



## St John's Church of England VA Primary School

### Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting Held in School

on

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024

at

4:15pm

**Present:** Brian King –Parent Governor  
Olly Priestley – Ex Officio  
Joe Basquill – LA Governor  
Sarah Brown – Staff Governor

**Chair** Safeguarding, Cybersecurity  
**Headteacher**  
Vulnerable Groups  
Health and Safety

**Apologies:** Cathy Paull – Parent Governor  
Ruth Knowlman

GDPR, EYFS

#### Unauthorised Absence

Colin Simpson - Ex-Officio  
Jo Leigh - Foundation

**Vice Chair** Equality Duty

**Clerk:** Angela Morley (SBM)

Item	Details
1.	<b>WELCOME &amp; OPENING REFLECTION</b>  The Chair welcomed everybody and led a short time of reflection to include contemplation of the school values.
2.	<b>APOLOGIES</b>  Apologies had been received from Cathy Paull and Ruth Knowlman. Governors agreed to accept the apology.  Apologies had not been received from CS and JL.

	The meeting was quorate.
3.	<p><b>DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS</b></p> <p>There were no matters to declare.</p>
4.	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023</b></p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
5.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b> None raised.</p> <p><b>Outstanding Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Headteacher (<b>HT</b>) reported that the Parent Survey would be summarised in a readily accessible format. This would then be distributed to parents and Governors. <b>Action HT</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Question: Would it be possible to quote a sample of positive comments in the proposed marketing publicity?</b></p> <p><b>HT</b> remarked that this would be an excellent idea and agreed to utilise the comments as suggested. <b>Action HT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Clerk</b> reported that the potential new Foundation Governor had been contacted and provided with the relevant documentation but despite chasing, no response had been received.</li> <li><b>Clerk</b> reported that all Governors had completed Prevent training.</li> <li><b>HT</b> reported that he had instructed a member of staff with experience in amateur photography to take a variety of photographs for use in marketing. The aim would be to articulate the school's vision and values via pictures. This material will be shared on the Website and in the prospectus.</li> <li>The Deputy Headteacher had been unable to deliver CPOMS and Thrive overviews at this meeting. This will take place at the meeting scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</li> <li>The Clerk confirmed that the staff member had been written to regarding the Leave of Absence request.</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>HEADTEACHER FULL WRITTEN REPORT</b></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"> <li>School Characteristics</li> <li>Attendance</li> </ul>

- Attainment and Achievement
- Teaching
- Staff CPD
- Pupil Premium
- Sports Premium
- Educational Enrichment
- Exclusions during Autumn Term 2023
- Child Protection/Safeguarding

**Question: How much attention do we pay to Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) in this early part of the academic year? Their results appear poor.**

**HT** remarked that this had been a familiar pattern in EYFS. Many children commence with low core skills. The long-term effects of lockdown had significantly impacted this cohort and it is essential to treat them with compassion and care in order for them to flourish. In many areas, immediate progress had been made. However, one child's low results had impacted the class average. Children in EYFS are likely to make accelerated progress as the year unfolds.

**Question: What is 'Understanding the World'?**

**HT** these are the projects that EYFS explore and focus upon the diverse nature of the world and all that is in it. Celebrating all that the world has to offer and the joy of creation captures their imagination. These topics drive the children forward and instil a quest for learning. This had become an excellent strength of the current cohort.

**Question: English as an Additional Language (EAL) -how had this been taken forward?**

**HT** explained that skills vary among EAL children, although as their grasp of the English language improves so too does their progress and they then tend to develop significantly. Children from EAL background appear to value education and often are rewarded in Assembly for respect and endurance.

**HT** advised Governors that he is booked onto a course in respect of EAL and will be visiting another setting in order to gain additional knowledge upon how best to provide EAL children with an excellent experience of being part of the school community.

**Question: Year 5 – why is attendance low?**

**HT** there is one child who had not attended and this had impacted upon the results for the whole class. Generally, attendance had improved throughout the school. Persistent absenteeism and lateness had reduced. The **HT** had particularly valued the weekly administrative support in this area and commented that it had positively impacted upon the results.

**Question: The data is very comprehensive. How is it collated?**

**HT** each term three tests had been used: Piri, Puma and Gaps. In the Autumn term the performance in the previous year is tested. Y6 undertake mock SATS tests throughout the year and this data had been analysed. A Spelling test called SPAR provided a spelling age. Data had been collected and teachers had detailed where they had pitched work and what each child had been working towards. This information had been

collated in a spreadsheet and percentages had been based on these figures. The results had been comprehensive and accurate with predictions rarely out.

**Question: Year 1 (Y1) girls are reported as achieving lower results in reading and higher results in maths. Why?**

**HT** some differences equated to the mobility of the cohort. Four new children had joined the class who had been below age related. There was a disparity between the EYFS curriculum and Y1 expectations. They tend to gather momentum as the year progresses. **HT** is anticipating 65%.

**Question: As the Year 6 (Y6) Teacher is likely to continue to be absent, what are the concerns going forward?**

**HT** The Supply Teacher is due to finish at half term. The absent Y6 teacher had arranged to visit the school prior to the half term break to meet with the class. Because the current Supply Teacher had excellent experience in Y6, the class had been focussing on English and Maths as a priority.

**HT** Still working upon contingency plans for the second half of the Spring term. Practice tests suggest that the children had been on target for SATS exams.

**HT** added that he had been supporting the absent teacher by offering friendship and compassion. The children had been very settled with the Cover Teacher who had been committed and excellent.

Governors asked for a letter of thanks to be sent to Mrs Robinson.

**Action Chair**

**Question: Does the SDP need tweaking as a result of this report?**

**HT** Considerable progress had been made. The children had been enthusiastic in terms of their writing. The SDP planned areas of focus had already impacted the children. Vulnerable groups had continued to be a work in progress with room for improvement.

**Q How does our Admissions Policy reflect the school's Core Values?**

**HT** forty-four children have been admitted during the last two years from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. Our reputation is that we facilitate the needs of vulnerable children and we do so with care and compassion. We are prepared to take children that other schools turn away, regardless of academic ability.

**Q Exclusions are down. What is the impact upon the classroom?**

**HT** Behaviour had been good and levels of disruption minor. Consistent compassion and care for dysregulating children had impacted upon their security in school and classroom calmness.

**Q Safeguarding: there appear to be a lot of high-level cases. What is the impact of this upon the wellbeing of the HT and Deputy Headteacher?**

**HT** there had been a high level of mutual care and friendship which both he and the Deputy Headteacher had highly valued. They had received regular external support and supervision. There had been a strong ethos amongst the staff in term of sharing the school values of respect, compassion, friendship and endurance. Governors also emphasised their ongoing support.

7.

**FINANCE**

The following reports had been circulated prior to the meeting:

**Finance Report as at Month 9**

**Notes to Accompany Month 9 Finance Report**

## Benchmarking Report

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

### **Q: Are there any significant differences from Month 7?**

**SBM** Most areas of spend had been similar to Month 7. Further expenditure on Premises repairs had been necessary. In addition, additional expenditure had been incurred to cover long term sickness absence in the kitchen.

### **Q: The kitchen forecast is a slight overspend at the end of the financial year. How viable is the kitchen?**

**SBM** reported spiralling costs in staff, food and energy. This had unduly impacted upon the running costs of the kitchen. Added to which, there had been a £10,000 reduction in grant funding due to the low uptake of Universal Free School Meals on the 2023 January census.

Governors asked for this matter to be further examined if the kitchen continues to run at a deficit.

### **What is the Key Subscription?**

**SBM** The Key is a national information service which provides school leaders with instant answers on all aspects of managing a school. It had been a valuable resource for school staff.

### **Q: Are there any significant factors that need to be addressed in the 24/25 draft budget?**

**HT** Pupil Numbers had been 218 for the October census. This will attract additional funding. The Formula funding may be reduced by up to £10,000 due to changes in LA and National allocations?

### **Q What is the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) and why is the school not taking part?**

**HT** A Department for Education (DFE) initiative providing schools with funding to spend on targeted academic support for small groups. This must be delivered by experienced tutors. The DFE require schools to contribute 40% of the cost from existing budget allocations. Many schools (St John's included) had opted out of this scheme because they had been unable to make up the difference. St John's had chosen to use alternative methods of targeted support.

## Staffing Structure

**HT** informed Governors of the proposed staffing structure for 24/25:

- 8 class structure next September - preserving the current teams.
- Potential retirement may result in a restructure of the school office with a potential saving of £15,000 per annum.
- Evaluation of staff hours in kitchen.
- Rationalisation of cleaning hours. Site Manager undertook a detailed audit of the school and highlighted that they have insufficient time per week to clean effectively. He had suggested is to moving some hours from holiday cleaning to regular cleaning. This is likely to incur additional costs in the region of £5,000. Further assessment to be undertaken in the context of the budget allocation.
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Governors expressed their support for the proposed changes.

	<p><b>HT</b> explained there may be a redundancy in 2027 when classes numbers reduce to seven. If, in the short term, a member of Teaching or Teaching Assistant teams retires or leaves, replacements will be appointed on a temporary contract.</p> <p><b>Benchmarking Data</b></p> <p><b>HT</b> Explained that the data is of interest but open to interpretation. For example, the high expenditure on teaching staff is reflects the number of highly experienced and quality top of scale teaching staff who understand and share the school values extremely well.</p> <p>Governors were supportive of the way in which the school spends its budget allocation and encouraged that the spending is based upon the school values.</p> <p><b>Q What are the actionable items in this?</b></p> <p>There is nothing unforeseen contained in the Benchmarking Report.</p>
8.	<p><b>PREMISES</b></p> <p>A Premises and Health and Safety Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors noted that the report covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Maintenance work undertaken by the Site Manager</li> <li>• Work undertaken by external contractors</li> <li>• Risk Management</li> </ul> <p><b>Q: Additional cabling was installed. Was this over and above the original quote for the new telephone system?</b></p> <p><b>SBM</b> Yes. It transpired that the internet cabling was insufficient in various areas of the school; not least the HT and SBM offices. The additional cabling had vastly improved internet speeds.</p> <p><b>Q: What difference had the installation of the new Interactive whiteboards made?</b></p> <p><b>Staff Governor</b> informed Governors that these had been a fantastic new resource. There had been better pupil engagement and increased lesson interactivity. Every child had benefitted and staff had commented that it had facilitated effective teaching.</p>
9.	<p><b>COMPLAINTS</b></p> <p><b>HT</b> reported that there had been no formal complaints received during 2023.</p>
10.	<p><b>POLICY REVIEWS</b></p> <p>The <b>HT</b> reported that the consultation period in respect of the admission arrangements had concluded and no objections had been received. Therefore, the Admissions Policy, agreed by Governors at the FGB meeting dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2024, would remain unchanged. The policy must be placed on the school website by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023.</p> <p>Governors agreed for the policy to be placed on the school website.</p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging and Remissions</li> <li>• Equality and Objectives</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Premises Management</li> <li>• Protection of Biometric Data</li> </ul> <p><b>HT</b> commented that the new Equality and Objectives Policy encompassed all of the objectives. He reminded Governors of the imperative to monitor the effectiveness of the policy.</p> <p>Governors must be aware of and understand the Equality Statement and be concerned with the implementation of its contents. The Chair asked the Clerk to circulate the document to Governors.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action Clerk</b></p>
11.	<p><b>GOVERNOR ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governor Training Update</b> HT reported that Governors had received face-to-face basic awareness Safeguarding training on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</li> <li>• <b>Governor Monitoring Update</b> Governors had actively supported the monitoring of the SDP in the following areas: Parent and Foundation Governor - Writing Chair – Curriculum The monitoring of vulnerable groups had been deferred due to illness.</li> </ul> <p>The Staff Governor had monitored Health and Safety.</p>
	<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that no correspondence had been received since the last Full Governing Board meeting.</p>
13.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Full Governing Board will be held in school on <b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 4:15pm.</b></p>

Meeting closed at **18:00**

**Action points arising from meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024**

Minute Ref	Action Point	Responsibility
5.	Circulate Parent Survey results	<b>HT</b>
5.	Use comments from Parent Survey in future school publicity.	<b>HT</b>
6.	Write to Y6 Supply Teacher to express thanks.	<b>Chair</b>
10.	Circulate Equality Statement to all Governors.	<b>Clerk</b>

Signed.....

**Chair of Governors**

Authorised

Date.....