



St John's Church of England VA Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting Held in School

on
Tuesday 19th March 2024
at
4:15pm

Present: Brian King –Parent Governor
Jo Leigh – Foundation
Joe Basquill – LA Governor
Sarah Brown – Staff Governor
Colin Simpson - Ex-Officio
Jo Leigh
Cathy Paull
Ruth Knowlman - Foundation

Chair *Safeguarding, Cybersecurity*
Vice Chair *Equality Duty*
Vulnerable Groups
Health and Safety
SIAMS
Vice Chair *Equality Duty*
Parent Governor *GDPR, EYFS*

Apologies:

Olly Priestley – Ex Officio

Headteacher (HT)

Clerk: Angela Morley

School Business Manager (SBM)

Item	Details
1.	WELCOME & OPENING REFLECTION The Chair welcomed everybody. The Chair led the Governing Board by sharing a prayer compiled by the School Chaplain in conjunction with the Pupil Chaplains.
2.	APOLOGIES Apologies had been received from Headteacher due to illness. Governors agreed to accept the apology.

	The meeting was quorate.
3.	<p>DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS</p> <p>There were no matters to declare.</p>
4.	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23rd January 2024</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING None raised.</p> <p>Outstanding Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair reported that the Parent Survey results had been shared with Governors. • Clerk reported that comments from the Parent Survey had been used in school publicity. • Chair reported that a letter had been sent to the Year 6 Supply Teacher to express thanks and a reply had been received. • Clerk reported that the Equality Statement had been shared with Governors.
6.	<p>HEADTEACHER SHORT WRITTEN REPORT</p> <p>A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors noted that the report covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Spring Term Census • Staff • Admissions Spring 2024 • Behaviour • CPD • Curriculum • Enrichment • Finance • GDPR • Safeguarding

- SEND
- SIAMS

The **Chair** stated that, due to illness, the Headteacher had been unable to attend the meeting but had agreed to deal with questions via email when back at work.

The **School Business Manager** (SBM) offered to assist Governors where possible.

Question: What had been arranged to cover the Year 6 class after the Easter break?

SBM explained that a phased return to work for the Teacher of Year 6 had been discussed. An ex-teacher of the school had been booked for the first two weeks of term. He will work alongside the Classroom Teacher.

Question: Had there been a contingency plan arranged in the event of the Y6 Teacher being unable to return to work?

SBM responded by stating that Supply Cover for Y6 had been difficult to source and consequently, a Year 4 Teacher had been moved to cover Y6. This had been a short-term solution and would not be sustainable.

After a long discussion, Governors concluded that Y6 require stability in the lead up to SATs exams in May. Governors requested a contingency plan to be compiled to ensure adequate cover arrangements for Y6 during the Summer Term. **Action SLT**

7. **SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

The following report had been circulated prior to the meeting:

Audit Response – Safeguarding

Governors expressed thanks to the Headteacher for his hard work on the audit and noted that the safety of all pupils is central tenet of the school values.

The **Chair** repeated that the Headteacher had agreed to deal with questions via email when back at work.

8. **FINANCE**

The following reports had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- **Draft Budget Plan 2024/25**
- **Schools Financial Management Standard 23/24**
- **Service Level Agreements and Traded Services 23/24**

Governors received, noted and thanked the School Business Manager (SBM) for the reports.

DRAFT BUDGET PLAN 2024/25

SBM highlighted the following in respect of the **Draft Budget Plan 2024/25**:

Total 24/25 anticipated funding allocation:	£1,336,892
Total 24/25 anticipated expenditure:	£1,336,617
In year surplus/deficit:	£275

- Pupil numbers had risen from 212 to 216 this equates to a total allocation of **£3534.49** per pupil.
- The increase in salaries had been budgeted at 5% for all staff.
- The employer contribution to the Teacher Pension Scheme had increased from 23.68% to 28.68% (5%). The DfE are due to reimburse 90% of the 5% increase. Therefore, the total additional cost the school had been **£2,449**.
- Due to the reduction in numbers of pupils entitled to Pupil Premium (PP) Funding, the PP allocation had reduced from £130,950 to £100,200. A decrease of **£30,750**.
- Recovery premium is due to cease in August 2024. Therefore, there had been a decrease of **£5,981**.
- English as and Additional Language funding had been **£20,684**.
- The Core Offer had increased from **£39,709** to **£43,959** (10%).

Q: Do we have any reserves to carry forward into 2024/25?

SBM Yes – The carry forward estimate was **£34,177**. This had not been utilised to balance the budget.

Q: Why is the predicted overspend so high in 25/26 (-£39,184)?

SBM Pupil numbers had been predicted to reduce from 216 to 214 (equivalent to approximately **£7,423**) and grant funding by **£25,759**. General increases in costs had accounted for the remaining **£7,002**.

Q: How many children will be commencing in Reception Class in September?

SBM The original forecast had been 25. Recent indications had suggested 16 first preferences and 9 second preferences. The school usually attracts additional admissions during the course of the academic year.

Q: Will the After School/Breakfast Club and kitchen be profitable in 2024/25?

SBM Both clubs had been well supported during the financial year 23/24. The total income had been difficult to analyse due to the central backlog in the processing of income. Therefore, a conservative estimate had been recorded in the Budget Plan. The actual outcome would probably total a modest surplus.

The kitchen accounts required constant monitoring and evaluation. Cost cutting exercises had been introduced by changing to cheaper catering suppliers and amendments to the menu options. A breakeven position had been anticipated.

Q: Is the school maximising the booking potential of the school hall?

SBM explained that a number of groups hired the premises on a regular basis during the course of each week.

Governors suggested that steps be taken to explore increasing lettings in order to maximise income potential.

Action SBM

Having sought assurance that the school values had been central to the budget planning process, Governors approved the budget plan as circulated.

SFVS

SBM explained the SFVS. She stated that it had been impossible to meet the requirements due to delays in the receipt of financial information from Somerset Council. This matter had been highlighted in the SFVS return and a target set to continue to work with the Local Authority to ensure the timely receipt of crucial financial information.

Q: What is the current situation regarding the provision of financial information from the County?

SBM All reconciliation details had been received and processed. There had been a considerable backlog in the receipt of crucial credit card and school income information. The situation had gradually improved. County had seconded additional staff to assist in the clearance of the backlog. The workload impact upon school staff had been significant.

Governors approved the SFVS.

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS AND TRADED SERVICES

Governors noted the contents of the report and thanked the **SBM**.

Q: Why is the Praestantia iCloud migration cost so significant (£3,323)?

SBM explained this sum is in respect of hosting all school information on the Cloud e.g. hosting SIMS, Cyber-Security, Microsoft and printing interface licences etc.

Q The cost of photocopying appears to be excessive? What steps had been taken to reduce costs?

SBM Steps had been taken to set the default on all school devices to black and white. Staff had been instructed not to undertake colour copying unless absolutely necessary. Staff had also been encouraged to consider if it would be essential to copy a resource.

Is it worth exploring the purchase of Google Chromebooks or a sourcing a cheaper photocopying contract in order to reduce costs?

SBM The County purchasing team offer support to review contracts and achieve best value. Google Chromebooks had not yet been explored as an option.

Governors requested that this matter be reviewed.

Action SBM/HT

Q: Is there a proactive list documenting when subscriptions are due for renewal? Is this regularly reviewed?

SBM: Yes, a list is maintained. Subscriptions had been evaluated prior to renewal. Auto-renewal settings had been disabled.

Mike Boyd, Grounds Maintenance – What does he cover?

SBM Maintenance of hedges, lawns, school field, shrubs and basic tree care.

Who sets the heating temperature? Can this be reduced?

SBM The Site Manager had responsibility for the setting of the heating system. The temperature level and length of time in operation had been reduced in the autumn. This action had resulted in savings on the cost of gas.

BENEFACITOR DONATION

SBM reported that an anonymous donation of £40,000 had been received and the Headteacher was considering utilising this sum in order to improve outdoor play facilities.

	Governors asked to be kept informed of developments. Action HT
9.	<p>PREMISES</p> <p>Business Continuity Plan</p> <p>A copy of the Business Continuity Plan had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Governors noted that the plan had set out how the school would respond if a disaster occurred and commented favourably upon the way in which the plan emphasised a compassionate approach to all those affected.</p> <p>Q Who is the plan for? SBM It is to help staff with the process of maintaining and quickly restoring the functions of the school in the face of significant disruption. A printed copy of the plan is kept in the Grab Bag and further copies had been made available online.</p> <p>Governors approved the plan.</p> <p>Asset Management Plan</p> <p>Q. Where are we on the Asset Management Plan and working group meeting? SBM The Asset Management Plan had taken a considerable amount of time to compile. One report (ecology) remained outstanding prior to sharing with the Working Group. A meeting would be arranged during early Summer. Action SBM</p> <p>Q: Will the school be using the field this summer and what will be done regarding toilet facilities? SBM Plans had been made to use the school field. Alternative vandal proof toilet facilities had been proposed by the Site Manager.</p> <p>Q: Could solar panels be fitted? SBM explained that an energy efficiency survey had been undertaken in 2023. Solar panels had been listed as an option but funding had not been available. An energy efficiency grant of £16,000 had been awarded to the school and the survey recommended LED lighting as a proactive first step. Three quotes had been received, the lowest of which was £8,500. Governors requested this information be shared via email for approval.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action SBM</p>
10.	<p>RESIDENTIAL TRIP</p> <p>SBM Sought Governor approval for the Y4/5/6 Residential Trips to Wildside during Week commencing 8th July 2024. The SBM explained that learning away from home will help the children flourish as they grow in confidence, develop independence and improve learning across the curriculum. Wildside provides a range of countryside experiences and nature activities and is surrounded by woodland, fields and hedgerows. The children are encouraged to discover a sense of awe and wonder through the beauty of creation and the activities provided. Central to the Wildside ethos is the verse 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good' Genesis 1:31</p> <p>Q: Behaviour – is there a clause in the Code of Conduct to preclude pupils from attending on grounds of breaching the behaviour code?</p>

	<p>SBM Yes, all pupils and parent must sign the Code of Conduct. Pupils breaching the Code of Conduct would be sent home. Persistent behaviour breaches in school prior to the date of the residential trip may result in withdrawal of permission to attend.</p> <p>Q: Has a subsidy been offered?</p> <p>SBM A subsidy of £9.50 per pupil had been allocated. Children in receipt of Pupil Premium had been offered a further 25% discount.</p> <p>Governors approved the Residential Trip and noted that is will be an excellent opportunity for the children to practically deepen their understanding of the school Values: Respect, compassion, friendship, service and endurance.</p>
11.	<p>POLICY REVIEWS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policy March 2023. <p>Governors thought the policy needed changing to ensure that confidential information is not left unattended in cars. In addition, clause 12.3 required amendment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Allowances Policy 24 – 25 <p>Governors agreed the above policies on condition that the above would be actioned.</p>
12.	<p>GOVERNOR MONITORING</p> <p>Chair encouraged all Governors to undertake monitoring in accordance with the Monitoring Schedule. All Governors would be required to complete the appropriate Monitoring Form and ensure a copy is shared with the Clerk for record keeping purposes.</p> <p>Clerk asked for a volunteer monitor for Collective Worship.</p> <p>Ruth Knowlman agreed to adopt this role. Clerk offered to meet with Ruth to brief her upon the requirements of the role. Action Clerk</p>
13.	<p>GOVERNOR ITEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Training Update <p>Clerk reported that Governors had undertaken or booked the following training:</p> <p>SB – Health and Safety Governor Training CP – EYFS Governor Training RK – Church School Governance – Part 1 and 2 SB – New to governors.</p> <p>Chair stated that his Safeguarding training (scheduled for 4th March) Had been cancelled. A revised date had not yet been offered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Skills Audit <p>Clerk reported that a recent audit of Governor Skills had highlighted a number of gaps. The Clerk asked Governors to update their Skills Audit forms. Action Clerk</p>

	<p>Q what are the gaps? Once updated, can the audit Summary be circulated?</p> <p>Clerk indicated that a range of gaps were evident but many may be addressed once the Skills audit forms had been updated. The updated Skills Audit summary would be circulated once complete.</p> <p>Governors agreed to discuss this matter at the next meeting. Action Clerk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter Service This will be held in church on Thursday 21st March at 1:30pm. All Governors welcome.
14.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>The Clerk reported that no correspondence had been received since the last Full Governing Board meeting.</p>
15.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting of the Full Governing Board will be held in school on Tuesday 7th May at 4:15pm. CP indicated that she may arrive late due to a work commitment.</p>

Meeting closed at **18:10**

Action points arising from meeting held 19th March 2024

Minute Ref	Action Point	Responsibility
6.	Create a workable cover plan for the Y6 teacher during the summer term.	SLT
8.	Explore increasing lettings in order to maximise income potential.	SBM
8.	Explore the purchase of Google Chrome books.	SBM/HT
9.	Share LED lighting quotes with Governors.	SBM
9.	Keep Governors informed of Developments regarding the utilisation of benefactor donation.	HT
9.	Arrange meeting of the Asset Management Plan working group.	SBM
12.	Meet with RK regarding Collective Worship Monitoring.	RK/Clerk/HT
12.	Update and share skills audit.	Clerk
12.	Skills Audit – agenda item next meeting.	Clerk

Signed.....*Brian King*.....

Chair of Governors

Date.....10/05/2024.....