



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FULL GOVERNING BODY OF
ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD IN SCHOOL
ON MONDAY, 15TH MAY 2023 AT 6.00PM**

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

APOLOGIES: Received from JH (accepted)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L Hall (Clerk)

1. CJ opened meeting with a prayer.
2. Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Meeting was declared quorate.

Chair highlighted that this is the first time the board have been together since the resignation of Head and LG. He said that he knows this was a sad and difficult decision and that it is hard for them to continue with business as usual, but appreciates them being at the meeting today. Chair welcomed the two new parent governors, thanking them for volunteering their time.

Chair raised the recent requests from parents to access FGB minutes. Governors agreed that they should be made more easily accessible and discussed options for how meetings will be minuted, as there has been some debate whether governor's initials should be included. Chair and Clerk confirmed that there is no statutory guidance from the National Governance Association (NGA), only that the board should decide based on its own preference. Governors agreed that going forward only Chair and Head should be named. Staff Governor will be identified if speaking as a member of staff.

Clerk explained that the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) expects minutes to be available for at least the previous three years, recommending that these are published on the school website. Confidential information and action points should not be made public.

Clerk will publish minutes on the school website after redacting any information which could potentially identify any pupil or staff member.

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.
4. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

ST was the only nomination for Chair. Governors all agreed to his election.
CJ was the only nomination for Vice Chair. Governors all agreed to his election.
5. **Minutes of the full GB meeting** of 6th February 2023 were declared to be a true record and were signed by Chair.

Matters Arising

The creation of a permanent visual display in church – action point to roll over to next FGB meeting.
Parent governor nomination – action point completed.
Training – Governor Hub doesn't automatically update when training is Power Point based.
Mass of Thanksgiving – will be addressed in Any Other Business.

6. Headteacher's Report

Chair described the Heads reporting of SDP objectives with their corresponding evidence from the Ofsted report as a nice summary of achievement. He drew attention to the recent news story that KS2 SATs are particularly hard this year. Head and LG both agreed that this hadn't been the case in their experience, and that every year seems fair. They said that they expect this cohort are likely to receive lower marks than last year but it won't be due to the difficulty of the tests. They also said that the timing of the King's coronation was unfortunate.

Head took this opportunity to thank LG for teaching 52 year 6 pupils, with planning and preparation which will continue to the end of the academic year. She felt that this was the best solution for the children as supply staff did not fit expectations. Governors asked Head to pass on their thanks to all the staff who have supported Year 6.

Head informed governors that the current year 2 class of 31 pupils includes 13 Catholic children who will be ready for their First Holy Communion next year. The current year 5 class of 33 children includes 23 Catholics who will be invited for Confirmation next year. Looking ahead to September, there are 27 children allocated to EYFS at St Mary's, and 13 of these are Catholic.

Governors questioned the lower figures and Head informed them that there has been a gradual decrease over time. She said that there has been pressure from the LA to reduce the PAN to single form entry which she has been resisting due to the geographical reach of St Mary's and her belief that no Catholic child should be refused a Catholic education.

Chair asked if this is a decision which should be made by the governors alone or if the LA can intervene. Head said that it is a governor decision. Governors discussed whether there is an advantage to dropping to one form entry, and they agreed that if the school were to decrease the intake it would be almost impossible to increase it again.

Chair queried the upcoming moderation of both KS1 and KS2. Head replied that it was expected but is a lot of work, especially with both at the same time.

7. Pastoral Matters

The Lenten Masses, Ash Wednesday Mass and usual school Masses were discussed. The Jubilee Mass was a particular highlight which was celebrated together as a community, with the children singing the Magnificat. Pastorally children at St Mary's are given every opportunity, supported by the Head. The First Holy Communion is this Saturday, and all governors were invited to attend.

8. Reports from Committees

a. Finance/H&S/Buildings

Head informed the committee that she had been successful in her bid to fund roofing work in various places around the school. This equates to £170,000 from the Diocese. Head said that she met with the contractors last week and has agreed that work can commence in the autumn term as the money has to be spent before March. LG informed governors that Head has been successful in securing bids during every one of her seventeen years as headteacher.

Chair informed governors that the previous financial year has now ended and the budget for 2023/24 has been submitted to the LA, who have approved it and are aware of pending staff changes. He explained that it is predominantly pupil numbers which effect the budget. The figure this year is 242, which was the number of pupils on roll on autumn census day.

Governors pointed out that there is a sentence in the minutes which could potentially identify a child. This will be rectified.

9. Policy Review Schedule

- a. **Pay Policy for Teachers**
Approved by Full Governing Body

- b. **Pay Policy for Support Staff**
Approved by Full Governing Body

10. Assessment Data

Governors were provided with assessment data prior to the meeting. Chair explained that this is for the year to March and that the overall trend shows that as year groups progress through the school the percentage of those not at expected levels becomes smaller. He said that this illustrates the impact that St Mary's has on its pupils.

Governors questioned if the lower percentages for writing in KS1 correlate with the effects of Covid lockdowns. LG explained that in addition to the difficulties in testing the writing ability of smaller children, the younger pupils have differing support before they start school. This evens out as they progress through the school. She also pointed out that as the year groups are smaller in KS1, each individual child is a larger percentage of the whole.

Governors discussed how the numbers reflect the new reading strategy which impressed Ofsted, and how the Literacy Lead has done incredible work. Chair commented that Head and LG had taught him that it isn't the number that is important, it is that each child reaches their potential.

11. Quality of Education

Quality of Education is a significant part of the school development plan this year. Governors were informed that through active literacy, memory is improved through physical movement. Head said that it's important to look at the different ways children learn and sitting at a desk isn't the best way for every child.

Governors discussed how well the SENCo is doing in school. Ofsted had reported that SEND is identified quickly and immersed into St Mary's. They said that the above average number of pupils with EHCP's shows how well they are identified and supported.

Ofsted had reported that foundation subjects are not as well developed as core subjects. Governors were signposted to the Headteacher's Report for the plan. There will no longer be curriculum showcases, but each class will deliver an assembly where they present what they have been learning. Chair said he has already been to an art assembly, which he said was brilliant.

12. Safeguarding Annual Report

Chair reminded governors that the school carries out a safeguarding audit. He emphasised that all governors are required to complete Level 2 Safeguarding training. Those that have not completed this yet will get another opportunity as this is available once a term.

Chair informed governors that the audit reveals that safeguarding issues are at a fairly low level currently in the school. Areas of improvement are for evidence of training, the schools Lettings Policy needs updating and the LA is keen to roll out the Neglect Tool.

As safeguarding lead governor, Chair will arrange time to speak with the SENCo for an update and report back at the next FGB meeting.

13. Academy Status

Chair recalled that actions relating to the roadmap were for all governors to be in place by this meeting. Two parent governors have been appointed and their 'buddies' have been allocated. There are two possible candidates for foundation governors, who should be in place by the end of June.

Governors discussed the meeting with staff on 27th April, minutes of which have been circulated to staff and governors. Staff had asked for better dialogue, information regarding recruitment and access to the

roadmap. Governors considered calling another meeting with staff and if this should become a regular fixture. Vice Chair warned governors that the headteacher is the line manager for staff and she could be undermined by governor involvement in the long term.

Head agreed that this has been an unusual situation. She said that staff called for the meeting with governors because they were angry and upset. They knew about the academisation and they are aware of job adverts so they do not need information being disseminated in a formal meeting.

Governors agreed that staff should receive pertinent updates, even if it is just to let them know there has been no progress, and communications to address their concerns. The roadmap will be provided with the next update to staff.

Chair said that it is important that staff know governors *want* to learn from what has happened, and *have* learnt from what has happened.

Governors discussed the next meeting with parents via Zoom. It was decided that it would be best to use a conference setting as there will be so many parents involved. Parents will be asked to submit questions prior to the meeting and will be able to ask follow up questions afterwards. Clerk asked if it was possible to record the meeting as she is unavailable to take minutes. It was decided that this could be a breach of GDPR. Chair will send a letter to Clerk for distribution to parents tomorrow, inviting them to a meeting on Monday 22nd May at 20:00.

Chair told governors that during the next FGB meeting, the next step towards academisation will be to send formal notification to the Diocese. Head asked for clarification. Chair replied that it should be minuted at that meeting that the FGB agree to move to the next stage. The roadmap was in response to the Diocese request for an indicative timescale, but now the governors need to complete a form that will precipitate Diocesan involvement.

Head and LG sought clarity that the decision was made when the roadmap was set down, as this was the basis of their resignations. Chair confirmed that the decision would not be reversed.

LG warned governors that staff are worried about the time between the current leadership leaving and the academy taking control. Chair replied that the Senior Executive Leader has said he wants to help during the interim.

14. **Any Other Business**

A governor discussed plans made with Chair for stakeholder engagement:

- Internal communications - Governors will be asked if they have anything they would like to share and this will then be added to governor updates.
- Parental communications – a newsletter from governors to parents
- Staff and parent surveys – with results communicated back to stakeholders

Head spoke about how traditionally, after an inspection, there has been a big, whole school celebration. Following Ofsted this year the school is going to Bournemouth beach on 22nd June. All governors are invited as are any adults who work within the school. This was previously done in 2013, and since then the school has gone to Legoland and had a funfair on the grounds.

CJ said that Thanksgiving Mass this year will be different. It will be a Farewell Mass for Head, a proper send off after nineteen years at St Mary's during the evening of 19th July.

15. **Date of Next Meeting**

26th June in school

The meeting closed with a prayer at 20:15

LH 16/05/2023