

DIOCESAN PROTOCOLS ON GOVERNANCE

Key principles:

- To be Catholic, Schools must be controlled by the Catholic Church and be recognised as such by the Diocesan Bishop.
- The Diocesan Bishop is responsible under Canon law for any strategic decisions about Catholic Schools in his Diocese.
- Structural changes, including changes to governance arrangements, require both the consent of the Diocesan Bishop and the Diocesan Trustees.
- The Diocesan Bishop has a duty to ensure that all the foundation directors/governors that are appointed to govern Catholic Schools in his Diocese have the necessary skills to perform the role and the personal commitment and skills required to fulfill their overarching duty to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the School(s) for which they have responsibility.
- As an integral part of its educational vision, the Catholic Church expects Governing Boards to promote and uphold high standards, including academic standards. This requires effective and strategic governance arrangements.
- The Governing Board must endeavour to operate at a strategic level, leaving the School's senior leadership responsible and accountable for the operational running of the School.
- The three core strategic functions, of a Governing Board, are to:
 - ensure clarity of Catholic vision, ethos and strategic direction;
 - hold the appropriate senior leadership to account for the educational performance and Catholic character of the School and its pupils; and for the internal organisation, management and control of the School, including performance management of staff; and
 - oversee the financial performance of the School and make sure its money is well spent.

Diocesan Protocols on Governance:

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| Protocol 1 | Governing Boards must ensure that their governance arrangements comply with the law. |
| Protocol 2 | Governing Boards must preserve and develop the Catholic character of the School(s) at each layer of governance and fulfil the three core strategic functions. |
| Protocol 3 | Governance and management structures and arrangements must be in line with any Diocesan policy that may be published from time to time. |
| Protocol 4 | Academy Trust Companies must use both the Model Articles for Catholic Schools and the CES Model Scheme of Delegation, (including the table of roles and responsibilities). Both of these documents may be subject to amendment by the Diocese and the Diocese will provide a version of these documents for use. |
| Protocol 5 | Governing Boards must use the information, guidance, resources and documentation relating to governance arrangements available on the CES website. |
| Protocol 6 | Governing Boards must conduct an annual self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for further development. Governing Boards should use the CES model skills audit and the CES model self-evaluation form for this purpose. Governing Boards |

must also engage with the Diocesan Schools Commissioner, on a regular and ongoing basis.

- Protocol 7** Governing Boards must adhere to Diocesan policy on Governance Statements and should consult the Diocesan Schools Commissioner before adopting the CES Model Governance Statement to ensure compliance with any particular Diocesan policy.
- Protocol 8** Governing Boards must comply with any requirements and directions issued by the Diocesan Schools Commissioner to address areas for improvement (including, in particular, any requirements and directions following a governance review).
- Protocol 9** Governors must complete all Diocesan induction and other training that may be required by the Diocese.
- Protocol 10** Governing Boards must pay the diocesan contribution as stipulated from time to time by the Diocesan Bishop.
- Protocol 11** Governing Boards, as the employer of School staff, must ensure that CES model application forms are used, that CES model employment contracts are issued and that CES model workplace policies are adopted.
- Protocol 12** Governors must ensure that they make themselves available to attend meetings or that they send apologies when appropriate. Governors must ensure that they read all meeting papers in advance of meetings, that they declare any conflicts of interest and that they do not vote where there is a conflict (for example, in the appointment of family members). Governors must ensure that they respect the confidentiality of Governing Board discussions.
- Protocol 13** Governing Boards must ensure that all Governors sign a code of conduct at the beginning of each academic year. Governing Boards should use the CES Model code of conduct for this purpose.
- Protocol 14** Governors must use their position on the Governing Board to implement the Diocesan Bishop's strategic plans for Catholic Schools in his Diocese.
- Protocol 15** Governing Boards must provide the Diocese with any information requested, in the format required, and in a timely fashion, in order to ensure that the Diocese is able to perform its functions.