

APPENDIX 4: School Governance Document

St John the Baptist RC School

1. The school is an Academy within Plymouth CAST Multi Academy Trust.
2. The school was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law and teachings of the Catholic Church, and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Plymouth and the Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation and Funding Agreement of Plymouth CAST.

In particular:

- religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;
- religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;
- and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The local governing body consists of:

8 Governors plus the head teacher

- 2 parent governors;
[Note: Plymouth CAST's Funding Agreement requires at least 2 elected parent governors.]
- 1 staff governors(and head teacher);
[Note: Plymouth CAST's Funding Agreement requires that there is at least one elected staff governor plus the head teacher – the latter could be a foundation governor. No more than 1/3 of the LGB can be employees.]
- 1 community governors;
[Note: ideally no more than 3.]
- 4 foundation governors;
[Note: Must outnumber by two the total governors across the other categories. While not a requirement, Plymouth CAST schools should endeavour to appoint sufficient number of parents within this category that, taken together with the Parent governors category, parents comprise a 1/3 of the local governing body]
- Up to 2 co-opted governors (and up to 2 additional foundation governors to preserve the foundation majority).
[Note: Where, with the agreement of the parish priest, the particular co-opted governors would be eligible to serve as foundation governors, there is no requirement that additional foundation governors should be appointed.]

4. Total number of governors is 8(including the head teacher).
5. Foundation governors are appointed, and can be removed, by the Bishop of Plymouth.
5. The term of office of all governors is 4 years, other than for the head teacher who shall serve for as long as they remain in office.
7. This *School Governance Document*, together with the *Governor Record Sheet* (Note 5 below) should be reviewed at least annually at the first governing body meeting of the year.

APPENDIX 5: Notes to accompany School Governance Document

Note 1: Categories of Governor

Parent governors

- Parents, including carers, of registered pupils at the school at the time of election are eligible to stand for election as parent governors.
- Parent governors are elected by other parents at the school.
- CAST schools should make every reasonable effort to fill parent governor vacancies through elections.
- The governing body can *appoint* parent governors where not enough parents stand for election.
- Parent governors may continue to hold office when their child leaves the school.
- The method of selection for Parent governors is set out in Note 2 below.

Staff governors

- Any staff who, at the time of election, are employed to work at the school under a Plymouth CAST contract of employment, are eligible to be staff governors.
- Staff governors are elected by the school staff.
- Staff governors cease to hold office when they cease to work at the school.
- The method of selection for Staff governors is set out in Note 3 below.

The head teacher (can be included in either the Foundation or Staff governor categories)

- The head teacher is a member of the governing body by virtue of their office.
- The head teacher may at any time resign as a governor, and withdraw their resignation, in both cases by telling the clerk in writing.

Community governors

- Plymouth CAST schools include this category of governor to continue its commitment to partnership working, especially with Local Authorities.
- Community governors are appointed by the local governing body.
- The local governing body can choose to appoint nominees of the Local Authority (or any other partner organisation) for these positions or simply appoint people they believe will support the school's relationship with its communities.

Foundation governors

- Foundation governors are appointed by the Bishop of Plymouth.
- Appointments are made for the purpose of securing that the school's religious character is preserved and developed.

- The administration of Foundation governor appointments is regulated by the Bishop in conjunction with the Bishops Conference of England and Wales. CAST's central support office can give advice to local governing bodies and clerks on the appointment processes and the required paperwork is available through the Plymouth CAST portal.

Co-opted governors

- Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body.
- Co-opted governors 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.

Associate members (Not governors - **and therefore cannot vote** - but attend meetings.)

- Associate members are appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committees and attend full governing body meetings.
- Associate members are *not* governors but bring expertise and experience which can add to that provided by the governor membership.
- The definition of associate member is wide and pupils, school staff and people who want to contribute specifically on issues related to their area of expertise (finance, for example) can be appointed as associate members.
- When an associate member is appointed, the local governing body should also agree the period of appointment (up to a maximum of 4 years).

Note 2: Process for Selecting Parent Governors

Where a vacancy for a parent governor arises, the local governing body must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that every person who is known to them to be a parent of a registered pupil at the school is:

- (a) informed of the vacancy and that it is required to be filled by election;
- (b) informed that the person is entitled to stand as a candidate and vote in the election; and
- (c) given the opportunity to do so.

The local governing body should make appropriate provision for parents to:

- (a) put themselves forward for election;
- (b) provide sufficient personal and professional information for voting parents to make an informed choice of candidate.
- (c) vote for their choice(s) of candidate by hand, by mail or by a suitable electronic means (or a combination thereof).

If one or more vacancies for parent governor arise and the number of parents standing for election is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, those standing should be appointed by the local governing body without a ballot.

If there are fewer parents standing than the number of places available, the local governing body may appoint a parent of a *former* registered pupil at the school.

If, having appointed any willing parent of a former registered pupil, there remains (a) place(s) to be filled, the local governing body may appoint a parent of a child who is of, or under, compulsory school age.

Note 3: Process for Selecting Staff Governors

Where a vacancy for a staff governor arises, the local governing body must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that every person who is employed at the school under a contract of employment is:

- (a) informed of the vacancy and that it is required to be filled by election;
- (b) informed that the person is entitled to stand as a candidate and vote in the election; and
- (c) given the opportunity to do so.

The local governing body should make appropriate provision for employees to:

- (a) put themselves forward for election;
- (b) provide sufficient personal and professional information for other staff members to make an informed choice of candidate.
- (c) vote for their choice(s) of candidate by hand, by mail or by a suitable electronic means (or a combination thereof).

N.B. At the discretion of the local governing body, vacancies for staff governor might be allocated to specific categories of employee e.g. teachers, support staff. If this is done, it should be to add to the overall experience of the local governing body and/or to encourage a sense of ownership among all employees.

If one or more vacancies for staff governor arise and the number of employees standing for election is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, those standing should be appointed by the local governing body without a ballot.

If there are fewer employees standing than the number of places available, the local governing body should discuss this with the Area adviser and consider together how to encourage employees to put themselves forward for this role.

If subsequently a member of staff identifies themselves as being prepared to take on the role, the local governing body should ensure that all employees are informed that:

- (a) they may put themselves forward for a ballot (under the arrangements detailed above);
- (b) if there are no further nominations forthcoming at this time, that the *named* member of staff will be appointed by the local governing body.

Note 4: Calculating the Relative and Total Numbers of Governors by Category

The table below is a screenshot from the 'Plymouth CAST – Local Governing Body Categories Calculator' which is available on the portal or on request from the central support office. There are six examples of different local governing body compositions and the calculator allows you to enter your preferred options for parent, staff, community and co-opted governor numbers and shows the number of foundation governors that will then be required together with what number of those foundation governors would ideally be eligible for appointment as a parent governor.

Governor Categories	Requirements	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Example 4	Example 5	Example 6	My School
Parent	Insert 2 or more	2	2	2	3	3	3	
Staff	Insert 1 or more. Insert 2 or more if Head is 'Staff' rather than 'Foundation'.	1	1	2	2	2	3	
Community	Insert up to 3	0	1	2	2	3	3	
Foundation (Total)	Must outnumber all others by 2	5	6	8	9	10	11	2
(of whom, eligible as parents)	Ideally this category plus the Parent category will comprise at least 1/3 of total governors	1	2	3	3	3	4	1
Total		8	10	14	16	18	20	2
If you wish to bring in Co-opted governors, this may also require additional Foundation governors to retain the Foundation majority. If so, add the details below to calculate new total local governing body size.								
Co-opted	Insert up to 2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
Foundation (additional)	(Usually) equals number of Co-opted governors	1	2	1	2	1	2	0
New Total Governors		10	14	16	20	20	24	2

Note 5: Governor Record Sheet

In order to aid administration and communication, clerks at Plymouth CAST schools liaise regularly with members of the CAST central support team. Together, clerks and the central support team agree how to share and update details of the local governing body complement at each school. In whatever form these details (names, contact details, categories LGB roles etc.) are kept, the shared record is known as the Governor Record Sheet. While this is ideally updated whenever there are any relevant changes, clerks are required to ensure that each LGB reviews and agrees the record at the first LGB meeting of each academic year and any changes are communicated to the CAST central admin team.

APPENDIX 6: Additional Notes

Note 6: Governors Code of Conduct

In its legal constitution, Plymouth CAST is a company and a charity. However, more importantly it is a network of 35 schools sharing a single mission and purpose. In all our actions we seek to apply the teaching of Jesus Christ within the Catholic Christian tradition of the Diocese of Plymouth. The trustees of Plymouth CAST are the company Directors and the Board of Directors carries ultimate legal responsibility for all aspects of our schools' conduct and performance.

However, in order to be most effective, Plymouth CAST has from its inception devolved high levels of autonomy to the Local Governing Body in each school. This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from local governors in order for the Local Governing Body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

The Code of Conduct is available through the central support office or the CAST portal.

Note 7: Safeguarding Checks

This is an area in which there has been some misunderstanding and so clerks and governors are asked to read this guidance clearly. In a multi academy trust, such as Plymouth CAST, the requirement that 'governors' should have Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks **does not apply** to the members of our Local Governing Bodies. This is made clear in the latest version of the (July 2013) DFE's 'DBS Guide for Academies' (page 5 - second paragraph). Instead it is the CAST Board of Directors which has to comply with the requirement that the Chair must have a DBS check 'through the Department (DFE)' and must then arrange for all other Directors to have DBS checks.

For each Local Governing Body in Plymouth CAST, it is only the Chair of the Body that is required to undertake a DBS check - other local governors are exempt. However, if someone who is a member of a Local Governing Body also undertakes other paid or voluntary roles within the school, schools should follow the usual guidance in determining if they are eligible for a DBS check. Further, although it is not usual practice for local governors, there may be some local reason why one or other governor is, even for a limited time, undertaking activities in the school that require them to spend more than the usual amount of time with children. In such circumstances, the school must consider whether the required activity falls under the government's definition of 'regulated activity' (i.e. one which must not be undertaken by a barred person) and, if so, apply for the DBS check accordingly.

Broadly speaking, within schools a 'regulated activity' is unsupervised activity with children on a regular basis. Regular is defined as, '*once a week or more often, or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period or overnight*'. However, more detailed information about which activities and settings are regulated is contained in the government's latest (March '15) advice which is through the CAST portal entitled, '*Regulated Activity re Children - DFE - March 15*'.

As there is sometimes conflicting information offered to governors regarding safeguarding checks, also available through the portal are the full versions of guidance summarised in this note, namely '*Disclosure & Barring Service - Eligibility for DBS Checks - Jan 2016*' and, '*DBS Guide for Academies - July 2013*'.

As a Catholic organisation, special care for the most vulnerable must always be a high priority and so Local Governing Bodies are asked to ensure that all safeguarding practices are strictly adhered to. If schools are at all unsure about how or whether safeguarding regulations should be applied, further advice must always be sought.

Note 8: 'Written Undertaking'

Paragraph 4.1.6 of the Scheme of Delegation requires that, 'All persons appointed or elected to the Local Governing Body shall give a written undertaking to the Company and the Bishop to uphold the object of the Company'. This should be done through the clerk to the Local Governing Body who can provide a template declaration, represented in this guidance as Appendix 6. Local governors should complete two copies of the form: submit one via their clerk and keep another for their own records.

St John the Baptist RC School Governors

Name	Role
Liz Hamilton	Head teacher
Fr Nick Debney	Community
Natalie Jackson	Parent
Leslie Joslin	Foundation (commencing Autumn 16)
Laura Upton	Parent (commencing Autumn 16)
Mary Cox	Associate Governor(CAST Adviser)
	Foundation Governor