



## Annual Governance Statement 2022-2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is my pleasure as the Chair of Governors to share with you the Governance Annual Report for academic year 2022-23 which relates to the period of September 2022 to August 2023.

This year's highlight has been receiving an Outstanding Judgement from Ofsted under a Section 5 Inspection. Only 17% of previously exempt schools with a graded inspection remained outstanding at the time of inspection. Our school and community can be justifiably proud of its achievements.

There are three core elements in the Department for Education's charge to all Governing Bodies:

- Maintenance of strategic vision and direction.
- Performance Management of the Headteacher.
- Oversight and stewardship of school finances.

These involve not merely holding the school to account, but offering the informal support and encouragement which will enable it to thrive and secure the highest levels of success for the students entrusted to us. This success comes from the opportunities provided through the wider Curriculum, Teaching & Learning, Pastoral and Wellbeing Care etc.

The Board is confident that the school has met all of its legal and statutory obligations. The Governor's priority is to fulfil these three core functions. We listen to our stakeholders, which include students, parents, staff, and outside advisers. We are a strong and supportive community at Richard Challoner School. Our students are at the centre of everything we do as a school.

The Vision and Christian Ethos of the School is that it is the right and duty of this School to offer an education based on the teachings and values of the Catholic Church. The offer is not to impose and the personal conscience of all students and parents is respected. The school seeks to foster an awareness of the living presence of our Lord and a climate within its Community inspired by the teachings of the Christian Gospel. This Christian climate continues to be expressed primarily through the example and commitment of the staff and their relationships with the students, along with the relationships between the students. We strive to encourage a partnership with parents, an education in conformity with the Christian ethos of the school that will enable all students to develop his/her full potential. The board continues to consider the Curriculum whereby we provide a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with National Curriculum requirements and with the School's Curriculum Policy and the values of the Christian Gospel. We enable all students to have the opportunities to experience success and to develop a sense of their own worth. To help students to be sensitive to the needs of others and free from prejudice.

The vision and values continue to be underpinned by the School's motto 'Keep Faith'. Our School motto has been important as Governors remain particularly proud of the resilience of staff and students as we address the impact of Covid on education. We continue to remain committed to providing an Outstanding education despite our current financial constraints as a result of the pandemic and unfunded staff pay rises that have had to be absorbed by the school budget.

The board has continued to recognise, adapt, and support the school. Governors are extremely grateful to the staff at Richard Challoner School or as we often refer, to the Challoner family. Governors would like to thank Mr Maher Headmaster, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for their continued commitment, support, approachability and confident leadership. The Governors are equally grateful to the experience of the Governance Professional Mrs Fowler for the invaluable contribution to the efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and compliance of our Governing Board.

We fully recognise the outstanding teaching and learning that happens at the School as well as the work of our Support Staff, all of whom play their part in providing a safe, caring, well maintained and exceptional learning environment for our students. The Governors fully appreciate the role and contribution to the School community made by the PTA, their financial contributions have enhanced the School environment and had a direct impact on the students' positive learning experience.

### **Further reflections on the year**

We remain extremely proud of the achievements of our Year 11 and Year 13 students in their GCSE and A-Level examinations, the resilience they have shown in challenging times has been humbling. This was the first set of exams that are comparable to pre-pandemic outcomes of summer 2019. Teacher Assessed Grades were awarded in 2020, Centre Assessed Grades in 2021 and a targeted exam content and supporting formulae in 2022. Whilst our results are provisional at this stage we are reporting that 58% of students achieved A\*-B grades at A-Level, 79% of students achieved A\*-C.; an exceptional set of results that has enabled the vast majority of students to reach their destination of choice 72.03% of Year 11 students achieved 9-5 grades at GCSE. Our results are truly outstanding, Attainment 8 is 57.65 and Progress 8 is +0.62, our students at GCSE have obtained over half a grade higher than expectation. The trend in results are on a par with our achievements in 2019 for which we must report on. We continue to remain one of the leading, non-selective schools in the country.

Whilst the School strives to provide the opportunities to gain outstanding results to the best of the students' abilities, we also provide wider curriculum opportunities, to develop the whole person. The school and its staff continued to provide a wide range of trips and activities, including Drama and Theatre trips, Year 7 North and South Camps, Battlefield Trip to France, Stratford Upon Avon Cultural Trip, MFL Trips to Spain and to France, Geography Field trips to Wales, some in the snow, Competitions and events for the students to participate and excel in. Opportunities included our House system of events, sporting fixtures against local schools in Basketball, Football, Rugby, County Cross Country, Swimming Gala and a Formula 1 Competition, finishing the year with Sports Day. Music Performances Soloist Concerts, Winter Concert including Instrumentalists, Choirs and Bands. Highlight of the year has seen the choir singing at St George's Chapel – Southwark Cathedral for Richard Challoner Day. School trips took place across all year groups, Duke of Edinburgh (Bronze and Silver), Maths Challenges, Jack Petchey Speaking Competition. An Art Exhibition Evening showcased the talent of our Students as well as several Drama Performances.

This academic year the Gender Equalities and Racial Diversity Working Groups continued to meet during term time. Both working groups were attended by both our students and staff body. The Governing Body received highlights from these groups along with feedback from the Student Parliament (Student representatives Yrs7-13), from the Parent Forum (Parents with children in Yr's 7-13) and from the PTA.

Governors have provided strategic direction and oversight. Governors work within the Scheme of Delegation and oversee its compliance duties. This year the board introduced an Estates Strategy and Vision.

Governing Body and Committee meetings were held in person throughout this academic year. The board took the decision to reduce Committee and Full Governing Body meetings to five a year instead of six. This has meant only one set of meetings occur in the Summer term.

The Governing Board has delegated to its committees the first check of all school policies which undergo a final recommendation and ratification to the Board of Governors. Governors continue to check the policies for the latest guidance and accuracy on procedure in school. Whilst the school maintains the statutory policies it has also brought in a number of policies it has considered relevant, for the effective running of the school. Governors have scrutinised the frequency of review cycle for non-statutory policies and adapted accordingly.

The Governing Board place our community at the forefront and continue to consider financial pressures placed on families especially as a result of the cost of living crisis. The Board introduced a Hardship Fund for those in need of financial support and there is a Bursary Fund for ages 16-18. The Board welcomes the continuation of the pre-loved (Second -Hand) Uniform sales for Years 7-11. The school has gone above and beyond its calling to assist those in need and fulfil its Christian ethos to react to where help is needed the most.

Significant projects this year include the remodeling of the School Chapel, Maths 6, refurbishment of the Chemical Storage Room a new Meeting Room and a new Drama Office.

The School continues as lead school for the Kingston Cluster – NHS Mental Health Trailblazer.

In January, 2023 the board of Governors welcomed Mrs Marshall as a Parent. On the 16th August, 2023 four long serving and experienced Foundation Governors stepped down from office – Mr Draper (Chair of Governors), Mrs Monica Guntrip, Mrs Patricia O'Connell and Mr John Sabourin (Vice Chair of Governors). On behalf of the board of Governors we are extremely grateful for their support and commitment our school over the last 30 years. On the 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2023, Mr Corrigan was appointed Chair of Governors and Ms Bermingham Vice Chair of Governors.

We had four Foundation Governor vacancies as we approached the end of August 2023, but thanks to the careful monitoring of succession planning, the board was able to agree on four new Foundation Governors for onward appointment by the Archbishop of Southwark as the school closed for the summer holiday.

## **Impact in 2022-23**

In 2022-23, the Board completed its core functions. It has completed an annual skills audit, which is an important tool in the Governor recruitment process because it allows the Full Governing Body to ensure it has the expertise required for effective governance. The findings revealed that there are no gaps in the Collective Board's skill set. As we look ahead to 2023-24 and the appointment of new Governors, we are confident that our collective board's skillset will remain exceptional. The board continues to learn through e-learning modules from the National Governance Association (NGA), NGA guidance, local authority training, and in-house training. All Governors receive regular Safeguarding training and are Safeguarding trained through Hays Online, which includes PREVENT training. Two Governors have completed their terms.

Governors regularly visit school to fulfil their monitoring roles – These roles include Leads in Safeguarding (LAC, PLAC), SEND, Health & Safety, Careers, Equality & Diversity, GDPR, Pupil Premium Departmental visits and reports of visits have been presented to the board for any further actions to consider.

How has the Governing Board helped the School achieve its vision? Each year the School Development Plan (SDP) sets out how the School plans to deliver its vision. The SDP is developed by the Headship Team - Mr Maher and Deputy Headteachers Mr Henderson, Mr O'Brien and Mr Webber with SLT discussion, then reviewed and approved by the Governing Board. It includes, amongst other information, key outcomes and the actions required to deliver. The Full Governing Body Meetings have strategic focus and feedback and challenge is provided to check impact of the outcomes linked to the SDP. This ensures that the Governors remain focused on strategic matters that directly impact the education of the students.

- In 2022/23 we amalgamated the Finance, General Purposes Risk & Audit with the Premises Committee. We increased the remit of the Personnel and Pay Committee to include Pastoral and Wellbeing.
- We held five Full Governing Body meetings, one AGM for our members, as well as five Finance, Premises General Purposes Risk & Audit Committees, five Personnel, Pay, Pastoral and Wellbeing Committees, five Curriculum Committees and two Admissions Committee meetings.
- We received reports from Mr Maher and SLT covering a variety of areas related to school development, including Student Progress, Attendance, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Premises, Risk Management, Data Protection, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to name but a few.
- We received presentations from Subject Leads about the curriculum for their subject area.
- We monitored the 2022-23 financial performance against the budget and both reviewed and approved the School's budget for 2023-24 and the medium-term financial plan until 2025-26.
- We agreed a new Risk Register.
- The Governors have led on the Environmental Strategy which has been shared on the school website.
- We requested the invitation to our SENCo to attend two meetings of the Curriculum Committee to provide SEND oversight.
- We initiated and received a report following the student and staff wellbeing surveys.

- We agreed a new Governor Visits Policy and schedule of visits. We have visited the school during the school day and received presentations from and engaged in dialogue with staff and students covering a range of topics.
- Governors with individual responsibilities (Link Governors) for Safeguarding LAC and PLAC, Deputy Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Careers, GDPR, Special Educational Needs or Disabilities had meetings with the responsible Leads and reported the results of their visits to the Governing Body.
- We received link Governor reports from Governor visits to Curriculum areas and meetings with the Subject Leaders.
- We have undertaken financial benchmarking against similar schools.
- We have initiated and received an Estates Strategy for our School.
- We have ensured that the Pupil Premium Strategy and Reporting are completed and to time.
- We have aided the school on Internal scrutiny for Equity and Diversity, Gift Aid claims and Environmental Audit and provided challenge.
- We reviewed and approved a significant number of policies, Governors have oversight to approve all policies including non-statutory and monitor effectiveness. Statutory policies include Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Charging & Remissions, Relationship, Health and Sex Education, First aid etc..
- We are compliant to the Academy Trust Handbook for 2022-2023.
- We conducted a self-evaluation of the board which provided opportunities to strengthen our impact of Governance. The outcome of the evaluation showed our board is effective and no further actions are required as we move to 2023-24..

### **As we approach 2023-24**

- We will continue to support the Headteacher in the implementation of the Schools vision and values.
- We will continue to monitor the Budget for 2023/24 and risks associated with energy costs and staff funding and inflation rises.
- We will support SLT to generate new sources of funds for the School.
- We will include a Governor visit check to sample staffing files for Safer Recruitment checks.
- We will continue to monitor student wellbeing, student progress, attainment, behaviour and attendance, curriculum provision, safeguarding, health & safety, staff work/life balance and financial performance. We will support and review the Schools implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) statement.
- We will regularly receive curriculum presentations from Subject Leads.
- We will support and review the School Development Plan and monitor its implementation through the Full Governing Body.
- We will continue to take part in Governor visits to Departments as well as to receive curriculum presentations from Subject Leaders. Our visits will also include identified focus visits with Governor links to the School Development Plan.
- We will keep Succession Planning on each Agenda of the Personnel Committee with feedback to the Governing Body.
- We will support, the initiatives for driving forward the Alumni links.

- Continuously monitor the fast-changing education landscape to ensure the School takes advantage of any opportunities to raise standards in education.

We will continue to act to make informed decisions for the greater good for our students, staff, parents and all our stakeholders. It is an exciting time for the future of Richard Challoner School as it embarks upon continued onward discussion and collaboration on its journey towards becoming a member of Christ the Redeemer Multi Academy Trust.

A full list of the Governors, their responsibilities can be found on the school website. The Governing Body can be contacted via the Governance Professional Mrs Heather Fowler [clerk@challoner.kingston.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@challoner.kingston.sch.uk) / or via the contacts section of the school website (School Office).

Thank you for the continued support of our School.

Mr Francis Corrigan  
**Chair of Governors**