



Grantham Villages' C of E Primary Schools Federation

Governing Board Statement 2026 - 2028



All schools in England have a Governing Board which is responsible for overseeing many of the strategic decisions of the schools under their governance.

As defined by the Department for Education (DfE) in The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013, the core functions of the Governing Board include:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and performance management of staff
- oversee the financial performance of the school and ensure money is well spent

In exercising their functions, the Governing Board shall:

- act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the schools
- be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and, in particular, be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties

Our Governing Board has a Code of Conduct which is reviewed and agreed annually. All Governors are obliged to abide by this code.

A key role is to act as a 'critical friend': to support; to challenge; to ask questions; ultimately to represent the school community. Our Governing Board is composed of volunteers who are interested in the continued progress of Marston Thorold's Charity C of E Primary School and St Sebastian's C of E Primary School and in ensuring the best possible education for the children in our federation.

The Governing Board of Grantham Villages' C of E Primary Schools Federation (GVSF) works in close partnership with the Executive Headteacher, staff and the Local Authority. Whilst the Executive Headteacher is, of course, responsible for the day to day running of the school, the Governors are involved with such things as staffing, curriculum, school buildings and finance. It ensures the schools function well and maintains the proper range of academic and social objectives.

GVSF Board of Governors

Our current Governing Board is made up as follows:

Name	Governor Type	Appointed By	Start Date	End Date
Revd Kevin Ashby	Foundation	Archdeacon of Lincoln	04.10.2023	18.06.2027
Gordon Cannon	Foundation	PCC LDBE	09.03.2024	08.03.2028
Lucy Jones	Foundation	PCC LDBE	26.9.2022	25.9.2026
Sandra Jackson	Foundation	PCC - LDBE	18.07.2024	17.07.2028
Lotti Thomas	Foundation	PCC - LDBE	24.03.2025	23.03.2029
James Starritt	Foundation	PCC - LDBE	06.03.2026	05.03.2030
Vacant	Foundation	PCC - LDBE		
Emma Jameson	Parent	Parent/Carers	21.11.2022	20.11.2026
Joris Vreeswijk	Parent	Parent/Carers	09.11.2023	08.11.2027
Kate Hamblett	Local Authority	LCC/FGB	22.11.2023	21.11.2027
Kelly Matthews	Staff	Staff	01.09.2026	31.08.2030
Elaine Bedford	Executive HT	FGB	01.01.2023	Ex Officio

Governors who have served within the last 24 months:

Name	Governor Type	Appointed By	Start Date	End Date
Anne Schaanning	Foundation	PCC/LDBE	01.01.2024	23.04.2025
Steph Kirton	Foundation	PCC/LDBE	01.11.2021	01.04.2025

Clerk to Governors

The Governing Body has appointed a Clerk who is responsible for arranging meetings, taking minutes, and following up on all actions. The Clerk also advises on procedural matters where necessary. Our clerk is Mrs Victoria Nicholas-Barry and as our governing board must follow some complex rules on governance that are set by law, Mrs Nicholas-Barry needs to have a detailed knowledge of these rules to guide the governors to carry out their role and responsibilities within the legal and regulatory framework.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation Governing Board operates a circle model of governance where the governing board works as a 'whole team' without committees and meets every half term or more if required. This means that governors have up to date information regarding the schools and can offer timely support and challenge, as well as take action should the need arise.

The remits for the governing board, working panels and individual or paired governors are reviewed annually as well as the specific areas of responsibility, to ensure appointed governor/s are equipped with the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles. A skills audit was carried out in September 2023 and on appointment to the governing board. Governors constantly review their skills audit as they gain skills and knowledge through attendance of training.

Specific Areas of Responsibility:	
Statutory Roles	
Finance:	Gordon Cannon
Health and Safety (H&S):	Joris Vreeswijk
Safeguarding and Child Protection:	Emma Jameson
Special Educational Needs & Disability:	Sandra Jackson
Other Roles	
Attendance	Emma Jameson
Equality & Diversity	Joris Vreeswijk
Food in Schools	Gordon Cannon
Health and Well-Being	Lucy Jones
Looked After Children (LAC)	Sandra Jackson
Maths	
Monitoring	Elaine Bedford
Online Safety	Gordon Cannon
Personal Development and Behaviour including RSHE/PSHE	Kevin Ashby
Pupil Premium & Catch-Up Premium	Gordon Cannon
P.E. & Sports Premium	Sandra Jackson
RE/SIAMS	Kevin Ashby
Training & Development of Governors	Victoria Nicholas-Barry
Staff Recruitment	Gordon Cannon & Lucy Jones
Website	Lucy Jones
Data Protection Officer (DPO)	Victoria Nicholas-Barry for St. Sebastian's Amy Parnham for Marston.

Statutory Panels:

Executive Headteacher's Performance Managements	Reverend (retired)Kevin Ashby Lucy Jones Vacant External Advisor
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Pay Review Panel	Gordon Cannon Sandra Jackson Vacant
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Governors' Meetings

Throughout 2024-2025 and 2025-2026, there have been six Full Governing Board (FGB) meetings (1 per half term) with governors' attendance as follows:

- 2023-2024 at 93%
- 2024-2025 at 86%
- 2025-2026 at 85%

All absences were approved by the governing board. There were no 'causes for concern' at the level of commitment shown by any member of the governing board (members are volunteers, giving up their own time to fulfil the roles for the benefit of the pupils). Each governor's attendance is published on the 'Meet the Governors' webpage of the schools' website.

Reviewing Policies

The FGB review all statutory policies within a three-year cycle and those policies which have a requirement to be reviewed annually. The review program ensured that all guidance was current, compliant with best practice and were 'fit for purpose' as well as being 'up to date' with current local and Government guidelines and recommendations. Through this review process, the FGB ensured that the schools had policies which were accurate as required by the Department of Education and recommended by Lincolnshire County Council. Statutory policies are required to be published on both schools' websites.

Governors' visits to monitor the School Development Plans (SDPs)

The Executive Headteacher (EHT), Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff work together at the beginning of each academic year in writing up the SDP for governor approval at their first meeting.

SDP 2024-2025 key priorities were:

1. Writing
2. Assessment for Learning
3. Vision and Values
4. Ensure curriculum and teaching meets the needs of all children in EYFS and KS1 within a mixed age class (Marston). Maths (St Sebastian's)

SDP 2025-2026 key priorities were:

1. Writing
2. Assessment for Learning
3. Vision and Values
4. Ensure curriculum and teaching meets the needs of all children in EYFS and KS1 within a mixed age class (Marston). Maths (St Sebastian's)

As part of their responsibility to monitor the SDPs, the governors' were put into SDP key area teams to carry out monitoring of the key priorities:

SDP Key Priority	Governor Teams
1. Writing	Gordon Cannon, Emma Jameson & Joris Vreeswijk
2. Assessment for Learning	Lucy Jones and Kate Hamblett

Governor visits are an invaluable opportunity for governors to evidence that the SDP key priorities impact upon the schools' ethos, vision, values and aims. Each governor visit had a core purpose and objective linked directly to the SDP. Governors were able to make observations surrounding safeguarding, health and safety, behaviour of pupils and the termly schools' value.

The total number of governor monitoring forms completed on monitoring visits to both schools were:

- 2024-2025 – 34
- 2025-2026 - 42

Governors' Strategy Plan 2025-2028

Our strategic plan for governors outlines the goals and actions needed to improve the schools, ensuring high standards of achievement, effective governance, and pupil success. It is a collaborative document developed with the EHT and linked to the School Development Plans:

- Objective 1 – Vision and Values
- Objective 2 – Learning and Teaching
- Objective 3 - Buildings, Premises, Admissions and Community Links

Governors' Training

All governors are entitled to receive and are expected to undertake training to develop their knowledge and skills to fulfil their responsibilities as a school governor. During the academic years, governors have attended training sessions run by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), Diocese of Lincoln Board of Education (LDBE), training sessions held online and eLearning modules.

The following training had been undertaken:

- Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) 6 Year Pathway Safeguarding Online Training Modules
- Safeguarding Essentials for Governors (annually)
- Governor Prevent Awareness
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Training (annually)
- Governor Induction Training – led by LCC and LDBE
- Supporting Children in Care (Looked After Children & Previous Looked After Children)
- LCC Pupil Reintegration Team (PRT) Exclusion Training for Governors
- Effective Governance Monitoring – 2 parts
- LDBE Governance Briefing
- LCC Governor Partnership Briefings (three times each year)
- LDBE Governor Networking Meeting (3 times each year)
- LDBE Evaluating the Impact of your theologically rooted vision on the curriculum
- Schools Food Standard
- LCC Introduction to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- SIAMS Gathering Evidence- led by LDBE

All governors and staff follow Lincolnshire County Council LSCP's 6-year safeguarding training pathway by completing a number of online safeguarding modules during each year. This is an annual statutory training requirement to ensure everyone is always fully up to date with the latest information and requirements.

Attending meetings, briefings and conferences during each academic year has assisted the Governing Board in keeping abreast of key developments and requirements in primary education. It has enabled the governors to support and challenge both schools in its provision of education to pupils and to monitor and support the day-to-day management and administration of both schools.

Summary from the Chair and Vice Chair

The Board of Governors have strived to support the work of the Federation and worked as a team in our strategic role:

- to ensure the children enjoy school, feel valued and part of the school community
- to ensure clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- to ensure pupil attainment is monitored and maximised
- to oversee and approve schools' budgets
- to ensure the staff are supported in their workload and mental health & well being
- to approve policies and procedures

By carrying out our strategic monitoring role, the Board enabled the EHT and SLT to focus on the day to day running and management of the schools.

A lot of governance centres around the Board's development and that of the schools. To follow this, governors regularly review our roles, experience, skills, and knowledge we individually bring to the governing board of the federation. We continue to identify gaps in our skills and learning and attend suitable training through face-to-face training sessions/briefings or online training portals.

During this year, we welcomed a new foundation governor- Mr James Starritt. Mr Starritt brings a wealth of knowledge in education provision and we are looking forward to having his expertise on the governing board.

One constant major challenge as a board of governors, is monitoring the school budgets, with reduced funding and the constant rise of costs. We are very mindful of the budgets and have strived to ensure that staffing levels, the needs of the children and resources have not suffered as a result. We continue to be grateful to 'Friends of Marston School', Marston's staff and St Sebastian's staff for the fantastic support they give to the schools in terms of fundraising, resources, time and commitment.

It is also reassuring that the schools' breakfast and after school clubs are popular and provide a vital wrap around care service to many parents/carers.

As we look forward to 2026 – 2027 we will have a fresh set of opportunities and challenges to face. We have no doubt we will continue to navigate all the future has in store for us with strength and resilience.

Mrs Lucy Jones
Chair of Governors

Mr Gordon Cannon
Vice Chair

July 2026