

FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING MINUTES

Monday 5 December 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	
						Emily Bainbridge	Stephen Tetley	

Apologies: Geoffrey Goddin, Stephen Tetley, Oliver Watkins, Emily Bainbridge

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

The meeting opened at 7.00pm with a prayer

		ACTION
1.	<p>WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE and DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Geoffrey Goddin, Stephen Tetley, Oliver Watkins and Emily Bainbridge and accepted by the Chair.</p> <p>There were no declarations/conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting.</p> <p>Emily B's nomination as a new foundation governor was confirmed. She would initially serve on F&S committee and move to C&S committee in the future. For the parent election taking place in March 2023, the intention was to highlight a preference for applicants with finance experience.</p>	
2.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING and MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 26 September 2022 were approved.</p> <p>Updates on the action points are provided at the end of this document.</p>	

4.	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>a. Headteacher's Report</p> <p>The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since the report was written, an additional EHCP had been secured taking the total number to 14. The challenges of recruiting Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), particularly for part-time positions, was highlighted. <p>Q: Given schools are required to fund the first £6k of EHCP support, are these new EHCPs placing a strain on the budget?</p> <p>Governors were assured that the initial costs were being absorbed and EHCPs brought long term benefits for all involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One staff member was taking maternity leave from Christmas. The position had been filled on a 3-day-a-week basis. - Staff sickness was relatively high. It was noted that, whilst absence rates were higher than the previous year, a significant proportion of overall absence was due to 3 members of staff. Aside from these cases, the general level of sickness had declined. To cover gaps, the school was relying on agency cover. <p>Q: Are there any identifiable trends in the staff absences?</p> <p>No trends were evident. Absences had been for a variety of reasons: unfortunate accidents, time off to care for sick children, a high number of flu-like viruses.</p> <p>Q: What was the school's experience in finding agency staff?</p> <p>Governors were informed that the school had established a good working relationship with a preferred agency and, to date, no significant problems had been experienced although there were signs that the system was starting to become stretched.</p> <p>Q: What has been the response to the increasing concern around Strep A?</p> <p>The school was required to inform parents of all confirmed cases. School staff had been updated on the symptoms. Given the extensive coverage in the media, it had been decided not to give further information in the school newsletter.</p> <p>Q: What were the main trends behind the attendance figures?</p> <p>There had been a high number of absences, particularly in the lower years, due to the winter vomiting disease and flu-like viruses. There were no particular concerns. In general, the level of attendance was consistent with previous years, with the exception of the Covid years.</p> <p>Q: What measures were being taken to limit the spread of viruses?</p> <p>Many of the steps introduced during the pandemic - hand sanitising, cleaning surfaces, disposing of tissues – had been maintained and would continue.</p> <p>The HT highlighted the problem of late arrivals. In some cases, the Education and Welfare Officer (EWO) was involved. If challenges persisted, it was agreed governors would reinforce the message around punctuality.</p> <p>Q: What is the reason for the relatively high number of red and yellow cards in Y4?</p> <p>It was explained that a number of cards had been issued in relation to a single incident, largely due to a group of pupils being overly physical. One pupil was struggling to moderate his behaviour. Generally, there were few cases of disruption in class. The majority of behavioural incidents occurred in the playground and resulted from children's inability to manage social disagreements effectively. The higher number of cases of disruption in Y6 reflected teachers applying a zero tolerance policy towards the older children.</p> <p>Q: Are parents supportive of the school's approach to behaviour management?</p> <p>Generally, parents were fully supportive.</p>	

	<p>The HT updated governors on the 'Forest School' initiative. The school had been granted permission for the development of the area near the pond at junior site. A survey had been sent out to parents to canvass support for a forest-style school to provide elements of outdoor learning. There had been over 300 responses (twice the usual number of responses to surveys) with the feedback overwhelmingly positive. The level of donation suggested by parents had been higher than expected. The part-time role of leading the initiative had been advertised and a highly trained applicant had been appointed. Initial efforts would be focussed on developing the area. Trees cut down on middle site would be re-purposed into seating areas and bark would be used around the firepit. All children would be included in outdoor learning irrespective of whether their parents had contributed to the forest school.</p> <p>Q: Would parental donations cover the full cost of the forest school?</p> <p>The level of donation was set at £20-25 and was expected to cover the full cost. The initiative had been cleared with the PFI provider.</p> <p>The HT updated governors on her LDBS advisory role. The role involved visiting a number of schools to support school improvement, in some cases working with the relevant local authority. Working alongside Ofsted inspectors, as well as supporting schools with SIAMS preparation, was a valuable learning experience which benefitted St Mary's own preparatory work. Dan C was deputising in her absence and the system was working well. The HT confirmed she continued to receive CPOMS alerts and remained in contact throughout her days off-site.</p> <p>One governor had attended the recent inter-faith panel and applauded the event which had demonstrated the school's ethos in action and related directly to the term's theme of compassion. He highlighted how such events were an example of what made St Mary's School distinctive and how the ethos and vision were enacted. The HT reminded governors that inter-faith week was an annual event, launched in 2021, which was organised by the RE subject leader for junior site children. The panel had included representatives of humanism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and the neighbouring St Stephen's church. The children's questions had shown great depth of thought. The initiative had demonstrated how all present, despite their differing views, were motivated by a wish to show compassion.</p> <p>Snapshot of the school</p> <p>Governors thanked Dan C for his work on the 'snapshot' which provided a useful overview of the school's profile. Changes to the pupil cohort were highlighted, notably the significant increase in the number of Cantonese speakers – currently 42 pupils - the majority of which were from Hong Kong. The number of EAL students was above the national average.</p> <p>Q: What is the impact of the high number of EAL pupils on teaching staff?</p> <p>The level of English language varied considerably across the EAL cohort. Many pupils from Hong Kong had a good level of both language and behaviour. Few pupils in the school had only limited English. In such cases, it was more of a challenge for teachers if pupils joined the school in the upper years. No additional staffing was available so class teachers were required to support language acquisition themselves.</p> <p>Ofsted preparedness</p> <p>The safeguarding link governor and chair of governors had attended a Q&A session to test their safeguarding knowledge. It had been a useful exercise to focus minds and</p>	
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	<p>committee chairs were encouraged to organise similar sessions relating to their particular areas of responsibility. <i>ACTION: Committee Chairs to organise Q&A sessions on areas under their responsibility as necessary.</i></p>	Cttee chairs
4.	<p>ADMISSIONS UPDATE</p> <p>a. Admissions Report It was noted that there were currently only 13 vacant places across the school: 77 children in Reception (out of a possible 90 places) with all other years full.</p> <p>b. Changes to Admissions Committee Membership The Chair informed governors that LDBS guidance on admissions committee membership recommended the participation of the headteacher but not of the clergy in order to avoid any conflicts of interest. Governors discussed the existing committee structure and agreed it was working well: the HT delegated responsibility to the school's admissions officer, and Fr Jeff attended to advise on the foundation places but always declared any interests and stood ready to recuse himself from discussions if necessary. Governors confirmed they were content to continue with the existing arrangements.</p> <p>c. Appeals Two admissions appeals had been received – for Y1 and Y3. The Y1 appeal had been completed and the appeal had not been upheld. It had been a relatively straightforward process as class sizes in KS1 were legally protected. The grounds for the appeal had been distance from school. The Y3 appeal was scheduled for mid-December and was also on the grounds of distance from school. It was noted that the child in question had a place at another local school. Governors regretted that the school was liable for the costs of each appeal (£400 per case plus interpreter costs if necessary). They further regretted that considerable staff time was required to prepare the appeal documentation.</p> <p>d. Parent Feedback The HT advised that, on school tours, prospective parents had been invited to complete a parent feedback form detailing what they were looking for in a school. The themes mentioned included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils' well-being and valuing the whole child; - An engaging curriculum and pupils' enjoyment of learning; - Opportunities for parental involvement in school life. <p>The forms were completed on arrival at the school and the HT noted that all topics highlighted had been subsequently addressed in the presentations. The tours had been full and approx. 40 parents had signed up for the newly introduced tours of middle and junior sites. Governors gave their thanks to Dan C and a parent for their work in putting together the school prospectus. Governors also welcomed the new promotional banners on middle site.</p>	
5.	<p>ETHOS UPDATE</p> <p>SIAMS Preparation</p>	

	<p>The Ethos Working Group had met three times in the autumn term and had reviewed the seven SIAMS strands. Fr Jeff was thanked for his invaluable input. His report on the relationship between the School and the Church was noted.</p> <p>The HT confirmed that the school was expecting a SIAMS inspection in the current academic year and that the school was doing everything it could to ensure the inspection went well: all LDBS guidance was followed and particular attention was paid to supporting courageous advocacy.</p> <p>Review of School Vision</p> <p>A small group of governors had met separately to review the school vision. Notes from the meeting were circulated prior to the meeting. After a considered review, governors had concluded that the current vision was concise, clearly understood by pupils and continued to drive all that was done in school. The recommendation was to maintain the current school vision. This was supported by all present.</p> <p>A series of RE walks had recently taken place with the purpose of assessing the quality of teaching, adherence to the LDBS scheme, and children's understanding as demonstrated by their questions. Three governors had participated in the walks and reported on one example of the school vision driving the curriculum: a class had looked at one local, one national and one global issue and reflected on how these issues related to Bible stories and how 'true love shows itself in action'.</p> <p>It was reported that all classes had 'core concept cards' which had been developed with the worship ambassadors and were now being used by the LDBS.</p> <p>LDBS Update</p> <p>The Chair and HT reported on their attendance at an all-day session on multi academy trusts (MATs) organised by the LDBS. The purpose of the meeting was to update attendees on the LDBS' response to the government's white paper on the future of education which aimed at all schools being part of a MAT by 2030. [Since the meeting the government announced that it would not be continuing with the proposals in the white paper although some elements would be maintained].</p> <p>The HT informed governors that the HTs of the 7 church schools which currently worked together on various issues had agreed to deepen cooperation with a view to sharing resources. The schools involved were St Mary's, Archdeacon's, St Stephen's, Bishop Perrin's, St Mary's & St Peter's, St Mary's Hampton and St John the Baptist's.</p>	
6.	<p>RISK</p> <p>a. Risk Register</p> <p>As agreed at the previous FGB meeting, committees had identified those risks relevant to their areas of responsibility. It was agreed that each risk should include the mitigations as well as a clear explanation of the implications of each risk if it were to occur. The risk register was to be monitored by committees termly.</p> <p>The only risk allocated to the FGB was the risk posed by academisation. Despite the changing approach to this in government it was agreed to leave the risk rating as was. Governors considered the impact of the current cost of living pressures on the school and agreed that this risk was adequately captured in the F&S risk of reduced income.</p> <p>b. Safeguarding Update</p> <p>The two safeguarding governors reported on their recent monitoring visit. They had visited the junior site and met with 2 members of staff, the DSL and 6 children from the</p>	

	<p>school council. Questions had been put to the teachers and TAs and later checked with the children. The children were articulate and demonstrated a strong sense of right or wrong. Governors were reassured that procedures were understood and followed and that a culture of safeguarding was evident in all aspects of school life. No concerns had been highlighted</p> <p>The Chair reminded governors that at the bi-weekly Chair-HT meetings, safeguarding was always the first item on the agenda.</p>	
7.	<p>STATUTORY POLICIES</p> <p>The following statutory policies had been reviewed by the relevant committees and were recommended for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND • Capability of Staff • Early Career Teachers • Admissions <p>All policies were approved.</p>	
8.	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>a. Chair's action – The Chair reported that she had approved the Pay Policy (agreement on the pay increases had been reached too late for review by F&S committee).</p> <p>b. Strategic goals – As agreed at the previous meeting, the governing body's strategic goals had been reviewed. <i>ACTION: Paper on the strategic goals to be circulated after the meeting</i></p> <p>The Chair noted that few governors had volunteered to help at the recent Christmas Fair. She reminded governors of the undertaking in the Code of Conduct to 'demonstrate commitment to the role' and stressed the need for governing body work to be shared equally amongst members. Governors were invited to speak with the Chair or clerk if they had any concerns. It was agreed that, when recruiting new governors, a clearer indication of the time commitment required should be given.</p> <p>c. Link governor descriptions – The clerk advised that link role descriptions were now available on governorhub. Caroline R informed governors that she would temporarily cover H&S until Geoffrey G returned from leave of absence.</p> <p>d. Reports by Committee Chairs On behalf of C&S committee, Andrew M reported that the committee had discussed writing in years 5&6 which had been identified as an area for improvement. No other concerns had been raised. Committee members highlighted the overwhelmingly positive position of the school – for key stage 2 the school was in the top 20% nationally. Once officially confirmed, this information would be included in the newsletter and on the school website.</p> <p>On behalf of SC&E committee, Kat H assured governors that no particular concerns had been identified. The recent safeguarding visit and training session had been addressed earlier in the meeting (see items 6b and 3c). She noted that governors would be invited</p>	CR

<p>e.</p> <p>f.</p>	<p>to attend the annual safeguarding training session for staff at the start of the academic year.</p> <p>On behalf of F&S committee, James M reported that the committee had focussed on budget monitoring, the implications of staff pay increases and schools' benchmarking. He noted that the benchmarking exercise had been of limited use given the specificities of St Mary's (being a 3-site school). It was noted that the recent FoSM-organised Christmas Fair had been highly successful although the total raised was yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>An update from Admissions committee had been provided under item 4.</p> <p>Governor training Governors were reminded to ensure their training profiles on Governorhub were up to date. The clerk undertook to liaise with governors individually on relevant training courses.</p> <p>Governor Visits Committee chairs were reminded to ensure that all monitoring visits were completed as scheduled.</p> <p><i>[Staff members left the meeting]</i></p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>HT APPRAISAL</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Leadership Appraisal Group had met and completed the HT appraisal process as required. For the benefit of new governors, the Chair provided a brief overview of the process which was supported by an external adviser.</p>	
	<p>Date of next meeting: 7pm on Monday 20 March at junior site.</p>	

The meeting closed at 8.30pm with a prayer.

Signed by the Chair:
Date:



20 March 2023

FGB Actions

As of 5 December 2022

Minute	Action	Assigned	Update
26.9.22 4c	Draft a governor recruitment strategy	OW	Information on the governor recruitment process to be added to the website
26.9.22 4c	Elaborate a small number of measurable strategic aims	Chair/HT	Addressed under item 8b.
26.9.22 4c	Committees to identify risks relating to their areas of responsibility at autumn meetings	Cttee chairs	Risk register completed. See item 6a.
26.9.22 8	Ethos Working Group to meet to review SIAMS strands	Chair/clerk	Meetings held on 13 Oct, 16 Nov and 30 Nov.
26.9.22 8	Coordinate a meeting of the 'vision' working group	clerk	Addressed under item 5b.
26.9.22 8	Add collective worship plan to autumn term SC&E meeting	clerk	Actioned.
26.9.22 8	Review ToRs of SC&E committee	Chair/ST	Actioned. No changes required.
5.12.22 3c	Hold Q&A sessions on specific areas of committee responsibility	Cttee Chairs	
5.12.22 8b	Paper on the strategic goals to be circulated after the meeting	CR	Actioned

Documents circulated:

ICT User Guidance
Draft minutes 26/09/22 FGB
HT Report Nov 2022
Snapshot of School 2022
Ofsted Q&As updated
Admissions Committee Report
Relationship bwn Church & School
Review of Vision statement

Instrument of Government
Risk Register
Send Policy
Capability Procedure
ECT policy
Admissions policy + forms
Link governor role descriptions
Visits Schedule