

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of  
Longstone C of E (Voluntary Aided) Primary School  
To July 2025**



The purpose of this statement is to outline how the Governing Body has fulfilled its statutory responsibilities during the 2024–25 academic year.

This includes our role in providing strategic oversight, supporting and challenging the leadership team, and ensuring the school's resources are well-managed in line with our vision: **"Nurture. Ignite. Shine."**

As governors, we are committed to improving outcomes for all pupils and ensuring that our small, rural Church of England school remains at the heart of its community.

### **Governance arrangements**

The Governing Body consists of 12 members:

- 2 Parent Governors
- 1 Local Authority Governor
- 1 Staff Governor
- The Headteacher (ex officio)
- 7 Foundation Governors

We have the following key committees to carry out our work effectively:

- Teaching & Learning Committee
- Resources Committee
- Headteacher Performance Management Panel
- Complaints/Exclusions (ad hoc panels)

All governors complete an annual skills audit, and recruitment of new governors is informed by identified skills gaps. An annual self assessment of effectiveness and areas for improvement was also completed.

## **Attendance record of governors**

A record is kept by the clerk to the Governing Body of governors' attendance at meetings and training completed - details of attendance can be found on page 5.

## **Our Core Governance Functions**

### **1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**

We approved and launched the 3-Year Strategic Plan (2024–2027) with three key priorities:

- *Improving quality of teaching & leadership*
  - *Growing pupil numbers to 110+*
  - *Developing enrichment activities for all pupils*
- Regularly monitored progress against strategic objectives via Headteacher reports, data reviews and visit reports.
- Strengthened Christian distinctiveness through SIAMS preparation and link governor monitoring.

### **2. Holding executive leaders to account**

- Held the Headteacher to account through rigorous Performance Management, supported by an external advisor.
- Scrutinised pupil progress and attainment data termly, with a focus on SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- Reviewed impact of curriculum development, early reading and intervention strategies via governor visits and standards committee scrutiny.
- Monitored effectiveness of leadership development initiatives, especially support for the new Headteacher.

### **3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school**

- Approved a balanced budget for 2025–26 and monitored in-year spending to ensure value for money.
- Oversaw pupil premium and sports premium spending, focusing on impact and sustainability.
- Commissioned a benchmarking exercise to ensure staffing and resources offer good value.
- Supported the school in developing a long-term financial plan linked to pupil number growth.

### **Impact of Governance (2024–25)**

- Teaching & Learning: Evidence from lesson observations and data analysis shows improved teaching quality and narrowed attainment gaps in reading and maths.
- Leadership: Headteacher and middle leaders demonstrate growing confidence and impact, supported by a structured CPD offer.
- SEND/Inclusion: Improved parental engagement and strengthened early intervention strategies, especially in KS1.
- Admissions: Small increase in reception intake for 2025 reflects improved local reputation and marketing efforts.
- Safeguarding: Annual audit completed; all governors received updated safeguarding and complaints training.
- Governance Development: Governors undertook training in Safer recruitment, Compliers and Induction to governance.

### **Attendance**

Governor attendance has remained high across all board and committee meetings. Quorum has been consistently met. (See below for individual governor attendance records.)

### **Challenges Faced**

- Ensuring adequate support during period of leadership change and building capacity of leadership within the school..
- Managing a tight budget in the context of fluctuating pupil numbers.
- Sustaining governor capacity and succession planning.

### **Priorities for 2025–26**

- Embed curriculum developments and continue to improve the quality of teaching.
- Strengthen middle leadership and succession planning.
- Increase school visibility and marketing to support pupil growth.
- Continue to refine governor monitoring and evaluation processes.
- Ensure that the revised 2025 Education Inspection Framework from OFSTED is used to inform our planning and monitoring.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

- Each year we conduct staff, parent and pupil surveys with responses feeding into our strategic review.
- Governors attended school events, supported collective worship, and engaged with pupil voice activities.
- Published updated policies and governance information on the school website, including this statement.

## **Conclusion**

The Governing Body remains committed to providing strategic leadership that is ambitious, inclusive, and grounded in our Christian values.

We are proud of the progress made in 2024–25 and are determined to continue working in partnership with staff, parents, the Diocese and the local authority to help Longstone children flourish.

## How to contact your Governing Body

Information about the School's Governing Body is available on the governors' page of the school's website

### Longstone C of E (Voluntary Aided) Primary School Governing Body – membership

Unless Ex Officio, governors serve for four-year terms

| Governor                                     | Category                                                                                                                                                         | Term of office & expiry date            |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| David Beale                                  | Substitute Ex Officio Foundation Governor appointed by Archdeacon Nicky Fenton 15.7.2024                                                                         | From 15.7.2024                          |
| Anna Cole                                    | Associate Member appointed by FGB from 8.10.2024 until 21.11.2024. From 22.11.2024 Foundation Governor appointed by the Derby Diocesan Board of Education (DDBE) | 22.11.2024 -21.11.2028                  |
| Juliette Fraser                              | Parent Governor by parent election                                                                                                                               | 31.1.2022 to 30.1.2026                  |
| John Hopkins                                 | Associate Member appointed by FGB from 21.6.2023. Appointed a Foundation Governor by the DDBE on 13.11.2023.                                                     | 13.11.2023 – 12.11.2027                 |
| Mark Knight (Headteacher)                    | Ex Officio Governor from September 2024                                                                                                                          | Ex Officio Governor from September 2024 |
| Emma Knightley                               | Parent Governor by appointment                                                                                                                                   | 20.3.2024 – 19.3.2028                   |
| Joanne Mills                                 | Foundation Governor appointed by DDBE                                                                                                                            | 28.11.2025-27.11.2029                   |
| Steven Ojari                                 | Foundation Governor appointed by DDBE                                                                                                                            | 24.2.2025 – 23.2.2029                   |
| Ian Pykett                                   | Foundation Governor appointed by DDBE                                                                                                                            | 1.9.2021-8.2.2023                       |
| <i>Link Governor roles:<br/>Safeguarding</i> |                                                                                                                                                                  | 8.2.2023 – 15.7.2024                    |

|                                          |                                                                                                          |                                   |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Mental Health and Wellbeing</i>       | Substitute Ex Officio Foundation Governor appointed by DDBE                                              |                                   |
| Chair of Governors until 15.7.2024       | Foundation Governor DDBE                                                                                 | 15.7.2024-15.7.2025 (resignation) |
| Lee Reed                                 | Associate Member appointed pending nomination as Local Authority Governor from 28.11.2022                | 28.11.2022-21.6.2023              |
| <i>SEND Link Governor</i>                | Local Authority Governor (appointed following Local Authority Nomination)                                | 21.6.2023 – 20.6.2027             |
| Sophie Stephenson (Chair from 15.7.2024) | Parent Governor by parent election until 11.5.2023 when she was appointed a Foundation Governor by DDBE. |                                   |
| Chair of Governors from 15.7.2024        |                                                                                                          | 11.5.2023-10.5.2027               |
| Tim Raybould                             | Staff Governor by staff election                                                                         | 16.2.2024 – 15.2.2028             |
| Tony Stirland (Vice Chair)               | Foundation Governor appointed by DDBE on 16.1.2024                                                       | 16.1.2024-15.1.2028               |
| <i>Health and Safety Link Governor</i>   |                                                                                                          |                                   |

**The School Governors' Attendance record for meetings from September 2024 to July 2025.**

| <b>Governor</b>           | <b>FGB meetings attended</b>           | <b>Committee meetings attended</b>     |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                           | Ap. = Apologies tendered and accepted. | Ap. = Apologies tendered and accepted. |
| David Beale               | 3 out of 5 (1 Ap.)                     | N/A                                    |
| Anna Cole                 | 5 out of 5                             | 1 out of 1                             |
| Juliette Fraser           | 4 out of 5 (1 Ap.)                     | 1 out of 3 (2 Ap.)                     |
| John Hopkins              | 4 out of 5 (1 Ap.)                     | 4 out of 4                             |
| Mark Knight (Headteacher) | 5 out of 5                             | 7 out of 7                             |
| Emma Knightley            | 5 out of 5                             | 3 out of 4 (1 Ap.)                     |
| Steven Ojari              | 3 out of 3                             | 3 out of 3                             |
| Ian Pykett                | 5 out of 5                             | 4 out of 4                             |
| Lee Reed                  | 3 out of 5 (2 Ap.)                     | 3 out of 4 (1 Ap.)                     |
| Sophie Stephenson (Chair) | 5 out of 5                             | 3 out of 3                             |

|                            |                    |            |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Tim Raybould               | 3 out of 5 (2 Ap.) | 3 out of 3 |
| Tony Stirland (Vice Chair) | 4 out of 5 (1 Ap.) | 4 out of 4 |

## **DECLARATIONS 2025-2026**

John Hopkins: Trustee Bakewell Rotary Club, Trustee Baslow Village Hall, Life member Association of School and College Leaders, Governor (Local Authority Nominee) Curbar School.

Steven Ojari: Bannerdale Osteopaths

Lee Reed: Board Director and Chief Operating Officer – Kedleston Group

Sophie Stephenson: The Thinking Project