



Serving as a Foundation Governor

**The Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy
Company**
Addison Road, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 9DG



The
Pope Francis Catholic
Multi Academy Company

Catholic Education in Oxfordshire

Our Mission Statement and Vision

Delivery of excellence in Catholic Education for our children, made in the image and likeness of God

The Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Company (PFMAC) is the family of Catholic schools in Oxfordshire, who work together to promote the teaching of Christ and the Catholic faith.

We believe each person is a unique creation made in the image of and likeness of God, called by name, with a special vocation and gifts to bring to the world. We seek to develop these talents in each individual by being a beacon for Catholic education in Oxfordshire.

Our vision is:

- To provide a culture, ethos and practice in each school that is distinctively Catholic, with the love of God at the centre, offering service and reconciliation to all.
- To grow, develop and continue to provide opportunities and experiences to encourage our students, at every stage of progress, to achieve their full potential, preparing them to face the future with confidence and a sense of their place in our diverse society.
- To provide outstanding teaching and learning enabling our pupils to become self-motivated, aspirational lifelong learners.
- To enhance, broaden and strengthen effective relationships between our parishes, homes and schools, thereby continuing to grow in faith and understanding together.
- To value all students, staff, parents and carers who attend and/or work in our schools, whether Catholic, of other faiths or none.

We are a Catholic Multi Academy Company within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. We have a close working relationship with the Diocesan Education Service, the Local Authority, the Department for Education, the Education and Skills Funding Agency and other local schools and academies.

We are committed to striving for excellence in delivering Catholic education for our students. We pray that the Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Company will lead and inspire all who attend, work and teach in our academies to achieve their potential by following in the path of Christ.

“The role of a governor is rewarding, challenging and interesting. Even though I have not worked in education before, contributing to the committee has helped me to develop new skills and polish old ones. As a stay-at-home mum and self-employed person, I missed feeling part of an organisation. Being a governor has given me that sense of community and I have enjoyed working alongside people who are passionate about enriching the lives of children in our parish.”

Local Governance

Our approach to governance reflects the vision of the PFMAC, which enshrines the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity which underpin Catholic Social Teaching. Subsidiarity means that decisions are best made by those who are closest to their effects; its express purpose is to avoid excessive centralisation. Consequently, Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) have significant responsibilities delegated to them by the Board of Directors.

The core functions of the Local Governing Body are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and performance of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
- Ensuring decisions consider the views and experiences of stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff and the community)
- Maintaining the Catholic vision and character of the school

FOUNDATION GOVERNORS

Catholic schools include Foundation Governors, who always form a majority on our Local Governing Bodies. Foundation Governors are appointed by the Archbishop to specifically preserve and develop the Catholic ethos of the school and ensure that his education policy is implemented within the school.

Foundation Governors come from all walks of life, and it is important that our Local Governing Bodies reflect the communities they serve. Each Local Governing Body needs a good mix of skills, knowledge and experience. What Foundation Governors have in

common is a deep commitment to serving their local communities and living out their faith in a practical way.

“School governors are said to make up the largest group of volunteers in the UK. I am proud that my role as a Foundation Governor has a specific purpose linked to my Faith. Given that so many in our school are not Catholics, the role has added relevance in the context of the mission of the Diocesan Education Service.”

RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIME COMMITMENTS

The average Foundation Governor role will take up about 10-12 hours per month. However, this can vary depending on the school calendar or events such as an Ofsted Inspection or Catholic Schools Inspection.

This commitment includes the minimum of attending three or four full governor meetings a year and serving on at least one committee. The committees focus on areas such as: Catholic ethos and mission, finance and resources, pay and HR, estates, safeguarding and health and safety and education standards.

Governors are appointed for a four-year term of office, after which they can apply to be reappointed.

Support and training are important to enable new governors to exercise their responsibilities effectively. The PFMAC offers a training programme and recommended schedule of training for all our governors, in addition to providing access to third-party training partners. Moreover, each Local Governing Body is supported by a professional clerk who provides advice and guidance.

DO I FIT THE CRITERIA?

Foundation Governors must be practicing Catholics, defined as someone who has been **“sacramentally initiated into the Catholic Church and who adheres to those substantive**

life choices which do not impair them from receiving the sacraments of the Church and which will not be in any way detrimental or prejudicial to the religious ethos and character of the school. Inspired by the Gospel and sustained by God's grace, a 'practising Catholic' will give sincere external expression to their interior faith through specific religious, moral and ethical behaviour which is in accordance with the teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church." Your Parish Priest will be required to certify that you meet this definition as part of your application.

Nominees are not expected to have a direct knowledge of current education law, of school organisation or governance but should be willing to learn and dedicate reasonable time to their responsibilities.

You do not need teaching experience and it is useful to bring skills from all areas of your life, such as financial, human resources, buildings, health and safety, safeguarding, parish work and community work. Schools are also looking for governors who reflect the ethnic, cultural and social background of their catchment area.

Both the PFMAC and the Archdiocese of Birmingham are committed to safeguarding children and all applicants are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check as part of the application process.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

If you would like to explore further becoming a Foundation Governor, you should express an interest by talking to your Chair of Governors or Headteacher. Alternatively contact the PFMAC's [Governance Manager](#) to discuss further.

The Foundation Governor online application form can be found on the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service website <https://www.bdes.org.uk/governor-online-application-forms.html>