

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Governors of St. Mary's School fully recognise their collective responsibility for providing a safe and healthy School for all of their employees, pupils, parents and visitors. They attach the highest priority to ensuring that all the operations within the School environment, both educational and support, are delivered in a manner that is safe and healthy for all. The Governors are committed to promoting the welfare of all in the School community so that effective learning can take place.

The School attaches the utmost importance to the safety, health and welfare of its employees and pupils. The School will comply with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all subsequent regulations, including those implementing EU Directives. The School Governors bear ultimate responsibility to provide leadership and day to day responsibilities are delegated to the Principal.

The Senior Leadership Team will take steps so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure that the workplace is a safe and healthy environment in which its employees, pupils, contractors and other persons affected by the School operations can work.

The Senior Leadership Team will make the necessary assessments, identify safety training and provide information and supervision for employees at all levels. It will consult on a regular basis with all employees/employee representatives with regards to health and safety issues. It will provide the necessary safety devices and protective clothing, provided that a safer working environment cannot be achieved by any other means.

### **1.2 Safety considerations**

The School's work programs will, so far as is reasonably practicable, adopt good safety practices. These will include:

- the safe use, storage, handling and transport of articles and substances.
- the provision of adequate information, instruction, training and supervision for employees including temporary employees and contractors.
- the provision of safe machinery and equipment regularly maintained, including the operation and maintenance of plant and systems of work.
- the provision of a safe and healthy place of work, including access and egress to and from the premises and adequate facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees at work.
- consider the safety of pupils, parents, contractors and any others accessing the premises including those who hire or undertake leisure activities.

### **1.3 Employee responsibilities**

All aspects of health and safety remain a management responsibility. However, a safe and healthy workplace can only be achieved with the full co-operation of every

employee. Employees have a responsibility to:

- Co-operate with the School Management in discharging the statutory duty to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Ensure that they do not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety at work.
- Co-operate with School Management in promoting health and safety in the workplace.
- Use only the correct tools and equipment for the job and follow laid down procedures or system of work.
- Comply with all health and safety rules, and statutory requirements, including the use of safety equipment and personal protective clothing where required.
- Report any hazardous defect in plant, materials and systems of work, safety equipment or personal protective clothing immediately to the Assistant Head of Operations.
- Ensure that School property entrusted to them is maintained in good condition and kept in a safe place.
- Always work safely and do not participate in horseplay or other undesirable behaviour.
- Lone working-ensuring that others are made aware of your location and times on the premises.
- Co-operate with and participate in safety inspections when required.

Employees are duty bound to act responsibly and to do everything possible to prevent personal injury to themselves and to others. They must also safeguard all persons to whom the School owes a duty of care, namely people who may meet pupils, parents, visitors etc. To achieve these employees must:

- obey all the safety rules and procedures, including the wearing of protective clothing and the use of protective devices if they are specified by the School's risk assessments.
- exercise their awareness, alertness, self-control and common sense at work.
- report promptly to the Assistant Head of Operations or Senior Leadership Team all hazards, potential hazards, defects in equipment and any shortcomings in the School's work systems or procedures.

The School's Security, Access Control, Workplace Safety and Lone Working Policy addresses several areas about which all employees will be made aware. This is made available through the staff handbook and training.

Employees should not be in any doubt that the School will apply disciplinary procedures to any employee who is in breach of the School's Health and Safety policy. This includes any specific safe systems of work, instructions, training and procedures laid down for the protection of those involved in the School's operations, and for those who may become involved in them.

## **1.4 Planning**

The Senior Leadership Team aims to eliminate risks in the workplace by careful selection and design of facilities, equipment and processes, together with effective control measures and training for employees. The School will consider the risk to safety involved in:

- dealing with physical, chemical and biological hazards, such as machinery safety, chemical safety, asbestos in the School building, water quality, and the use of radioactive material
- contractors in Schools
- vehicle movements within the School grounds
- workplace arrangements, including housekeeping
- School trips
- work experience arrangements
- violence to employees
- School security
- stress management
- lone working
- letting of School premises to outside bodies
- pupils with special needs
- the School's minibus service for students
- any other site-specific issue e.g., swimming pools

## **1.5 Organisation**

When reviewing the School's organisation, the Senior Leadership Team will ensure that:

- responsibilities for health & safety are always clearly defined to employees at every level
- safety requirements are implemented throughout the School by all employees and that training is regularly conducted in support of those standards
- All job specifications will consider any requirements and instructions highlighting health and safety responsibilities.

## **2. Health & Safety Management**

Day to day responsibility for the operation of health and safety at the School is vested with the Principal. However, the Governors have specified that the School should adopt the following framework for managing health and safety:

- That the School's Health and Safety Committee meet at least twice per academic year and provide copies of the minutes and associated paperwork to the nominated Health & Safety Governor who will have the opportunity to report to the Governing Body as and when required.
- The Head of Finance & Operations includes a health and safety section in his/her report for Governor meetings, where appropriate and if not covered elsewhere.
- That the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee are tabled at meetings of the Finance & Operations Committee and the full Governing Body as appropriate, together with any other issues on health and safety that the designated Health & Safety Governor or Head of Finance & Operations wishes to bring to the Governors' attention.

- That the external fabric of the School, its plant, equipment and systems of work are surveyed and inspected regularly by qualified professionals.
- That their reports are considered by the Governors when required via recommendations or reports from the Head of Finance & Operations and its recommendations feed into the School's maintenance programmes.
- That the School's contracted catering service adheres to health and safety in catering and cleaning of the food preparation and eating areas. That they have in place a programme of regular external inspection, arrange for a regular independent hygiene and safety audit of food storage, meal preparation and food serving areas as required by regulation. In addition, there will be regular external deep cleaning and pest control services (arranged via the Estates Office), and that any significant findings are reported to the Governing Body by the Head of Finance & Operations or the Health & Safety Committee
- That the School's contracted cleaning service adheres to the specified health and safety practices in carrying out their work. That they have in place a programme of regular audits of all areas as required, either by regulation or at the request of the School. Any significant findings are reported to the Governing Body by the Head of Finance & Operations or the Health & Safety Committee.
- That the School has a fire risk assessment carried out by a Competent Person which is updated at least every 2 years; more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or new buildings are bought or added. The Health and Safety Committee should review this risk assessment when produced and submit any recommendations or requirements to the Governors.
- That the School has a professional risk assessment for legionella carried out at least every 2 years and a water sampling and testing regime in place.
- That the School has a comprehensive policy in place for the training and induction of new Employee in health and safety related issues. Health and Safety training that is related to an individual member of Employee's functions, such as Lab Technician or Estates, will be provided if required in addition to the standard induction training. Basic First Aid training is provided to all employees.

All employees are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, that of pupils, visitors, temporary employees, volunteers and contractors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Principal and other members of the Senior Leadership Team in order to enable the Governors to comply with health and safety responsibilities.

All employees are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Assistant Head of Operations.

### **3. Organisation for Health and Safety**

The Chair of Governors of the School has delegated day to day responsibility for the operation of health and safety welfare to the Principal. This includes the responsibility for ensuring compliance with this Policy.

The Principal has delegated some of the duties to other employees but retains ultimate responsibility for health and safety.

Areas that have been delegated are:

#### **3.1 Safety and Security**

- Building security (including alarms, CCTV, locking external doors and windows) – the Assistant Head of Operations.
- Preventing unsupervised access by pupils to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool or the science laboratories – The Assistant Head of Operations, working in cooperation with the relevant Faculty Leads and Subject Leads.
- Controlling lone working after hours – The Assistant Head of Operations (see also the Security, Access control, Workplace safety and Lone Working Policy)
- Ensuring that all visitors sign in at the School Offices, produce acceptable ID when requested and wear visitors' badges – the School Office

#### **3.2 Vehicles (including the School minibus service)**

- Car parking on site and vehicles on site – the Assistant Head of Operations.
- Ensuring that all School vehicles are properly maintained and roadworthy – the Assistant Head of Operations

#### **3.4 Accidents**

- Maintaining an accident and near miss record and reporting notifiable accidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – the Assistant Head of Operations or Senior Leadership Team
- Informing the parents of any accidents – the School Office
- Checking that all first aid boxes and eye washes are kept replenished – Appointed First Aiders

#### **3.5 Fire Prevention**

- Keeping fire routes and exits clear - a whole School responsibility
- All the buildings have current electrical installation and safety test certificates – the Assistant Head of Operations
- Regular portable appliance testing – the Assistant Head of Operations
- Testing all fire alarms weekly (and recording all tests). Arranging an annual service of alarms, smoke detectors, emergency lights, fire extinguishers – the Assistant Head of Operations, Lightning protection is in place where required – the Assistant Head of Operations
- All gas appliances (boilers, kitchen equipment etc.) and supply pipework are regularly maintained and serviced by suitably qualified (Gas Safe) Registered Engineers – the Assistant Head of Operations
- Termly fire drills, combined with a programme of inducting new staff and pupils with emergency escape procedures help to ensure that the School can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire – The Senior Leadership Team

- Switching off all kitchen equipment at the end of service – the Catering Manager.
- Checking that all scientific equipment is switched off at the end of the School day – Subject Lead for Science or Lab Technician.
- Securing flammable or combustible materials used in teaching or maintenance locked in suitable containers – Subject Lead for Science, Catering Manager, Cleaning Supervisor and Estates team.

### **3.6 Water, drainage etc.**

The Assistant Head of Operations is supported by professionally qualified contractors to:

- Maintain water quality. A sampling and disinfection regime, using external contractors, is in place.
- Ensure that drains, gutters etc. are kept unblocked. Checking that all drain runs are clear.

### **3.7 Risk Assessments**

Ensuring that up to date risk assessments are maintained for:

- Fire – the Assistant Head of Operations
- Legionella - the Assistant Head of Operations
- All rooms, corridors and exits - the Assistant Head of Operations
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) users – the Head of Finance & Operations in association with the Senior Leadership Team. This is covered within the Display Screen Equipment Policy.
- Catering functions, (including Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) system of food hazard awareness and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) procedures) – the Catering Manager
- Cleaning functions, including the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health(COSHH) procedures) – the Cleaning Supervisor
- Grounds maintenance (including use of pesticides and COSHH)- the Assistant Head of Operations
- Maintenance functions, (including working at heights, electricity, manual handling, and building work, use of power tools, COSHH and flammable materials) – the Assistant Head of Operations
- Asbestos Register - the Assistant Head of Operations

Ensuring that up to date risk assessments are maintained for teaching in the following areas:

- Science (including COSHH and flammable materials) – Subject Lead for Science/ Lab Technician
- All outdoor games – Faculty Lead for Sports & Outdoor Education
- Swimming – Faculty Lead for Sports & Outdoor Education
- Athletics – Faculty Lead for Sports & Outdoor Education
- Duke of Edinburgh Award - Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator
- Art (including COSHH and flammable materials) – Subject Lead for Art
- Music – Subject Lead for Music
- Textiles (including COSHH and flammable materials) – Subject Lead for Textiles
- Stage equipment – Assistant Head of Operations
- Food Technology – Class teacher / Faculty Lead
- All outdoor lessons – Class teacher / Faculty Lead

- Forest Schools - Forest Schools Leader
- All visits and trips - Educational Visits Coordinator (see also Educational Visits Procedure)

### **3.8 Training**

Responsibility for organising (and maintaining records of training) is as follows:

- Minibus competency – the Assistant Head of Operations
- Science-related health and safety training – the Subject Lead for Science, in cooperation with the Lab Technician and Assistant Head of Operations
- Textiles training – the Subject Lead for Textiles
- Health and safety training for the catering employees – the Catering Manager
- Health and safety training for the cleaning employees – the Cleaning Supervisor/Operations Manager
- Briefing new pupils on emergency fire procedures – Form / Class teachers
- Briefing new staff on emergency fire procedures - the Assistant Head of Operations and Heads of Lower and Senior School
- Inducting new employees in health and safety – the Head of Finance & Operations / Assistant Head of Operations / Heads of Lower and Senior School
- Identifying specific health and safety training needs of employees – the Assistant Head of Operations, in conjunction with all Faculty Leads, Line Managers or Supervisors.
- First aid training - the Head of Finance & Operations and Heads of Lower and Senior School

### **3.9 External Advisors for Health and Safety**

External consultants / organisations are used as required to advise on matters of health and safety within the School. In addition, the School subscribes to the Safetymark for Schools scheme, which includes an audit and agreed action plan, plus ongoing support and advice as and when required.

- Structural Surveyors are retained to give advice on the external fabric of the premises
- Engineers monitor and service the School's plant, equipment, including boilers and lifts annually
- All gym and fitness equipment, plus machinery used in the Estates department are serviced annually
- The School's adherence to health and safety in catering is managed by the catering contractor who arranges for an independent hygiene and safety audit of food storage, meal preparation and food serving areas as required by the relevant standards. The professional deep cleaning of all equipment, high level cleaning of all cooking, food preparation and storage surfaces, areas etc once a year or as required (via the Assistant Head of Operations)
- Appropriate pest control measures are reviewed and implemented by a qualified contractor in conjunction with the Assistant Head of Operations
- The School has a professional fire risk assessment which is updated at least every 2 years, more frequently if significant changes are made to the interior of buildings, or new buildings are bought or added.

- In addition to the weekly fire alarm tests, the alarm system, together with all smoke detectors, emergency lighting and extinguishers are tested annually by a qualified contractor
- The School has a professional risk assessment for legionella, at least every 2 years and a water sampling and testing regime in place.
- The School maintains an asbestos register and the Assistant Head of Operations is responsible for ensuring that it is kept up to date and for any sampling or removal before works take place. They are also responsible for making sure that contractors are fully briefed on areas of asbestos before starting work and that relevant school employees receive regular awareness training.
- The School has current electrical test certificates for all its buildings. It uses NICEIC qualified Electrical Engineers to inspect and maintain its electrical installations.
- All work on gas boilers and appliances is carried out by registered Gas Safe Engineers.
- All domestic boilers are serviced annually, and all domestic properties have current Gas Safety Certificates.
- All lightning protection is tested regularly by a specialist contractor and recommended improvements are implemented
- A qualified Planning Supervisor is used in order to ensure compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) (CDM) Regulations 1994 whenever major work is undertaken.

### **3.10 Lone working (reiterated in the Security, Access Control, Workplace Safety and Lone Working Policy)**

There is no legal requirement to conduct a specific, separate risk assessment for lone workers. However, employers have a duty to include risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary. This must include:

- involving workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them
- taking steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, for example by carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker can perform what is required safely
- instruction, training and supervision
- reviewing risk assessments periodically and updating them after any significant changes, such as new staff, processes or equipment
- when the lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, consulting with that employer to identify any risks and required control measures.

All staff are expected to report all situations which leave them open to any health and safety issues to the Senior Leadership Team. The risk can then be assessed, and control measures applied where necessary. Through the risk assessment process, existing control measures will be assessed for their effectiveness.

Lone workers must always have access to a charged mobile phone or landline and should advise an SLT member or a trusted colleague when they are either working alone or in an isolated part of the School premises. They should also give an indication as to when they will be leaving or returning to a populated part of the site.



### **3.11 School Safety Co-ordinator**

The Assistant Head of Operations is the School's Health & Safety Co-ordinator and is responsible for advising the Head of Finance & Operations and the Principal on any measures that may be needed in order to carry out maintenance work without risks to health and safety. The Assistant Head of Operations also coordinates the advice given by specialist safety advisors and produces action plans. The Assistant Head of Operations has overall responsibility for monitoring health and safety within the School and for reporting any breaches to the Head of Finance & Operations and the Principal. The Assistant Head of Operations is responsible for ensuring compliance with CDM Regulations and for safe conditions of work for all at the School.

### **3.12 School Health and Safety Committee**

The School's Health and Safety Committee meets at least twice per year and is chaired by the Assistant Head of Operations. A Governor is welcome to attend these meetings, however this is not a requirement and minutes of the meetings will be shared with Governors in the Finance & Operations Committee meetings. The full membership of the Committee is:

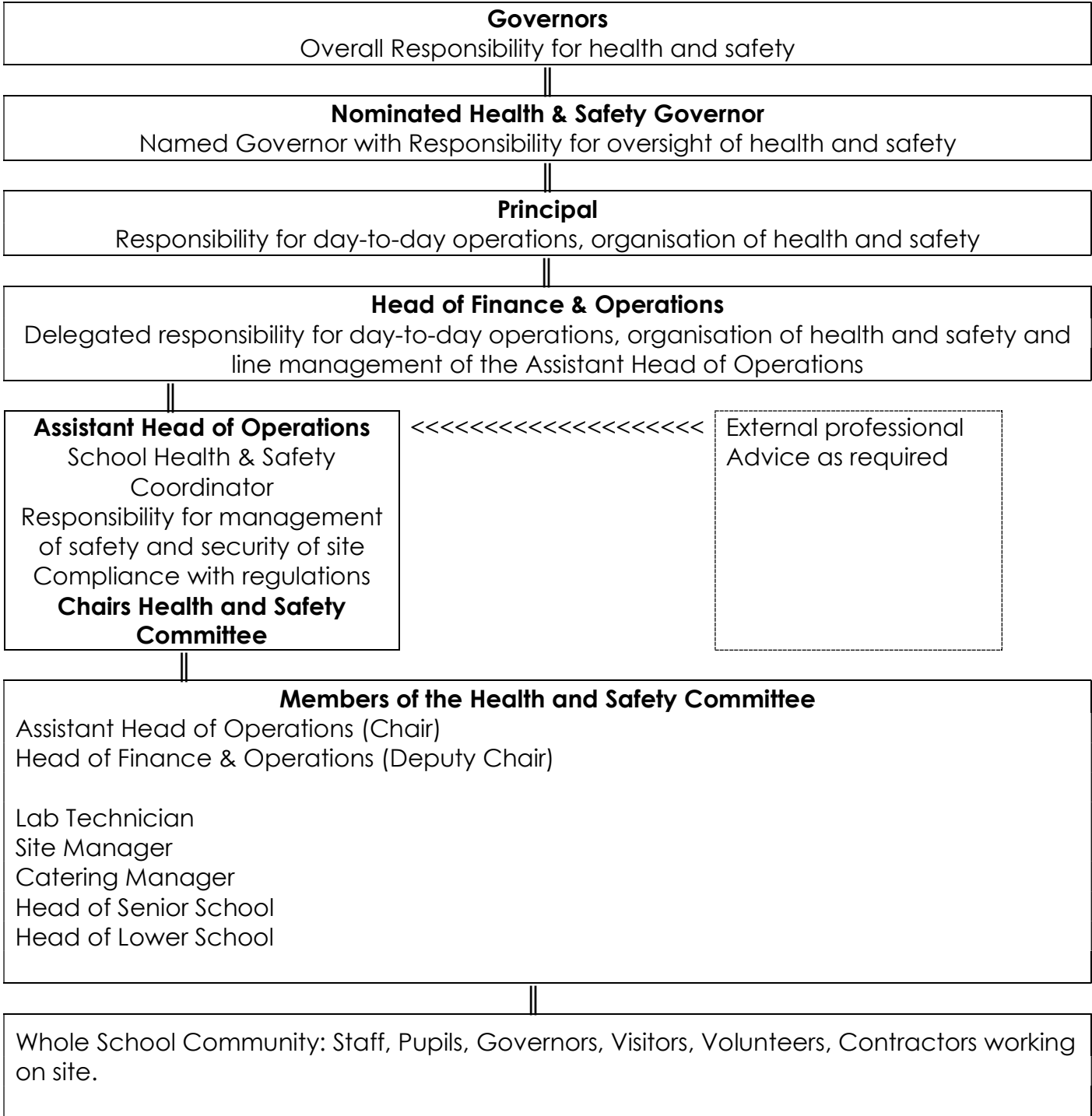
- Assistant Head of Operations (Chair)
- Head of Finance & Operations (Deputy Chair)
- Site Manager
- Catering Manager
- Lab Technician
- Head of Lower School
- Head of Senior School

The role of the Committee is to:

- Discuss matters concerning health and safety including changes in regulations.
- Monitor the effectiveness of health and safety within the School
- Review accidents and near misses. Discuss preventative measures
- Review and update risk assessments
- Discuss training requirements
- Monitor the implementation of professional advice
- Review safety policies, procedures and guidance and make recommendations where appropriate
- Assist in the development of safety rules and safe systems of work
- Monitor communication & publicity relating to health & safety in the workplace
- Encourage suggestions and reporting of defects by all employees

The Committee meeting minutes will be made available via electronic and paper formats and submitted to the Governing Body through the agreed reporting structure.

**Diagram showing the organisation for Health and Safety**



### **3.3 Specific arrangements for Health and Safety**

Whilst all employees have a responsibility for identifying and notifying hazards, the following areas/activities have been identified as significant risks in the School. As a consequence, pupils are not allowed unsupervised access to PE, Science, Textiles, Art, Drama, Catering, Forest Schools and Maintenance areas.

School policies and risk assessments supplement department-based risk assessments and are available in both electronic and paper formats.

### **4. Review and updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if appropriate. A signed copy will be made available in staff rooms and in the Staff Handbook. They will be advised as and when it is reviewed, added to or modified.

**Signed:**

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is on the left and the second is on the right.

**Graeme Lambert & Jack Magill**  
**Joint Chair of Governors**

**Date: 7 March 2024**

Reviewed/Approved: March 2024  
Next Reviewed: Spring 2025