



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Birchley
Governing Body (December 2025)

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, every state school has a governing body, consisting of specified numbers of various categories of governors depending on the type and size of school.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Birchley is a voluntary aided school in the Trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The composition of the school governing body is summarized in the following table:

Category of Governor	No. of Governors in category
Foundation	7
Parent	2
Head teacher	1
Staff (elected staff governor)	1
Local Authority (nominated by the local authority and appointed by the Governing Body)	1
Co-opted	0
Total size of Governing Body	12

The total number of governors on the school governing body is 12 and the term of office for every governor is 4 years from the date of appointment.

Governors are volunteers who have an important part to play in working with the school, providing strategic leadership and accountability to ensure that the school delivers a good quality education. Governors appoint the head teacher and deputy head teacher. It is governors who hold the main responsibility for finance in the school, and it is governors who work with the head teacher to make the tough decisions about balancing resources.

Each individual governor is a member of a governing board, which is established in law as a corporate body. Individual governors may not act independently of the rest of the governing body; decisions are the joint responsibility of the governing body.

The head teacher is responsible for the internal organization, management and control of the school and the implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body. Working together with the head teacher, the key functions of the governing body are to:

- set the aims and objectives for the school
- set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- set the targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- hold the head teacher to account for a school's performance
- make sure the school's budget is properly managed
- be a source of challenge and support to the head teacher (a critical friend)



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Birchley - Serving Governors (December 2025)

Name	Category of Governor	Date Appointed	Latest Term of Office	Appointed By	Business, pecuniary or material interests
Rev. Father. Paul Harris	Foundation Governor Parish Priest	24.06.2020	24.06.2020 23.06.2024	The Archbishop of Liverpool	
Mr. Wayne Leatherbarrow	L A Governor Chair of Governors	20.05.2009	19.05.2021 18.05.2025	Governing body (on recommendation of LA)	Wife employed at school in non-teaching capacity (Clerical Officer)
Mrs. Melanie Snowdon	Foundation Governor Vice Chair of Governors	14.02.2013	12.11.2020 13.11.2024	The Archbishop of Liverpool	
Mrs. Ruth Martin	Head teacher	03.09.2024	n/a	Automatically a member by virtue of office	Employee
Mrs. Jenny Dwyer	Foundation Governor	22.07.2013	01.09.2022 31.08.2026	The Archbishop of Liverpool	
Mr. John Andrew McDonald	Foundation Governor	01.08.2015	01.07.2023 30.06.2027	The Archbishop of Liverpool	Wife employed at school as Learning Assistant
Mrs Eileen McBirnie	Foundation Governor	21.10.2015	21.10.2023 20.10.2028	The Archbishop of Liverpool	
Mr. David Cairns	Foundation Governor	01.09.2018	01.09.2022 31.08.2026	The Archbishop of Liverpool	
Ms. Nichola Moorcroft	Foundation Governor	08.04.2024	08.04.2024 07.04.2028	The Archbishop of Liverpool	
Mr Martyn Ode	Parent Governor	24/01/2024	26/01/2024 25/01/2028	Elected by Parents	
Mr James Marsh	Parent Governor	07/06/2024	07/06/2024 06/06/2028	Elected by Parents	
Mrs Beth Evans	Staff Governor	03/09/2025	03/09/2025 02/09/2029	Elected by Staff	Employee



Serving Governors (December 2025)

					
Mrs. Ruth Martin	Father Paul Harris	Mr Wayne Leatherbarrow	Mrs Melanie Snowden	Mrs Beth Evans	Mrs Jenny Dwyer
					
Mrs Eileen McBirnie	Mr Andrew McDonald	Mr David Cairns	Ms Nichola Moorcroft	Mr Martyn Ode	Mr James Marsh



Governors who have served at any point over the last 12-18 months (July 2024 – December 2025)

Name	Category of Governor	Date Appointed	Last Term of Office	Appointed By	Date stepped down
Mrs. Andrea Hymers	Head teacher	n/a	n/a	Automatically a member by virtue of office	24 th July 2024
Mrs. Christine McDonnell	Foundation Governor	01.11.2011	07.11.2020 06.11.2024	The Archbishop of Liverpool	5 th September 2024
Mrs. Jane Talbot-Davies (Deputy Headteacher)	Staff Governor	15.09.2021	15.09.2021 18.07.2025	Elected by School Staff	18 th July 2025

Nominated Governors (December 2025)

Name	Function
Wayne Leatherbarrow	Chair, HTPM, Admissions, Resources (Chair), Safeguarding/LAC, Music
Melanie Snowdon	Vice Chair, HTPM, Admissions, Safeguarding/LAC, Geography, History
Fr Paul Harris	Catholic Life
Jenny Dwyer	Governors Forum Rep, Science
Andrew McDonald	Assessment, Financial Audit, Maths, Computing
Eileen McBirnie	SEND, Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing, English,
Dave Cairns	Health, Safety and Welfare (Co-chair), PE
Nichola Moorcroft	Curriculum (Co-Chair), EYFS, RE, Art/DT
Martyn Ode	Health, Safety and Welfare (Co-Chair), Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Behaviour, Attendance, PSHE/RSHE
James Marsh	Curriculum (Co-chair), Assessment, English, PP, Languages
Beth Evans	Staff Governor



Governance Committee Structures (December 2025)

Curriculum Committee	Resources Committee	Health, Safety & Welfare Committee
Mr J Marsh (Joint Chair) Ms N Moorcroft (Joint Chair) Mr W Leatherbarrow Mrs J Dwyer Mrs E McBirnie Mr A McDonald Mr M Ode Mrs J Talbot Davies Mrs R Martin (Head Teacher)	Mr W Leatherbarrow (Chair) Mr M Ode Mr J Marsh Mrs E McBirnie Mrs M Snowdon Mrs Jenny Dwyer Mr A McDonald Mr D Cairns Mrs B Evans Mrs R Martin (Head Teacher)	Mr A McDonald (Joint Chair) Mr D Cairns (Joint Chair) Mr W Leatherbarrow Mr M Ode Mr J Marsh Mrs E McBirnie Mrs B Evans Mrs R Martin (Head Teacher)
Pupil Admissions Committee	Pupil Welfare, Discipline & Exclusions	Complaints Committee
Mr W Leatherbarrow (Joint Chair) Mrs M Snowdon (Joint Chair) Mrs R Martin (Head Teacher)	Mr W Leatherbarrow (Chair) Mrs E McBirnie Mr A McDonald Mr D Cairns	Mr W Leatherbarrow (Chair) Mrs M Snowdon Mrs E McBirnie Mr D Cairns Mr A McDonald
Staff Grievance Committee	Staff Discipline Committee	Appeals Committee
Mrs M Snowdon (Chair) Mr M Ode Mr W Leatherbarrow	Mr W Leatherbarrow (Chair) Mrs J Marsh Mrs M Snowdon Mr D Cairns	Mr A McDonald (Chair) Mrs E McBirnie Mrs J Dwyer
Head Teacher Performance Review	Pay Committee	
Mr W Leatherbarrow (Chair) Mrs M Snowdon	Mrs Snowdon (Chair) Mr W Leatherbarrow Mr A McDonald	

Committee Terms of Reference (September 2025 to September 2026)

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

This committee will continue to scrutinize the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the delivery of the curriculum in meeting the needs and raising the achievement of all children.

- To advise the Governing Body on the school's curriculum statement and their statutory obligations regarding the National Curriculum.
- To establish and review policies relating to curriculum provision and delivery.
- With the assistance of the staff, to assess how the curriculum is taught, evaluated, resourced, and delivered.
- To establish and review the policy and provision for Collective Worship and for Religious Education and make recommendations to the full Governing Body.
- To establish and review the policy and provision for relationships and sex education and make recommendations to the full Governing Body.
- To ensure that the requirements of children with special needs and disabilities are met.
- To review the information about school performance, targets, and achievement, which the Governing Body have a duty to publish.
- To contribute towards the School Development Plan.
- To have an input into the School's Self Evaluation Form (SEF).
- To have input into the School Profile Document.
- To establish and review the School's Home/School Agreement.
- To consider and report back upon such matters as may be delegated or devolved to the Committee by the Governing Body.
- To receive reports from Governors with a designated interest in a specific curriculum area.

Quorum: Any four Governors

Administrative Responsibilities

Ensure there are effective Clerking arrangements in place for the Committee to submit minutes of meetings to the full Governing Body.

RESOURCES COMMITTEE *(Integration of existing Finance, Personnel and ABC Committees 2017)*

This committee will continue to ensure that the school deploys its resources to achieve best value, that it robustly monitors the school's finances & financial systems and that it supports the Head teacher in securing and maintaining the best staffing arrangements. This will include extra provision provided through childcare and clubs.

- To consider and report back upon such matters as may be delegated or devolved to the committee by the Governing Body.

FINANCE

- To set an annual balanced budget and ensure that this complies with the Local Authority Scheme of Delegation.
- To consider the School Development Plan priorities and link these to annual spending priorities.
- To review financial planning, including long term planning and resourcing.
- To monitor and evaluate budget spending within a Best Value framework (Compare, Challenge, Consult and Compete) and to be accountable for balancing costs in terms of income/expenditure, economy, and efficiency.
- To provide guidance and assistance to the Head teacher and the Governing Body in all matters relating to budgeting and finance.
- To monitor income and expenditure of all delegated funds (including money delegated for specific purposes) against the agreed budget and report the financial position to the full Governing Body.
- To ensure that the approved Financial Regulations for the School are implemented.
- To approve virements and ordering of work, goods, and services in accordance with the limits agreed by the Governing Body and as documented in the School's Financial Regulations.
- To vary specific budget categories by defined amounts, which will be reported to a subsequent full Governing Body meeting (amounts as per the school's Financial Regulation).
- To receive and where appropriate respond to periodic audit reports.
- To draw up and review the School's Lettings and Charging Policy.
- To ensure that the school achieves and maintains the School Financial Value Standard (SFVS).
- To monitor school compliance with GDPR, data protection, consent, and confidentiality of information.

PERSONNEL

- To undertake the requirements of the school pay policy (as adopted) with delegated powers to implement the review of salaries.
- The committee is required to set Individual School Ranges for the Leadership posts, ascertained by the school group size.
- To determine the staffing structure and review staffing on an annual basis.
- To establish and review policies relating to staff performance and attendance.
- To undertake the selection/recruitment of teaching staff below Head and Deputy Head Teacher level (which is covered by legislation).

- To consider and make decisions that could result in the termination of employment of any employee on the grounds of performance capability in accordance with any procedures adopted by the Governing Body.
- To consider and make decisions relating to staff leave of absence with or without pay.
- To review the operation of sickness absence procedures and monitor sickness absences.
- To consider and make decisions about matters relating to the dismissal of staff arising from redundancy or redundancy arising from ill health or incapacity, which may be referred to the committee in accordance with any procedures adopted by the Governing Body (considering any statutory and LA guidance).

AFTER & BEFORE SCHOOL CHILDCARE (ABC)

- Ensure that the school's childcare offer is financially sustainable by monitoring income and expenditure, and to be accountable for balancing costs.
- To determine the staffing structure and review staffing on an annual basis.
- Ensure that key policies and procedures relating to childcare for the out of school club are implemented and adopted.
 - An admissions policy
 - A safeguarding children policy/procedure
 - A policy for ensuring equality of opportunities and for supporting children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities
 - A policy for administering medicines including effective management systems to support individual children with medical needs
 - A behaviour management policy
 - A procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints from parents
 - A procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the appointed time
 - A procedure to be followed in the event of a child going missing
 - A procedure for the emergency evacuation of the premises
 - A procedure for recovering payment arrears

Quorum: Any four Governors

Administrative Responsibilities

Ensure there are effective Clerking arrangements in place for the Committee to submit minutes of meetings to the full Governing Body.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE COMMITTEE

This committee will continue to ensure that the school meets all its statutory duties to keep pupils and staff safe, ensuring that the school has robust systems for recruiting new staff, dealing with safeguarding issues and that the school site is safe.

- To provide support and guidance for the Head Teacher on all matters relating to the school premises and grounds, security, health, and safety.
- To annually inspect the premises and grounds and prepare a statement of priorities for maintenance and development (linked to the School's Asset Management Plan) for the approval of the Governing Body.
- To assist the Governing Body and Head Teacher to discharge their responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act and the Environmental Protection Act.
- To consider the LEA's policies on Health & Safety and recommend a Policy for the school to be adopted by the Governing Body.
- To establish and review policies relating to matters of pupil and staff health and welfare.
- To ensure that the necessary school management and organizational process is in place to implement the Policy.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the school's Health & Safety arrangements, make periodic inspections of buildings, plant and equipment and report at least once a year to the Governing Body.
- To report costs and arrangements for maintenance, repairs, and redecoration within the budget allocation.
- To oversee the preparation and implementation of contracts.
- To ensure that the school complies with Health & Safety regulations.
- To monitor the school's Asset Management Plan.
- To ensure any necessary liaison with the LEA's Property Services Department.
- To consider and report back upon such matters as may be delegated or devolved to the Committee by the Governing Body.

Quorum: Any four Governors

Administrative Responsibilities

Ensure there are effective Clerking arrangements in place for the Committee to submit minutes of meetings to the full Governing Body.

PUPIL ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

- In consultation with the Head Teacher and the Local Authority, to review and agree the school's admissions policy, including criteria, which must be approved annually by the full Governing Body.
- To assume responsibility for the implementation of the policy.
- To report in broad terms all admissions to the Governing Body.
- To consult as appropriate with other admission authorities on the school's admission policy.
- To draw up the timescale during which the admission arrangements are completed.
- To apply the admissions criteria to all applicants and decide which are to be admitted and which are to be refused a place.
- To ensure that all procedures regarding the notification to the parents of the refusal of a place and the right to appeal are carried out.
- To prepare the case to be made in defence of the Governors refusal to admit a pupil or pupils at an Independent Appeals Panel hearing.

Quorum: Any two Governors

Administrative Responsibilities

Ensure there are effective Clerking arrangements in place for the Committee to submit minutes of meetings to the full Governing Body.

PUPIL WELFARE, DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSIONS COMMITTEE (statutory)

- To discuss aspects of discipline and pastoral care.
- To review the school discipline/behaviour policy and make recommendations to the full Governing Body.
- To advise the Governing Body on matters of discipline and pastoral care.
- To consider and deal with any pupil exclusion, paying particular attention to the DfE and Local Authority guidance.
- To consider the appropriateness of any permanent exclusion.
- To consider whether the Head Teacher has complied with the correct exclusion procedures and had regard to Government guidance before excluding any pupil.
- To consider any representations made by parents or the pupil.
- To review the School Behaviour and Discipline Policy, and make recommendations on changes to the Governing Body or relevant committee.

Quorum: Any three Governors

Administrative Responsibilities

Ensure there are effective Clerking arrangements in place for the Committee to submit minutes of meetings to the full Governing Body.

COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (statutory)

- To ensure that the school has in place a procedure to deal with complaints, to meet its obligations under Section 29 of the Education Act 2002.
- To provide parents with information about the Complaints Procedure and to ensure that parents understand what they can complain about and how to complain.
- To ensure that the Head teacher has access to guidance and support about how to respond to complaints.
- To consider, investigate and respond to any complaint referred to the Committee in accordance with procedures adopted by the Governing Body, ensuring that complaints are dealt with appropriately and within relevant timescales.
- Types of complaint to be considered by the Committee include Bullying, Unfair treatment of pupil by staff, Behaviour and Discipline, Pupil Safety, Handling of Concerns, Communication with Parents, Temporary Exclusions, Extra-Curricular activities, School Uniform, School Policy or Working practices.
- Circumstances under which this procedure should not be used
- The Committee will not investigate or deal with matters relating to the National Curriculum, Collective Worship, Religious Education, Hate Crime, Safeguarding, Non-approved external qualifications, Withdrawal of pupils from the national curriculum, Pupil Admissions, Pupil Exclusions, Special Educational Needs, Staff Grievance & Capability or Financial Impropriety, which should be dealt with via other procedures.

Quorum: Any three Governors

Administrative Responsibilities

Ensure there are effective Clerking arrangements in place for the Committee to submit minutes of meetings to the full Governing Body.

STAFF GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

- To ensure that where a member of the teaching staff is aggrieved on any matters involving other staff, he/she has discussed the matter initially with the individual(s) concerned and steps have been taken to resolve the matter informally.
- To consider any formal grievance that may arise between members of the teaching staff, where the informal procedure has failed to resolve the matter, or is deemed by either party to be inappropriate, and seek to settle the matter.
- Where the grievance is against another employee at the school, the case shall be considered by the school Governors. If the grievance is against a Governor/Governing Body, the matter should be laid before a special meeting of the school Governors. If the grievance is against an officer of the Education Authority or any other Council employee, it will be laid before the Local Education Authority.
- Any Governor who has been involved in the particular action taken, or who is to be called as a witness, or who is in any material way an interested party, shall not participate as a Governor in the proceedings.

Quorum: Any three Governors

STAFF DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

- To consider disciplinary cases & decide upon any disciplinary action against or dismissal of a teacher on the grounds of conduct.
- This committee shall also serve as the staff dismissal committee.
- Any Governor who has been involved in the particular action taken, or who is to be called as a witness, or who is in any material way an interested party, shall not participate as a Governor in the proceedings.

Quorum: Any three Governors

STAFF DISCIPLINE, GRIEVANCE or SALARY APPEALS COMMITTEE

- To consider appeals against decisions of the staff grievance committee.
- To consider appeals against decisions of the staff disciplinary committee.
- To consider appeals against decisions of the staff pay committee.
- To confirm in writing the findings of the Appeal Panel, which will be final and binding on all parties.
- Any Governor who has been involved in the particular action taken, or who is to be called as a witness, or who is in any material way an interested party, shall not participate as a Governor in the proceedings.

Quorum: Any three Governors

HEAD TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE REVIEW PANEL (statutory)

- To carry out the Head Teacher's annual performance review as laid down in current legislation and the School Performance Management Policy.
- To review the Head Teacher's performance over the previous academic year and to set and agree performance objectives for the forthcoming year.
- Make a recommendation on Head teacher pay progression to the Pay Committee.

Quorum: Any two Governors

PAY COMMITTEE

- To approve and adopt the school Pay Policy, which acknowledges the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
- Decide on pay progression for the Head teacher and decide any additional allowances for the Head teacher, where applicable, in accordance with the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
- Make/ratify pay decisions for teachers, based on recommendations from the Head teacher or the Local Authority, with consideration to Trade Union recommendations.
- Be responsible for approving applications to progress to the Upper Pay Range.
- Approve other pay related decisions e.g., the award of Recruitment & Retention benefits and/or the allocation of TLRs.

Quorum: Any three Governors

Note. All Governors are invited to attend and contribute to the Committee Meetings; this helps us to ensure that we each have an appreciation of the various matters of school business which need to be addressed over the course of the academic year. It also serves to assist the governing board to work strategically in fulfilling both our legal and statutory responsibilities by spreading tasks and responsibilities.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The following lists are suggested key tasks that our Governing Body will undertake throughout the 2022/23 academic year as part of our agenda planning process.

Standard Governing Body Agenda Items
Apologies for absence and consent to absence
Declaration of pecuniary interest
Review governing body membership
Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising
Head teacher's report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the provision for Children Looked After • Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium) • Update on self-evaluation • Update on school development and improvement plan
Reports from committees
Reports on governor visits / nominated governors
Review governor training and development
Confirm dates of next meeting
Any other business (if required)
Confidentiality (to declare confidential items)

Items for the Autumn Term	Responsibility
Appointment of Chair / Vice-Chair	Governing Body
Review of committee membership and terms of reference, including delegation structures	Governing Body
Review of governing body code of conduct	Governing Body
Register of business interest returns	Governing Body
Approval of school development and improvement Plan	Governing Body
Review governing body strategic plan/self-evaluation	Governing Body/All Committees
Ratify/approve revised school spending plan (by 31 st October)	Resources Committee /Governing Body
Review scheme for financing schools (financial regulations)	Resources Committee
Review school financial procedures	Resources Committee
Review whistle-blowing policy	Resources Committee
Review and approve local authority service level agreements	Resources Committee
Ratify/approve audited school fund account	Finance Committee/Governing Body
Monitor appraisal procedures for head teacher, SLB and teaching staff	Head teacher Performance Management Committee/Resources Committee/Governing Body
Review of SATS/national tests/examination results	Curriculum Committee
Review of admission policy	Governing Body/Admission Committee
Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)	Curriculum Committee/Resources Committee

Items for the Spring Term	Responsibility
Review school information published on website	Curriculum Committee
Receive RAISE Online and analysis data	Curriculum Committee/Governing Body
Approve school term and holiday dates / occasional & INSET days	Governing Body
Review asset management plan / buildings report	Health, Safety & Welfare Committee
Approve initial school spending plan	Resources Committee
Review governors and staff financial management competencies	Resources Committee
Undertake/review and approve assessment for school financial value standard (SFVS)	Resources Committee/Governing Body
Review pay policy	Resources/Personnel Committee
Undertake pay review for head teacher, deputy head teacher and staff	Resources/Personnel Committee
Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)	Resources Committee / Curriculum Committee

Items for the Summer Term	Responsibility
Review staffing structure	Resources Committee
Review attendance of pupils and staff	Resources Committee
Review pupil exclusions for the school year	Resources Committee
Monitor provision for special educational needs	Resources Committee/Curriculum Committee
Ratify/approve initial school spending plan (if not already completed in spring term – by 30 th June)	Governing Body/Resources Committee
Undertake financial benchmarking exercise	Resources Committee
Agree meeting schedule for governing body and committees for forthcoming school year.	Governing Body
Report on the provision for disadvantaged children (pupil premium)	Resources Committee / Curriculum Committee

Items for Any Time of the Year	Responsibility
Implementation of audit recommendations (whenever audit of school undertaken)	Resources Committee/Governing Body
Receive report from LA Link Professional/Governor	Curriculum Committee/Governing Body
Preparation for Ofsted inspection / review of action plan following inspection	Governing Body
Review statutory policies as per governing body schedule	Governing Body

Items for Consideration Every Term
Health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff
Headteacher and SLT work/life balance
Monitor and evaluate pupil progress
Monitor and evaluate provision for disadvantaged children
Monitor and evaluate quality of teaching
Monitor and evaluate the school development plan
Update self-evaluation documentation
Monitor spending plan/school budget
Evacuation and Emergency Procedure



Governor Attendance Records (September 2024 to December 2025)

	Date of Meeting	Ruth Martin	Jane Talbot-Davies	Wayne Leatherbarrow	Melanie Snowden	Father Paul Harris	Jenny Dwyer	Beth Evans	Eileen McBirnie	John Andrew McDonald	Dave Cairns	Martyn Ode	Nichola Moorcroft	James Marsh
Curriculum Committee Meeting	16.10.2024	√	x	√	√	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	√	x
Curriculum Committee Meeting	12.02.2025	√	√	x	x	x	x	-	√	√	x	√	x	√
Curriculum Committee Meeting	17.06.2025	√	√	√	x	x	√	-	x	√	√	√	√	√
Curriculum Committee Meeting	15.10.2025	√	-	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√
Health, Safety & Welfare Committee Meeting	06.11.2024	√	x	√	x	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	x	x
Health, Safety & Welfare Committee Meeting	26.02.2025	√	√	√	x	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	x	√
Health, Safety & Welfare Committee Meeting	25.06.2025	√	x	√	x	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	x	√
Health, Safety & Welfare Committee Meeting	05.11.2025	√	-	√	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	√	x	x
Resources Committee Meeting	06.11.2024	√	x	√	x	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	x	x
Resources Committee Meeting	26.02.2025	√	√	√	x	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	x	√
Resources Committee Meeting	25.06.2025	√	x	√	x	x	√	-	√	√	√	√	x	√
Resources Committee Meeting	05.11.2025	√	-	√	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	√	x	x
Full Governing Body Meeting	20.11.2024	√	√	√	√	x	x	-	√	√	√	√	√	√
Full Governing Body Meeting	22.07.2025	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Full Governing Body Meeting	26.11.2025	√	-	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Please note that although minutes of the committee meetings and full governing body meetings are not published on the school's website, they are readily available from school upon request.

Governor Profiles



The Very Reverend Father Paul Harris SDS Parish Priest

I am delighted to be a part of the school governing body as the Parish Priest.

The school is very much a part of the local church community, in which all children and their families find a welcome and a place in our community. To this end, my role is one of service and leadership in the spirit and model of Christ, who came to serve, not to be served.

I bring over 10 years' experience of foundation governorship of both primary and secondary schools, beginning in the Archdiocese of Westminster and latterly here in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. I am both happy and proud to serve alongside very able and willing governors who all have the best interests of our children and staff at heart.

I am a blue, through and through, supporting Everton (for my sins) and in my spare time - when I get some - I relax by doing a bit of coach driving.



Wayne Leatherbarrow Chair of Governors

I applied to join the governing body of the school in 2009 and here I am many years later!

During the day, I am part of Sefton Council's Senior Management Team, leading a range of Council services and my 40 years' experience of working in local government has equipped me with the strategic and leadership skills to make a positive contribution to shaping the standards of education and supporting our school to be the best it can be.

I am passionate about volunteering, chairing St Helens School Forum, and the Committee of St Mary's Parochial Club, striving to develop opportunity for all people in our local communities.

I am proud dad to Georgia, Emily, and Joseph, who cherish the time they spent at the school, and my wife Paula works at the school. When I get any spare time, I enjoy washing the car, gardening, and socialising with friends.

As a Governor at St Mary's School, I am committed to working with the headteacher and her team to ensure that every child can get the best possible start in life, reach their full potential, and enjoy school life.

I am extremely proud of our school governors, who bring a diverse wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience to supporting our school.



Melanie Snowden
Vice Chair of Governors



Jenny Dwyer
Foundation Governor

I have been on the governing body at St Mary's Birchley since 2013.

I am a primary school teacher with over 20 years of teaching experience in Key Stages One and Two. I am also part of the senior leadership team at my school in Kirkby, Knowsley.

I have 2 children who have attended St Mary's, which led me to wanting to volunteer my support to the headteacher, staff and community of St Mary's in a governance role.

When not working, I enjoy spending time outdoors, being with my family (across the 3 generations) and travelling.



Andrew McDonald
Foundation Governor

I have been a Foundation Governor at St Mary's Birchley since 2015.

I've worked in Financial Services for over 20 years, the last 9 years running my own business as an Independent Financial Adviser specialising in Occupational Pension Transfers.

My two children previously attended St Mary's before moving on to high school and my wife Emma is also employed at the school.

In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my family and I help coach a junior football team.

As a Governor I feel privileged to be in a position to positively influence the running of St Mary's helping every child to be 'The Best They Can Be'.



Dave Cairns
Foundation Governor

I have been a Foundation Governor at St Mary's School since September 2018.

I am a 73-year-old retired Headteacher with forty years teaching experience.

I am married to Joy and we have three sons and six grandchildren. All the boys loved their time at St Mary's School and after retirement I decided to volunteer my time to supporting the amazing work of the staff and the pupils.

As a lay reader at St Mary's Parish Church, I am responsible for reading aloud excerpts of scripture at a liturgy. I also volunteer as a driver and fundraiser for Willowbrook Hospice.

I still enjoy watching and participating in a variety of sports, as well as walking, travelling and of course babysitting my grandchildren.



Beth Evans
Staff Governor

'I am thrilled to have recently been appointed as Staff Governor, having been a part of St Mary's for nine years as the Year 5 class teacher. I am 35 years old, born and raised in Garswood, and now live in Bryn with my husband, David.

I studied English at Edge Hill University and later completed my PGCE part-time while working in retail. I began my teaching career as a HLTA at a small Catholic school in Wigan for a year before joining St Mary's.

I am passionate about animals and nature and enjoy taking my dog, Pippa, on long walks. Anglesey has always been a special place for me, having visited regularly with my grandparents, and I cherish spending quality time with my family in my free time.

My own experiences as a child in Primary School in Ashton had a lasting influence on me, and I am committed to ensuring that the pupils and staff I work with experience the same joy and inspiration that shaped me.'



Eileen McBirnie
Foundation Governor

I have been a Governor at St Mary's since 2015 and I have also had experience of school governance in three other schools.

I have lived in Billinge for 38 years. I have three sons and two grandchildren; two of my sons attended St Mary's school.

I have 35 years teaching experience in Secondary, Primary and Nursery schools and 14 years as a Headteacher in a large inner city Primary School and Children's Centre. I have also been involved in Teacher Training as an Internal Moderator for Liverpool Hope University for several years.

As a committed Catholic I am involved in St Mary's church as a Eucharistic Minister and reader of the Liturgy. I have enjoyed supporting children at St Mary's and their parents through sacramental preparation for the Holy Eucharist.

I enjoy working with the school children and have run an after-school Art Club for a couple of years. My Hobbies include singing in a local rock choir performing at charity events raising money for a variety of good causes. I enjoy foreign travel to the far east, which gave me the opportunity to visit and fundraise to support schools and orphanages in Vietnam over several years.



Martyn Ode
Parent Governor

I am pleased to be a new member of the governing body at St. Mary's Birchley. I have served as a governor for over 20 years at the primary school which my three older children attended and where I currently work as a cover supervisor. My youngest daughter is currently in Yr 1 at St Mary's which has led to my involvement in the wider aspects of the St Mary's community as a governor and a member of the PTFA.

In my current role, I support teaching and learning and I am actively involved in the school community in regards to organising fundraising events. This hands-on involvement has given me a valuable insight into how schools operate and the dynamic nature of the education sector.

My previous, professional experience, which I feel will contribute to supporting the governing body, has involved financial and business management.

In my spare time, I am an avid Wigan Athletic fan and enjoy walking, camping and spending time with my family.

I look forward to working with the governors, the headteacher and staff to ensure the children in school receive a high-quality education in a safe and inclusive environment.



Nichola Moorcroft
Foundation Governor

I am a former pupil of St Mary's Birchley and have wonderful memories of my time there. I am a 'true' Billinger and now live back here, after many years of working around the country. I am an advocate for creating opportunities for children to receive excellent educational, pastoral, and wrap-around care. I feel passionate that the Catholic ethos is maintained throughout our children's educational journey and will seek to promote that amongst the school community. I am a practicing Catholic and regularly attend St Mary's Church.

Outside of my professional life, I enjoy all areas of the Arts, and draw, paint and attend many musical performances. Prior to my educational career, I was a designer, working in TV and Film. I am an avid Liverpool FC fan and regularly attend home matches. I travel frequently and love to plan adventures in unusual destinations. I am also a member of the Rotary Club, in St Helens.

In my professional life, I am a School Improvement Advisor with 10 years' experience in school improvement, working across many diverse schools and all phases. In total have 17 years' experience in education, starting as an NQT.

My current role is as a Local Authority Officer for St Helens. I oversee all secondary schools, alternative provisions, and the Education Welfare Service within the borough. In addition, I

am the Lead for the Attendance Quality Mark for St Helens. I provide high levels of support and challenge for Headteachers and senior leaders working in schools across St. Helens.

I have worked as a teacher and a senior leader in nine diverse secondary schools. I have delivered training on a broad spectrum of areas to teachers and senior leaders in all sectors for over 10 years. I have also written educational programmes for children with SEND and Mental Health for the charity sector.

Prior to my current role, I was the Trust wide Lead for Teaching & Learning across 10 secondary schools for 5 years for a large Multi Academy Trust, based in Lincolnshire.

I am also currently the Vice Chair of Governors for Lansbury Bridge Special School and have recently been appointed as a Foundation Governor for St. Peter and St Paul's Catholic Primary School.



James Marsh
Parent Governor

I have recently joined the governing body at St Mary's as a Parent Governor.

I am looking forward to working with the governing body and believe that I have the expertise to offer the necessary support and challenge to school leaders and the board.

I have worked in primary education for many years and served as a headteacher across three different primary schools. I currently work as an independent education consultant and provide a range of services to schools across the North West. The majority of this work involves school improvement support, quality assurance reviews, headteacher performance management and leadership coaching.

I am hopeful that my experience to date will enable me to offer a useful skillset so that we can continue to ensure that pupils at St Mary's receive the highest quality education.

In my spare time I enjoy socialising with family and friends.

I have two boys who both attend the school and my wife is an active member of the PTFA.