



Annual statement of key issues addressed by Governors - 2016

The Governors at St Augustine's have prioritised the following key issues over the past year, some of which have been a focus since the last Ofsted inspection in 2014. Our role is to provide the strategic direction of the school and to assist the leadership team in continuing to improve the standards and quality of our provision.

Visitors to our school always tell us how delighted they are with the positive ethos within the school and with the good behaviour and smart dress of our pupils. As a Catholic school all our judgements, decisions and standards are underpinned by our faith.

This list of issues is not exhaustive, we have prioritised our work:

Improving Outcomes for Pupils at KS3 & KS4

Issue: Ofsted noted in February 2014 that middle and lower ability pupils were not making enough progress.

Response: Literacy and numeracy interventions were put in place alongside subject specific interventions. Also, schemes of work were reviewed that personalised the learning experience for pupils offering greater differentiation and greater enjoyment.

A new staffing structure was put in place to ensure that a clear direction for teaching and learning was given, with classroom practice being regularly monitored.

Impact: GCSE results have improved year on year with 2015 outcomes placing the school in the top 15% of schools nationally for progress - progress is now the key performance measure.

Pupils report that they enjoy their learning much more and recognise that their work with staff enables them to become independent, resilient learners. Pupils in all groups made positive progress this year with the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils narrowing from 22% to 3%.

Ensuring the highest possible standards of Teaching & Learning

Issue: Teaching was weak in some subject areas and did not respond well to pupils' needs.

Response: The school underwent a staffing review and put in place rigorous systems that ensured only the best teaching would be acceptable.

A more focussed CPD programme has been put in place that addresses any identified areas for development.

Impact: This past year has seen teaching strengthen further as the new staff appointed since 2014 have developed strong classroom practice and excellent working relationships with pupils.

The staffing review of 2014 ensured a greater degree of accountability within subject areas.

There is much greater consistency in progress between groups in the same subject areas.

Response to National Education Policy Reforms

Issue: Our curriculum does not match the demands of the DfE's new key performance measures coming into effect from 2020.

Response: A curriculum review has taken place this academic year, ensuring that by 2017 the government's stipulation that a minimum of 90% of pupils will study the 'EBacc' subjects (English, Maths, 2 Sciences, History or Geography and a Language) will begin to take effect. This is to be phased in over the next two academic years. History or Geography from September 2016, Languages from September 2017.

Impact: The school will meet the new benchmark measures put in place by the DfE, which will come into effect from 2020.

Securing improved outcomes through partnership work

Issue: Smaller schools such as ours can struggle to access training and teaching resources that are more readily available to larger providers.

Response: We have been working with other secondary schools in the diocese to establish a stronger network of support and collaborative working. This year the schools came together as a teaching alliance to further develop provision in each of the schools. This partnership will continue for the benefit of all parties.

Impact: Closer working with schools that share our beliefs and values will ensure that we preserve the Catholic identity of our school whilst strengthening the offer for our pupils through improved teaching and learning.

Governor monitoring and evaluation

Issue: Ofsted reported in 2014 that governance in the school had been weak prior to April 2013 and the appointment of a new Governing Body would provide appropriate challenge for the school.

Response: New governors have put rigorous monitoring systems in place that hold the Leadership Team to account on all matters within school. They also played an active role in the recent curriculum review and continue to monitor the implementation of these new arrangements.

Impact: The school now has a clear direction and, through continued monitoring and evaluation, continues to strengthen its provision for all pupils

Ensuring external quality assurance

Issue: The school was concerned about the security of its judgements regarding leadership and performance and recognised that stronger links with other partners would increase confidence in these.

Response: Governors have worked closely with the Headteacher to establish and develop these links and the headteacher now works closely with a peer mentor partner within the local authority.

As part of a newly-formed diocesan teaching alliance we have extended our links with other partners and see this as further strengthening all aspects of what we do and offer.

Local authority monitoring visits have also verified the school's judgements, recognising the great improvements made over the past two years.

Impact: The school is now approaching the new Ofsted window and is secure in its judgements about the quality of leadership and provision.

It is important to stress that the life of our school is vibrant and varied, including a wide range of additional activities – concerts, trips, charity work, sports fixtures and spiritual events to name but a few. These activities complement our curriculum work and ensure that our pupils have a fully rounded educational experience.

If you require any further information about our work please contact me via the Clerk to Governors (Mrs S Brown) at the school.

Dr D Swiers
Chair of Governors
On behalf of the Governing Body
Spring 2016