



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Christchurch

Minutes of Governing Body Meeting **Wednesday 14th October 6.15pm**

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Governor Monitoring: not applicable at this meeting

1. Opening Prayer

The meeting was opened with prayers

2. Welcome and apologies

Present: Brigid Hincks - Chair (BH), Liz Rippon - Head (LR), Pete Barry (PB), Margaret Bond (MB), Brian Cassidy (BC), Sinead Cheeseborough (SC), Mike Board (MBd), Peter Hartley (PH), Sam James (SJ), Rachel McMillan (RMc), Vicki Merifield (VM); Nikki Dennison (ND); Nick Mills (NM)

Attending: Gerry Curran (GC) (Deputy Head), Mandy Flack (MF) (Finance Officer/Acting Clerk)

Apologies: Father John Chadwick (JC), Mary Hurl (MH), Alyson Moore (AM) (Clerk)

There is one vacancy for a Foundation Governor.

It was noted that since JC, a Foundation Governor, had missed the last four meetings through illness this would need to be referred to the Diocese.

All governors confirmed they were in a private room and not overheard.

3. Introduce Alyson Moore – new Clerk to the Governors

Alyson Moore had been appointed as new Clerk but, as she was unable to attend the meeting, introductions would take place at the next FGB meeting.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

No nominations had been received in advance of the meeting. BH and PH agreed to be re-appointed as Chair and Vice Chair respectively.

Appointment of Chair: Brigid Hincks proposed by BC, seconded by MB

Appointment of Vice-chair: Peter Hartley proposed by BH, seconded by RMc

Both appointments unanimously approved by the FGB.

It was noted that the governors needed to discuss succession planning in the near future.

5. Declaration of Business Interests

The re-signing of the Register of Business Interest would be organised shortly.

No business interests were declared

6. Minutes of meeting held and matters arising

The minutes of the FGB meeting held on 24th June 2020 were agreed as accurate. In addition, the minutes from the Extra-ordinary meetings on 2nd and 9th July 2020 were also agreed. All sets of minutes signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

There were no matters arising from either the FGB minutes or those from the Extraordinary meetings.

7. School full re-opening and Covid update including attendance

LR advised:-

- It was highlighted that the success of the full re-opening had been reliant on the NHS test and trace system being in fully operational. However, the problems encountered in trying to book tests had been detrimental to both pupil and staff attendance at the start of the term. As a result, it became necessary to ensure that a number of the COVID-19 tests in school were kept for use by key staff should the need arise.
- To date one child (who had not been on the school site at the start of term) and a small number of parents had tested positive for COVID-19. BCP had been very supportive, offering advice together with Public Health and the DfE helpline. The individuals concerned had self-isolated and, due to measures in place, no one else at the school had been required to.
- A daily attendance analysis by year group was shared on screen. The second week showed a dip in attendance levels, partly due to confusion regarding Covid-19 symptoms and the common cold. A letter home to parents clarified when self-isolation and a test were required and attendance had improved since.
- The efforts of GC and the Office Staff were acknowledged for the challenging start to the term.
- Chartwells had provided packed lunches at the start of term. Hot meals resumed from 5th October.
- A remote learning plan was in place which included the option for teachers to record video lessons. For those children self-isolating, home learning resources were available on the school's website as well as packs being sent home.

GC advised:-

- Measures detailed in the COVID Risk Assessment had been implemented, including use of a COVID Screening Form for all visitors to school. In addition, temperature check forms had been introduced in classes to record temperatures for monitoring purposes for when children were sent home with a high temperature.

- A lot of time was being spent dealing with safeguarding issues, with several meetings having been held. **Governor question:** “Were outside agencies involved in these meetings?” Response – yes, most meetings had been virtual but one had been face to face.
- Learning was continuing as normal. However, Autumn 1 assessments had been based on expectation at the end of the previous academic year so as to provide a benchmark. **Governor question:** “Were any classes more behind than others?” Response – as the assessments were only just being carried out, the data was still to be analysed and would be shared at the next Curriculum Meeting. In order to assess progress since the start of term, further assessments would take place in Autumn 2.
- A BCP Fire Officer visited on 7th October to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment. The report was expected in a few weeks’ time and would be shared with the Premises Committee. A fire drill had been carried out at the start of term with fire escape routes altered due to the building works.
- Staff from the Life Education Bus had visited the classes to deliver the sessions that would normally have been located in the bus. Comments were very positive including how well-mannered the children were. A booking had been made for next year.
- Parent showarounds for the next intake were taking place after school, one family at a time with social distancing.
- Parents’ Evening via phone calls was scheduled over the next few weeks.
- Virtual assemblies were being held.
- A PCP SCITT student had started her placement and was proving to be a strong candidate.
- Epipen training had taken place (virtual training) for all staff following one child being prescribed an Epipen over the summer.
- The school photographer was due to come in later in the week.
- Bikeability sessions had been arranged for Year 4. **Governor question:** “What was happening about Year 5 and 6 missing their level 2 session?” Response – there were plans for this to take place later in the year.
- **Governor observation:** the Chair had been impressed with the lunchtime set up and the morale of the children following the reintroduction of hot school meals.

8. Head Teacher’s Report

Questions were invited on the Head Teacher’s report which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

- **Governor challenge:** the governors questioned why one EHCP was taking so long to go through. An explanation was given as to the reason for the delay which had been out of the schools’ control.

9. Safeguarding

- KCSiE 2020 and Child Protection Policy 2020 sign offs. Two governors still needed to email confirmation that they had read and understood the safeguarding policies. **Action:** MF to contact the governors concerned.
- LR reported on the main changes to KCSiE 2020 including an increased focus on Mental Health. The governors were reminded about the provision in school (PHSE and ELSA).
- It was noted that a lot of responsibility is being put on schools by social care and it was becoming increasingly difficult to reach social workers leading to concerns about the social care system currently in place.
- **Governor question:** “Are we able to access CAHMS?” Response – it was a struggle to get hold of them and even other professionals were finding it difficult.
- It was reported that staff, including casual workers, had signed off that they had read KCSiE 2020 Part 1 and the safeguarding policies.
- The Safeguarding Governor and Head would liaise to arrange a date to review the safeguarding audit once it had been received from BCP.

10. Committee Reports:

- 10.1 **Human Resources** - the minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held on 30th September had been circulated prior to the meeting. The model pay policies were not yet available from Dorset Council. With regards to the 2020 Teachers Pay Award, the governors unanimously agreed to adopt Dorset’s proposed assimilation process to the new STRB advisory pay points. **Action:** MF would email Dorset HR notifying them of the governor’s decision. A staffing update was provided including arrangements to cover the Deputy Head being out of class and the appointment of the Year 5 Teaching Assistant. Midday Supervisor staffing was discussed in light of there currently being two long term absences and, since September, provision needed for one to one lunchtime support for one new child. **Confidential Minutes** – dealt with at the end of the meeting once staff governors had left.
- 10.2 **Finance** – the minutes of the meeting held on 9th October had been circulated prior to the meeting. The governors were briefed on the current financial position and Quarter 2 reporting to BCP. A few areas had been highlighted regarding missing invoices (Water) and local authority service level agreements having not yet been charged. The governors were informed about the status of the COVID-19 catch up grant and exceptional expenditure claim. It was reported that the school had received a £1000 donation into the building fund that could be used to cover the rental of the mobile classroom should we not be able to claim this from the DfE. A letter would soon be sent to parents requesting them to support the building fund as any shortfall in contributions is covered by the delegated school fund. Future spending plans were discussed including furniture for the new build and a desktop photocopier for the school office. Funtastic (before/after school club) had negotiated a reduced rent for the autumn term as child numbers were significantly lower than previously. **Virements:** the governors unanimously approved virements in respect of Pupil Premium Grant and EHCP top up funding adjustments.
- 10.3 **Admissions** – it was reported that current number on roll was 210 compared to a PAN of 218 with one year 1 place under offer. A Year 4 appeal had been withdrawn prior to the panel hearing after the parents had read the school’s case. The

governors voted in favour of the proposed changes to the 2022/23 Admissions Policy and Supplementary Information Form which needed to go out to consultation by BCP.

10.4 **Curriculum** – no meeting held. Other curriculum aspects covered elsewhere in these minutes.

10.5 **Premises** – the minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held on 29th September to review the building work had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee's concerns had been communicated to WSW, the project manager, regarding building control sign offs, materials used, project manager's presence on site and communication lines. Governors were informed that building control had since visited site. In addition, the project manager was liaising with the Diocese to arrange for the existing roof to be surveyed after the builder identified areas that needed repair. It was reported that the problems with the plaster would be rectified at half term at the builder's own cost.

10.6 **Performance Management** – LR reported that targets for teachers had been set and support staff objectives would be completed soon. A meeting needed arranging for the Head's performance management. **Action:** LR to contact Judith O'Hare to check availability for the end of November.

11. Policies

The governors unanimously approved the following policies:

- Child Protection Policy (Updated for KCSiE 2020)
- Pupil Attendance Policy and Addendum
- Remote Learning Action Plan
- Behaviour Policy Addendum

12. School Improvement Plan 2020-21, Accessibility Plan and SSE Cycle

- LR briefed the governors on the main areas of focus in the SIP, some of which had been rolled over from last year due to the pandemic: SEND and dyslexia, phonics, RE, developing the curriculum. Looking at how children catch up, diversity and inclusivity and early years' behaviour were additional areas of focus.
- It was agreed that the Accessibility Plan would be discussed by each committee.
- LR reported that the SSE had been simplified and, now that the children had settled back in, focus would be on monitoring.

RMc and BC left the meeting

9. Governors

- **Committee Membership** would stay the same.
- **Governor Classes** – As it was difficult to come into school, it was agreed that governors would email their class teachers at least once per term to ask monitoring questions and complete a monitoring form. **Action:** MF to email teacher contact details and a monitoring form to governors.

- **Training – Action:** all governors were required to check that they were up to date with the CES online training.

10. Correspondence

- Resignation letter from Leonie Jackman-Jones.
- Waiting list for admissions – We have received a request from two families in Wimborne regarding places in Y5 from September 2021 as St. Catherine's School will no longer be a primary but a first school. The children are catholic and will be progressing to St. Peter's in due course where they currently have siblings. The families were advised that the year group is currently full but that the children's names would be kept on the waiting list.
- Notification that Dorset Governors Services was no longer available as a traded service.
- Registration details for the NGA. **Action:** AM (Clerk) to email login details to governors.
- BCP Consultation on the provision of SEND at Somerford and Winchelsea – forwarded to the Inclusion Leader.

11. AOB

- The school had been contacted by the Karate Club asking whether they could resume hiring the hall Wednesday evenings after half term. The governors agreed that due to the building work and rising COVID-19 cases in the BCP area that this was not feasible.

12. Dates for future meetings

- Next FGB meeting – Wednesday 25th November, 6.15pm

Staff members left the meeting - see **Confidential Minutes**

Meeting closed at 7.50pm