

Governing a Jesuit School

An Introduction for New Governors (and School Leaders)

The role and responsibilities of school governing bodies have increased enormously in the past twenty years. Governing bodies are expected to provide strategic drive and vision, as well as detailed scrutiny of the day-to-day operation of the school. Such responsibility can be daunting. These notes are intended to provide some guidance on being a governor for a Jesuit school.

The governing body is not there to govern the school directly but rather to see that the school is governed. It is the responsibility of the head teacher and school leadership team to run the school, to be responsive to changing circumstances and demands, and to plan for the future, in a way that is open and accountable and reflects best practice.

The role of the governing body is to scrutinise what the school leadership team is doing. Governors need to have a detailed knowledge and understanding of what goes on in the school, how it is managed, what the impact on its pupils is, and how robustly it is prepared for expected change and unexpected challenge. A good governing body will do this through a carefully structured flow of information from, and discussion with, the head and leadership team. In most schools, this will be achieved through a committee structure in which committees are delegated to deal with the detail and the full governing body is freed to focus on the bigger and more strategic picture.

In short, the job of the governors is to reflect back to the head and leadership team an independent assessment of what sort of place the school is and how it is performing. Sometimes this is described as being a *critical friend*. Only if things have gone catastrophically wrong should governors step in and take direct action. This does not mean that, faced with serious concerns about some aspect of the school, governors should not make clear to the head and school leadership team that they expect a resolution, within a timeframe and criteria they specify for success.

A well-composed governing body will have members who are experienced in a range of fields from which the school can benefit: from business, finance, law, buildings and maintenance, human resources, public service, higher education, the Catholic community, and not forgetting the experience of being a parent, as well as from education itself.¹ Governors bring their expertise to the table but should never replace the school's judicious use of external experts.

To be an effective governor of, specifically, a Jesuit school, each new governor needs (a) to understand what Jesuit identity and mission is; (b) to be able to articulate Jesuit identity and mission at governors' meetings and apply it to strategic decisions; (c) to encourage and help the head and school leadership team to make Jesuit identity and mission a reality in the day-to-day life of the school as it is actually experienced by pupils, staff and parents. This paper is offered as a help to governors in carrying out this important role.

¹ Governing bodies should beware having too many teachers on the board (especially of the same phase as the school, ie. secondary teachers on a secondary school board) – it is the head and leadership team who provide educational expertise to the school; the governing body should predominantly provide a range of other, complementary, expertise.

Getting started

Joining a governing body can be daunting if you have not been a school governor before. The breadth and detail of business can be overwhelming. It may be reassuring to know that most governors feel like that for the first year or three!

It is good practice for the school to provide you with a 'welcome pack' of documents which will allow you to understand how the governing body is constituted, how it works, and what the current state of play is. Things to ask for should include:

- the school's *Articles of Association* (for independent schools) or *Instrument of Government*² (for voluntary aided schools)
- a list of governors, their particular areas of interest/expertise, and their roles on the governing body
- minutes of the most recent governing body meeting
- the summary and analysis of recent exam results
- the annual accounts for the last year (including the auditor's letter/report)
- the current year's budget
- the most recent inspection report³
- the most recent diocesan inspection report⁴
- the most recent *Apostolic Report* prepared for the Jesuit Provincial's Visitation
- the current self-evaluation form (SEF) or equivalent
- the current school improvement / development / strategic plan
- the school staff list and staffing structure
- the current school prospectus
- a list of current school policies⁵
- a copy of the most recent school magazine / newsletter
- a history of the school (if there is one)

² The law requires that new governors be given the *Instrument of Government* in maintained schools.

³ An Ofsted report for maintained schools or an ISI report for independent schools.

⁴ Known as a Section 48 report in maintained schools (§48 of the *Education Act 2005*).

⁵ But not the policies themselves as the volume of paperwork will be overwhelming. Most policies are presented to the governing body annually or tri-annually for review and adoption.

Importantly, make sure you are also given a copy of the current guidance for school governors from AGBIS⁶ (for independent schools) or the DfE⁷ (for state maintained schools) or access these online.

Ask to have time with key people (Chair of Governors, Clerk to the Governing Body, Head, Deputy Head and other members of the School Leadership Team (SLT), Bursar, Chaplain, etc.) over the first term or so. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Find out what they do, what their current priorities and concerns are, and what support they need from the governing body.

Do visit the school. Meet support staff and teachers. See classes and school activities in action. Talk to the pupils. Get a sense of the school as a community. But be aware that there are protocols and sensitivities here (see *Making a School Visit* below).

If you are not a professional educationalist, the discussion and acronyms can be bewildering. Do not be afraid to ask for elucidation. Other governors are probably feeling the same!

Do sign up for a governor training course in your first year and try to do one every year. As well as doing this broad-based training, discuss with the Chair if it would help for you to specialise in one area and pursue training in that (eg. school finance, safeguarding, teaching and learning, special needs, employment and human relations). The Clerk to the governing body should keep you informed about training courses for governors.⁸

As a governor, you will be required to complete some safeguarding training as you begin your term of office. This is a statutory requirement. Safeguarding is one of your most important

⁶ Association of Governing Bodies of Independent Schools, [Guidelines for Governors](#) (updated regularly).

⁷ HM Government, Department for Education, [Governance Handbook](#) (updated annually).

⁸ There are many good training course provided by dioceses, local authorities, law firms, and the governing body associations (NGA [National Governance Association](#), AGBIS [Association of Governing Bodies of Independent Schools](#), and SCIS [Scottish Council of Independent Schools](#)).

responsibilities as a governor and training should be completed with care and attention.

Do attend the induction course for Jesuit school governors run by the Jesuit Institute.⁹ This will give you a better understanding of your particular responsibility for a Jesuit school.

Don't feel you have to contribute to every discussion. If something has been said, leave it at that. Speak little, listen a lot.

Ask someone you trust on the governing body to tell you (privately) if you are out of line.

Most school governing bodies have committees – the number and focus of the committees will vary considerably. Expect to serve on at least one committee – speak to the Chair of Governors about how best to use your expertise and interests.

From time to time, governors have to form *ad hoc* panels to deal with discipline (both pupils and staff), grievance, appeals (for admissions or against staff/pupil disciplinary decisions), redundancy, job interviews for senior posts, etc. It is good to get experience by offering occasionally to sit in on one of these panels alongside more experienced governors.

Many schools have 'link governors' who take a particular interest in a subject department, or age-phase of the school, or in chaplaincy, special needs, or safeguarding, etc. Discuss with the Chair of Governors how your own interests and experience would best be used.

As well as being a school governor, if the school is a registered charity, you may also be a charity trustee, and a director of any companies the school uses to manage lettings and events. If you have questions about this, speak to the Clerk or Chair of Governors. Schools will have set up these charities and companies in such a way as to restrict your personal liability but it is wise to clarify what the situation is.

⁹ Dates and details are on the Jesuit Institute website: jesuitinstitute.org > [courses and conferences](#)

And lastly but perhaps most importantly, do pray for the school and for particular people in the school – at the start of meetings, in times of difficulty, when making decisions, and each day.

Jesuit education and the purpose of Jesuit schools

According to St Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), founder of the Society of Jesus and Jesuit schools, the purpose of Jesuit education is “the greater glory of God and the common good” through “improvement in living and learning.”¹⁰

Note St Ignatius' emphasis on the twofold *living* and *learning*. Jesuit schools are not, and never have been, just about learning, although they have a formidable reputation for academic excellence – they are also about learning to live a good and virtuous life, making a difference for the better, and contributing to the common good of society, locally and globally. Jesuit schools are about education of the intellect¹¹ and the formation of character.¹² Together these two strands are, if you like, the DNA of Jesuit education. Governors have the responsibility of ensuring this Jesuit identity in education does not become unbalanced with one strand given more or less prominence than the other. Good Jesuit education is about both *living well* and *learning well*.

At the heart of Jesuit education is the idea of *cura personalis*¹³ – a personalized care for the individual which will allow each pupil (or staff member) to flourish academically, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. *Cura*

¹⁰ St Ignatius Loyola, *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, n.440

¹¹ “In Jesuit schools the criterion of excellence is to be applied to all areas of school life. ... The pursuit of academic excellence is appropriate in a Jesuit school, but only within the larger context of human excellence.” *Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986) n.107

¹² The *Jesuit Pupil Profile* (JPP) articulates the virtues and qualities of character Jesuit schools seek to develop or “grow” in each pupil and across the school community. See Appendix II below.

¹³ *Cura personalis* is sometimes misunderstood to mean *pastoral care* – it is a much wider concept than this but includes good pastoral care.

personalis is achieved through excellent education (the transmission of knowledge and skills leading to competence across a broad curriculum) and outstanding formation (the development of virtue and character – articulated for Jesuit schools in the *Jesuit Pupil Profile*).

A more detailed vision for Jesuit schools worldwide is set out in a document called *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986). A second document, *Ignatian Pedagogy* (1993), explores in greater detail the Jesuit method of teaching and learning.

As you begin your work as a governor, it may be useful to think about Jesuit education under five headings and to use these as a template for your collective oversight of the school. Sometimes governing bodies get side-tracked – keep coming back to these five characteristics and make sure they are front and centre of every agenda:

1. Jesuit schools strive to offer an excellent **intellectual formation** through outstanding teaching . . .
2. and a **magis¹⁴ curriculum** that is as broad and deep as the school's resources will allow, together with a rich complementary offering of extra-curricular activities, encouraging each child's gifts, talents and interests to develop.
3. Underlying teaching and learning in a Jesuit school is outstanding **pastoral care** – teachers and support staff get to know children very well and step in with challenge, encouragement and support to help children and teenagers negotiate the ups and downs of growing up.
4. **Religious formation** is an important part of Jesuit education, giving pupils the opportunity to encounter God and Jesus

¹⁴ The *magis* is a key idea in the spirituality of St Ignatius. It is a Latin word meaning 'more'. It reflects Ignatius' idea of a generous response to the call to discipleship – we become more so that we can do more, go deeper, act with greater integrity, for the greater glory of God.

Christ in prayer, reflection and worship, in study of the Catholic Christian faith and other faiths, and in the service of others, especially those on the margins of society, locally and globally.

5. Through links with Jesuit schools and institutions around the world, including Jesuit organizations with global reach such as Jesuit Missions and the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), pupils and staff are encouraged to have **outward looking perspectives and horizons**, exploring what it is like to live in very different circumstances and cultures, close to home and on the other side of the planet, our common home.¹⁵

Some questions for governors' reflection and enquiry around these five characteristics of Jesuit schools are suggested in Appendix I below.

Governors' responsibility for Catholic/Jesuit identity and mission

The governing body has primary responsibility for the Catholic and Jesuit identity and mission of the school. State maintained Catholic/Jesuit schools have an *Instrument of Government* and independent Catholic/Jesuit schools have *Articles of Association* (or trust deed) which set out the legal requirements placed on governors for the conduct of the school as a Catholic and Jesuit school.

Catholic schools do not have a mission that is separate from, or different to, the mission of the Church. Catholic schools are one of the key places where the Church's mission is played out. The Catholic Church "establishes her own schools because she considers them a privileged means of promoting the formation of

¹⁵ "Our common home" is a phrase used by Pope Francis to speak about the need to attend both to the ecology of the planet and to the social and economic injustices of its human inhabitants. For Francis the two challenges are inextricably linked. The phrase is the subtitle of his 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*.

the whole person. ... The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church . . .”¹⁶

As well as being part of the Church’s mission, Jesuit schools have a mandate from the Society of Jesus. Governors need to stay aware and informed of the Church’s and Jesuits’ current understanding of that mandate or mission, the school’s role in the wide educational landscape and their priorities for the schools.¹⁷ The Jesuit Institute hosts an annual meeting for chairs of governors and other governors to allow this to be communicated and discussed.

In Jesuit governance, the head teacher is known as the *Director of Work* and is accountable to the Provincial for the Jesuit identity and mission of the school, as well as to the governing body.¹⁸

Governors cannot promote the Jesuit identity and mission of the school if they do not themselves have a good knowledge and understanding of Jesuit education and what it is that makes Jesuit schools distinctively Jesuit.

There are two good ways to get started:

- Watch *The Spirit of Jesuit Education*¹⁹ – a short film made in the British Jesuit schools. Through interviews with former pupils and current staff and pupils, this gives a good sense of the principles and distinctive character of Jesuit education.
- Read *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986). This is the foundational document for Jesuit schools worldwide today – it sets out what needs to happen in a school for it

¹⁶ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School* (Rome 1977) n.8-9

¹⁷ The current mandate of the Society for its schools worldwide is set out in detail in the *Rio Papers* (2017) with which governors should be familiar (available on the Jesuit Institute website).

¹⁸ The Society of Jesus worldwide has 16,000 members and is divided into around seventy provinces, each of which is led by a Provincial Superior, usually appointed for a term of six years. The English (now British) Province was founded in 1624.

¹⁹ *The Spirit of Jesuit Education* (2014) is available on the Jesuit Institute website.

“A distinctive spirit still marks any school which can truly be called Jesuit. This distinctive spirit can be discovered through reflection on the lived experience of Ignatius, on the ways in which that lived experience was shared with others, on the ways in which Ignatius himself applied his vision to education in the *Constitutions* and in letters, and on the ways in which this vision has been developed and been applied to education in the course of history, including our present times. A common spirit lies behind pedagogy, curriculum and school life . . .

‘Distinctive’ is not intended to suggest ‘unique’ either in spirit or in method. The purpose is rather to describe ‘our way of proceeding’: the inspiration, values, attitudes and style which have traditionally characterized Jesuit education, which must be characteristic of any truly Jesuit school today wherever it is to be found, and which will remain essential as we move into the future.”

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education (1986) n.8-9

to be truly Jesuit. An abridged version (as well as the full text) is available on the Jesuit Institute website.²⁰

In particular, governors of a Catholic/Jesuit school must:

- ensure the religious and spiritual life of the school are not add-ons but permeate and inform all aspects of school life;
- co-operate with the local diocese in fulfilling the bishop’s mission for Catholic schools;
- understand and co-operate with the Society of Jesus, at province and international levels, to promote the Jesuit identity and mission of the school;

²⁰ www.jesuitinstitute.org

- ensure pupils receive an education of the best possible standard including academically;²¹
- have particular care for chaplaincy and religious education.

This will mean balancing the complex demands and expectations of all kinds of agencies, including the state, parents and wider society, with the primary mission of announcing the gospel and building the kingdom of God in school in a way that is creative and has integrity:

“Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost, every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth.”²²

The apostolic core

The former Jesuit Superior General, Fr Adolfo Nicolás, has spoken of the importance of the *apostolic core* in Jesuit schools and other works.

By *apostolic core*, he means those people who deeply understand the Ignatian identity and Jesuit mission of the school, who live out that identity in their words and actions, and who consistently and actively promote it in the school (sometimes in very hidden and humble ways; and sometimes not even fully aware that they are doing so because they have simply absorbed Jesuit identity and mission).

It is therefore important for governors and school leaders to know who is part of the apostolic core and to take steps to put their way opportunities for personal development, and involve them in the shaping of school policy and practice.

²¹ “Those who are in charge of Catholic schools are to ensure . . . that the formation given in them is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area.” *Code of Canon Law* (1983) n.806

²² Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to Catholic Educators* at the Catholic University of America, 17 April 2008.

The head should be a key member of the apostolic core and governors should ensure that s/he receives the opportunities for personal development in the Ignatian tradition that s/he needs to grow in his/her role as leader of a Christian Catholic community.

Many others will, of course, contribute all kinds of service (for example, by teaching their subjects well, or managing the finances, or cleaning the school) but it is always important to know who creates, sustains and energizes the Jesuit spirit of the school community.

Our way of proceeding: Some Jesuit tools for governance

St Ignatius used the phrase “our way of proceeding” to characterize a particularly Jesuit way of behaving and doing business. It is informed by the spiritual principles and tools of his book, the *Spiritual Exercises*.

Some of these principles and tools can be of great help to governors:

Principle and foundation²³

A key statement at the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Principle and Foundation* sets out St Ignatius’ fundamental take on the world and the purpose of human life – namely “to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord”²⁴ and that this focus and perspective is what opens us up to salvation – the possibility of being fully human and fully alive. It is about getting the right perspective: all is for the greater glory of God.²⁵

The Examen²⁶

The Examen is an Ignatian method of reflecting in conscious gratitude on the events of the day – seeking to notice the presence and activity of

²³ St Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* n.23

²⁴ This is where the “LDS” (= *Laus Deo Semper* / praise to God always) which pupils in Jesuit schools write at the end of their work comes from.

²⁵ “AMDG” is the motto adopted by St Ignatius for the Society and for Jesuit schools: Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam / for the greater glory of God.

²⁶ *Spiritual Exercises* n.43

the God who is 'found in all things'.²⁷ This practice of attentiveness can provide a model when governing bodies need to conduct reviews.

Discernment²⁸

Ignatian discernment is a way to seek the *magis* (the more, the better, the deeper, the richer) from a number of possible good paths of action. It is the Jesuit way of making good decisions.

Good construction²⁹

A principle of Ignatius that we should always look for the good in what other people say and do, presuming good motives rather than ill.

Generosity³⁰

Just as the *Spiritual Exercises* begin with the practice of gratitude, so they end in generosity. Gratitude and generosity should be the hallmarks of a Jesuit school's "way of proceeding".

Deeds rather than words³¹

Ignatius proposes that it is in the depth, integrity and quality of our actions that true Christian love is to be found. A Jesuit school should be judged by what it does rather than what it says.

The school's relationship with the Jesuit province

Catholic schools have a particular relationship with the Catholic Church as they are part of the Church's mission. They are not independent of the governance structures of the Church.

Every Catholic school comes under the authority of the local bishop. For schools which are in the care of Religious Orders (such as the Jesuits), the bishop retains oversight but invites the Religious Order to run the school and to do

²⁷ *Spiritual Exercises* n.235

²⁸ *Spiritual Exercises* n.313ff

²⁹ *Spiritual Exercises* n.22

³⁰ *Spiritual Exercises* n.233ff

³¹ *Spiritual Exercises* n.230

Key Documents on Jesuit Education for Governors

The Characteristics of Jesuit Education
(Society of Jesus, Rome 1986)

*Jesuit Pupil Profile:
Virtue and Learning in the Ignatian Tradition*
(Jesuit Institute, London 2017)

AMDG to LDS – a one-page infographic setting out the vision of Jesuit education
(Jesuit Institute, London 2017)

Jesuit Schools: A Quick Introduction
(Jesuit Institute, London 2019)

Film: *The Spirit of Jesuit Education*
(Jesuit Institute, London 2014)

The *Jesuit Institute website* contains a wide range of resources for schools and governors.

so according to its own particular identity and mission (the *charism* of the Religious Order).³²

At the head of each Jesuit province there is a Provincial Superior (known simply as the Provincial), usually appointed for six years.

He holds the position of Church authority (known as being an *Ordinary*; bishops are Ordinaries in their own dioceses) in relation to Jesuit works, including the schools.

The Jesuit province is incorporated in civil law for the purposes of ownership of property, financial transactions, and functioning as a registered charity. The civil title of the Jesuits in Britain is the Trust for Roman Catholic Purposes (or TRCP).

Strategic and day-to-day governance of schools is delegated by the bishop and Provincial to the governing body. In the case of Jesuit schools, the Provincial will appoint either all or a majority of governors (the *Foundation Governors*) or the key *Member Governors* who

³² The canon law (Church law) which governs this relationship is found in canons 801, 803, 806, and 678.

appoint other governors, depending on the school's Instrument of Government or Articles of Association. This relationship of appointment and accountability is critical for schools which are Catholic schools.

Each year or every other year, the Jesuit Provincial conducts a Visitation of each school. He will meet the head teacher, the chair of governors, and teachers, support staff and pupils. He will celebrate the eucharist with the whole school community or a substantial part of it. This Visitation is designed to provide a review of the school's work as a Jesuit school. In preparation for Visitation, the school will prepare an *Apostolic Report* – this document governors should be presented to, and endorsed by, the governing body.³³

Chaplaincy

A vibrant and high-profile chaplaincy is an essential characteristic of a good Jesuit school. Successful chaplaincy has a significant impact on pupils, families, staff, and former pupils.

Governors have a particular responsibility for ensuring chaplaincy is properly staffed, well resourced, and has a voice at leadership level.³⁴

Governors need to have a clear understanding of what best practice in school chaplaincy looks like. The Jesuit tradition of chaplaincy is not sitting around waiting for people to come with their problems or to seek spiritual advice but to be outgoing and to engage with the whole school community in a wide variety of ways.³⁵

³³ More information is on the Jesuit Institute website: [Resources for Schools > Visitation](#)

³⁴ The chaplain should attend meetings of the School Leadership Team regularly to give account of chaplaincy activity and to contribute to discussion of matters of importance to the religious and spiritual life of the school.

³⁵ St Ignatius says, "thus we go in his door and come out our own" (Letter Alfonso Salmeron, 20 September 1541) – this is characteristic of the Jesuit approach to ministry where Jesuits seek to find people where they are in order to open up the possibility of an encounter with Christ and the good news he brings. It is why Jesuits have always worked in such diverse places and ministries, some not immediately evident as "religious".

The Jesuit Institute has developed a model of Jesuit school chaplaincy which sets out eight *domains* of chaplaincy activity:

1. Encounter with the person of Jesus Christ
2. Developing a personal philosophy of life
3. Spirituality and prayer
4. Worship
5. Service of others and social outreach
6. Leadership
7. Involvement in the life of the Church
8. Pastoral care

These domains are like the interlocking pieces of a jigsaw and good chaplaincy provision is incomplete if any is missing or is particularly weak. Inevitably, at different times, some domains will be stronger than others but, overall, governors should expect to see activity and impact in all eight areas.

Governors should be aware that being a school chaplain can be a lonely job (as chaplains have a role different from all other members of staff) and should ensure the chaplain has appropriate support by being an active member of the Jesuit school chaplains' network (run by the Jesuit Institute), of the Centre for Chaplaincy in Education (CCE), and any diocesan chaplaincy network. This networking benefits the chaplain him/herself but also impacts on the quality and vibrancy of the school's chaplaincy provision for pupils and staff.

Chaplaincy provision is reviewed by the Provincial at his Visitation of the school and is an important part of Catholic school inspection and report.

If your governing body has the practice of appointing link governors for different key areas of school life, there should be a link governor for chaplaincy.

It is good practice for governors to receive a written chaplaincy report each term and to invite the chaplain to a meeting each year to report on chaplaincy and answer governors' questions.

As far as possible, the Provincial tries to assign a Jesuit priest to each school to contribute priestly ministry to the school's chaplaincy. The Jesuit Institute has provided guidance on these arrangements.

The school chaplain (lay or ordained) is a reserved post.

Key Documents on School Chaplaincy for Governors

A Model for Jesuit School Chaplaincy
(Jesuit Institute, London 2019)

Priestly Ministry in Jesuit Schools
(Jesuit Institute, London 2017)

Religious education

Governors of a Catholic school have a particular care and responsibility for Religious Education.

The RE department should be well staffed and well resourced and have the status that befits this core activity of a Catholic school.

Well staffed means:

- having enough qualified specialist teachers of RE able to teach the full range of the RE curriculum;
- being led by a suitably qualified and experienced head of RE;
- with access to good professional development ;
- and particular support for any non-specialists who are teaching RE (especially in primary schools).

Well resourced means:

- an appropriate subject budget;

- the resources to do the job including an identifiable location within the school;³⁶
- based on good quality curriculum.

The Head of RE should have a major role in the wider academic life and policy of the school and a voice at senior leadership level.³⁷

All Catholic schools should be familiar with the *Curriculum Directory* of the bishops' conference.³⁸ The school's RE curriculum and schemes of work should be compliant with the national directory. Governors need to be aware and check that this is so.

The bishops (both in England & Wales and in Scotland) have set out clear expectations of the amount of curriculum time that must be given to RE. In KS2-KS4 (P1-S5), it is 10% of taught time. In Sixth Form (KS5 or S6), it is 5% of taught time.

In England and Wales, the bishops expect Catholic schools to teach Catholic GCSE specifications; and that the second religion option will be Judaism. Schools should consult the Delegate for Education before deviating from these expectations.

Public examination outcomes in Religious Studies should be at least as good as for English and Maths and benchmarked against them as well as the national pattern of results in Religious Studies. For England, GCSE performance of Catholic schools is mapped and analysed each year by the Catholic Education Service (CES). Governors should be aware of these comparators.

³⁶ In secondary schools there should be dedicated RE classrooms; in primary schools there should be classroom RE areas and displays as well as whole-school displays.

³⁷ The Catholic Bishops' Conference (E&W) recommends that the Head of RE should be a member of, or at least regularly attend, School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings and be in a promoted post equivalent to the Head of English and Mathematics.

³⁸ The *Bishops' Conference* is the body of Catholic bishops acting together in a particular geographical area (there is a Bishops' Conference for England and Wales and a separate Conference for Scotland) – the Conference sets national policy on a range of matters.

The provision of Religious Education is one of the three main areas for Catholic schools inspection in England. Governors should be familiar with the new national inspection framework.³⁹ They should be aware that not following the national Curriculum Directory or failing to allocate appropriate curriculum time are limiting judgements (ie. a school cannot be graded good or outstanding if it fails to do these things).

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in a Catholic school are closely tied to Religious Education. Governors should assure themselves of clear lines of responsibility, effective delivery of these curriculum areas, and adherence to national policy and guidance from the Bishops' Conference.

Governors should check on these things when they review the work of the RE department.

If your governing body has the practice of appointing link governors, there should be a link governor for Religious Education.

The Head of RE is a reserved post.

Key Documents on Religious Education for School Governors

for England & Wales

Religious Education Curriculum Directory
(Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, 2012, major revision due 2022)

Catholic Schools Inspection Handbook
(Bishops' conference of England & Wales, due 2022)

for Scotland

This is the Faith: Guidance on the Teaching of Religious Education in Catholic Schools
(Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 2011)

³⁹ To be introduced in September 2022.

Key issues for effective governing bodies

Effective governing bodies are characterised not just by being populated with dedicated and competent people with the necessary range of skills but also by governors who understand the purpose of school governance, the principles which underpin their work, and the ways of proceeding which promote effective governance.

Who do I represent?

It should always be about the children: every policy, every plan, every appointment, every decision, every change, ought to have a direct impact on pupils for the better.

Whoever appoints you (the Jesuit trustees, the school trustees, the local authority, the parent body), your job as a governor is to promote the best interests of the school. As your school is a Catholic and Jesuit school, this needs to be done in harmony with the aims of Catholic and Jesuit education which will be summarised in the school's *Articles of Association* or *Instrument of Government*.

Vision and Mission

The school's mission statement should be that of Jesuit schools and universities worldwide over the past half-millennium: the "improvement in living and learning" of young people "for the greater glory of God and the common good."⁴⁰

The school's vision statement (its understanding of how it achieves its mission) should reflect the wider vision statement of the Society: "We aim to form leaders in service, in imitation of Christ Jesus, men and women of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment."⁴¹ The vision statement is shared by all Jesuit schools. Your school will have a

⁴⁰ St Ignatius Loyola, *Constitutions* n.440

⁴¹ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ (29th Superior General), Address to Jesuit Educators at Villa Cavalletti, Rome, 29th April 1993.

statement that sets out how, in your school's own particular circumstances and community, the school will go about achieving that shared vision and mission.

As a governing body, keep before your eyes the vision and make sure the mission is a reality for current and future pupils. Don't let the pressures of present demands, wherever they come from, displace the mission and vision of Jesuit education. The strategic challenge for governors is how to remain faithful to the mission in a rapidly changing social and educational landscape.

A good way of doing this is to take one aspect of the Jesuit vision of education at each governing body meeting and, for just 20-minutes, to ask a key member of staff to speak to it, followed by a brief discussion. In this way the mission is kept front and centre of the agenda and, over the years, systematically worked through and absorbed into the school's "way of proceeding."

The school development plan should be framed around the elements of the mission and vision of Jesuit education. The five key characteristics of Jesuit education which constitute *cura personalis* in schools (intellectual formation – *magis* curriculum – religious formation – pastoral care – perspectives and horizons) have been used by some schools as the section headings for the school development plan.

Managing the Business

It helps to be clear about what each piece of business which comes before the governors, either at full governing body meeting or in committee, is for. Is it . . .

- for information?
- for decision?
- to take the mind of governors (ie. get a sense of what governors think and return to it on another occasion)?

Some governing bodies indicate the status of each agenda item (which, of course, does not preclude governors deciding to deal with it in a

different way it that seems to them desirable) and this can save a lot of time.

Link governors

Some governing bodies appoint link governors who take a particular interest in an area of school life, such as, for example, safeguarding, or chaplaincy, or boarding, or admissions, etc.

The role of a link governor is to be better informed on behalf of the governing body – but this doesn't mean other governors should not take a keen interest. The link governor is a critical friend to a department or member of staff and should provide context to governors but not fall into the trap of speaking for the department or member of staff.

Information

Governing bodies can only function effectively if they receive good and timely information. The chair and clerk need to be clear with the head and leadership team what information is needed (and what is not – governors are often bombarded with information they do not need), in what format,⁴² and when.⁴³ Matters coming to governors should always have their relation to the budget, if any, explicitly stated at the outset.

It is very easy for governors to call for papers or information on this and that, often without consideration for how long this will take the head and leadership team to prepare. Don't let servicing the governing body detract from running the school. Wise governors are careful what they ask for.

Sometimes it is only the head who attends governors' meetings. This is not good practice as the governing body ends up getting all its information from one person and that same

⁴² Consistent format for data and reports is essential if governors are to build up a picture over time.

⁴³ Good practice suggests that governors should receive papers ten days in advance of meetings and that no new papers are tabled subsequently or on the day unless it is really urgent business authorized by the chair of governors or committee chair.

person is the one mediating governors' views and interests back to the school leadership team and staff. Without by-passing the head, it is good practice for the governing body to invite key members of senior and middle leadership to present regularly to them at governors' meetings and committees. In this way, governors have a much broader sense of what is going on in the school and key staff have the opportunity to understand the mind and working of the governing body and contribute to its discussion and discernment.

Confidentiality

The governing body needs to achieve a balance between openness (communicating to staff and parents) and confidentiality in its business. You will see much confidential information as a governor, including personal and other sensitive data, and this needs to be treated with appropriate confidentiality. However, governors need to be careful to avoid creating an unnecessary sense of secrecy. The governing body needs to devise routine ways of communicating to parents and staff what decisions have been made and why.

Competence

It is a rare governor who is competent in every matter of business that comes before the governing body. It is the responsibility of governors collectively to ensure a spread of competences. Develop your own competences which are useful to the board (and don't be afraid to take on and develop a new one). And when the discussion is about an area with which you are unfamiliar, don't be afraid to ask questions or for clarification – you are almost certainly not the only one who is lost.

Communicate with the Chair of Governors

A good chair of governors will prepare meetings meticulously with the head. Difficulties sometimes arise in governing bodies when individual governors challenge or raise issues out of the blue. It is always good to have a word with the chair ahead of the meeting if there is business you want to raise or questions

you want to ask. Keeping open a good channel of communication directly with the chair is good practice.

School governing bodies cannot deal with all governance business within the handful of meetings each year. Much business should be delegated to committees but there will be occasional issues which need to be resolved through what is known as *chair's action*. Chair's action will generally be a matter about which the head feels governors need to be aware but is either urgent or administrative.

Chair's action should be reported to governors at each meeting for the record. However, if it seems that an unhealthy trend is developing and governors are being routinely bypassed, then raise the matter. Often a 'phone-around or request for an email response can give the chair a sense of governors' positions and whether a meeting needs to be called or chair's action is acceptable.

Collective responsibility

Governing bodies are subject to collective decision making (sometimes called *cabinet responsibility*) which means that, following appropriate detailed and robust discussion, the decision of the majority is adopted and any in the minority do not act against the decision, do back the decision in its implementation, and do not disclose any division of opinion to anyone outside the governing body.

If a decision means that you cannot, in conscience, continue as a governor, then you need to offer your resignation. This can be done without fuss or rancour – sometimes good people have different views about fundamental issues.

Committee structure

The range and detail of governors' business is generally too great to be dealt with at full governing body meetings – so most schools have a committee structure.

Which committees you have should reflect the structure of the school and the way it operates. Schools increasing do not divide academic and pastoral matters and have middle leaders appointed with responsibility for academic and pastoral care across particular age phases – it is good practice for governors’ committees to mirror this arrangement.

In addition, there are likely to be committees on finance and budget, buildings and estates, admissions and marketing, safeguarding, and human relations.

Private business

Governors will sometimes wish to meet alone, without the attendance of the head or other senior staff. This is often referred to as *private business*.

A routine example of private business is the annual discussion of the head’s performance assessment and setting of his/her salary.

But there will be other occasions on which the governing body may wish to discuss things without the head or other staff present. Great care needs to be taken, however, not to undermine the confidence of the head and it is wise for the chair to explain to the head what the governors wish to discuss privately and why.

The clerk should always be in attendance unless s/he is the subject of the discussion.

Governors always have a right to attend all full governing body meetings and committees and must never be prevented from attending. If a governor has a conflict of interest, it would be expected that they would declare this and recuse themselves from a meeting, or part of a meeting, or not take part in a particular discussion or vote.

Conflicts of interest

Declaration of conflicts of interest should be on the agenda and made at (a) first governing body meeting of the year in relation to the school

generally, and (b) at the start of each meeting in relation to the business on the agenda.

Being present

Governors should be seen at school events, especially major set-pieces of the school year. It is good practice for the chair to ask the head for a list of events for the year and make sure at least one governor will be present at each event.

Having your ear bent

Once it is known that you are a school governor, it is almost inevitably that you will be approached by parents or members of staff who want to bend your ear about something. The trick is to be open and approachable but to refer things back to head and leadership team (unless the governing body has explicitly nominated some governors to be contacts for parents or staff, either permanently or in specific circumstances).

You should never promise to resolve things yourself (you are not an ombudsman or an MP) but only to make sure the matter is passed on and dealt with (it is entirely appropriate to ask the head if it has indeed been followed-up).

When things go wrong

Be prepared for when things go wrong:

- action rarely needs to be taken today or hastily – sleep on it. But at the same time don’t let things drag on unresolved. Decide a reasonable timescale to resolve the issue;
- “Let all that you do, be done in love”,⁴⁴
- reconciliation and redemption are core Christian values and should characterize the way a Catholic school deals with individuals in trouble.

⁴⁴ 1 Corinthians 16:4

Crisis

Crises occur when ‘things going wrong’ get out of control or when the school is overwhelmed by external events having an impact on the school.

The school should have a crisis management plan in place which makes clear:

- who speaks publicly on behalf of the school;
- who makes decisions;
- how different constituencies are informed and kept informed of developments;
- who is needed for various liaison roles;
- whether the chair or any governors should play a role.

Something that commonly happens to institutions facing a crisis is that they forget to follow the crisis management plan and do everything on the hoof which is a recipe for disaster. The chair and head should ensure that the crisis management plan is being followed or that proper decision making is adapting it to circumstances.

Major crises should be reported to the Delegate for Education or Provincial Curia as a matter of course and courtesy. The Provincial Curia can offer support and professional media advice if requested.

Gratitude

Expressing gratitude does a lot of good in a school and getting a note of thanks from the governing body can make a big difference to teachers and support staff who often go above and beyond the call of duty.

Subsidiarity

Subsidiarity is an ancient Christian principle of leaving decision making to the lowest appropriate level in an organization. It is a good principle to follow in a Catholic school.

Governors need to be vigilant that they are not encroaching on the proper roles of the head and leadership team, including the bursar.

Being a governor is not about governing the school but rather about making sure the school is governed. Ask detailed questions to ensure you properly understand the situation but avoid dictating detailed advice to the Head.

The head and school leaders should be treated with professional courtesy at governors’ meetings – they are not there to be grilled. They may not have all the information at their fingertips. They may be tired or worried. The things on governors’ minds at that moment may be the least of their worries. Encourage, support, ask, invite!

Institutional memory

Institutional memory is important for effective organizations – it is the longer-term memory of what was decided and why. Who does this for your school? It might be the clerk to governors, a former head, long-serving members of staff, or sometimes parents with long connections. And what about Jesuit institutional memory? The person(s) with institutional memory might be recruited to the governing body or simply consulted as needed. But knowing who carries the institutional memory is important.

Compliance

Compliance with the extensive raft of legislation and statutory codes of practice is today a major function of school governance. Governors need to know what is required, what policies deal with it, how the policies are monitored, when the policies are reviewed and by whom.

There will be a list of compliance/policy requirements in the relevant inspection handbooks.⁴⁵

GBA and AGBIS run good compliance training for governors and the governing body as a whole should ensure it has enough governors who have undertaken training.

⁴⁵ The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) for maintained schools; the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) for independent schools.

Policies

The proliferation of policies is one of the things schools have to live with. Governors need to have a firm grasp of what policies the school has. When things go wrong it is often because the school failed to follow its own policies. There can also be a problem with multiple versions of the same policy unless policies are well managed.

All policies should have a review date and the name(s) of the person(s) responsible for conducting that review and presenting the updated policy to governors for approval.

Legal advice

Avoid treating any lawyers on the board as free legal advisers (especially as they may not be experts in the field in question but can still give a good general steer). Seek legal advice where necessary but do not be averse to making reasonable in-good-faith decisions. Schools are coming under increasing criticism for using funds on legal opinion rather than the education of their pupils.

Schools should subscribe to legal briefings (such as Croner⁴⁶) and governors should have access to these as needed.

Governor associations produce newsletters and online advice which governors should read in order to keep up with changing requirements and the outcomes of school-related cases.

Appointments and reserved posts

Governors should be aware that the Catholic bishops have identified *reserved posts* to which practising Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church must be appointed.

The reserved posts are:

- the Head
- Deputy Head
- Head of RE

- Chaplain
- and Head of Biology in Scotland

Exemption from the *Equalities Act 2010* is claimed for these posts and schools need to be very careful to state that exemption and explain the grounds upon which it is claimed in job advertisements and contracts.

Governors must be involved in shortlisting and sit on the interview panel for Headship, Deputy Headship and Chaplain appointments. A representative of the Provincial (usually his Delegate for Education) must also be involved in the selection process and be on the interview panel for these appointments.

Other appointments should be left to the head and leadership team. Governors are not usually involved in appointments below senior leadership level.

Recruiting new governors

Effective governing bodies keep a close eye on when governors are due to retire and plan for their replacements. One way of doing this is to advertise through local parishes and parents who often know of potential candidates.

It is important that vacant places on the governing body are not left unoccupied for long.

Foundation and Member governors are proposed by the school and appointed by the Provincial. Requests for governor appointments and reappointments should be sent to the Delegate for Education.

Making a school visit

Heads welcome visits from governors. But it is important that governors are not seen (by staff or parents) as an alternative authority to the head and leadership team. Be guided by the head teacher in how to conduct yourself when visiting the school.

Always check with the chair of governors if you plan a visit to school. S/he may know of other

⁴⁶ www.croneri.co.uk/products/education

visits or suggest things to avoid or which s/he particularly wants you to engage with.

You are there to look and learn – comment when impressed, ask questions how and why, but refrain from offering your views or judgements or suggesting better ways of doing things!

Most importantly, take at least some time to speak to pupils about their learning: Do they know what they are doing (are they on task)? And why they are doing it (learning objectives)? What resources are available to them? What appropriate autonomy do they have in directing their own learning? How does what they are doing fit into the bigger picture of what they have learned (progress)? What do they enjoy most? When do they think they learn best?

Also enquire about their pastoral care/personal development: Do they feel safe and happy at school? Is there someone they can talk to if there is a problem? Are they flourishing? Do they feel they understand what it means to be a good/virtuous person?

Thank teachers for allowing you into their classrooms (this is a big deal with teachers!)

Thank you

Being a school governor means giving your time, your energy, and your expertise. Thank you for your generosity in doing this. Schools are much better and more robust places if they have effective governing bodies. What you do will ensure that the Jesuit identity and mission of the schools will serve future generations of young people “for the greater glory of God and the common good.”

Appendix I

Jesuit Education – Questions for Governors to Ask

What follows are some suggestions of the sort of questions governors might explore under each of the five characteristics of a Jesuit school. The list is suggestive rather than exhaustive.

1 Intellectual formation

- Are you confident that teaching is of high quality across all teachers and all departments? How do you know?
- Are exam results as good as they can be? Does the school use value-added data and benchmark against similar schools to contextualize and challenge its own performance?
- Is there engaged and effective learning?
- Is there effective differentiated teaching across the range of intellectual abilities?
- Is teaching and learning informed by the Jesuit method – the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm*⁴⁷ (experience – reflection – action)?

2 Magis curriculum

- Is the curriculum appropriate for the pupils following it?⁴⁸ Does it serve the interests of all children well, across the range of needs (pupils with additional needs, pupils with low academic ability, intellectually gifted pupils, pupils with English as a second language, vocational skills)?
- Do the specifications chosen by the school for public exams best serve the school's actual pupils?
- Jesuit education has always emphasised the importance of a liberal curriculum including culture and the fine and performing arts, modern and ancient languages, history and

⁴⁷ *Ignatian Pedagogy: The Jesuit Method of Teaching and Learning* (Rome 1993; abridged Jesuit Institute London 2013)

⁴⁸ "... the curriculum [in a Jesuit school] is centred on the person rather than on the material to be covered." *Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986) n.42

geography, sport, as well as English, mathematics, science and technology. How broad and deep is the school's curriculum? Is this regularly reviewed?

- Jesuit education stresses the importance of extra-curricular activities as a way of supplementing the taught curriculum and extending and celebrating children's God-given talents and interests. Does the school have a wide-ranging extra-curricular offer and is there evidence of extensive take-up of the offer? What is the impact of the extra-curricular programme on pupils and on the life of the school? And is the extra-curricular programme accessible to all (eg. expense of trips, range of sport, access to music tuition, etc.)

3 Religious formation

- Is Religious Education a lead department in the school with outstanding teaching and learning and excellent outcomes? Do pupils have a good knowledge of the Catholic tradition of faith (whatever their own faith background)?
- Is there a strong and vibrant chaplaincy with a wide range of activity across the eight chaplaincy domains? Does it engage most pupils and staff?
- Is there a recognizable pattern of worship and prayer across the school day, week and year? Are the liturgical seasons and feasts appropriated celebrated?
- Are liturgy and prayer in the school (including music in liturgy) of high quality, engaging, and true to the Catholic tradition?
- Are there opportunities for service (being "men and women for others"⁴⁹ in practice) and leadership?

⁴⁹ The formation of "men and women for others" was identified as a principal aim of Jesuit schools by Fr Pedro Arrupe (1907-91), 28th Jesuit Superior General, in a

- Do the language and iconography of the school reflect its Catholic, Christian and Jesuit identity, heritage and mission?
- Above all, do pupils and staff experience gospel values in the day-to-day life of the school?

4 Pastoral care

- Does the school have robust and compliant safeguarding arrangements and training?
- Is there good pastoral care, tailored to age and the needs of different groups and individuals?
- Are there “ways back” or “paths of reconciliation” for pupils who engage in serious unacceptable behaviour?
- Are staff well looked after, especially when under pressure or facing challenges?
- Is good provision made for the pastoral care of the head?

5 Perspectives and horizons

- Does the school typically look outwards to the horizons, educationally, socially, culturally, spiritually?
- Is everyone in the school encouraged and enabled to see things from the perspectives of those on the margins of society (rather than the comfortable centre)?⁵⁰
- Does the school take advantage of, and contribute to, the worldwide network of Jesuit schools?⁵¹
- How well does the school do in making access in admissions as wide as possible, especially targeting those who might otherwise not benefit from a Jesuit education?

“Jesuit schools should be places where people are believed in, honoured and cared for; where natural talents and creative abilities are recognized and celebrated; where individual contributions and accomplishments are appreciated; where everyone is treated fairly and justly; where sacrifice on behalf of the economically poor, the socially deprived, and the educationally disadvantaged is commonplace; where each of us finds the challenge, encouragement and support we need to reach our fullest individual potential for excellence; where we help one another and work together with enthusiasm and generosity, attempting to model concretely in word and action the ideals we uphold.”

Ignatian Pedagogy (1993) n.37

seminal address to former pupils of Jesuit schools at Valencia on 31st July 1973.

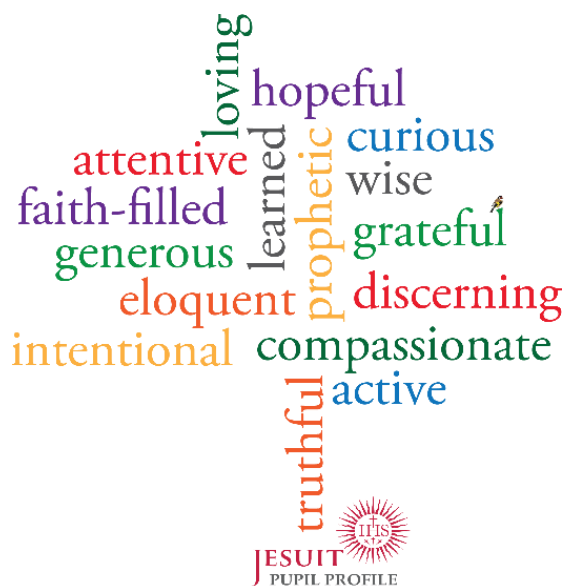
⁵⁰ “. . . the poor form the context of Jesuit education. Our educational planning needs to be made in function of the poor, from the perspective of the poor.” *Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986) n.88

⁵¹ For example, through the international online platform for Jesuit schools: [Educate Magis](#).

Appendix II

Jesuit Pupil Profile – The Vision for Jesuit Schools

The Jesuit Pupil Profile was developed by the Jesuit schools in the UK as a way of articulating the qualities Jesuit schools try to “grow” in their pupils. It was an attempt to respond to Pope Benedict’s question to young people: “My question for you is this: what are the qualities you see in others that you would most like to have yourselves? What kind of person would you really like to be?”⁵²



Pupils in a Jesuit school are growing to be . . .

Grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and **generous** with their gifts, becoming men and women for others.

Attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and **discerning** about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

Compassionate towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and **loving** by their just actions and forgiving words.

Faith-filled in their beliefs and **hopeful** for the future.

Eloquent and **truthful** in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.

Learned, finding God in all things; and **wise** in the ways they use their learning for the common good.

Curious about everything; and **active** in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

Intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and **prophetic** in the example they set to others.

Jesuit schools help their pupils grow . . .

By encouraging them to know and be **grateful** for all their gifts, developing them to the full so that they can be **generous** in the service of others.

By promoting the practice of **attentive** reflection and **discerning** decision making: in teaching, in the examen, prayer and retreats; and through the practice and example of school leaders and staff.

By being **compassionate** and **loving** in the way pupils are treated, especially when a pupil is in trouble; and by opening pupils’ eyes to those who suffer poverty, injustice or violence.

By passing on the living and **faith-filled** tradition of Jesus Christ; by having persevering faith in the pupils, and by encouraging them, in turn, to have faith and **hope** in others.

⁵² Pope Benedict XVI, Address to pupils from Catholic schools at St Mary’s University, Twickenham, 17 September 2010

By developing an **eloquent** language which pupils can use to understand and articulate their emotions, beliefs, and questions, encouraged by the example of their teachers to be **truthful** in the way they represent themselves and speak about the world.

By the breadth and depth of the curriculum; by excellence of teaching, and the creation of opportunities to become more **learned** and **wise**.

By leading pupils to be **curious** about the universe and all human activity, and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning,

and by providing opportunities for them to be **active** in the life of the school, the Church, and the wider community.

By being a school community which is **intentional** in its way of proceeding to build-up quality of life; and which is **prophetic** in the way it offers an alternative vision of education and the human person rooted in the gospel.

**Key Document on the Jesuit Pupil Profile
for Governors**

*Jesuit Pupil Profile: Virtue and Learning in the
Ignatian Tradition*
(Jesuit Institute, London 2013)

Appendix III

Jesuit schools in the UK

There are eleven Jesuit schools in Britain:

St Aloysius College & St Aloysius College Junior School

Glasgow

An independent HMC day school for 560 boys and girls, ages 12 to 18, founded in 1859; and its IAPS junior school for 300 boys and girls, founded in 1954.

Stonyhurst College & St Mary's Hall

Hurst Green, Lancashire

An independent HMC boarding and day school for 450 boys and girls, ages 13 to 18, founded in 1593; and its IAPS preparatory school for 280 boys and girls, founded in 1908. Stonyhurst College is the oldest continuously existing Jesuit school in the world and the oldest English Catholic school.

Mount St Mary's College & Barlborough Hall School

Spinkhill, Derbyshire

An independent HMC boarding and day school for 300 boys and girls, ages 11 to 18, founded in 1842; and its IAPS preparatory day school for 180 boys and girls, ages 4 to 11, founded in 1939.

St Joseph's School

Hurst Green, Lancashire

A Voluntary Aided primary school for 100 boys and girls, ages 4 to 11. St Joseph's is the oldest Catholic primary school in England, founded in 1686.

Wimbledon College

Wimbledon, London

A Voluntary Aided comprehensive secondary school for 1,270 boys, ages 11 to 18. Founded in 1892.

St Ignatius College

Enfield, London

A Voluntary Aided comprehensive secondary school for 1,050 boys, ages 11 to 18. Founded in 1894 at Stamford Hill and moved to Enfield in 1968.

St John's Beaumont Preparatory School

Old Windsor, Surrey

An IAPS boarding and day preparatory school for 260 boys ages 4 to 13. Founded in 1888 as the prep school for Beaumont College (founded 1861, closed 1968). The building for St John's by the architect of Westminster Cathedral, John Francis Bentley (1839-1902), was the first purpose-built preparatory school in the UK.

Donhead Preparatory School

Wimbledon, London

An IAPS preparatory school for 320 boys ages 4 to 11. Founded in 1935 as the prep school for Wimbledon College.

Between them, these eleven schools educate some five thousand pupils (roughly half in independent schools and half in maintained schools).

In Europe, there are 191 Jesuit schools with 173,000 pupils.

Worldwide, there are 839 Jesuit schools in 72 countries educating some 862,000 pupils. Additionally, the Jesuit Fe y Alegría network educates 1.3-million children in 1,613 schools and projects in some of the poorest parts of the world. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) has around 70 projects educating a further 147,000 refugee children.⁵³

Today there are few Jesuits working directly in the schools in Britain. This means that, if the schools wish to retain and develop their Jesuit identity and mission, the lay people who now run the schools must ensure that they understand what the Jesuit identity and mission is and take steps to turn it into reality in the everyday lives of the pupils and the school as a Catholic community.

⁵³ 2020 statistics:

<http://www.sjweb.info/education/stats.cfm>

For its part, the Society of Jesus is pleased to see so many lay people wanting to continue its mission in education now and for future generations. And so the Society of Jesus supports the schools through formation. In the British Jesuit province, this work of support is done principally through the Jesuit Institute which aims to “provide opportunities such as discussions, workshops and retreats which can enable others in the school community to come to a better knowledge and appreciation of the world-view of Ignatius”⁵⁴ as well as facilitating “an ongoing exchange of ideas and experiences with other schools.”⁵⁵

The Jesuit Institute regularly hosts conferences for key players in the schools: Governors (including a training day for new governors), Heads, Deputy Heads, Heads of RE, Directors of music, Marketing and Admissions Directors, and Chaplains. And has an induction programme called *Shared Vision*⁵⁶ to share the vision of Jesuit education with new staff. The Jesuit Institute website provides a wide range of resources, guidance and templates for schools.


JESUIT
INSTITUTE
Governing a Jesuit School
– An Introduction for New Governors
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⁵⁴ *Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986) n.127

⁵⁵ *Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1986) n.149

⁵⁶ There are four levels of the *Shared Vision* (SV) programme: SVi for new staff in the first term (delivered in school), SV1 (on Jesuit education) for staff in their second year in a Jesuit school, SV2 (on the Jesuit method of teaching and learning) for staff in their third or fourth years, and SV3 (to train experienced staff to deliver SVi in their own schools). More information on the Jesuit Institute website: jesuitinstitute.org > [shared vision](#)