



# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## Minutes of Full Governors Meeting

Remote meeting via Zoom

**PRESENT:** Julian Rakowski, Headteacher (JR), Maggie Jones, Chair of Governors (MJ), Gerard McMahon (GM), Philip Stark, Chair of R&C Committee (PStark), Danita Rowlands (DR), Una Whybrew (UW), Louise Brooks Chair of S&O Committee (LB), Priya Sakorkar (PSakorkar), Patricia Salume (PSalume)

**OBSERVER:** Kate Kenny, Deputy Headteacher

**CLERK:** Cath McNee

Item	Discussion	Action
1a	The Headteacher started the meeting with a prayer.	
1b	<b>Apologies</b>  Apologies were received and accepted from Anita Marshall, Hilary Turner and Fr Cristiano Braz	
1c	<b>Chairs Action and Report</b>  The Chair informed Governors she has signed a memorandum of understanding with the LEA to progress the Safer Streets scheme. School has given an understanding we will implement the scheme if the consultation with neighbours comes back favourably.  Staff thanked the Chair and Governors for the treat provided by the Governing Body for the staff inset.	
1d	<b>Accuracy and matters arising from last minutes – 23 March 2021</b>  Minutes were approved and agreed by Governors.  The Chair referred to point 2b and asked the Headteacher if the catch up scheme benefited the children? The Headteacher said the ability to measure the catch-up programme in a macro type fashion is difficult when the children improve in a micro manner. Children have improved in increments, but we can't say they have improved in leaps and bounds, they have not moved grade boundaries, for example, from secure to exceeding.  The Chair asked if there is a report to show how many interventions the children have received. The headteacher said no. One was	

	<p>published for Governors last meeting for autumn interventions and the next one will be at the end of summer.</p> <p>The Chair referred to point 2c and asked about the wellbeing of children. The Headteacher said the fact children are in school has made a big difference.</p> <p>The Headteacher referred to point 4a and confirmed the insurance was a duplication and it's not on the budget anymore.</p> <p>The Headteacher updated Governors about Safer Streets. Balfour Road is a one-way street. The suggestion from Safer Streets was to close York Avenue off and then have a further barrier at York Avenue and Station Approach junction. Cars exiting can leave. The Headteacher said he does not know how that will go down with residents.</p>	
1e	<p><b>Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
1f	<p><b>Governor's Action Plan</b></p> <p>The Chair said the meeting to review the Governor's Action Plan has not been organised yet. The Chair will be in touch with members to organise the meeting before the half term, suggesting w/c 24 May.</p> <p>The Chair suggested holding a Governors Forum after half-term when restrictions are lifted. A Governor asked if the meeting is for parents? The Chair said the meeting would be for parents to meet Govenors and ask questions.</p> <p>The Chair asked Governors for suggestions for a topic? The Chair suggested the wellbeing of children after lockdown could be a possibility but all suggestions will be considered at the Working Groups next meeting. The Headteacher suggested having a year group representative.</p> <p><i>The Chair referred to Governor Zone tab on the school website and said it is empty.</i> The Headteacher said 'Meet the Governors' is under the parent section. Governor documents are all on GovernorHub. The Headteacher agreed to remove Governor Zone from the school website as it is not used.</p> <p>The Chair said a Parent Governor election will be held after half term. Headteacher agreed.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>All</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>JR</p>
1g	<p><b>Any urgent business pre-notified to Chair</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
1h	<p><b>Register of Interests</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
1i	<p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p>	

	None.	
1l	<b>AOB</b>  None.	
2.	<b>Governors' Purpose: vision, ethos and direction, educational performance, financial performance. Part One.</b>	
2a	<p><b>Pupil and staff wellbeing update</b> The Headteacher gave an update and said staff thanked Governors for the treat supplied by Governors for the inset evening.</p> <p>Pupil wellbeing. Headteacher said children have settled in well. Catch-up programme is going strong. Small behaviour issues.</p> <p>Mental health. Going well and moving in the right direction.</p> <p>The Deputy Headteacher said behaviour is very good considering children have been off so long.</p> <p><i>The Chair asked about staff mental health? Do they have access to support mechanisms? The Headteacher said we have 3 class teachers per year group. Teachers can spot if something isn't going well with a member of their year group.</i></p> <p>Staff Governor said most staff are happy and glad we are back to normal.</p> <p><i>Governor asked if all staff and children back in school? The Headteacher said all staff and children are back in school with respect to COVID19.</i></p>	
2b	<p><b>Reception toilet block update</b></p> <p>The Headteacher said the Reception toilets are looking good and the work has gone well with 2 items to be upgraded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Damp found – coming in from a down pipe possible or a badly pointed wall. Builders have had to leave the staff toilet to let it dry out. Builders will return to finish in the half term.</li> <li>- Shower in disabled toilet - builders did not get the drop right in the shower tray and water can leak out. Builders will return in half term to fix the problem.</li> </ul>	
2c	<p><b>Ealing Schools Catering Consortium update</b></p> <p>Harrisons lost the Ealing Schools Catering Consortium last year. ISS will begin in September. Harrisons staff who work within school have been transferred over to ISS.</p> <p><i>Governor asked if it was it a financial decision or was quality slipping? The Headteacher said quality was not slipping in our school. Some of the portion sizes may have been small but then children did not always avail of the salad bar or choose the vegetables etc.</i></p>	

	<p>The Headteacher said other companies have offered their services, but by being part of the Ealing Catering Consortium, we don't have to follow up with other companies and deal with payments etc. we don't have the time or the experience.</p> <p><i>Governor asked how Ealing score the catering companies? The Service goes out to tender. The Headteacher said ISS will provide new posters, new trays, exciting menus, it will make a difference to the children.</i></p> <p><i>Governor asked if the payments systems will be carried over. The Headteacher said payments will be taken over by ISS. Governor asked what happens if parents have credit? Will that be carried over to ISS? The Headteacher said he will find out and report back.</i></p> <p><i>Governor requested to see the presentation from ISS. The Headteacher said he will try and find a copy of the presentation and make available.</i></p>	<p>JR</p> <p>JR</p>
2d	<p><b>Policy updates</b></p> <p><b>The Headteacher and Governors reviewed policies as follows:</b></p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and adopted/approved with minor amendments to be made by the Headteacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accessibility Plan – policy approved.</li> <li>- Guidance on the Administration of Medicines - policy approved.</li> <li>- Admissions Policy 2023-2024 – Cover page to be added. Policy agreed subject to insertion of LEA deadline when available.</li> <li>- Nursery Admissions Policy 2023-2024 – Cover page to be added. Policy agreed subject to insertion of LEA deadline when available.</li> <li>- Anti-Bullying Policy – policy approved.</li> <li>- Anti-Radicalisation and Prevent Policy – policy approved.</li> </ul> <p>PStark Proposed JM Seconded</p> <p><i>Governor asked why the Admissions and Nursery Admissions Policies are being reviewed so early? Headteacher will find out and let Governors know.</i></p> <p>Due to time constraints, it was not possible to review the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asthma Policy</li> <li>- School Charging Policy</li> </ul>	<p>JR</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational Visits Policy</li> <li>- Equality Policy</li> <li>- Fire Plan and Major Incident Plan</li> <li>- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Privacy Notice</li> <li>- Gifted and Talented Policy</li> <li>- Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>- Out of Hours School Learning</li> <li>- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed the Headteacher will send an email with the policy amendments for Governors to review. Once Governors have reviewed the amendments the policies will be considered at sub-committee meetings and recommended for approval at following full Governors.</p>	JR
2e	<p><b>Academies update</b></p> <p>Headteacher informed Governors he attended a National Association of Headteachers meeting on academies.</p> <p>The Headteacher said Ealing has not been approached by the Diocese. The Diocese want us to undertake a process of due diligence. The Diocese maintain the stance that no school will be forced to academise.</p> <p>The Headteacher surmises that the Diocese only want schools that do not have a strong local authority to academise and Ealing has a strong local authority. No school in Ealing has been asked to academise yet.</p>	
3  3a	<p><b>Governors' Purpose: visions, ethos and direction, educational performance, financial performance – Part 2</b></p> <p><b>To enquire into, and approve budget for 2021/2022</b></p> <p>The Headteacher said he met with the school bursar, admin staff and Chair of the R&amp;C Committee to plan the 3-year budget. Previously we only had to agree a one-year budget, but Ealing now ask for 3 years.</p> <p>The Headteacher explained the income we get is fluid, we don't always get the money in one tranche so we have to be aware the figure can change slightly.</p> <p>The Headteacher said the budget was set with due diligence. The Chair of the R&amp;C Committee agreed.</p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors we have a balanced budget. The process involves looking at last year's budget – some headings have been added to and some headings have been reduced.</p> <p>The Headteacher said Governor requests for IT and resources for mental health have been added into the budget.</p>	

*The Chair enquired about salaries going up by 1.5%, how was that figure arrived at?* The Headteacher said that was the advice from the school bursarial service to set the figure at 1.5%.

The Headteacher said salaries are costing a fortune, we have experienced staff.

*Governor asked if there is movement in the workforce with retirement.* The Headteacher said at each performance management meeting he discusses with staff where they see themselves in the future with regards to a promotion or moving school. He said one teacher is retiring this year.

*The Chair said we have a policy of recruiting at the bottom.* Headteacher agreed and said that we usually recruit final year students from St. Mary's after they have spent an 8-week placement at our school.

Governor said good staff are a school's best asset. It is a difficult balance. Good staff have an impact on results.

*Governor asked what is the headcount for staff?* About 70 staff members.

A Governor said they had recently attended Effective Governance training about finance. Other Governors on the training course said they felt there was no flexibility within school budgets.

*Governor said I do not see as it stands now where we should work, the budget is set in stone. It is difficult to see where we can add value. There is no room for looking at different ways to do things.* The Headteacher agreed and said we are fixed cost laden. Energy costs, photocopying etc. are the sort of areas where we have flexibility. It is about the ability to think outside the box and think about where we can save money.

*Governor asked how and where is that being done? Where do we have the space as a Governing Body, a business manager should be doing that, but we don't have a business manager.*

*Governor said support for the Admin Staff is not in the budget.* The Headteacher said Admin staff want to think carefully about the right person to alleviate the morning rush. Currently they do not require it. Governor suggested Kick Start programme from the government – an apprentice paid for by the Government.

*Governor asked who is taking on the role of the business manager?* The Headteacher said a member of the admin team does the school business manager role, the school bursarial service praised the work that was done by that member of staff.

The Chair of R&C committee agreed there is not much flexibility within the budget. Expenditure is dominated by salaries which is inflexible. Income is not substantially within our control. How we manage likely expected pupil numbers is the key.

	<p><i>Governor asked who is strategically thinking about the future and how things can be done differently?</i></p> <p>Governor said 85% of budget is spent on salaries. Governors can only influence a very small part of the budget.</p> <p>The Chair said a small amount is spent on educational resources used by the children.</p> <p>The Chair suggested the Headteacher and Chair of R&amp;C have a meeting to take the issue further.</p> <p>Headteacher asked if Governors want to continue with Spanish, school counsellor and music. Headteacher said this is included in the budget.</p> <p><i>Governor asked about budget heading miscellaneous £34,500, was the money for computers?</i> The Headteacher said that figure has reduced to £31,449 as we had to balance a teacher salary because the teacher was on a lower scale than should have been. Figure is now £31,449. Miscellaneous is an account that extra funds can be drawn from to balance the budget. Computers is under Computer Hardware £35,000.</p> <p><i>Governor asked what R&amp;M mechanical is?</i> Headteacher said it stands for Repair and Maintenance, has been cut by £3k.</p> <p>The Headteacher said the carry forward is £240,000.</p> <p>Headteacher said we still have some unspent catch-up programme money and free school meals money included in the carry forward.</p> <p>The budget was agreed and approved by Governors.</p> <p>GM Proposed PStark Seconded</p> <p>Governor said pupil numbers are looking healthy, better at the lower end of the school.</p> <p><i>Governor asked about the PTA and lack of fund raising due to Covid-19.</i> The Headteacher agreed. No school fete which generates an income. The PTA have not spent any money so still have a healthy budget.</p>	
4.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
	<p><b>Meeting finished at 9.20pm</b></p>	

*Maggie Jones*

Maggie Jones, Chair of Governors, 13 July 2021