

English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

Governing Board Annual Impact Statement (2025–2026 Academic Year)

School Mission Statement

"To accept each individual as they are and to enable them to develop their full potential within a Christ-centred, worshipping community in a spirit of love, happiness and understanding — 'A Learning Community in Christ'".

Executive Summary

Throughout the 2025–2026 academic year, the Governing Body of English Martyrs Catholic Primary School worked in close partnership with the Headteacher, Dr Helen Townsley, and school leaders to provide strategic direction, robust accountability, and sound financial management. In a context of growing complex pupil needs and small-school operational demands, governors focused monitoring and resources on raising educational standards, enhancing safeguarding compliance, supporting inclusion, and improving pupil wellbeing.

Key Impact Metrics & Strategic Allocations at a Glance

Strategic Area	Key Metric / Value	Impact & Context
Early Years GLD	74%	Historic high achievement in Good Level of Development
KS2 Writing Standard	70%	Expected standard reached across Key Stage 2
Overall Attendance	95.6%	Consistently above national and local averages
Phonics Investment	£4,750	Transition to Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised
IT & Cloud Storage	£4,000	Server modernization & cloud migration investment
OPAL Play Grant	£3,000	Thriving in Education grant for outdoor play & learning

Budget Carry-Forward	£34,462	Reinvested into SLT capacity & HT release time
SEND Provision	46 pupils / 6 EHCPs	Tailored inclusion support & development of 'The Nest'
External SCR Audit	100% Compliant	Independent audit by Hampshire CC (19 Jan 2026)

1. Core Strategic Function 1: Financial Oversight and Resource Management

The Governing Body maintained rigorous oversight of the school's finances to ensure solvency, value for money, and alignment with strategic priorities:

- **Budget Solvency & Strategic Planning:** The Finance Committee and Full Governing Body (FGB) reviewed financial performance throughout the year and formally approved a balanced budget for 2026–2027.
- **Reinvestment in Leadership Capacity:** Governors scrutinized the 2025–2026 budget carry-forward of £34,462, strategically directing funds towards increasing Senior Leadership Team (SLT) capacity and release time for Headteacher monitoring.
- **Value for Money & Site Efficiency:** Governors evaluated the strategic impact of appointing a full-time Premises Manager, noting significant cost savings by bringing routine maintenance, gutter clearing, equipment servicing, and hall setup in-house rather than using external contractors. This role directly supported site improvements, including building sheds for play equipment, transforming Year 3 wet areas for transitional play, and converting "The Nest" into an SEN space.
- **Technology & Infrastructure:** The board approved £4,000 to transition PC storage from on-site servers to the Cloud, alongside securing three days of specialized professional IT support to modernize school systems.
- **Capital Grants & Bids:** Governors monitored Voluntary Aided School Capital Building Programme (VASCA) bids, securing funding for critical infrastructure upgrades including septic pumps and heating controls.

2. Core Strategic Function 2: Educational Performance, Curriculum & Standards

Governors consistently challenged and supported leadership to raise attainment and progress across all key stages:

- **Early Years & Key Stage Outcomes:** The board monitored termly assessment data, noting a historic high of 74% Good Level of Development (GLD) in Early Years, alongside 70% expected standard in KS2 writing.
- **Strategic Literacy Overhaul (Little Wandle):** Recognizing that phonics outcomes needed greater consistency, governors supported the decision to transition from Song of Sounds to Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised across EYFS and Key Stage 1. Governors approved the required resource investment (£750 subscription plus £4,000 for phonics materials) and supported a match-funding application to the English Hub.

- **Embedding Data Systems (Insight):** Governors oversaw the embedding of the Insight assessment and tracking system to enable staff to identify learning gaps, track pupil progress accurately, and evaluate the impact of targeted interventions.
- **Distributing Leadership:** To increase school improvement capacity in the absence of a Deputy Headteacher, governors supported the creation and development of new Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Leader roles, providing dedicated release time for shared monitoring, work scrutiny, and pupil progress reviews.

3. Core Strategic Function 3: Safeguarding, Single Central Record (SCR), and Health & Safety

Safeguarding remains the highest priority for the Governing Body, with dedicated link governors actively checking compliance and culture:

- **External SCR Audit Success:** On 19 January 2026, an external Single Central Record (SCR) Audit was conducted by Hampshire County Council on behalf of West Sussex CC, alongside Headteacher Dr Helen Townsley and Link Governors Rosanne Turner and Frances Amos. The audit confirmed that the school's SCR is well-maintained, fully compliant, and aligned with Ofsted inspection standards.
- **Safeguarding Governance & Training:** Governors received termly safeguarding reports detailing whole-school anti-bullying training via the National College, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) refresher training, safer recruitment protocols, and monitoring of multi-agency referrals (Early Help, Child in Need, and Child Protection).
- **Pupil Voice & Safeguarding Conferencing:** Link governors conducted pupil conferencing on safeguarding, verifying that pupils feel safe and supported in school while identifying key action points for anti-bullying strategies.
- **Health, Safety & Premises Checks:** Governors participated in termly Health & Safety walkarounds, ensuring site security, finger guard installations, slow door closures, and accident monitoring protocols were maintained.

4. Core Strategic Function 4: Inclusion, Personal Development, and Pupil Wellbeing

In line with the school's Catholic ethos, governors prioritized provision for vulnerable pupils and whole-school personal development:

- **Inclusion & SEND Oversight:** Governors regularly scrutinized provision for the school's 46 pupils on the SEND register and 6 pupils with EHCPs. They monitored the development and impact of "The Nest"—a teacher-led, bespoke inclusion provision for Key Stage 2 pupils with complex needs.
- **Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL):** The board championed the launch of OPAL to enrich physical, social, and emotional development through high-quality outdoor play. Governors oversaw the allocation of a £3,000 Thriving in Education grant to fund Play Team training, cloakroom adaptations, all-weather gear, and outdoor site improvements.
- **United Against Bullying & Pastoral Initiatives:** Governors supported the school's engagement with the United Against Bullying (UAB) framework. Key achievements included establishing student "Belonging Buddies", introducing Happy Hello and Fond Farewell transition sessions, delivering Thought-Full

friendship interventions, and updating the anti-bullying and mobile phone policies to protect pupil wellbeing.

- **Attendance Oversight:** Governors tracked weekly attendance trends (95.6% overall attendance, performing above national and local averages), while challenging leadership on targeted actions to reduce persistent absence among vulnerable cohorts.

Governor Training and Continuous Improvement

To ensure governance remains effective, members of the board completed training on Ofsted frameworks, attendance monitoring, and subject link visits. Monitoring visits were conducted across Science, History, Geography, Maths, EYFS, and Safeguarding, with findings reported back to the Full Governing Body to inform strategic planning.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

Humberto Gonzalez

Chair of Governors

Dr Helen Townsley

Headteacher