



## **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 119th meeting of the Governing Body which took place on Thursday 1 December 2016 at the school starting at 1700.**

Present:

Mary Hutchinson (Chair of Governors)	Mark Edwards
Anna Boshier (Head Teacher)	Paul Gribben
Bobby Jasper	Kenneth Chan
Jo Gibson	Carlette Victoire-Nijjar
Bruno Cotta	Margaret Connell
Father David Camilleri	Lisa Weeks (Deputy Head Teacher)
Elizabeth Atkinson (co-opted)	

In Attendance: Dominique Wells (Clerk to the Governors)

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

#### **1. Opening Prayers**

The meeting was opened with the Umbrella Trust prayer.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

None.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest** in items in this Agenda.

None.

#### **4. Committee Matters**

Carlette Victoire-Nijjar was welcomed as the new elected Parent Governor.

The Governors' Code of Conduct was received and signed by each Governor.

#### **5. Minutes** of the previous meeting, held in June 2016, were reviewed.

##### **5.1. Confirmation of Accuracy**

The minutes were deemed to be an accurate record.

**Minutes agreed by all.**

##### **5.2. Matters Arising**

None.

## 6. Head Teacher's Report

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

- The number of pupils on the roll is currently 214.
- Attendance and punctuality has rarely been below 97% recently, which is excellent.
- A review from the School Improvement Adviser, David Gosling, shows the school to be outstanding – the Head Teacher would circulate the review to all Governors. **Action: ABo.**

It was noted that the whole school community had responded well to the many changes necessary and the teaching continues to be outstanding. David Gosling would be returning to carry out his next review in the near future.

- Mrs Richards is continuing to with the maths project and Mrs Weeks has introduced 'Spellodrome' to the school. Pupils are already proficient in Maths and spelling, but the aim is to continue to improve and build further on their progress.
- The Y5 and Y6 school journeys had taken place and it was noted that the pupils showed resilience, teamwork and, most importantly, kindness towards each other during the activities undertaken. Next year's trips have already been booked with Kingswood and Liddington. Although they are both activity-based trips, each venue offers very different activities and challenges. Both are considered good value.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Is there any update concerning the DfE bid for improvements to the KS2 toilets? Are the Fire Audit priorities being addressed?*

*A: Re: fire audit, the school is currently compliant and safe, but needs some work for further improvement and updating/upgrading. A statutory document stating that the work to be done would total c.£20k-30k. The school intends to put in a bid for the EfA to pay. The KS2 toilets bid would be for a condition and improvement fund for which the school has to demonstrate clear and present dangers. The KS2 toilets present a Health and Safety problem and c£90k of funding would be requested.*

*Q: Who did the audit?*

*A: An independent company who issues the statutory document.*

*Q: Are boundary issues included?*

*A: No.*

- The Umbrella Trust Terms of Reference have now been written and the Trust is now able to focus on standards.
- There were double the numbers of parents attending the Open Morning this year compared to last year. The admissions for September 2017 include 14 siblings.
- The data report was discussed at the Children and Learning Meeting. Teachers were working 'in the dark' with last year's Y6, but this year they feel more confident that the children will be prepared for the SATs.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Is the new testing at a different level?*

*A: There has been a huge step up, particularly in writing.*

*Q: Has there been pressure on the children?*

*A: The school manages this very well: the children are encouraged to do their best and the teachers take on the burden, but the children themselves want to succeed and take up the challenge.*

- The school has received a Gold level sports award and an outstanding international award.

## **7. Chair's Report**

### **Trustees' Report**

This has been completed and, once signed, will be distributed and uploaded to the website. The Chair thanked the Bursar for his work on the Trustees' Report, and in turn he thanked the Chair and Head Teacher for their input into this.

### **Governor Morning**

The Chair thanked Anna for interpreting RAISE online in its current form for Governors. She thanked those Governors who were able to attend and reported that they had met the School Council, who brought up the issue of the KS2 toilets. The children were articulate and enjoyed talking to the Governors.

### **Committee Membership**

The Chair invited Governors to join the committees.

### **Governor Training**

The school is trialling the Bexley package for two terms and Carlette Victoire-Nijjar and Margaret Connell attended their New Governor training course. There may, however, be potential issue with differences between Local Authorities, so the Governors would discuss Octavo's 2017-18 courses when they are published in the Summer 2017 and whether it would be worth moving to Octavo. It was noted that the courses run by the Commission were not parallel to the Local Authority courses.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: How much is the Octavo package?*

*A: £1,200 as a package, or £104 for each individual session.*

### **Other**

The Umbrella Trust was working on a logo for the Trust.

The Governors sent their good wishes to Miss Spedding who has recently started her maternity leave.

## **8. Budget Monitoring Report**

The report was distributed prior to the meeting.

The Bursar noted that the cashflow position is still strong, but there are projects which may require outlay and so it was important to run a contingency. If the bid for the KS2 toilets is unsuccessful, the school will have to use the contingency.

Additionally, budget cuts are anticipated so the school should be prepared for this. Under the National Funding formula, it is unlikely that the school will be worse-off per pupil, but there may be other areas where funding will be reduced, eg. SEN. Nevertheless, it is considered that the school is better prepared than most.

The Bursar clarified that, although the balance sheet was showing as negative, this is only because it includes the LA pension liability and the figures presented are not a concern.

## 9. Committee Reports

### 9.1 Resources and Audit Committee/9.2 Children & Learning Committee

The draft minutes of the recent meetings of these committees would be received via email in the New Year.

### 9.3 Terms of Reference

These were ratified for both committees.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Is there anything to report regarding the Admissions Committee?*

*A: The policy had been submitted to the Local Authority and the Diocese and some amendments are required on the wording.*

## 10. Reports from Subject Ambassador Governors

A science week had taken place, with five activities based around two research concepts – gravity and evolution. Included within the activities were science experiments, planning for investigations and looking at science in the news.

'Spellodrome' has been introduced to the school to help improve spelling within the school. It is linked to Mathematics inasmuch as it has a competitive element to it. It is used mainly in school, but pupils can access it also at home. Each class has had a 'launch day' to introduce it.

Mrs Richards is still continuing with the Maths project.

Governors were invited to take the role of Humanities Subject Ambassador.

## 11. Holding the School to Account

The main responses to questions posed were as follows:

- **Achievement** - Covered in the Head Teacher's Report.
- **Work scrutinies** - These show that the children are responding well to the marking as improved work show later on. Cursive writing has helped to improve presentation.
- **SEN/Pupil Premium progress** - Stated children are showing above average progress and the KS1 results for Pupil Premium children are above national average.
- **Teacher training** - The focus has been mainly on spelling and reasoning in Maths. Literacy training at Warren Road has been reported to be very good, and teachers have requested more. The NQT training is also going very well. Specialist dance training has helped give teachers more confidence in this area.

There have been changes within the staff, but these are not perceived as barriers to teaching and are being well-managed – the NQT is settling in well, the maternity cover is in place and the teacher is well-known to the children, and a consultant has been helping the new Reception team.

- **Personal development & welfare** - confidential items.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Are children in KS1 entitled to Free School Meals, even though they get free meals automatically?*

*A: Yes, the parents still need to fill in a form as they are entitled to the funding.*

- **Attendance/punctuality** - currently excellent.
- **Performance management** - this process has taken place for both teaching and non-teaching staff. Attendance among staff is reported to be very good.

Governors were invited to attend the INSET day on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 at which the focus would be updating the SDIP.

## 12. Policies

Those not requiring further amendment have been ratified through committee meetings.

### **Lockdown policy**

The procedure for offsite children was discussed.

It was noted that even if parents were advised to keep away in the event of a lockdown, they would most likely still want to come for their children.

The policy was adopted.

### **Summer Assessment Information Report**

This was explained by the Head Teacher and Governors were advised to keep this data and file for easy access for OFSTED.

## 13. Umbrella Trust

This was reported to be going well. St James' will chair one more meeting in March and then the Trust will be chaired by Holy Innocents. The Bursar commended the Chair for her hard work in relation to the Trust.

## 14. Any Other Business

It was reported that an in-year admission appeal had been received and would be taking place the following week.

During the Schools Forum Meeting for Bromley, the Local Authority was failed by OFSTED for safeguarding as it had not been quick enough to improve.

Elizabeth Atkinson wished to commend the school choir who have been working very hard to learn a difficult work for a collaborative performance with a local choral society.

The school has signed up for PREVENT training which is available to both Governors and staff. Governors were given relevant details and requested to do the training. They should also bring in a copy of the certificate for the school files.

### **15. Dates of next meetings**

Resources & Audit Committee - Tuesday 24 January 2017 at 4.30pm

Governor Morning - Tuesday 7 February 2017 at 9.15am

Admissions Committee - Tuesday 28 February 2017 at 4.00pm  
(to endorse process used for admissions)

Children & Learning Committee - Tuesday 28 February 2017 at 4.30pm

Full Governing Body - Thursday 16 March 2017 at 5.00pm

**16. The Closing Prayer** was led by Fr David Camilleri.

**The meeting closed at 1825.**