

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body
held in the school at 6.30 p.m.
on Tuesday 18 July 2017

No. 2016/2017 - 6

Present: Mark Broadbent (MB, chair), Lia Campos (LC), Patrick Coughlin (PC), Jo Coward (JC), Sally Livesey (SL), Joseph McCrossan (JMcC), Jo Wager (JW), Rachael Beale (RB, clerk)

Apologies for absence: Canon Eugene Harkness, Graham Hughes, Bill Merrick, Janet Muir

1. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Thursday 27 April 2017

Confirmed.

2. Matters arising

MB provided an update on MAT progress. Discussions with St Laurence's about working together have continued. The basic need to protect the future of Catholic schools still requires the formation of multi-academy trusts but with uncertainty in the Government's position re. the cap on faith places the urgency is unclear.

A meeting was held at St John Fisher, chaired by Paul Rossi, and attended by the chairs and vice-chairs of the governing bodies of St Alban's, St Laurence's and two Peterborough primary schools (Sacred Heart and St Thomas More). The outcome of that meeting was to ask the Diocese for a clearer position statement, which is expected in September.

JC volunteered to draft a proposal outlining how St. Alban's and St Laurence's could work together more closely in future, including possibly creating a multi-academy trust incorporating the two schools (ideally, such a MAT would comprise about four schools in total).

4. Reports from termly briefings (9 May)/training/subcommittee meetings

LC attended an Improving Governance workshop, which discussed how to engage parents in their children's learning, focusing on the kinds of activities schools could undertake. The PFA has an important role to play here; any occasion on which parents are brought into school (e.g. for a performance) could be an opportunity. Some tactics that were discussed included: having a 'twilight book club' in Reception with children in their pyjamas; a barbecue at the beginning of term to welcome new parents and build some community; using software (possibly Tapestry?) to provide very detailed feedback (videos, photos etc) to parents on their children's progress.

The Performance & Standards subcommittee met in the previous week and reviewed the KS1 and KS2 results, which are on the agenda for further discussion. It also looked at the performance of vulnerable groups.

5. Updates on curriculum areas (Staff)

ACTION: JMcC to distribute curriculum reports via email after the meeting.

The school has really enjoyed the School Sports Partnerships. JW queried why hockey had been provided by Cambridge United? Year 5 have worked with a coach at the Leys as part of the Leys' charitable outreach work, and this might be better for the future. The netball team reaching the county final was particularly noted as they have worked very hard over the year. Miss Brett will be taking on the PE curriculum responsibility next year, and should be able to do more when she has full ownership.

It has been a busy year for Performing Arts too. Mrs Burrows has done a lot of community outreach; children continue to produce performances in their year groups. JW commented that music at school masses had really improved this year as a result of the introduction of the instrumental group.

In RE, JW has been part of the RSE education Diocesan working group. The guidelines are nearly agreed, and should be issued in September; longer term, the hope is that model policies will be attached to guidelines for governing bodies to adopt, alongside a list of authorised resources. The idea is to support the teachers, in order to give them a good understanding about the Church's teaching and how the curriculum comes out of this, and also to empower parents to talk to their children, as first educators. From September 2018, relationship education will be statutory in primary schools, and sex & relationships in secondary schools. At present, there is no parental opt-out. A period of consultation is due in the autumn, and it is very important that the school should be aware and ready to contribute. MB asked about legal advice? JW said that the CES have provided a model policy and curriculum, but there may be potential for conflict between the letter of the law and religious belief. Embedding the new curriculum and assessment is the main objective for the year ahead. Mrs Overend is the new RE subject lead and will be taking this on. JW asked if it would be possible to put in dates of significant school masses at the start of the year? It is important that holy days of obligation are properly observed now there are so few of them. Fr Peter was disappointed that St Alban's feast day was not observed with a mass.

In English, results have improved. New phonics books are due to be purchased. 'Star Writers', celebrating children's achievements, has been a major introduction.

6. Update on vulnerable groups

ACTION: JMcC to circulate Miss Swindell's summary.

JC said that P&S had looked at vulnerable groups: FSM, EAL local authority care, BAME, Summer Born Children (SUM). Some children may fall into more than one category ('golden children'). Encouragingly, results showed a 'normal distribution' – that is, vulnerable groups had the same curve as the rest of the class. 'Working Towards' may actually demonstrate good progress for a child in a vulnerable group, especially one that falls into multiple categories. JC said that identifying the children and their respective interventions helped with tracking performance over time.

7. Key Stage results

Results were circulated to all parents via the newsletter. The Year 1 Phonics result (90%) was particularly impressive. JW commented that it was important to acknowledge the amount of hard work that went into achieving this success; SL highlighted in particular the structured support and analysis. JMcC pointed out it

was not just in KS2 but across all the classes. PC said the staff deserved to be congratulated (all agreed). MB also noted that thanks were due to Anne Fisher; he will write to her formally. PC asked if there is anything that needs particular focus for next year, especially with the changes in staffing? The Y1 teacher is an NQT, so extra support will be needed here; Y3 and Y5 are both very experienced. JMcC is confident there is a strong staffing team for next year. Y6 parents will be invited in at the start of next term to reassure them about the future of that class after a disruptive year.

8. New model school complaints policy

If a complaint has gone to the chair and the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they have the right to notify the clerk that they want it to go to a review board, comprised of governors not involved in the previous handling of the complaint. JMcC asked if this should be a paperwork exercise, or involve a physical meeting? The LA recommends that it should be done on paper. MB proposes we adopt this recommendation; JC seconded, and the decision was unanimously adopted.

9. RAISEonline replacement

RAISEonline is being replaced. JMcC recommended the Fischer Family Trust data.

10. Preparation for Headteacher's performance review

This ought to take place early in the autumn term, in line with Anne Fisher's visits, and requires a panel of 2-3 people plus the external advisor. The exact composition of this group will be agreed in September.

11. Governing Body 'self-evaluation tool'

This is a replacement for the 'governing body self-audit' that has been undertaken in previous years. MB suggested a similar informal gathering as in previous years to complete it, made up from those interested. This could take place in September.

12. School priorities

RE continues as a priority; science (Mr Wright will be the subject lead) and PE are also priorities. PC asked about the cycle of inspections? RE is finished, and Ofsted is unlikely to want to follow up given the good KS2 results this year. LC said that at the improvement meeting, it was stated that Ofsted are more concerned at present about the bigger picture – a holistic education rather than a narrow focus on results.

13. Child protection review

Miss Swindell and JMcC carried this out online and are waiting for the documentation to be returned by the LA; JW will audit the results once available.

ACTION: JMcC will send this out, and make any amendments if required.

14. AOB

Termly briefings will take place in Cambridge on Tuesday 19 September. LC has signed up for 1-3.

The first meeting of next term is fixed for **Thursday 7 September**.

JMcC informed the governors about changes to FHC preparation. The Bishop wants FHC to be taught in the parish, not schools; Canon Harkness wants to track mass attendance. The options seem to be a class after school taught by one of our teachers; or a part-timer coming in to release the Y3 teacher to teach lessons during class time. JMcC's preference would be for after school. SL asked if these classes would be open to other children from outside St Alban's? JMcC said that the school hosts OLEM's FHC classes in the building already. JW thought quite a few parents would withdraw their children as a result because of clashes with afterschool activities. JMcC confirmed that the teacher would be paid an additional amount to cover the out-of-hours teaching. It would still be desirable for the mass itself to be a big occasion rather than children making their communions on a range of different days.

SL is resigning her post as a foundation governor and has informed the Diocese. MB and JC as chair and vice-chair thanked her, and noted she will be missed. The Liveseys have been associated with the school since 1975! A suitable celebration should be planned.