



## **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 123<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Governing Body which took place on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at the school starting at 1700.**

Present:

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

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 a prayer led by Father David Camilleri.

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

Elizabeth Atkinson

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

None.

#### **4. Minutes** of the previous meeting, held in November 2017, were reviewed.

##### **4.1. Confirmation of Accuracy**

Amendments as follows:

##### Item 7: Holding the School to Account

'Much CPD is being undertaken by staff [*add:*] and records are kept by the Deputy Head Teacher.'

'Mr Parr has attended NQT training....with records kept by [replace 'Deputy Head Teacher':] his mentor.'

'The external peer review .... [*amend:*] 70% outstanding teaching and the remainder good with outstanding features.'

'There are six [*add:*] 'Post Looked After' children.

#### Item 9: Chair of Governors' Report

'Governor afternoons [*amend:*] and mornings ...'

#### Item 10: Trustees Report

'The School currently has a strong position but [*amend:*] there are uncertain times ahead regarding future funding.'

#### Item 12: Governor Reports – Subject Ambassadors

'[*Add:*] New subject ambassadors ...'

**Subject to the above amendments, the minutes agreed by all.**

### **4.2. Matters Arising**

#### Item 7: Holding the School to Account

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Are children being given more time to respond to the questions asked?*

*A: Yes, particularly in early work.*

*Q: Is there any update on the children with persistent attendance issues?*

*A: Yes, there has been marked improvement.*

## **5. 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 points:

- The Head Teacher clarified that the term 'Children Looked After' was an umbrella term for fostered, adopted, children in care, etc. These children are looked after by Bromley's 'Virtual Head' except the adopted and fostered children, who are 'Post Looked After' children. Those under the Virtual Head are recognised in the data – the funding comes to the school via the Virtual Head. Post Looked After children are not showing on the data – the funding comes to the school directly. From September, all funding will be received via the Virtual Head. Those privately adopted or adopted abroad do not receive funding.
- Miss Atkinson has recently given birth to baby Alice. The teaching of Y3 has been uninterrupted and smooth with Mrs Richards taking on the role of acting SENCO and Mrs Partridge taking the music teaching.
- An information document concerning social media has been shared with parents.
- Character education is being instigated.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: What is Pupil Premium funding being spent on?*

*A: Adults to support within the class setting. All Pupil Premium children benefit from this, not only those who are most needy.*

## 6. Holding the School to Account

Many questions had already been answered in the Head Teacher's Report as per item 5 above. Others were addressed as below:

- Expected results:
  - Early Years – 89% Good Level of Development
  - Y2 – 83% Expected, 23% Exceeding
  - Y6 – 87% Expected, 37% Exceeding
- Vulnerable children should make expected progress.
- Monitoring of underperforming EGT children is addressed in several ways: discussion in staff meetings, staff being aware of indicators, meetings with the class teachers, talking to the children, use of classroom monitor. The process is an ongoing one.
- NACE Award – the framework has changed – the School is looking into requirements.
- Primary Maths Challenge – some children achieved Silver this year.
- Science & Humanities – an outstanding school offers a broad curriculum. The NQT+2 teacher is the Humanities Lead and book scrutinies are undertaken as a staff group with a focus on responses to marking across the curriculum. CPD is undertaken by newer staff.
- Intensive work on phonics is being given to those who need it.

*Michelle Wilson joined the meeting at 17:40.*

- The NQT has weekly meetings with his mentor to discuss issues and targets. He has an experienced TA with him in the classroom and weekly CPD at Warren Road (who offer a very good package). He undertakes classroom observations and the children respond well to him.
- No reports of bullying or homophobia to report. There was one incident of racism recorded, but the conclusion was that merely part of playground chat. A bullying questionnaire had been given to the children, from which it would appear that most bullying takes place online at home via gaming websites.
- Safeguarding – No CAFs. Confidential item.
- The SDIP was covered in the Children & Learning Committee meeting and would be updated after the Spring Term.
- Staff performance management – termly observations have been carried out.
- Prevent training has been undertaken by staff and Governors. British Values are embedded within the School and are visible around the School. Words such as 'radicalisation' and 'extremism' are considered more appropriately used at KS3 level and therefore avoided where possible, but if they are brought up, they are discussed in a child-appropriate way. Philosophy for Children teaches the children tolerance and respect for others' opinions even if we don't agree with them. 'Educate against Hate' provides resources for pupils, teachers and parents.

## **7. Chair of Governors' Report**

The Chair's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The Chair highlighted points in her report as follows:

- Thanks offered to Mr & Mrs Wells and Mrs Bromfield volunteering to take the school choir while Miss Atkinson is on maternity leave.
- Thanks to Mary Jones for her dedication regarding the admissions process in spite of adverse weather. Mary Jones in turn thanked Governors for allowing her to take this sabbatical.
- All Governors were invited to attend the RE Inspection, especially if they have children in the school. The School will be given only two days' notice and the Chair would put together questions that may be asked. The Inspection is organised by the Commission, but could be undertaken from outside of the Diocese.

## **8. Budget Monitoring Report**

The Bursar reported that the new finance package, Sage, was now running. Work had been done to ensure data had been transferred correctly onto the new system and all seems fine. The Finance Officer was commended for her hard work on the transition. Thanks were also offered to the Bursar and to Kenneth Chan for overseeing this.

The School is still in a healthy position with a strong cashflow. There is a good current ratio (ie. assets vs liabilities) of 3:1.

The School would be informed of next year's funding soon – caution is being exercised, but the School is in a good position to be prepared for the outcome.

The PTA funding for computers was gratefully received as the School would otherwise have needed to find funding itself.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: How did the PTA accumulate so much money?*

*A: The PTA are very active fundraisers and the amount was accumulated over a relatively short period. They themselves were pleasantly surprised about what they could give to the School.*

*Q: When will the computers be installed?*

*A: Over the Easter holiday.*

*Q: Has there been a hard disk upgrade?*

*A: Yes, and a new IT provider has been appointed. There will be a weekly visit from a technician, as was the case with the previous provider.*

*Q: Could the column headings of the reports be further explained?*

*A: The Bursar is working on the best reports which can be generated from the new system to be able to give to Governors.*

## 9. Committee Reports

The minutes from the recent Resources & Audit Committee and Children & Learning Committee meetings were received.

*Paul Gribben left the meeting at 17:50.*

## 10. Reports from Subject Ambassadors/Link Governors

### Science/EGT Ambassador

Bruno Cotta reported that he had met with Mrs Richards. There would be a new after school club, 'Mad Science', starting after Easter. The possibility of obtaining microscopes would be investigated.

Regarding EGT, a register is kept and children are tracked and monitored. There is a growing cohort of those at Exceeding level. This demonstrates the 'value added' of the school and the support of parents. The impressive results of the Maths Challenge were noted.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Regarding staff wellbeing, can this be an area to address?*

*A: It is recognised that staff may be under stress in their personal life and that, because the School is small, they must wear many 'hats'. Staff are very supportive of each other. Perhaps a questionnaire could be sent out to staff to see where extra support could be given.*

## 11. RE SEF

Two documents are being put together using the revised format in place from September.

Part 2 had been completed and sent to Governors for comment.

Part 1 is still work-in-progress.

A suggestion from Governors was that the bullet points could be ordered such that those initiatives which are more specific to our School and its Catholic ethos could be presented before those that all schools would implement in order to make our School stand out. Eg. Lenten reflections, classes going to 9.30 Mass in the church shows the School is engaging with the church, sending out newsletters.

The visit to the synagogue had to be postponed – an alternative date would be found. A visit to a Hindu temple would be arranged.

The children's work is displayed in the hall.

## 12. Policies

### **e-Safety**

This area was noted as being very open-ended as there are so many ways in which children can access online chat rooms, etc. – eg. Roblox, on phones. It was recognised that children need to be educated about protecting their identity online. It was also recognised how peer pressure can become overwhelming and that the use of social media within the family itself also has an effect on how the children view it. Schools

and parents can educate their children about 'stranger danger', but the dangers of peer-to-peer interaction is missing. 10-13 is a vulnerable age range.

### **Literacy Policy**

A small typo was noted and would be amended.

### **DT Policy**

### **Governor Monitoring Visit Policy**

### **Governor Visits**

**All policies were adopted.**

## **13. Umbrella Trust**

This is going well. The area of finance has been addressed, there have been subject leader cluster groups, Head Teacher Meetings and the Head Teachers are supportive of each other.

The only issue to date was that the appointment of Pam Fearnley had been disappointing. She had visited the School mainly to look at data, SEF and SDIP, but the report produced lacked any evidence. The School would have to pay for more of her time if they wanted more detail. This would be fed back to the Umbrella Trust. She is coming back in the Summer to look at teaching and learning.

## **14. Any other business**

Father David thanked the School for continuing to open despite the snow – many parents had expressed their gratitude. The Head Teacher affirmed that staff had been very supportive during this time, especially the caretaker.

The idea of parental giving has been dropped.

Mary Hutchinson has taken on the role of Equal Opportunities Governor.

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

Governor Morning	Tuesday 24 April at 9.15am
Resources & Audit Committee	Tuesday 1 May at 4.30pm
Children & Learning Committee	Tuesday 15 May at 4.30pm
Full Governing Body	Thursday 14 June at 5.00pm

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

**The meeting closed at 18.30**