



# 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 129<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Governing Body which took place on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at the school starting at 1700.**

Present:

Mary Hutchinson (Chair of Governors)  
Michelle Wilson (Deputy Head Teacher)  
Kenneth Chan  
Amanda Garlick

Carlette Victoire-Nijjar  
Mark Hutchins  
Catriona Hardiman

In Attendance: Dominique Wells (Clerk)  
Martin D'Souza

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**

Lisa Weeks (Head Teacher)  
Paul Gribben  
Margaret Connell  
Mark Edwards  
Fr David Camilleri

Martin D'Souza, whose application to become Foundation Governor is in process, was welcomed.

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

None.

### **4. Minutes** of the previous meeting, held in November 2019, were reviewed.

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

##### Item 10: Holding the School to Account

Confidential items to be moved to confidential minutes.

##### Item 17: Rôles and Responsibilities

RSE Governor is Mary Hutchinson.

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

## **Matters Arising**

### Item 17: Rôles and Responsibilities

It was noted that staff governors are not able to be link governors due to conflict of interest.

## **5. Head Teacher's Report**

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

- The School had held an International Day at which children and parents came together to share knowledge (and food) of different countries.
- Two visitors had given talks on Online Safety to governors, teachers, parents and children. The children in particular gained a lot from the talks, which were very good. The School had obtained funding to ask the Breck Foundation to speak to both children and parents and all were appreciative of the knowledge gained.
- Calm Caterpillars provide mindfulness activities which the children are all enjoying.
- A resident from Southmore Court had celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and the children had sung 'Happy Birthday' to her. She had thanked them and showed them the card she had received from the Queen.
- Code Blue had gone very well and the children's behaviour was excellent.
- Preparations for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations are going well, including the celebration of Mass by the Archbishop. The mayor would also be attending and Miss Lennon had been invited.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: How can Governors contribute?*

*A: It would be appreciated if Governors would welcome people into Mass and attend the lunch afterwards.*

## **Coronavirus**

The Umbrella Trust had met yesterday agreed a policy which could be amended by the school. The Umbrella Trust Heads are preparing for closure and teachers are preparing resources to send to parents.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: How can the School facilitate home learning for families without computers?*

*A: Photocopies can be arranged.*

The Umbrella Trust meeting planned for next week had been cancelled.

Holy Innocents have cancelled sporting events, St Peter and St Paul have stopped tradesmen and visitors to the school.

The School is reinforcing the importance of washing hands. Door handles and frequently-touched surfaces are wiped regularly before school, after break, before lunch, etc.

Nourish do not yet have contingency. The cleaners have their own policies with high priority on different areas. It is felt they have acted quickly.

Baxters also have contingency and are working remotely.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Will there be a deep clean?*

*A: Yes, during the Easter holidays.*

*Q: Will there be an increase in class sizes in the Umbrella Trust?*

*A: The schools have authority to split class sizes. We are awaiting the decision from Cobra.*

*Q: Have parents been informed?*

*A: We are waiting to see what happens and will give reassurance to parents in the Newsletter. Midfield has decided to close next Friday.*

## **6. Holding the School to Account**

The following points were highlighted by the Deputy Head Teacher:

### **Quality of Education**

CPD in MFL and Computing has been undertaken.

For MFL, at Warren Road, training was focussed on classroom behaviours, French speaking and resources on social media. Book scrutinies were undertaken by the lead and Head Teacher and there is a detailed curriculum map for listening, speaking and writing.

For Computing, Miss Atkinson has attended training focussed on ICT across the curriculum which was fed back to the staff. It covered internet use for reading as well as researching. A session in Tower Hamlets was attended on coding – HSBC resourced this but only in-borough. There is also a focus on how much the ICT suite is being used for cross-curricular work.

Children get feedback from book scrutinies via post-it notes, or verbal feedback from the teacher as to what they liked about the work, and the Head Teacher will also congratulate children.

Interventions are undertaken by both teachers and TAs. It varies but currently mainly teachers lead these in Y3 and Y6 and other interventions are led by TAs.

### **Behaviour**

Confidential items.

### **Personal Development**

Cultural capital – means giving children the opportunity they might not ordinarily have. This has been fostered within the school through judges and banks coming into the school to talk to the children, trips to art galleries, gardening club, etc. The teachers look for opportunities to do this and write them into their medium-term and weekly plans.

The language of feelings in Early Years is about how children can express themselves: how they feel, how they deal with that feeling and empathy. In EY, this is facilitated during circle time and through role play and PSHE sessions for the whole school through Calm Caterpillars and mindfulness resources.

### **Leadership & Management**

The SDIP is reviewed every term (half a day per term with an extra day given last term) and subject leaders look at their subject in relation to the New Ofsted Framework. This is carried out via work scrutinies by the Head Teacher across the year groups. Teachers also monitor their own work and subject.

The overriding priority is currently reading in relation to the New Ofsted Framework – met through CPD and via staff meetings – and the curriculum progress from Years 1 to 6 whereby the subject leaders can see how their subject progresses through the school.

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

This was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. The Chair highlighted that Margaret Connell had been appointed as Vice Chair and that the School has a prospective Governor in Mr D'Souza. She also noted that, from her Ofsted experience at another school, she considered that School is in a good position and would come out well from an inspection. Regarding the forthcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, she requested that Governors make themselves available for Mass and tea if at all possible.

## **8. Budget Monitoring Progress**

The Finance Officer reported that there had not been much change – the budget was on track and the School continues to be prudent.

The School could not obtain help for the pension top-up, however the Finance Offer would look to appeal and reapply.

The bid has been successful and the School is waiting on the outcome of another bid.

The School is looking at increasing letting income and charity donations via Amazon. The 3-year forecast is being looked at and it was noted that after school and breakfast club along with lettings are an important income for the School.

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: What will be the effect on the budget if the school has to close?*

*A: It is not known how much of an impact this will make. For example, for staff on a zero-hour contract, we are unsure as to who carries the cost of sick pay, etc.*

It was recognised that the staff are being sensible at this time and were thanked for this.

Mark Hutchins had gone through the accounts procedures, etc. with the Finance Officer. He reported that it was good that the Umbrella Trust and Baxters were available to her to talk to. The Umbrella Trust would be holding a meeting for Finance Officers – there seem to be additional benefits in having the UT beyond educational ones.

## **9. Committee Reports**

These would be presented at the subsequent committee meetings for review and approval.

## **10. Reports from Subject Ambassadors/Link Governors/Governor Morning**

Mark Hutchins had met Mrs Connolly regarding PE. Sustainable improvements have been made using the Sports Premium money so that, if the funding ceases, the resources are sustainable. The funding also pays for competitions and the coach accompanying the competitors. The PTA helps with coach funding so it may be that they would be able to further help with this. The children find it motivational to have the coach at competitions and they are doing well – they are 2<sup>nd</sup> in the small school category of the Cross Country competition.

Ken Chan had met with Mrs Richards regarding Maths. This is going well, especially with active Maths. There will be a deep dive and meeting with Pam Fearnley.

On Governor Morning, active Maths was observed in the Hall. One Governor raised a point about using ticks and crosses during marking which was taken up and addressed at the recent Children & Learning meeting. The staff were commended for going above and beyond for the children.

## **11. SEND Funding**

*Questions asked by Governors:*

*Q: Is the School doing enough to secure funding for SEND?*

*A: We feel confident that we are able to get the funding that is available. The School does its best for SEND children but the challenge is that it is labour-intensive in time and therefore costly even with volunteers. The School has spent much on intervention.*

Cat Hardiman presented a paper to help the school with this and the School would look at this in detail.

*Cat Hardiman left the meeting at 18:00.*

## **12. Policies**

All policies were circulated prior to the meeting and were ratified and signed.

## **13. Reports**

The School Garden and Forest School reports were circulated prior to the meeting. Governors agreed that they were both excellent initiatives and extended their thanks to the staff involved.

## **14. Half Term Consultation**

This relates to a proposal to have a two-week half term in the Autumn Term. Only 12 schools in the borough do not have this. A consultation would go out to parents, informing them of how it would actually happen and be achieved.

The teachers and assistants have already been asked and the effect on INSET days and twilights was conveyed – the response was different depending on the staff. The School would need to get information from the unions regarding the effect on staff contracts, then the parents could be consulted.

The Umbrella Trust had talked about it and some Head Teachers have already made a decision.

## **15. RE Updates**

Recent advice from the Diocese has meant that the Lenten Reconciliation (which was to have been done in Church) has been done in school. It was not possible to do the same for the Adoration. Fr David spent a whole day at school last week in lieu of not being able to attend Governor meetings. It was acknowledged that the School was lucky to have his support and commitment.

## **16. Umbrella Trust**

Pam Fearnley is due to do a 'deep dive' into Maths tomorrow, looking at progress through the year and planning. The Head Teachers met yesterday to discuss a Coronavirus policy. They were going to speak about Pam Fearnley's review next week, but this has been cancelled. The Finance Officers met this academic year.

## **17. Any other business**

A Governor has requested that papers for meeting be available 7 days prior – this was noted and this will be attempted as far as it is possible.

Members of Year 5 and Year 6 took part in a UT Science Competition and came first.

## **18. Dates of next meetings**

Governor Morning	Wednesday 29 April at 9.15am
Resources & Audit Committee	Tuesday 5 May at 4.30pm
Children & Learning Committee	Tuesday 19 May at 4.30pm
Full Governing Body	Thursday 18 June at 5.00pm

## **19. The Closing Prayer** was led by the Chair

**The meeting closed at 18.45.**