

Governance Report

St John Bosco College 2022 -23

The last academic year, 2022-2023, has been a more usual year for the school with the pandemic restrictions largely behind us. However, the challenges raised by having the school open for only a small number of students are continuing to be felt with the national problem of persistent absence being a real issue especially in central London. Other challenges this year which have impacted our community include strikes and the cost-of-living crisis.

However, we are delighted that when the Ofsted Inspectors arrived in October 2022, we received a very favourable report and maintained our Good classification. The inspector was impressed by our school and her report highlighted the progress that we continue to make.

The Governors continue to support the staff and recognise the hard work and dedication of staff to provide a first-class education.

SJBC continues to grow its student numbers which indicates a more stable and thriving school. We number over 850 and but with the school population falling in London there will be continued competition with neighbouring schools to maintain our intake. Our Sixth Form numbers continue to be a real success and that is projected to continue with the introduction of T levels in 2023-24. The school has developed high quality careers provision and innovative work experience for the Sixth Form. One of these programmes was a result of a direct introduction from a Governor and is a good example of the positive impact that Governors have on the school community.

The development of our expanded Resource base has suffered delays with planning issues, but the building work is scheduled to start during the late summer /early autumn with students starting after half term. As a result of the increased provision, we will have a new Chaplaincy at the centre of the school before the end of the year.

Governors have discussed how to help the school recruit and retain staff, especially support staff. We have agreed changes to working contracts to enhance the number and quality of applicants, however the high cost of living in London means recruitment will continue to be a challenge.

Governors approved continued investment in the ICT infrastructure. Budget constraints are significant due to inflation and high utility costs. The school has maintained a healthy surplus from previous budget years which will help cushion the cost increases, but this remains an area where Governors will continue to challenge the budget planners at school.

We continue to experience issues with our Heating and Ventilation system and are still working with the main contractor to resolve these issues. The Governors have been leading on the work to resolve the legal issues with the contractor and although the air quality and

daily temperature control in the school environment has improved it is still under pressure when external temperatures are very low or very high.

As I said last year, we will expect continued pressure on Pastoral Support services throughout the school community as the economic realities bite. We have a robust safeguarding structure in place, but Governors are aware that the volume of work in this area will continue to dominate.

I would like to thank all the Governors for their time and effort supporting SJBC. We are all volunteers and aim to help, guide, and advise the staff during challenging times for Education.

Jane Hargrave JP
Chair of Governors

Please see below the summaries from our three Governor sub committees:

Resources – chaired by Allan Gardiner

I have to say that from the resources committee's point of view, the last academic year probably felt like the most 'normal' year that we have had since the school opened. Being in a budget surplus certainly has taken the pressure off everything and we have had more time and space to think much more strategically as a committee this year. That said, the cost of living crisis, and particularly energy bills, have hit the school budget for this coming academic year and, like many schools, if there is not some more central funding to take this increased expenditure into account, things will become more challenging next year. We starting to think about this eventuality now and have restructured our meetings to give us time to consider this possibility early enough to make structural changes should these be required.

We have continued to review and change our staffing structure to support the growing pupil numbers and to try and expand our curriculum. Living for so many years with a deficit budget has taught us to always be on the look out for ways reduce expenditure and we have continued this year to review and change a number of contracts with external suppliers to ensure we are making the most of the surplus budget we now find ourselves with. It has also been good to see our additional income from lettings continue to rise. There has been the various building works that were required to support the expansion of base provision for pupils with special educational needs. We are also now looking ahead to upgrade the school's IT infrastructure and equipment as well as to look ahead and plan for some of the equipment we will have to replace and renew over the coming years. And we have made good progress with our asset strategy so we can make the most of the space and resources we have as the school grows. We have been ever mindful of the challenge that a lot of London schools are facing with falling roles and a lot of thought and a lot of effort continues to go into the marketing of the school for year seven pupils, the sixth form and in year admissions.

We have started to think about the opportunities and challenges that academisation could offer the school. This work will continue this year.

And last but by no means least is the ongoing saga of our heating and ventilation system. There have been a lot more investigations and bits and pieces of work done on the system, and I think on balance the temperatures in most of the school are much better than they have ever been. But there is still more time and money to be spent on bringing this matter to a conclusion.

Quality of Education Chaired by Mrs Moira Bennett

The Quality of Education committee are tasked with ensuring that the quality of academic education provided by SJBC is outstanding. The aim of the committee is to provide support and challenge for the school in terms of: Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact.

The academic year 2022/2023 began with an OFSTED inspection that was very positive about the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum overall. History and English were singled out in the report for special mention. In a small number of subjects there was room for improvement in certain areas and the QoE committee have scrutinised the school's plans to address these. The committee are keeping a particular watching brief on Computing, which is a relatively new subject for the school (for public examination) and has an ambitious curriculum. Throughout the year the progress of all pupil subgroups (including vulnerable groups) was monitored with particular attention paid to the on-going need to recover from the fallout of the Covid pandemic.

In the Spring term, in place of a formal committee meeting, the governors attended a whole school Governors' Visit Day where they had the opportunity to meet with pupils and teaching staff in groups and individually. This was the second year that the Spring term committee meetings were replaced with a whole school visit day and once again it was deemed very successful. The majority of the governing body was in attendance and reports were produced by governors detailing their individual activities and feedback. The governors particularly welcomed the opportunity to speak at length with students about their school experience. The visit day also gave governors the opportunity to observe the quality of teaching in the classroom and see first hand how staff implement the 'Responsive Teaching' strategy that seeks to ensure consistency of delivery across all subjects.

The committee seeks to ensure that SEND students maximise their potential at all stages in their school career. It was pleasing to note that the OFSTED inspectors acknowledged that SEND students are supported to access an ambitious curriculum from Y7 through to the sixth form. However, there is work still to be done in a few areas and the committee also notes that securing and retaining experienced SEND staff is an ongoing challenge. The recruitment of a SEND Lead Practitioner has had a very positive impact.

The GCSE outcomes were in-line with the predicted grades provided to the committee in the summer term. Overall the results were down against the previous year, in line with the national picture, but there were some very encouraging individual results. The committee will analyse the outcomes for all subjects in the autumn term.

The committee were pleased to see the continued expansion of the sixth form and were encouraged that the A level and BTEC results held up against pre-covid data when the national trend inclined to a dip. This was particularly pleasing noting that the Sixth form has almost doubled in size since 2019.

The committee are looking forward to the introduction of the first T level course (in Digital Production, Design & Development) in September 2023 and will follow its implementation closely.

Personal Development

The Personal Development Committee has responsibility for ensuring that the Personal Development and the Behaviour and Attitudes of students at SJBC is outstanding. The aim of the committee is to provide support and challenge for the school in terms of how leaders and staff create a safe, calm, orderly and positive environment in the school and the impact this has on the behaviour and attitudes of pupils; how leaders and staff provide a curriculum that provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents; prepares learners for future success in their next steps and for life in modern Britain. It is also responsible for scrutinizing and agreeing the school's policies relating to behaviour and attitudes each year.

In 2022/2023 it was pleasing for the committee to note that the OFSTED inspectors supported their view that the personal development of students at the school is good and that the governing body and school leaders support pupils' wider development.

The committee noted that the Personal Development curriculum goes from strength to strength (as noted by the OFSTED inspectors); it includes a wide range of after school clubs that all pupils have equal access to; there are opportunities for students to develop public speaking skills; the vertical tutor system provides opportunity for debate and information sharing on health and citizenship; RSHE workshops address issues of bullying, positive relationships and consent.

The committee continued their focus on the Mental Health & Well Being (MH & WB) provision for students. The assigned link governor met with the school's MH&WB Lead to update the governors' annual audit of Mental Health & Well Being provision across the school. It was noted that there continues to be a raised number of students with varying levels of mental health issues as a direct result of the covid pandemic. This pattern is repeated in other schools and as such the level of support provided by external agencies, where required, has been adversely affected.

Attendance remains an area of concern, particularly as it is a reliable indicator of pupil outcomes. The committee noted that the school takes poor attendance very seriously and makes strenuous efforts to improve the situation for individual students; this year this has involved providing detailed information to tutors to enable them to have informed telephone conversations with parents of persistent absentees.

Governors continue to be aware of the need for pupils to have quality careers advice and work experience opportunities during their final years at school and were pleased that for a second year running the school could benefit from the Wates Beacon Programme which provided Y12 students with quality work experience. The committee were also delighted that another work experience initiative is underway via the Compass Project; a pilot programme which aims to create greater social mobility, diversity and inclusivity in the travel and cruise industry, and provided ten Y12 students with invaluable experience of the industry over a two-month period during the summer term. It was pleasing to

note that the OFSTED inspectors believed that careers advice and guidance is very strong across the whole school.

RUAH Committee – Chaired by Dr John Lydon

Governance report for 2022-23

The Governors' RUAH Committee has responsibility for: ensuring that St John Bosco College (SJBC) is an outstanding Roman Catholic, Salesian school. The aim of the committee is to provide support and challenge for the school in terms of:

- Catholic Life and Mission of the school
- Religious Education in the school
- Collective Worship in the school
- Scrutinizing and agreeing the school's admissions policy each year.

Catholic Life, Mission and Chaplaincy

The RE Department and the Chaplaincy Team continue to build on the Outstanding judgement achieved in the Section 48 inspection in May 2019 and to prepare for a Catholic School Inspection while will be carried out under the National Catholic School Inspection (CSI) Framework introduced in September 2022. St John Bosco College, having been judged Outstanding in 2019, is scheduled to be inspected in 2024.

In my last report I signposted the appointment of Fr Gregory Echegwo SDB by the Salesian Provincial to the role of Chaplain of St John Bosco College. I can report that Fr Echegwo continues to lead a range of initiatives from liturgies and retreats to building relationships with the wider local community, inspiring that community to contribute to his range of charitable projects. He is also mission-critical in his commitment to leading extra-curricular activities, a central feature of the education philosophy of St John Bosco.

As I reported in 2022, I believe the chaplaincy provision would be graded outstanding in a CSI Inspection. Chaplaincy features prominently in the latest version of the CSI Handbook:

- Chaplain 10 references
- Chaplaincy 24 references
- Chaplains 15 references

I believe that the following OUTSTANDING grade descriptors in relation to chaplaincy are reflected in the chaplaincy provision at St John Bosco College:

- Pupils highly value the school's chaplaincy provision, willingly taking leadership roles within it. They actively participate in and contribute to opportunities provided by the school. (p.28)

- The chaplaincy provision is a central and celebrated aspect of the life and mission of the school. It witnesses to the school's commitment to the flourishing of every member of the school community, to the education of the whole person and to helping each discern their own unique vocation. As a consequence, the school has a dynamic and well-planned chaplaincy programme that provides extensive, creative and high-quality opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff. (p.32)
- Leaders, including chaplains, are highly effective in facilitating others to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy. As a consequence, pupils and staff are able to provide prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, of a consistently high quality and are accessible, meaningful and relevant for the whole community. (p.71)

With regard to the latter descriptor the contribution of the wider Salesian community to SJBC cannot be overstated. The interface between St John Bosco College and the Salesian community continues to constitute a particularly positive characteristic and has developed with significant support from several members of the Salesian community in a range of contexts including governance, chaplaincy, ethos, spiritual formation and support for pupils with learning disabilities.

Religious Education in the school

In regard to Religious Education, the judgement of the 2019 Section 48 Report that outcomes in Religious Education have consistently improved and, from attainment levels below the national average on entry, almost all pupils make at least good, and often outstanding, progress in Religious Education" remains the case. The following constitute headlines for RE GCSE in 2022:

Quality of Education in Religious Education (RE)

Once again, the Headteacher noted the excellent results in the summer exams. 121/130 pupils sat GCSE RE and the results detailed below show that 74% achieved Grade 4 or above making this the best performance in a subject at GCSE level for the school for the second year in succession. The Headteacher thanked Father Andrew Ebrahim SDB and his team for all the work they had done to prepare students for the exam.

Grade	No of Pupils achieving grade
9	4
8	12
7	9
6	24
5	18
4	21

Fr Ebrahim confirmed that the following support was offered to students

- Six after school revision sessions to ensure all students who wanted to attend could do so
- Online video resources and a revision booklet

Leadership of the RE Department

This performance in GCSE examinations reflects the outstanding leadership of Fr Andrew Ebrahim SDB. I signposted in my last report issues around ensuring that the quality of resources across all key stages remains consistently high alongside a commitment to supporting newly-appointed teachers. I stated in that report that “the leadership of the school is confident that issues raised in the review can be addressed and that the RE Department will continue to flourish.” I am, therefore, particularly pleased to report that, based on my visit to the College on 28th March 2023, these issues have been addressed, especially in relation to teachers’ use of a wide range of resources and teaching strategies to stimulate pupils’ active participation in their learning and to secure outstanding progress. This development has contributed to my judgement that, in general, behaviour for learning in RE is very good and, in some cases, outstanding.

GOVERNORS AND CSI

Finally, I would like to comment on the enhanced emphasis on the role of governance in the latest Catholic School Inspection documentation, illustrated by the following

- 8 references to ‘Governor’, 124 references to ‘Governors’
- 21 with reference to **How the School will be Inspected**
- 111 with reference to **How the School will be Judged**
- Governors’ active involvement in both the completion of the school’s **Catholic Self Evaluation Document** and its on-going evaluation. (#46)
- The chair of governors and/or chair of directors, or any link governor of religious education should be invited to explain:
 - 1) how the governing body or board of directors fulfils its responsibility as the guardian of the mission of a Catholic school
 - 2) the vision and priorities for the Catholic life and mission of the school, religious education and prayer and liturgy (#.48)

JJ Lydon

**Professor John Lydon KC*HS
Link RE & Chaplaincy Governor
St John Bosco College
Chair of the RUAH Committee**

September 2023

