



St John's Church of England VA Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting Held in St John's Primary School

on
Thursday 18th July 2023
at
5:00pm

Present: Brian King –Parent Governor
Olly Priestley – Ex Officio
Jo Leigh – Ex-Officio
Harry Foster – Staff Governor
Cathy Paull – Parent Governor

Chair (*Safeguarding*)
Headteacher
(*Church School Distinctiveness, RE and SIAMS. Equality Duty*)
(*Health and Safety/Cybersecurity*)
(*Asset Mgt Planning*)

Apologies: Joe Basquill - LA Governor
Patrick Robinson – Foundation Governor

(*SEND, Pupil & Sports Premium/Asset Mgt Planning*)
Vice Chair (*Finance and HR*)

Clerk: Angela Morley (SBM)

Item	Details
1.	<p>WELCOME & OPENING REFLECTION</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everybody and opened the meeting by inviting Governors to reflect upon the current Bible parable adopted by the school to underpin and reflect the school values: The Prodigal Son. He asked Governors to consider whether this parable adequately reflected the school values?</p> <p>Following an extensive discussion, Governors concluded that the parable of the Prodigal Son is complex and often difficult for young children to comprehend. Governors suggested changing this for more child friendly parable to include a strong, inclusive and compassionate message.</p> <p>The Ex-Officio Governor offered to research possibilities and report back to the next meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action Ex-Officio JL</p>

2.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Patrick Robinson and Jo Basquill had sent apologies in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p>
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 11th May 2023</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk had contacted Claire Hudson, Diocese and arranged for Bespoke monitoring and SIAMS training to take place on Thursday 14th September at St John's school. • SFVS Update to be delivered at <i>item 9 below</i>. • Meeting of Asset Management Group will be in Autumn term. Action Clerk • The updated governor monitoring/link roles had been circulated. • Monitoring of School Development Plan progress completed. <i>See item 13.</i> • Curriculum review had been undertaken by Chair and Headteacher. • Informal tea party with staff had been very successful.
6.	<p>SIAMS UPDATE</p> <p>Headteacher (HT) Reported that the St John's inspection is due in the academic year 24/25. The HT stated that he would like to use the intervening period to develop strong church school links and was looking forward to working with new Rector.</p> <p>The HT reported that the SIAMS inspection judgement criteria had been changed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through its vision and practice, the school is living up to its foundation as a church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish or: • The school's vision and practice are not enabling it to fully live up to its foundation as a church school. The reasons will then be listed. <p>The HT reminded Governors that the school had been built by the church one hundred and fifty years ago and the church/school link had been very much part of the school's heritage.</p> <p>The HT explained that the new criteria asks Governors to consider the schools vision and values carefully and to give thought as to how they are theologically rooted.</p> <p>Q What do the church expect in terms of who are we as a school?</p> <p>HT The church are looking to see that Governors have reflected upon 'who we are' and to have worked through the process (with school and local church leaders) of ensuring the school has clear theological and biblical underpinning. The values of the school should reflect this and enable all to flourish. Work had already begun and the Ex-officio Governor had been very supportive.</p>

7. HEADTEACHER REPORT SUMMER 2

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors thanked HT for the report. Governors noted that the report covered the following areas:

1. School Characteristics
2. Attendance
3. Attainment and Achievement
4. Teaching
5. Staff CPD
6. Pupil Premium
7. Sports Premium
8. Educational Enrichment
9. Exclusions during Summer Term
10. Child Protection/Safeguarding
11. Health and Safety

Questions arising from HT Report:

Q Why do we have a dip in maths attainment?

HT Standards in English are good and reflect the whole school focus upon this core subject. There are some concerning trends emerging in maths, mainly amongst Pupil Premium (PP) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils.

Q SATS scores were as predicted. Are the results a fair reflection of the cohort?

HT 36% of year group qualify for PP, 32% SEN and 4% EAL Therefore, there are several children in the year group who have significant needs. This is a challenge for staff. The results were a fair reflection of the Y6 cohort.

Q Maths. What can we do to improve maths going forward?

HT In the SATS examinations, some children missed out by a few marks. Children in Y3 and Y4 missed vital foundational maths input during COVID. Able pupils had made excellent progress but gaps still remain for PP pupils. Some had fallen behind and some are age related.

Q If we had more funding what would we be spending on it?

COVID catch up funding had previously been used to fund supply teachers in order to release class teachers to undertake booster work with small groups. Further work of this nature would be of significant benefit.

Q Do we know if pupils have access to IT facilities at home?

HT Devices were not provided to pupils because the majority had access to equipment at home. Provision is available upon request.

Q How do we compare with similar schools?

HT We are above National Average in terms of PP, SEND and EAL. Benchmarking against similar schools had not yet been undertaken. This information is available on the DFE website.

Q What can we do to support EAL children? Is there a consistent barrier to learning?

HT Y6 children arrives without English and are expected to pass SATS without additional support. It had affected the data. There had been a lot of mobility in Y6. The EAL pupils had received Nurture room support.

Q: Can we reach out to the parents to help with the language barriers?

HT This area had not yet been explored.

Q. Y4 Can we devise a plan for next year's Y5 cohort? Otherwise year 6 results will be very poor?

HT The current class teacher had stated that the children had anxiety around testing. They often flunk their tests. She is planning to invest time in developing these skills. A decision had been made for this year group to remain with the same teacher. The aim is to achieve accelerated progress. Behaviour in the Y4 class had significantly improved.

Governors expressed concerns over EAL and PP children. They care very much about these children and asked for further support to be provided. Governors requested a plan to target PP and EAL children.

Action HT

Q. Attendance appears to have improved this term. Is there anything that can be done to improve lateness?

HT Attendance had improved because of increased administrative support and rigorous monitoring. In recent months, the focus had shifted to addressing late arrivals and the results had been positive.

Requests for holidays had increased. Holidays during term time are cheaper for parents (including factoring in the fine). Cost of living crisis had impacted upon decisions to book holidays during term time.

How is wider learning disseminated after a safeguarding incident?

HT Information to parents had been included in the newsletter. Important and significant matters had been shared separately via the school the email system to both staff and parents.

Do we need a short parent questionnaire about communication?

HT Yes, it would be of great value to survey the parents during the autumn term. Parent Governor offered to visit the HT and assist in the compilation of a parent survey.

Action HT/Parent Governor

8. **SEND ANNUAL REPORT**

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors thanked SENDCO for the report. Governors noted that the report covered the following areas:

- Key Personnel
- External Agencies
- Somerset's Core Standards
- Core Standards at a Glance
- Policies
- Education Health Care Plans

- Identifying Pupils with SEND
- Provision
- Progress made by Pupils with SEND
- SEND Funding
- Staff Development

Q How had the new SENDCO settled in?

HT She is very talented and excellent. She had built a very good working relationship with the Deputy Headteacher and with the wider school community. Governors asked for their thanks, appreciation and praise to be conveyed to Jane.

Action Clerk

Harry Foster left the meeting at 18:00pm

9.

FINANCE UPDATE

School Financial Value Standard

School Business Manager (SBM) reported that two action points had been identified and addressed:

- The school required a Business Continuity Plan.
- The Asset Register had not been updated.

Both actions had been completed and the SFVS updated accordingly.

SBM reported:

- An agreed Costed Plan for a pupil had not been passed on to the school during the Financial Year 22/23. Consequently, a long battle with the County Special Educational Needs team had followed, resulting in an agreement to fund the £15k arrears owed.
- Price increases for After School Club, Breakfast Club and lunches had been communicated to Parents.

How has this been received? Is there any flexibility to support families?

HT Families had received the price increase positively. On occasion, support is offered to families, this had depended upon individual circumstances. Support of this nature had been short term.

- **West Buckland School** had withdrawn from the catering contract with effect from 1st September 2023. Consequently, notice had been served to the MDSA member of staff responsible for the delivery of the meals. The employee did not qualify for redundancy pay because she had not been working for the school for two years or more.
- **Pay Award** school teachers in England had been given a pay award of 6.5%. The Government accepted all the recommendations set out by the independent body advising on teacher pay. Schools will fund 3.5 per cent from their own budgets, with the remaining 3 per cent coming from central Government. A budget assumption of between 5-7% had been earmarked in the St John's Budget Plan. Therefore, this cost centre will have a small surplus.

	<p>The Support Staff Pay Award had not yet been settled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation Files There had been significant central problems in implementing the new Somerset Council financial system (Dynamics 365) and as a result, there had been delays in paying invoices, payroll inaccuracies and reconciliation files had not been issued. The problems are unlikely to be resolved before September. Consequently, schools had been unable to undertake regular monthly checks and had become seriously behind with the processing of reconciliation files. It had not been possible to prepare a month 3 report for Governors. <p>SBM stated that it will take a considerable amount of time to process the backlog when the central problems are resolved. The SBM reported that she hopes (depending on resolution of the above problem) to prepare a Month 6 report for governors.</p>
10.	<p>PREMISES UPDATE</p> <p>A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors thanked the SBM for the report. Governors noted that the report covered the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premises Management • Work Undertaken in Summer Term • Summer Work • Asset Management • Refuse Collection • PAT Testing • Legionella <p>Governors expressed thanks to the team for the excellent work that has been undertaken and noted the improvement to the appearance of the school.</p> <p>Governors noted that there will be capital work to the KS2 retaining wall during the summer holiday.</p> <p>Governors approved the purchase of PAT testing equipment at a cost of £332 and to delegate responsibility to the Site Manager for testing. All school electrical items to be included and tested on a rolling programme. The Health and Safety Governor will monitor this process.</p> <p>Governors approved the purchase of the legionella testing equipment at £150. Thus saving £491 per annum. Governors authorised delegated responsibility for quarterly legionella testing to the Site Manager. The Health and Safety Governor will monitor this process.</p>
11.	<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p>The following reports had been circulated prior to the meeting:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Audit Report June 23 • Governor Health and Safety visit • Health and Safety Management Report July 23 <p>Governors congratulated all involved in H&S audit and asked for their thanks to be conveyed.</p> <p>SBM requested governor approval of delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to approve Educational Visits in Category 'A'. Governors approved.</p>
12.	<p>STATUTORY POLICY REVIEWS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Code of Conduct <p>Q Any notable changes? HT Dress code had been merged with Code of Conduct and updated with the latest KCSIE conduct guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND 23 24 Policy • Behaviour for Learning Policy 2023 <p>Q The Staff Governor noted that the Policy asks for a member of the Leadership Team to be contacted if challenging behaviour escalates. Would this apply even if they are teaching at the time of the incident? HT Indicated that this would be the case if no other member of staff is available. In practice, the likelihood would be remote. HT agreed to edit that line in the policy to ensure a member none teaching SLT be contacted in the first instance. Action HT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Procedure 2023 • EYFS Policy 2023 <p>Governors approved the above policies (subject to the above change to the Behaviour for Learning Policy)</p>
13.	<p>GOVERNOR ITEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Training Update A Governor had undertaken cybersecurity training. Chair of Governor had undertaken one-to-one Chair training with Claire Hudson. The Chair reported that he had found this training extremely valuable. • School Development Plan Monitoring Report A Governor had reviewed the curriculum with HT. A Governor had reviewed reading with the Reading Lead and HT. SIAMS compliance had been reviewed by the Ex-Officio Governor with the RE Lead, HT and Diocesan advisor. • New Incumbent St John's Church had successfully appointed a new Rector. Rev'd Colin will commence in the autumn and join the Governing Board as Ex-Officio.

	<p>Governors thanks Jo Leigh for fulfilling this role during the vacancy and asked Jo to remain as a Foundation Governor. Jo confirmed that she would be willing to remain on the Governing Board.</p> <p>The Licensing of Rev'd Colin will take place on the 5th October. The Ex-Officio Governor indicated that the church intend to invite the school choir and chaplains. Further information will follow.</p> <p>The Ex-Officio Governor shared details of a monthly church service called the @11 service which is often led by a range of people. The church would like to invite the school chaplains to take this service at some point and plan to send across dates in due course.</p> <p>HT Offered to share details of the regular @11 service in the school newsletter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Meeting Schedule and Year Planner</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the meeting schedule and year planner had been prepared for the next academic year. This had yet been checked by the HT and Chair and will be circulated to Governors in due course. Action Clerk</p>
14.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>No correspondence had been received.</p>
15.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting of the Governing Body will be held online on Thursday 28th September 2023 at 5:30pm.</p>

Meeting closed at 6:50pm

Action points arising from meeting held 18th July 2023

Minute Ref	Action Point	Responsibility
1.	Explore alternative parables	JL
5.	Meeting of Asset Management Group will be in Autumn term	Clerk
7.	Develop a plan of targeted curriculum support for PP and EAL children.	HT
7.	Compile of a parent survey.	HT/CP
8.	Send letter of thanks to SENDCO	Clerk
12.	Edit Behaviour for Learning Policy	HT
13.	Circulate Governor Meeting Schedule and Year Planner	Clerk

Signed.....

Chair of Governors

Authorised

Date.....