

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

Minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body
held remotely at 6.30 p.m.
on Wednesday 7 October 2020

No. 2020/2021 – 2

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 No apologies were received.

1.2 Present: Lia Campos (LC, chair), Edward Acton (EA), Cristina Alves Martins (CAM), Patrick Coughlin (PC), Tanatsa Jingura (TJ), Joseph McCrossan (JMcC), Janet Muir (JMu), Sarah Smith (SS), Jo Wager (JW), Michael Yelton (MY), Rachael Beale (RB, clerk)

1.3 Absent: Canon Eugene Harkness

2. Ratification of local authority governor appointment

2.1 RESOLVED: Tanatsa Jingura was unanimously approved as the school's local authority governor.

2.2 The chair commented on the great benefit to the GB of Tanatsa's financial expertise.

3. Appointment of vice chair

3.1 JW is happy to resume the role of vice-chair for the next year, with thanks to PC for stepping in to cover the previous year. The chair reminded all that if there was any interest in becoming a chair or vice-chair in future, shadowing a chair or vice-chair would be useful for succession preparation. There are also good NGA courses.

4. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Monday 13 July 2020

4.1 RESOLVED: Minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

4.2 One governor offered to send the clerk an example of a format for the minutes that they felt would be more suitable.

5. Matters arising

5.1 The head's communication with the Bishop regarding clergy involvement with the GB was deferred due to lockdown and developments at OLEM.

5.2 ACTION: JMcC to contact Canon Harkness again.

5.3 There is currently no clear information from the Diocese on school chaplaincy arrangements during the pandemic. A governor offered to support the head in communications with the parish.

5.4 An item of business at the April meeting concerning the MAT may need to be reserved from the minutes.

5.5 ACTION: LC and JMcC will review the draft and consider the case for reservation.

6. Reports from termly briefings/training

6.1 No governor was able to attend. The presentations from the session are available from the Knowledge Hub.

6.2 ACTION: LC to circulate the presentation.

7. Meeting dates for the year

7.1 Agreed as:

- Wednesday 18 November
- Wednesday 3 February 2021
- Wednesday 21 April 2021
- Wednesday 7 July 2021

8. Sub-committee memberships

8.1 Performance & Standards: EA, CAM (vice chair), LC, JMcC, JM, JW (chair), SS

8.2 Resources: LC (chair), PC, TJ (vice-chair), JMcC, SS, MY

8.3 Performance & Standards first meeting: Monday 16 November

8.4 Resources first meeting: Monday 9 November

9. Link governor responsibilities

9.1 It is important for new governors to get to know the school, although visits in person will be difficult under the current circumstances. Governors were asked to contact their link subject teachers before half term, and to review curriculum plans on the website.

9.2 Link governor responsibilities were confirmed as follows:

- English - JW
- Maths - PC
- Science - LC
- Child Protection & Safer Recruitment - SS/MY
- Inclusion – CA/TJ
- Early Years - SS
- Assessment & Planning - CA
- History - SS
- Geography - TJ
- PE - PC
- MFL - LC
- Computing - CA/LC
- Performing Arts - EA
- Design and art - EA
- RE - JW

- PSHE - JW

9.3 Geography and history should receive light-touch monitoring as it is not a priority for targeted improvement.

9.4 It was proposed that any new parent governor might also take on a link subject (e.g. Design & Art).

9.5 *CAM excused herself from the meeting.*

10. Training and induction

10.1 Governors are encouraged to attend training sessions wherever possible, as they offer a useful refresher and opportunity to become aware of the local authority's approach. Live sessions (if/when they ever resume) are also good for networking with other governors. If any fee is payable, the school should be invoiced, but in most cases fees should be covered by the school's subscription. The NGA also offers training.

10.2 New governors usually have an induction visit to the school led by pupils, which it will be difficult to conduct at present. It was proposed that a visit might take place one evening in the hall, socially distanced. This was agreed for Wednesday 14 October, 5-6.

11. Headteacher's report

11.1 This was circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. A governor commented it was very clear and well set out and easy to follow.

11.2 The St Alban's website offers an ongoing update on Covid status within the school: a table is populated at the end of the week with any tests, positive or negative. There have been no positive cases at the school so far; two members of staff have been tested, both negative.

11.3 Five children will be leaving the school before Christmas due to parental relocation and educational needs. There is a waiting list, but it has been some time since the school has been in touch with these families, and those children may now be well settled in their new schools and no longer interested in a place at St Alban's.

11.4 St Alban's rarely has children on the child protection register (when external agencies are involved).

11.5 The school is happy with current rates of attendance; parents have been very supportive and punctuality has been excellent.

11.6 No update has been received on Miss Binnie's condition. The school has been advised to advertise for a temporary post to cover her absence. Miss Waterson is currently teaching full time in Year 2 but cannot continue due to her responsibilities at the Faculty of Education; it will be necessary to recruit a job-share temporary position in Year 2. The school will advertise for one full-time position in the summer, should Miss Binnie not return.

11.7 Two children with statements will be leaving the school in the near future. The TAs allocated to them will be retained for the meantime, using 16k of 'catchup money' to offset the loss. Teachers have identified pupils who particularly need

catchup support. However, this is not sustainable and the TA structure will need to be reviewed in the spring term. One more EHCP child will be leaving at the end of Y6.

11.8 City Kids is working well, and a holiday club is being tried out at October half term. A bid has been put in for safety improvements on Union Road.

11.9 The extra costs due to Covid are as a result of the staggering of break times. Twice the number of people are needed to cover the midday supervisor positions.

12. Vision document

12.1 This was distributed to governors for information ahead of the meeting.

13. School priorities

13.1 Governance: to develop an effective governing body; to support the Bishop's vision to join the MAT

13.2 Staffing: to establish an effective KS1 team; maintain wellbeing of all staff

13.3 Teaching and learning: track progress of children throughout the school, including catchup initiatives; improve standards of writing at greater depth, especially in KS2; to develop a bespoke curriculum and embed the monitoring; to develop effective interventions following the school closure

13.4 Community cohesion: to develop links with the parish; to develop clearer lines of communication with all stakeholders; to have an effective Home Learning strategy; to support the wraparound care offer

13.5 Pupils: to support the wellbeing of pupils in the current climate

13.6 Finance: to develop strategies to manage the financial cuts in Cambridge and the impact it will have on St Alban's pupils, specifically the High Needs group

13.7 The idea of open-air classrooms in the KS1 playground is still under consideration but not likely to be a priority.

13.8 Success against these priorities will be judged by data collated from multiple sources, including governor scrutiny, financial reports and so on. Priorities will be RAG-rated in the headteacher's report and reported to each meeting. Aspects of the plan will be scrutinised by sub-committees also.

13.9 The softer value of 'wellbeing' will require a more creative approach to assess progress. Zoom 'focus groups' with pupils, the Parental Voice tool and questionnaires are all possible tools.

14. Child Protection review

14.1 The school will not be required to complete the online monitoring form this year. A safeguarding report has instead to be produced, following a template.

14.2 ACTION: Safeguarding link governors (SS and MY) to support the completion of this within the next couple of weeks.

15. Safer Recruitment audit

15.1 This will take place on 7 November. A document has been completed ahead of the meeting, RAG-rating various aspects of safer recruitment. One governor has been trained in safer recruitment, and has supplied her certificate to the clerk. This will act as a benchmark from which to move forward. The audit was requested by the school rather than imposed.

15.2 It was suggested that governors should complete the PREVENT training annually and forward the resulting certificate. It is a very short online process.

15.3 ACTION: JMcC to forward training link to the clerk for circulation to governors.

15.4 Governors have discussed updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education.

16. Policy updates

16.1 The Diocese adopts policies from the CES; it is proposed that the GB should adopt these. The DfE statements similarly must be adopted. The HR company EPM manage most schools in Cambridgeshire and work with the Diocese, so it is reasonable to assume that their policies have been well developed and scrutinised with the support of the unions. LA policies should also be adopted.

16.2 JMcC recommended to the GB that these policies should all be adopted.

16.3 School policies are not statutory policies, but advisory, and are currently available on the website. JMcC proposed that review of school policies should be deferred to the subcommittees.

16.4 All governors were in agreement with this approach.

17. MAT update

17.1 The MAT has paused the process of St Alban's joining while it reviews its financial situation.

18. Headteacher's performance review

18.1 St Alban's has a new school improvement partner, Sue Blythe, a head teacher at Fourfields Primary School, who replaces Anne Fisher. A handover meeting will take place on 6 November. The aim is to complete this process before the end of November. SS and LC are willing to form the 'committee' for this. It was suggested it would be a good idea to include a third governor from the point of view of succession planning.

19. Register of pecuniary interests

19.1 Governors were reminded of the need to complete this.

19.2 ACTION: RB to circulate pecuniary interests form.

20. AOB

20.1 The clerk noted that today was the 10th anniversary of her first clerking of a St Alban's GB meeting.

Meeting closed: 8.30 p.m.