored and reviewed all key priorities of the School Development Plan from September 2025 to July 2026. At St Wilfrid's each Governor is assigned a Subject Role. This is where a governor is linked to a specific subject within the school, this then gives governors an opportunity to work in partnership with the teaching staff. With regular meetings, governors build a better understanding of the subject they have specific responsibility for within the school. All governor visits to school are documented on a subject form which details their observations and comments. During this academic year one twilight session has been held in the spring term with teaching staff and governors. This twilight session enabled teachers to update and inform governors about their subject and to highlight priorities or any issues or concerns in relation to

their subject. As governors, this session is invaluable as it helps immensely in helping governors to monitor the Schools Development Plan.

Listed below are further duties and responsibilities which St Wilfrid's Governing Body has fulfilled during this year.

We have done this primarily by:

- Supporting the Headteacher in achieving excellence in all areas.
- Review of statutory policies and ensuring there is compliance of the school website.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the whole school, ensuring standards continue to be high. Ensuring that there is pupil progress across the school and that there is a broad and balanced curriculum to engage all children.
- Monitoring the use of Pupil Premium/Sports Premium funding (statement available on the school website)
- Budget Management and assurance of "best value"
- Ensuring Leadership of the school is secure.
- Ensuring that the school is fit for purpose.
- Attending training courses where appropriate.
- The Chair of Governors has attended 3 EAB Meetings this academic year representing all the Catholic Primary Schools in the Diocese of Shrewsbury.

The full Governing Body has met 3 times during the last academic year.

We have not cancelled a Governing Body meeting because it was not quorate (the number of Governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made).

Overall, there has been excellent attendance at all our Governing Body meetings throughout this academic year.

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Governing Body meetings can be found at: **Appendix 2.**

Committees work this year and Governor's attendance at Committee meetings

At St Wilfrid's School we have held the following Committee Meetings:

1. Resources/Finance/Staffing/Health & Safety:

This committee monitors finance stringently to ensure the schools budget is spent to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children, especially in these very difficult financial times. All financial procedures are monitored by CWAC. Governors monitor Staffing to ensure good work life balance for all staff at

St Wilfrid's School. This committee will continue to monitor the wellbeing of all staff so that when issues arise, they are able to address them accordingly.

Governors receive regular updates from the Everyman system in relation to the maintenance of the school site. All health and safety issues are monitored on a regular basis, and the Health and Safety audit is carried out on a yearly cycle.

2. Standards and Achievement:

Governors provide a high level of challenge of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and the Senior Leadership team and the school. They consider a range of documents and data. Governors on this committee also monitor specific areas of the School Development Plan on a regular basis. During 2025/2026 Governors continue to monitor data which they receive from the NFER assessments which have been carried out in November, March, and June. Also, Year 6 children sat their SATS tests in May 2026

At all Governing Body meetings, Governors continue regularly to monitor parental/community involvement in school and make recommendations re the development of future links. They keep constantly reviewing pupil attendance, targets and strategies to improve attendance and engagement, the committee receives termly reports on behaviour and discipline including bullying incidents. Governors ensure that the school meets its legal requirements by publishing information on the school's website. The committee annually reviews the school's admissions policy and makes recommendations to the Full Governing Body when appropriate. This year Governors have continued to actively look at how to market the school within the local community and the number of children starting in reception in September 2026 is **28** which is higher than September 2025. Therefore, the Governing Body's focus for 2026/27 will be to continue to develop a marketing strategy to try to ensure that the number of applications for Reception continues to rise.

3. Governor Training:

All Governors have participated in the following training for the academic year 2025 – 2026

- Safeguarding Level 1 Training
- Cyber Training
- Prevent Training

The Chair and Vice Chair have attended the Diocesan Chairs and Vice Chairs Forum. These Forums are held 3 times a year at school locations in the Diocese. The purpose of these meeting is to share information and get support from other Chairs and Vice Chairs on a wide range of issues and topics.

The Chair of Governors has attended the following training and conferences during the academic year of 2025/26.

- Safer Recruitment Training
- Governor Conference Headteacher/ Chair of Governors
- Day of Spiritual Reflection
- Diocesan Association of Primary Heads 2-day Conference
Headteacher/Chair of Governors
- Diocesan Training Events which have been held throughout this last academic year on a range of topics.

Individual Governors' attendance during the year at Committee meetings can be found at **Appendix 3**.

Governors' Future Plans for the School for 2026/2027 are as follows:

- The Governing Body will continue to work in line with the Government Agenda
- To support the Headteacher and Staff team for Ofsted.
- To ensure that all Children make the best possible progress including Pupil Premium and SEND Children.
- To ensure that the Senior Leadership Team continue to drive the school ever forward
- To monitor the school budget considering future budget cuts
- To monitor the effectiveness of the School Development Plan/ SEF for 2026/2027
- To continue to look at the implementation of a succession plan for the Governing Body.

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings

Minutes of Governing Body and Committee meetings are public documents - you can either find them on the Governors' page of St Wilfrid's School website, or you can ask

Mrs. A Bennett Clerk to Governors if you would like to see a copy of the minutes.

Review of Value for Money

The Governing Body has used its resources to provide good value for money during the academic year and has assessed where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where available. The Governing Body has delivered improved value for money during the year by obtaining funding to replace sections of the school roof. The School Business Manager, Mrs Bennett, SBM has managed to obtain insurance payments for the damaged Verlarde boiler.

Our School Business Manager, Mrs. Bennett, always obtains at least three tenders for any work that the school needs to carry out, and members of the finance committee discuss and agree these tenders before contracts are awarded. Mrs. Bennett tries to get the best price on any supplies that school may require throughout the year. To the extent that in spite of a huge cut in the school's budget for 2025/2026 and with the School Business Manager obtaining best value for money and the Finance Committee making difficult decisions in relation to the school's budget there was still a carry forward in the budget for 2026/2027.

The Risk and Control Framework

The school's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability, where appropriate.

These include the following:

- Comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body.

- Regular reviews by the [Finance Committee] of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecast and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programs.
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance.
- Clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties.
- Identification and management of risks.

Capacity to handle risk

The Governing Body regularly reviews the key risks to which the school is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

Review of effectiveness

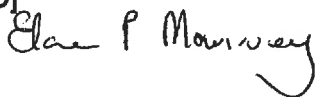
The Governing Body has a responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the systems in place in the school to identify and manage risks and plan to address any weaknesses (if relevant) and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

How to contact the Governing Body

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers, and the wider school community – please contact the Chair of Governors, **Mrs. Elaine Morrissey** via the **school office**.

This Governance Statement is approved by order of the members of the Governing Body on the 6th of July 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

[SIGNED]



Mrs. Elaine P Morrissey

Chair of Governors

[SIGNED]



Mrs. Justine McEniff

Headteacher