

GOVERNOR SERVICES: EDUCATION, QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE SERVICE

SCOTFORTH ST PAULS' CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL (01006)

Minutes of the governing body meeting held by video conference on Tuesday 6 July 2021 at 5.30pm.

Present:

- Mr K Weatherill (Chair)**
- Rev Dr R Aechtner**
- Mrs R Atkinson**
- Mr B Booth**
- Mr L Carson-Brown**
- Ms K Dolan**
- Miss A Goddard**
- Mr M Hammond**
- Dr R Long**
- Doctor R Mckenna**
- Mrs N Miller**
- Mrs A Quainoo**
- Mrs K Stephens**
- Mrs A Aylott (Headteacher)**

Also Present:

- Mrs H Lewis (Clerk)**
- Miss SJ Huddleston (Deputy Headteacher, Observer)**

21.21 Opening Prayer

The chair welcomed governors to the meeting and invited Reverend Dr R Aechtner to say an opening prayer.

Mr Weatherill introduced the new parent governors to the meeting and explained the governing body meetings covered statutory information provided by the local authority. The main function of the governing body was achieved in the three committee meetings. The chair thanked them for their commitment and volunteering and offered his support should it be required.

21.22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs I Jolley and Mr J Mynott

21.23 Governing Body Matters

a) Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to agenda items.

Action

b) Membership

It was noted that Mrs Quainoo's term of office would end on 30 November 2021; she was asked to seek re-appointment with the Diocese.

Mrs Quainoo

Governors noted that Mrs Jolly had sought reappointment with the Diocese.

Doctor R Mckenna, Ms K Dolan, Mrs N Miller and Mr B Booth had been appointed parent governors. In line with the Regulations, it was confirmed that the DBS clearances had been received and they were asked to ensure they –

1. completed a register of business/pecuniary interests form and submitted it to the school;
2. requested access to the Schools' Portal; and
3. attended one of the New Governor training sessions if they were totally new to governance.

c) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for governors

The governing body confirmed that all necessary arrangements were in place and all governors had the required clearances.

The chair confirmed the Single Central Record (SCR) was up to date, and all details in relation to governors had been duly recorded.

21.24 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the chair at a later date.

Chair

21.25 Matters Arising

The following matters arising from the minutes were noted:

a) Finance (Minute 21.11 b) refers)

Governors referred to the additional governing body meeting and the budget approval process. It had not been minuted that the budget had been approved, it had only been implied. The chair advised that there was an item on the agenda to approve the budget.

b) Governor Training and Development (Minute 21.12 refers)

Mr Hammond had reviewed the Covid-19 Review of Virtual Governance prepared by the headteacher and Mrs Atkinson and

confirmed there was sufficient evidence. Mr Hammond would send Mr Weatherill a copy of the completed template.

21.26 Reports

a) Committee Reports

Governors noted the minutes of the following meetings:

- Finance and Staffing Committee held on 13 May 2021.

Governors noted the previously circulated minutes, Miss Goddard highlighted notable item including;

The SFVS had been completed and in doing so the committee considered the benchmarking data and the school's performance against other similar schools. The committee were satisfied with a mid-field position on spending; salaries had been high which had been expected with an experienced teaching staff. The school had been less well funded in comparison to other schools.

The committee discussed the Financial Outturn Statement 2021 noting that there had been a loss of revenue with no lettings, the after school club had been suspended and no catering during the lockdown period, there had been an increase in cleaning costs.

The committee would consider spending in the first period of the new academic year at the autumn term meeting. Miss Goddard observed that the most significant governing body action would be to replace the headteacher. Covid-19 had halted the recruitment process, she reflected that it had been a good decision not to proceed because an important part of the decision making process was witnessing the candidate take an assembly.

The chair explained to the new governors the three stage recruitment process. The initial stage involved the recruitment panel setting a list of requirements to be included in the person specification, Job description and advert. Shortlisting suitable applicants took place at the second stage. Mr Weatherill explained that both these processes had been completed and a date had been set for the final stage, the interviews. He continued that unfortunately some shortlisted candidates had had to self-isolate, so the interview process had been postponed until the 10 September 2021, with the formal interviews held on 13 September 2021. The process was well documented and they had followed best practice with the same governors being involved in all three stages.

The chair advised that he would continue to keep the new governors updated as the process developed, he also intended to write to parents to explain the situation and was confident that if an

appointment was made on 13 September, a new headteacher would be in post on 1 January 2022, concluding that they would only appoint if there was an outstanding candidate.

Miss Goddard added that the local authority and diocese had provided advisors to support the governing body decision making. Their purpose was to offer guidance and not influence the decision, she felt there was a good pool of shortlisted candidates.

In response to a question, the chair said he would share the job description and person specification with the new governors. **Rev Dr Aechtner** further explained that some of the job description and person specification was generic, the priority in terms of essential and desirable had been amended to set the most appropriate criteria for the school. The headteacher interjected that they were standard requirements of a headteacher application pack.

Governors noted that an agreement (with conditions) had been reached with the After School Club (ASC) to open the after school and holiday club.

- Buildings Health and Safety Committee held on 13 May 2021.

The chair highlighted the main points of the meeting and included the Covid-19 requirements and building plans that had been agreed with ASC. There may be tweaks as required by the Covid-19 guidance; a cleaner may need to be employed.

Damp had been identified in the kitchen and the kitchen toilet. Quotations included additional remedial works. Funding had been agreed and a pre-meeting with the contractor had been organised prior to the commencement of work in the summer. Mr Hammond thanked those involved for getting to this stage

The committee chair reported that the VOIP system would not be a suitable upgrade to the telecom system. Other options would be considered.

It was noted that a new system had been introduced to clean the flat roof around school that had previously presented health and safety cleaning issues.

Mr Weatherill reported that together with Miss Huddleston they would be briefed by Cassidy and Ashton at Ripley St Thomas Trust on the 29 July 2021. It was hoped that the proposal would be considered favourably by the trust. The chair and Mr Hammond had walked around school with Cassidy and Ashton but there had been no follow up as yet.

- Curriculum and Standards Committee held on 26 June 2021

The chair of the committee said he would only cover notable highlights of the meeting and encouraged new governors to read the minutes in order that they appraise themselves of the subject leaders' reports. The school was in scope for an Ofsted inspection and Ofsted would expect governors to have a good understanding of subject areas.

Mr Weatherill reported that it was apparent that the staff were fully aware of where children were, and where the gaps in attainment were, concluding that well documented plans evidenced in the subject leader information were in place to close the gaps.

Governors agreed to the following committee allocations;

- Doctor Mckenna and Mrs Miller to Finance and staffing Committee
- Mr Booth, Mrs Miller and Ms Dolan to Buildings, Health and Safety Committee
- Mr Booth, Doctor Mckenna and Ms Dolan to Curriculum and Standards Committee

Clerk

b) Nominated Governors

Dr Long reported that she had a virtual meeting planned with the maths subject lead.

Mr Hammond nominated governor for PE informed governors that year 6 swimming would restart, there would be no competitions. He also believed sports day would go ahead. The headteacher clarified that sports day would be adapted and take place in individual bubbles.

The governing body discussed the nominated governor role, Mr Weatherill read out the list, noting the vacancies. Governors discussed at length the vacancy in writing and if there was a requirement to continue to split English into reading and writing. Miss Huddleston resolved that the subject was a large area but the elements were intrinsically linked .

Rev Dr R Aechtner left the meeting at 6.18pm

A governor suggested that reading and writing was split between KS1 and KS2, the deputy headteacher responded that there was no issue with two nominated governors but there was some fluidity between the two key stages.

Nominated governors agreed to email Mr Weatherill with their subject areas.

Nominated governors

Nominated governors were thanked for their reports.

c) Chair's Action

The chair reported that whilst it had not been necessary to take any urgent decisions on behalf of the governing body since the last meeting, he had approved a venue change for the year 6 residential trip. Risk assessments were in place and it was a recognised facility.

21.27 School Improvement

a) School Improvement Plan in the Current Context of the Pandemic

Governors noted that the Curriculum Committee evaluated the progress of this year's improvement priorities and any changed priorities due to remote learning and the subsequent return to school.

For the benefit of new governors Mr Weatherill advised the information was included in the committee minutes. The School Development Plan (SDP) on remote learning had been improved and would be carried over to next year. The SDP demonstrated how hard the school had worked to close the gaps in pupil attainment.

b) What Maintained Schools Must Publish Online

Governors noted the information that schools were required to include on their websites.

Miss A Goddard and Ms K Dolan were appointed as the school website nominated governors. They agreed to review the website, to ensure compliance with the government requirements, and to report back to the next governing body meeting.

**Miss
Goddard
and Ms
Dolan**

21.28 Headteacher's Report

a) Termly Report

The headteacher's written report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Mrs Aylott said that she had intended to write to parents to send reassurances that staffing changes as a result of her leaving would be minimal. Miss Huddleston would become acting head, Amy Parlane would teach year 6. The headteacher thought that a letter updating parents on the headteachers recruitment process would be beneficial and suggested a combined letter.

**Chair/
headteacher**

The headteacher highlighted attendance as a notable item from the report and was pleased to report that attendance had never been better, there had been limited persistent absenteeism and she thought that children had appreciated the routine of school.

In response to an enquiry, the deputy headteacher replied that there had been no visits to facilitate the year 6 transition. Both Lancaster

Girls Grammar and Ripley St Thomas had had to cancel the face to face sessions. There had been no recent contact from Lancaster Boys Grammar which was unusual.

The governor asked if the leavers service would be online again, the headteacher responded that it would be, which was disappointing.

It was noted that some governors were unable to access the headteachers report as the portal was unavailable. The document would be sent by email.

The headteacher was thanked for her detailed report. In response Mrs Aylott thanked the governing body for their support over the years.

b) Unavoidable School Closures

The headteacher confirmed there had been no unavoidable school closures since the last meeting, beyond the national school closure. The chair reminded governors that the school had not been closed, bubbles had, adding that the headteacher and staff had done an excellent job keeping the school and bubbles open throughout the pandemic.

21.29 Finance

a) Budget Outturn 2020/21

The headteacher briefed governors on the national funding formula and explained that Lancashire County Council continued to be underfunded, thereby Lancashire schools were underfunded compared to other regions. It was a historical situation.

The governing body noted the school's outturn position for 2020/21.

Governors were aware that the application of clawback had been suspended on balances held by the school at 31 March 2021.

Governors reviewed the Analysis of Balances Return, which highlighted the commitments carried forward, and were informed that it had been submitted to the county council.

b) Schools Budget 2021/22

Following the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee, and after considering any budget sustainability issues, the governing body approved the school budget plan for 2021/22 as follows:

Revenue income of £1,061,531 and proposed revenue expenditure of £1,114,080 resulting in a net in year deficit of £52,549.

The governing body considered the effect on school balances and noted the estimated balance of £87,624 brought forward from the previous year which would result in a forecast carry forward balance of £35,075 into 2022/23. Financial forecasts for 2022/23 and 2023/24 were noted. The chair advised that the position of the three year budget was an indication but could be widely out.

The headteacher confirmed that the Income and Expenditure Form had been submitted to the county council within the required timeframe.

c) Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The governing body noted the extended deadline for the submission of the SFVS. The headteacher confirmed that the approved standard had been submitted to the county council by the 28 May 2021 deadline.

d) Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) 2021/22

Governors noted the updated pupil premium conditions of grant. The date change to the Pupil Premium Grant allocations would impact on the funding, the headteacher explained that schools had lost out financially, going forward it would stay static, however the gap between the January date and amended October date had been when a significant number of families circumstances changed.

The chair remarked that it was interesting that schools were being asked to provide evidence of the effectiveness of PPG from September. The Education Endowment Foundation information toolkit and PPG strategy would be in place by the end of 2021. The impact would be monitored and reported to the Curriculum and Standards Committee. The headteacher mentioned that the conditions were about analysing where the gaps were and how they would be addressed.

e) Use of Government Grants

The governing body noted the requirement for schools to publish information on its website relating to its use of government grant funding. The headteacher outlined the information that would be published.

21.30 Educational Visits

a) Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational / Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines

The governing body noted the information provided on the health and safety of pupils on educational visits.

It was confirmed that Miss SJ Huddleston was the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and Mrs A Malin had Administrator status for the school's EVOLVE system. The reporting procedures for visits were agreed as:

Option 3

The governing body to approve residential Type B visits only prior to submission to Lancashire County Council. The headteacher/EVC to approve all Type A visits and to approve all other Type B visits for submission to Lancashire County Council. The decisions to be reported to the governing body meeting each term.

A governor enquired if the governing body and management committee were the same entity. The headteacher confirmed it was.

The headteacher was requested to return the e-proforma to the county council by 9 July 2021.

Headteacher

b) Approval and Evaluation of Visits

There were no visits to approve at the time of the meeting.

The governing body received a report on recent visits in relation to the impact and benefits for pupils. Educational visits discussed included:

- Bassenfell Manor Christian Outdoor Centre, at Bassenthwaite, Keswick.
- Beacon Fell.

Miss Huddleston explained that this was the first educational visit for year 6 and a new activity centre for the school. It had been an excellent week, and they had been relieved to get there. Going forward it was a location they would consider again.

The deputy headteacher thanked all the accompanying staff for their contribution to making the trip a success.

Mrs Redmayne had reported on a trip to Beacon fell at the curriculum committee.

Governors noted that a trip to Lockerbie in September 2021 had been approved, staff were hopeful it would go ahead.

21.31 Policies and Procedures

a) Collecting Children from School Policy

The headteacher referred to the new 'Collecting Children from School Policy' that had been previously circulated. The policy had been written as a result of an enquiry from a parent and should be read in

conjunction with the Walking to and from School Policy, the policy was for older siblings collecting a younger sibling.

Mrs Aylott explained the difficulty she had finding specific age related guidance, she had referred to the legal guidance that was relevant in early years and KS1 where it must be an adult. KS2 was a little woollier, essentially the collecting child could be a sibling aged 13 plus and this aligned with what other schools had implemented and national guidance. The forms made it clear the responsibility was with the parents and they were designating the role, and as long as they realised it was parental choice that it would be accepted. It was a formalised document.

A governor responded that the document was sensible and clear, and it cemented the school position formally. However, she had noted that section three, extra collection procedure, was not what happened in practice. The headteacher commented that 1) the legality side of the club was run by school was one thing, or 2) if the club was external ie karate, they had to sign a transfer of deed control document, a legal document to say they were responsible. Dr Long suggested the policy should specify which one and suggested bracketing the wording to make it clear it did not apply to external clubs. Mrs Aylott thanked Dr Long accepting that she had not considered external providers.

Subject to the amendment the governing body approved the policy.

b) Performance Management and Pay

In preparation for the performance management of staff in the autumn term, the governing body confirmed that the following arrangements were in place:

- a committee to undertake the appraisal of the headteacher's performance and the validity of the appraisal process across the school (Miss A Goddard, Mrs A Quainoo, Mr K Weatherill);
- the school had bought into the county council Schools Advisory Service for advice regarding the appraisal of the headteacher;
- a committee to undertake pay decisions in relation to the headteacher and teacher's pay (Mrs I Jolly, 2 untainted governors);
- relevant training had been undertaken by governors to assist them in fulfilling their duties;
- consideration would be given to the changed school context when reviewing performance.

c) HR Policies

The governing body confirmed adoption of the following model Lancashire Personnel Policies and Procedures:

- Directed Time
- Extreme / unpredictable Weather Guidance
- Whistleblowing Policy (Delegated Schools)

d) Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The governing body noted the options available for the appointment procedure of chair and vice-chair.

It was agreed that:

- nominations would be accepted both self and other nomination;
- nominations would be received both prior to and at the meeting;
- voting would be by a show of hands;
- in the event of a tie, a second vote would be held; if the outcome remained tied then lots would be drawn;
- in the event of only one candidate being nominated for a position the candidate would be asked to leave the room while a vote was held.

21.32 Governor Training and Development

In the absence of the link governor Dr Long reported that Mrs Atkinson and Mrs Jolly had undertaken some training. Governors noted that SIAMS training would support the preparation for the inspections that was expected later in the new academic year.

All training should be reported to Mr Mynott.

Attention was drawn to the new courses available through Governor Services. Training was currently being delivered by video conference. The availability of mentors for new chairs of governors was noted.

It was noted that all governors had a Schools' Portal account.

21.33 School Admissions

The governing body confirmed that it was not looking to change the school's oversubscription criteria or admission numbers for September 2023 admissions, and that it had consulted on its admissions policy within the last seven years.

The chair informed governors that a more detailed process for managing admissions had been introduced that gave children adopted from state care outside of England equal admissions priority as children who were previously looked after in England. Mr Weatherill expressed his view that the school's Admission Policy complied with the requirements and that the school never discriminated. The headteacher added that there was a requirement to evidence compliance.

A governors asked which body required the changes. The headteacher responded that the local authority had acted on behalf of national government.

A governor enquired if the change would be specified or would the acronym IAPLAC be used. Mrs Aylott replied to be complainant there was a form of specific wording.

Governors resolved to approve the amendment to the policy. The school business manager would be asked to amend the policy.

Mrs Malin

21.34 Information, updates and items for further discussion as appropriate

The governing body noted the guidance and additional information in relation to:

- a) Chairs' Forum
- b) LASGB
- c) Update from School Safeguarding
- d) Ofsted Update

Governors noted that an Ofsted inspection was expected during the next academic year.

- e) Clerking Service Level Agreement.

21.35 Any Other Business

The headteacher informed governors that the government had allocated an additional bank holiday to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee; the school would be open 194 days in 2022/23. The bank holiday fell in the same week as the summer half-term holiday; however the day could be taken at any point throughout the year. Governors agreed to take it on Monday 1 November 2022 to extend the October 2022 break.

21.36 Confidentiality

Governors were reminded that all matters discussed at governing body meetings were not for general discussion outside the meeting.

The governing body considered whether any items discussed were required to be recorded in the minutes as confidential; that is, that should not be made available to the general public should a request be received to view governing body papers.

For the purpose of the minutes there were no items deemed confidential.

21.37 Date and Time of Future Meetings

The governing body confirmed the pattern of dates for the 2021/22 academic year as follows, Miss Huddleston would circulate the sub-committee meeting;

Autumn Term

Governing body meeting Tuesday 9 November 2021 at 5.30pm

Spring Term

Governing body meeting Tuesday 8 March 2022 at 5.30pm

Summer Term

Governing body meeting Tuesday 5 July 2022 at 5.30pm

On behalf of the governing body the chair thanked the headteacher for her 18 years of service and contribution to the success of the school and wished her well for the future, he added that it was disappointing that they were unable to have a face to face farewell.

Mrs Aylott said she hoped there would be a year 6 end of year party and a tea party with staff and governors on her final day.

The headteacher appreciated the input from governors particularly through Covid-19 saying many had offered words of wisdom and it had been appreciated. She continued that the school would be in safe hands and she looked forward to hearing the school had made a good headteacher appointment in due course.

The chair thanked governors for their attendance and input and, before closing the meeting at 7.32pm, said the Grace.

Signed: _____
(Chair)

Date: _____