

FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING MINUTES – PART I

Monday 21 March 2022 at 7pm at Junior Site

PARENT	CO-OPTED	LA	STAFF	HEAD TEACHER	FOUNDATION 8			
2	1	1	1	1	LDBS	PCC	Trustees	St Mary's Church
Malcolm McKinlay	Christina Sturge	Geoffrey Goddin	Kieran Murphy	Angela Abrahams	Harry Coleman	Andrew Miyaji	Caroline Rayfield	Jeff Hopkin Williams
Kat Honour						James Maher	Oliver Watkins	
						Andrew Gunn	Stephen Tetley	

Apologies: Jeff Hopkin Williams, Malcolm Mckinlay, Stephen Tetley

Also attended: Dan Cadman (Deputy Head Teacher and Associate Member)
Alison Watts (Clerk)

The meeting opened at 7.00pm

		ACTION
1.	<p>WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE and DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.</p> <p>The Chair introduced the two new foundation governors - Oliver Watkins, proposed by the trustees, and Harry Coleman, proposed by the LDBS. Governors ratified the appointments and welcomed Oliver and Harry to the governing body.</p> <p>Governors were informed of recent changes to membership and responsibilities: Liz Rhodes stepped down as a governor with effect from 11 March 2022. Kat Honour was appointed Chair of Safety, Community & Ethos committee and safeguarding link governor. Geoffrey Goddin was nominated as link governor for health & safety.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Jeff Hopkin Williams, Malcolm Mckinlay and Stephen Tetley.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest relevant to the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (06/12/21) and MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 6 December 2021 were approved.</p> <p>Updates on the action points are provided at the end of this document.</p>	

3.	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>a. Headteacher's Report Governors reviewed the Headteacher's Report prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school roll was currently 622 (as opposed to 630 as stated in the report). Some local schools were suffering low pupil numbers. St Mary's had benefitted from the influx of families from Hong Kong. - The RSE curriculum was becoming fully embedded, teachers had undertaken relevant training and gaps in pupils' knowledge due to lockdowns were being addressed. - An independent curriculum review had been carried out, with a focus on art and history. Results were encouraging. - As requested by governors, data on persistent absence (PA) had been added to the report. It was noted that the impact of Covid hindered a comparison of rates across years. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) was working with children of concern. The Chair of Governors and HT were considering a governor panel to support efforts in this area. <p>Q: Are there any trends across the persistent absences? Governors were advised that, since the pandemic, some parents were more willing to keep their children off school for minor ailments. The school nurse provided support with such cases.</p> <p>Q: How is persistent absence defined? It was explained that it was based on a proportional metric with attendance under 90% scrutinised by the EWO on a termly basis. In general, St Mary's aimed for a minimum of 96% attendance. Governors welcomed the addition to the report of data on leavers and requested the further addition of whether leavers were identified as SEND/EHCP. It was further agreed that information on peer-on-peer abuse would be added. <i>ACTION: Include additional information on SEND/EHCP pupils in the leavers report. Also include data on peer-on-peer abuse.</i></p> <p>Q: There are currently 91 children in Reception bringing one class over the standard maximum of 30 per class. Does this raise any issues? It was explained that this was a result of an obligation to offer places to twins who were next on the waiting list. The class affected had a high level of need and the additional place increased demands on the teacher.</p> <p>Q: Were any themes identified from the review of recent Ofsted reports? It was explained that anecdotal evidence indicated that the approach to grading was variable, perhaps reflecting a recent Ofsted recruitment drive and some inspectors therefore lacking experience.</p> <p>It was noted that the number of bullying/racist incidents seemed higher than usual reflecting the fact that several children had been involved in a single incident.</p> <p>Q: Are we sure our procedures are robust given the number of recorded cases of bullying is low? Governors were advised that, in general, the children were well behaved. It had been encouraging to note that the recent curriculum review had reported that children were engaged and not passive.</p> <p>Q: Will the 'consent' assemblies be continued?</p>	HT
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	<p>It was explained that consent would be covered in the context of safeguarding.</p> <p>Q: Why is the school drawing up a separate anti-racism policy distinct from the Equality policy? The demographic of the school was changing with a higher number of ethnic minorities than previously. The school therefore wanted to ensure its procedures were robust and would be consulting with non-white parents on the new policy.</p> <p>Q: What is the purpose of the £40k contingency provision in the budget? The chair of F&S committee advised that the contingency reflected the school's prudent approach to budgeting. He further advised that the pay award for support staff had been agreed and would be backdated to April 2021.</p> <p>b. Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) 2021-22 - updated The SEF had been subject to minor amendments and was noted.</p> <p>c. Eco-Actions in School The Chair advised that the DfE and NGA were placing an increasing emphasis on sustainability in schools. A summary of eco-actions taken by school was circulated prior to the meeting. Governors were invited to reflect on how the governing body could contribute to the green agenda and noted that most meetings were now paperless. It was noted that governors' contribution to the school's carbon footprint was modest.</p> <p>Q: What happens to the school's food waste? It was explained that there was currently no food waste recycling scheme for schools and were such an initiative to be introduced it would raise challenges around food storage between collections.</p> <p>d. Term Dates 2023-24 It was confirmed the proposed term dates for 2023-24 were in line with other local schools. The dates were approved.</p>	
4.	SAFEGUARDING	
a.	<p>Covid Assessment It was noted the risk assessment was a working document and the changes highlighted reflected the country's shift to 'living with covid'. The main amendments related to the change in guidance around self-isolation and testing requirements. New guidance was expected in April which might necessitate further revisions.</p> <p>Q: Are there any concerns relating to the new procedures and what has been the feedback from staff? The relaxation of the rules around isolation had facilitated the management of staff. In general, staff members had responded positively and the school environment was operating normally.</p> <p>Q: In practice, what are the procedures applied in the event of a suspected case of covid at school? Governors were advised that the child in question would be taken to the medical room to await collection and would be supervised periodically.</p> <p>Q: Does St Mary's risk assessment differ from that of other schools? It was noted the RA was based on a model provided by the local authority.</p>	

b.	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <p>The Chair advised that a half-day safeguarding training session had been held for SC&E governors. Subsequently a governor monitoring visit had taken place to review practice against procedures. The visit had entailed a significant amount of work by staff who had provided anonymised case studies. Future visits would be lighter with efforts focused on the recommendations of the safeguarding review and spot checks of the Single Central Register (SCR). It was noted the recent visit had highlighted one issue with the SCR (only one person had access) which was being addressed. The monitoring visit report would be circulated once finalised.</p> <p>It was noted that almost all governors had completed the NGA's online safeguarding training. The new governors were requested to complete the training promptly.</p> <p><i>ACTION: new governors to complete safeguarding training</i></p> <p>Harry C was nominated as the second safeguarding link governor.</p> <p>The Chair stressed the importance of a safeguarding culture at school in which all staff and governors were responsible for safeguarding.</p>	HC, OW
5	<p>SCHOOL FINANCES</p> <p>a. Draft Budget 2022/23</p> <p>Due to staff illness, the draft budget 2022/23 had not yet been scrutinised by F&S committee. It was therefore agreed that F&S members would review the draft budget and convene a short, extraordinary committee meeting if necessary. It was noted that the school was presenting a balanced budget over 3 years. At the request of governors, a line for HT CPD had been included from April 2022.</p> <p>b. School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)</p> <p>The Chair of F&S committee advised that the SFVS had been discussed in the March committee meeting and was recommended for approval by the full governing body. Governors confirmed their approval.</p> <p>For the benefit of new governors, the F&S chair gave a brief summary of the school's financial situation: the school received approx. 91% of its costs from central government with the remainder made up by the St Mary's Fund (parental contributions), funding from the trustees (for specific items supporting spiritual development and the poor of the parish) and FoSM (ring-fenced funding for specified items). The school also received income from clubs and lettings, and school meals. It was noted that the school always ran a deficit budget and was only able to present a balanced budget thanks to these non-guaranteed sources of income. The F&S chair advised that, in the past, work had been done to identify other innovative, income-generation schemes. Governors were advised that the schools' financial benchmarking service was a useful tool but, given St Mary's unusual situation of operating over 3 sites, direct comparisons were difficult. New governors were invited to contact the F&S chair or school business manager for a more detailed introduction to school finances.</p>	
6.	<p>STATUTORY POLICIES</p> <p>The following statutory policies had been reviewed by committees and were recommended for FGB approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grievance (LDBS model) - Disciplinary (LDBS model) - Health & safety - Medical conditions in school - Children with health needs who cannot attend school 	

	The policies were all approved.	
7.	GOVERNANCE	
a.	<p>Ofsted Preparation For the benefit of new governors, it was explained that the school had not received an Ofsted inspection since 2011 and was therefore expecting to be inspected in the near future. The Chair outlined steps the governing body had taken to prepare itself and the HT gave a brief outline of the timetable of an inspection. It was agreed to hold a preparation evening for governors after the Easter break to be led by the LDBS School Improvement Partner if possible. <i>ACTION: Liaise with H.Ridding re. Ofsted training for governors</i></p>	AA
b.	<p>Chair's Update The Chair updated governors on the following items:</p> <p>Air cleaning units – To manage the need for increased ventilation through the winter to help combat the spread of covid, £10k had been raised to fund air cleaning units for all classrooms and staff rooms. If, post-covid, they were no longer needed, efforts would be made to auction them to recoup some of the costs. It was noted that there had been some parental concern relating to frequent fund-raising appeals and the overall efficacy of the units. It was explained that the model purchased was in accordance with the government's recommended specifications.</p> <p>Moormead pavilion – The Chair advised that she had liaised with HTs and chairs of governors at local schools to send a jointly signed letter to the Council in support of a long-running community campaign for the renovation of the Moormead park pavilion. The pavilion, which had recently fallen into disrepair, had provided storage facilities for a parent-led Saturday morning football group for pupils at local schools which did not have on-site facilities. The planning application for renovation had finally been approved.</p> <p>First annual poetry competition – The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors together with Fr Jeff had recently judged the first annual poetry competition. The competition had taken place across the school with 1st, 2nd and 3rd places being awarded at each site. The presentation of prizes was timed to coincide with World Book Day. It was noted that poetry offered an inclusive means of expression with one of the winners being a child with special needs.</p> <p>FoSM – see part II minutes</p>	
c.	<p>Succession-planning update The Chair advised that all committee vice chairs were expected to take over the chair role in due course. Those committee chairs approaching the end of their term of office were requested to ensure they had identified and prepared their successor. Governors discussed introducing the practice of a periodic rotation of committee responsibilities to ensure all governors gained chairing experience. Governors were invited to indicate to the chair of governors if they wished to serve on a different committee in the future.</p>	
d.	<p>Draft committee minutes Noted</p>	
e.	<p>Governor Training and Visits It was noted that governor monitoring visits were on track and were monitored by committee chairs at each committee meeting.</p>	

8	LEADERSHIP APPRAISAL GROUP (LAG)	
	The LAG confirmed it had met with the Headteacher in January to undertake the annual appraisal process. Objectives had been set for the year and would be monitored. The group had been supported in its work by an HR adviser from the LDBS.	
	<i>Next meeting: 7pm on Monday 27 June 2022 at junior site</i>	

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.



Signed by the Chair:

Date: 27 June 2022

FGB Actions

As of 21 March 2022

Minute	Action	Assigned	Update
6.12.21 5	An annual summary of eco-actions to be reviewed by FGB.	Chair/AA	On 21/3 agenda
21.3.22 3a	Include additional information on SEND/EHCP pupils in the leavers report. Also include data on peer-on-peer abuse.	AA	
21.3.22 4c	new governors to complete safeguarding training.	HC, OW	
21.3.22 7a	Liaise with H.Ridding re. Ofsted training for governors.	AA	

Documents circulated:

Draft minutes 06/12/21 FGB
HT Report & Behaviour Summary
Updated SEF
Curriculum Review Report March 2021
Sustainability at St Mary's – summary
Proposed term dates 2023/24
Covid risk assessment
Safeguarding visit report
SFVS

Grievance Procedure
Disciplinary Procedure
Health & Safety policy
Medical Conditions in School policy
Children w Health needs who cannot attend school policy
Ofsted Q&As
Ofsted snapshot