



ST JAMES' R.C. ACADEMY TRUST

Maybury Close, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1BL

Faith in Action, Working Together, Walking in the Footsteps of Christ

Minutes of the 128th meeting of the Governing Body which took place on Thursday 21st November 2019 at the school starting at 1700.

Present:

Mary Hutchinson (Chair of Governors)
Lisa Weeks (Head Teacher)
Michelle Wilson (Deputy Head Teacher)
Margaret Connell

Carlette Victoire-Nijjar
Kenneth Chan
Mark Edwards
Catriona Hardiman

In Attendance: Dominique Wells (Clerk)

Papers relating to the meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

1. Opening Prayers

The meeting was opened with a prayer led by the Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Paul Gribben
Mark Hutchins
Fr David Camilleri
Amanda Garlick

It was noted that Fr David Camilleri may find it difficult to attend FGB meetings this year due to following a Spiritual Directors course which takes place on Thursdays.

3. Declarations of Interest in items in this Agenda.

None.

4. Welcome new Parent Governor and Staff Governor

The Governing Body welcomed Catriona Hardiman as new Parent Governor and Amanda Garlick as new Staff Governor.

5. Committee Matters

A copy of the Governors' Code of Practice was circulated to each Governor and duly signed.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting, held in June 2019, were reviewed.

6.1. Confirmation of Accuracy

Item 11 – Holding the School to Account: CPD

'A two-day visit from *[insert]* **Ofsted**...'

Subject to the above amendment, **the minutes were agreed by all to be a true record.**

6.2. Matters Arising

Item 5 – Head Teacher's Report: Water Safety audit

The report on the audit had been circulated to Governors.

Item 7 – Budget Monitoring Reports

Mark Hutchins had attended the meeting held by the Umbrella Trust with three auditors and had found it useful. It was reported that David Walsh from Baxter's had attended the recent Resources & Audit Committee meeting and had offered to answer any queries and come in to meet Governors if requested, at no expense.

Item 13 – Policies: RSE Policy

It was explained that RSE stood for 'Relationships and Sex Education'. This had been completed and a curriculum evening held for parents. The policy had gone out for a 2-week consultation period before going out to Governors – the feedback has been positive so far.

The RSE Policy is separate to the Health Education Policy, which is still to be done and is a separate policy to ensure that everything is covered that should be.

7. Head Teacher's Report

The Head Teacher's report had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting and taken as read. The Head Teacher highlighted the following:

- The School has been listed among the top 250 state primary schools by the Sunday Times.
- All the School's data last year is above both local and national average, with 'greater depth' often double.
- Staff had become 'dementia friends' following a talk from an external visitor who came to talk to staff about dementia.
- The parent body are very supportive.

8. IDSR

This is considered better than the previous Raise Online package, and is the one that Ofsted have access to. The Head Teacher explained that light grey figures are where numbers are too small to have significance, and dark numbers often state that the School is 'significantly above' (i.e. standing out) and in the 'highest 20% of all schools' based on a 3-year average. The data does not show any areas to be significantly concerned about and the Head Teacher expressed that she was very proud of the results.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: There seems to be a low level of SEN support – 6% compared to a national average of 12.6%?

A: The need for SEN support is dependent on the admissions into the school and this is reflected in the figures. The same is the case for Pupil Premium children.

9. Parent Questionnaire / Governor Table Responses

Thanks were given to Governors who attended the goal-sharing. The responses from parents and children had been put on the visualiser during the recent Open Morning.

The Head Teacher reported that some EBIs were not possible to address at this time (e.g. bigger classrooms) and that some WWWs for some parents were also EBIs for others (e.g. communication). Any comments about the PTA were fed back to the PTA, any patterns in the comments were taken seriously and EBIs were being addressed as much as possible.

Regarding the questionnaires, 56 parents replied and were spoken to if any concerns had been raised.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: Some children reported that the fire alarm could not be heard.

A: This concern has been addressed. In the recent drill, all teachers heard the alarm and got the children out.

Q: How easy it is to sift through responses in order to address them?

A: If there are names given, concerns are easily addressed. Otherwise, any patterns in the responses are discussed with staff and duly considered.

10. Holding the School to Account

It was noted that Pam Fearnley was due to visit tomorrow and that the Holding the School to Account questions would be adapted to the new framework.

In particular, the following points were highlighted by the Head Teacher:

Achievement

Data is above local and national average and up from last year. In KS1 maths at greater depth, the decrease from last year should not be seen as a weakness but more that this is an area to keep an eye on.

A different subject is chosen every week as a focus for work scrutinies to be looked at by the Head Teacher and Senior Leaders. The books look good and presentation is considered excellent. Governors will be able to see this at the Governor morning and data morning.

There are three data drops per year, the next one being due on Tuesday 17th December to which all Governors are welcome.

Teaching

CPD is undertaken by teachers and TAs. In particular, there have been subject leader forums, RE courses on the new RE framework, courses in Maths in Y3 and Y4, autism champions, phonics training, First Aid and Safer Recruitment.

Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare

For any concerns about punctuality, the School is working with the parents to improve this. Regarding attendance, there have been no authorised absences. The Head Teacher's Report compares the figures to last year (as recommended by Pam Fearnley).

Leadership and Management

Performance Management has been completed.

Staff attendance is very good and absence very low.

The SDIP is on track and any areas for development reflected in this. There will be a review of the SDIP on 20th January to which all Governors are invited.

11. RE Report

This was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. Governors agreed that a lot happens in this area and the report was comprehensive.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: Are the 10:10 resources being used?

A: Parents can see this and also teachers. It was shown to parents at the parent meeting and will be used from January.

The Deputy Head Teacher would forward a link and the policy to Governors after the consultation period.

Action: MW

Most of the Umbrella schools are using 10:10 and the School is ahead on this.

The God who Speaks will be a focus next year with a candle passed around the schools.

12. School's 50th Anniversary Celebrations

The anniversary is on 10th April but will be celebrated on 2nd April with Mass at 10.30am in the church, lunch and an event in the afternoon. A list of invitees is being collated.

13. Chair's Report

The Chair reported that she had examined and signed the Single Central Register.

A new Vice-Chair of Governors is required (previously Fr David) and an enquiry would be sent out by the Clerk to ask interested Governors to come forward. It would go to a vote if more than one application is received.

Action: DW

It has been suggested that a more formal process to appoint a staff Governor be employed next time a vacancy arises.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: Bobby Jasper has stepped down?

A: Yes, due to increased work commitments elsewhere. In recent months, he has acted more in a mentoring capacity to the Finance Officer, who has continued to manage the day-to-day finances and is considered sufficiently experienced to maintain the School's finances herself. The School recognises that she is a real asset.

14. Budget Monitoring Reports

The Finance Officer sent the statement below to be read out to Governors:

'The budget report to date shows where we are at so far. These percentages may show inflated numbers as we have received quarterly payments.

We are very pleased that the Government confirmed the teachers pensions and pay increase shortfall payments and this has now made the shortfall easier to manage.

We have received £6,581 teachers pay grant and £18,593 teacher pensions grant.

We must still be very mindful and ensure we are getting best value for money.'

The Finance Officer invited any queries from Governors to be sent by email to be addressed at the next Resources & Audit Committee meeting.

15. Pupil Premium

There is a very small number of Pupil Premium children compared to five Post Looked-After Children.

The School is encouraging FSM children to partake in clubs before and after school. The funding and focus depends on the individual child and their specific needs, be it getting them to school or helping them with attendance issues.

The Virtual Head is able to be contacted about Post Looked-After and Looked After Children.

16. Committee Reports

The minutes will be presented at the respective meetings next term.

17. Rôles and Responsibilities

Governor rôles and responsibilities were agreed as follows:

PE & Sports Premium – Mark Hutchins

E-safety & Computing – Mark Edwards

RSE, RE, Safeguarding, SEND, Pupil Premium – Mary Hutchinson

Maths – Kenneth Chan

Literacy, French & Spanish – Margaret Connell

Website compliance & Health and Safety – Paul Gribben

Humanities & Arts – Carlette Victoire-Nijjar

Science – Catriona Hardiman

Governors would meet once a year with their subject teacher.

18. Policies for Review

18.1 SEND Policy

Various amendments to the policy were suggested by a Governor who would meet to discuss this further with Mrs Richards and the Chair.

18.2 Governor Allowance Policy

This is a new policy which is required of Academies. Having consulted with the other Umbrella Trust schools, of the six who responded, either there was a policy of not paying allowances or there was no policy in place because no Governors had ever asked for an allowance.

After discussion, it was generally considered that Governance is similar to a ministry in the Church. Therefore, Governors voted that no allowances should be paid.

19. Umbrella Trust

The Umbrella Trust had met at St Vincent's to moderate writing. There was a good sharing of ideas on types of writing, vocabulary, etc.

At the Head Teachers' meeting, it had been reported that a recent Ofsted had gone well. Peer reviews are constructive and positive.

20. Any other business

It was considered whether the day of FGB meetings this year should be changed to enable Fr David to attend. It was concluded that, as it would only be for this year, he could come in to catch up on important matters and he can be invited to voice any queries or concerns which could then be addressed at the meetings.

21. Dates of next meetings

Resources & Audit Committee	Tuesday 21 January at 4.30pm
Governor Morning	Tuesday 4 February at 9.15am
Admissions Committee (to endorse process used for admissions)	Tuesday 25 February at 4.00pm
Children & Learning Committee	Tuesday 25 February at 4.30pm
Full Governing Body	Thursday 12 March at 5.00pm

22. The Closing Prayer was led by the Chair

The meeting closed at 18.45.