



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FULL GOVERNING BODY OF
ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD IN SCHOOL
ON MONDAY, 16TH OCTOBER 2023 AT 6.00PM**

PRESENT: Mr S Taylor (Chair, Foundation); Mr M Quigley (Head); Canon J Batthula (Vice Chair, Foundation); Mrs N Henderson-Andrade (Foundation); Mr M Doherty (L.A.); Mrs J Hurst (Foundation); Mrs E Morgan (Foundation); Mrs T Yarker (Foundation); Mrs Princess Akin-Olugbade (Elected Parent); Mr G Refalo (Elected Parent); Mrs S Horton (Staff)

APOLOGIES: None

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L Hall (Clerk)

1. CJ opened meeting with a prayer.
2. Chair welcomed all to the meeting, including the new staff governor and interim headteacher. Meeting was declared quorate.
3. **Register of Interests**
 - a. NH-A declared she is a governor at Blessed George Napier school.
 - b. EM declared she is a member of staff at Blessed George Napier school.
 - c. SH declared she is a governor at Waddesdon School.
 - d. Chair declared that he was appointed as a Foundation Director at Pope Francis Multi Academy Company at the end of September. This is for a three-year term. He explained the rationale behind his decision is that he feels it would be beneficial for the board of St Mary's to understand who the people on the MAC board are and how they operate. Governors questioned the impact at St Mary's and whether a person is able to be on two boards. Chair explained that he had discussed this with the Diocese Governance Manager, who confirmed that Chair could continue to be elected to post whilst St Mary's is outside of the PFMAC. Once St Mary's has joined can serve out notice but cannot be re-elected. This will allow for a couple of years for succession planning.

Clerk requested that governors update their Declaration of Interests on Governor Hub.

4. **Minutes of the full GB meeting** of 26th June 2023 were declared to be a true record and were signed by Chair.
Matters arising

Action Points:

- a. Invitation to Thanksgiving Mass
- b. The creation of a permanent visual display in church
Examples of posters including Ofsted quotes, a QR link to the school website and pictures were tabled. Governors discussed including their photographs and keeping the board active and refreshed. It was agreed that photographs of governors who consent would be on display. Governors discussed the new school social media accounts, Open Morning and the possibility of creating leaflets.

- c. Chair to meet with SENCo and update governors
- MD Entered.
- d. Provide roadmap and updates to staff
Governors discussed communicating about both the headteacher interviews and academy roadmap to staff and to parents. Chair stated that the academisation is a planned agenda item, and should be discussed then. Concerning the headteacher recruitment, it was said that parents are not usually informed when a school is interviewing staff, but this could be a consequence of a long period of uncertainty. It was decided that staff would be kept informed about the interview process, and parents would be told after the half term break when there is something concrete to relate as the successful candidate should have the opportunity to inform their school, staff and employer first.
- e. Review of Lettings Policy in preparation for KCSiE 2023
To be discussed under agenda point.
- f. Review of health & safety audit actions
- g. Governors to make themselves familiar with the Complaints Policy
Chair said that in the past governors had been informed that there were no complaints by the previous leadership. The policy, however, is that a complaint has a lower threshold than a formal, written complaint. Governors discussed moving to a culture where there is more openness from the leadership and school, how staff should be supported and governor's welcome complaints. A key measure of an organisation is how complaints are dealt with. Governors should be aware of the policy and it is very important that staff, governors and parents follow the policy.
- h. Discuss school residential booking

5. Pastoral Matters

(Change in order of agenda items)

A governor thanked CJ for the most beautiful, prayerful Thanksgiving Mass in July.

CJ thanked the interim heads for the gradual adjustments at school with the change in leadership. There has been a Welcome Mass and two School Masses. He commented on the musical talents of St Mary's teachers, which have been recently showcased. There have been parent meetings for the Confirmation and Reconciliation & First Holy Communion groups, as well as the Commitment Mass on Sunday. CJ will meet with Head to discuss Advent Masses. A governor asked if the Rosary classes are going to continue. Head responded that these are planned to start again.

6. Headteacher's Report

When both Head's first visited the school in July, they were immediately impressed that it is a positive place, with lovely children and a dedicated staff. The Masses have been excellent, the singing has been wonderful, and another Mass planned for after the half term break.

The numbers on roll are looking good, with several in-year admissions added to almost all classes. The challenge is that there is one class per year in almost all year groups except year 1. If the school was full to its PAN there would be split classes throughout. Head has known schools where reorganisation has been necessary mid academic year, which we hope to avoid.

Governors **challenged** the Head about parent's unhappiness with the split EYFS/Year 1 class. He replied that a number of parents felt they hadn't been told that their child would be in a split class. Head explained that he sent the parents in that class a letter of explanation and offered to meet with them. Those that he met face to face seemed comfortable and since then there have been no reported issues. The class will be reviewed continuously, and was based on both date of birth and what was known about pupil progress.

EYFS pupils in both classes have daily access to the EYFS free-flow. He said that he understands that parents are anxious and that lessons have been learnt this year. If another class is mixed, information will be sent out early to parents, and generally there is a good feeling of trust.

Regarding staffing Head said that hopefully the headteacher recruitment process will be completed this Friday. He informed governors that while both heads are not intending to be out of school, two of the SLT have agreed to be designated deputy in that circumstance. Both members of staff have been incredibly supportive in managing continuity.

Chair informed governors that if one of the candidates were to be offered the position and verbally accept, he would contact governors on Friday.

Head reported that although there is a significant number of new staff, they are getting on well as a team.

He told governors that he is creating a simple document to record contact with staff for link governors, as well as a process to negotiate dates.

Parental engagement is positive in the school, with an active PTFA.

Head discussed incorporating the post Ofsted action plan into the school development plan. Governors **challenged** Head about the Section 48 inspection, concerned that there is not enough preparation and that it should be in the SDP. Head agreed that it should be, and will be, in the plan.

Head said that the recent Ofsted inspection was very good with few improvement points including curriculum plans being sequential. Subject leads are focusing on this as part of the performance process. Consistency of teaching is being reviewed and improved across the school.

Chair asked when the SDP would be ready to share with governors and Head replied that it would be ready by the end of November.

Attendance is a big focus of Ofsted and the DfE, so the current good attendance figures should be encouraged. Persistent absence at primary level is often due to complex factors and families are often already known to school.

Headline performance figures were shared in the headteacher's report. Governors questioned if writing could be part of the SDP because it was the only area that figures had dropped in. Head stated this could be cohort specific, as these are headline figures, once they are drilled into there could be many factors. Governors discussed opportunities to compare data within the MAC.

7. Reports from Committees

a. Finance/H&S/Buildings

Action arising from minutes is to demonstrate that H&S audit actions are completed. Head said that he is in the process of confirming, and overall standards of health and safety are good in the school.

The budget is in a good position. The prediction for the end of the financial year is that the budget will be balanced. Regarding SEN and PP funding, Chair asked that link governors check that money is spent on SEN and PP.

The three- year forecast is mostly balanced and assumes a non-teaching deputy head which has never been the case at St Mary's. The budget is working with the most expensive scenario. Policies to review as a committee include the Critical Incident Policy, and checking that the Lettings Policy is aligned with KCSiE 2023.

8. Pupil Premium Review 2022/23 Pupil Premium Plan 2023/24

This is almost completed and will be circulated to governors

9. Sports Premium Review 2022/23 Sports Premium Plan 2023/4

A governor **questioned** why performance of swimming was 80-90% and is now 40-50%. Governors discussed the impact that Covid had on this cohort; not only the closure of pools but also financially if parents lost jobs or were furloughed. There was consideration given to PP money being used to help struggling families purchase costumes and towels, and also how targeted swimming lessons could be fitted into an already overcrowded curriculum. This needs to be discussed with the PE lead.

GR left meeting

A governor **challenged** Head about the recommended 30 minutes a day physical activity, asking for the percentage at St Mary's, including the percentage of SEN, EAL etc. Head replied that this is not included in curriculum time, but at break and lunchtimes which are generally very active as there is good provision. Staff governor added that it has been made more difficult due to the loss of the playground to the roofing work, which also means there is no daily mile. Governors suggested speaking to the PTFA about equipment provision.

10. PFMAC

Chair explained that fortnightly meetings have commenced and he has been provided with a 60-point checklist for tasks to complete over the transition. The first task is to find a project lead in both the Department for Education and Local Authority. Then an application for an academisation order must be submitted. £25,000 will then be released to the academy for legal costs

Parents and staff will be updated. The formal staff consultation will take place later in the year or early next year once a headteacher is in place and representation from PFMAC and the governors can meet. Consultation with parents will happen shortly after, but the staff consultations will take longer as subjects such as TUPE need to be covered and staff will need reassurance as their employer will change.

11. Policy Review Schedule

- a. **Acceptable Use Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- b. **Allegations against Staff or Volunteers Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body A governor questioned policies referred to within this policy (social media and low level concerns policy)
- c. **Anti Bullying Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- d. **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- e. **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- f. **Data Protection Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body.
- g. **Equality Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body. Governors discussed the monitoring of equality and how to publish.
- h. **Home School Agreement**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- i. **Privacy Notice for Governors**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- j. **Privacy Notice for Staff**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- k. **Privacy Notice for Pupils**
Approved by Full Governing Body
- l. **Safer Recruitment Policy**
Approved by Full Governing Body

12. Code of Conduct

Governors were asked to sign the declaration on Governor Hub

13. Committee Terms of Reference

- a. **Curriculum Committee Terms of Reference**
Approved by Full Governing
- b. **Finance Committee Terms of Reference**
Approved by Full Governing
- c. **Admissions Committee Terms of Reference**
Approved by Full Governing

14. Safeguarding

Chair requested that governors ensure they have all completed their mandatory safeguarding training

15. Any Other Business

Head advised governors that the roofing work is now completed, the scaffolding removal and interior decorating will be done over the half term break.

A governor asked what the provision for January will be if a new headteacher is not employed on Friday. Chair replied they would need to look at more interim cover.

A governor asked about wrap around care, as the breakfast club has been discontinued. It was suggested one of the reasons it didn't prove popular is because an 8 o'clock start is too late for most working parents.

The meeting closed at 20:10

LH 19/10/2023