

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

Minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body
held remotely at 6.30 p.m.
on Wednesday 21 April 2021

No. 2020/2021 – 5

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Tanatsa Jingura and Cristina Alves Martins.

1.2 Present: Lia Campos (LC, chair), Edward Acton (EA), Fr Alan Hodgson (AH), Joseph McCrossan (JMcC), Keith Menary (KM), Janet Muir (JMu), Sarah Smith (SS), Jo Wager (JW), Michael Yelton (MY), Rachael Beale (RB, clerk)

1.3 Absent: Patrick Coughlin

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 3 February 2021

2.1 Confirmed.

3. Matters arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. Reports from termly briefings/training/sub-committees

4.1 Governors were encouraged to attend the termly briefings if they were able to do so. KM and AH are yet to go through governor induction at the school.

4.2 ACTION: KM and AH to send dates to JMcC

4.3 No data is yet available from catchup assessments. SATs will be taking place in June. It would be ideal, as soon as possible after the provisional ending of restrictions on 21 June, to schedule a 'learning walk' for governors around the school followed by a Performance & Standards meeting. 22 June was proposed as a possible date.

4.4 ACTION: Performance & Standards meeting and learning walk dates to be finalised via email amongst the committee members.

4.5 The Resources committee met and discussed the budget, which had been prepared by Mrs Monument, Mrs Farrell and JMcC, and reviewed by the financial advisor. The Resources committee felt that it could recommend that the budget should be adopted.

5. Budget

5.1 This year there is a balanced budget, with a carry-forward of £69,000. LC proposes that we accept this budget so that the school can submit it to the Local Authority.

The governing body unanimously approved the school budget plan for the financial year 2021–22 with total spend of £ 1,035,513.19.

6. Headteacher's Report

6.1 The headteacher's report was circulated ahead of the meeting. Unfortunately, there was not much detail to be celebrated as a result of the school's closure for the best part of a term.

6.2 There were around 6 entries in the Log of Concerns, including some reports of domestic violence; this was to do with teenagers arguing with parents. Others were from staff following up comments from pupils returning to school after lockdown. 2-3 concerns are logged monthly, but these are usually from children of whom the school is already aware, and not normally of serious significance. One child has gone onto the child protection register for the first time in a very long time; multiple agencies are involved. The child themselves is not in danger, but the family circumstances cause them to be vulnerable.

6.3 School priorities had been RAG-rated by JMcC; governors' views on this were invited. It has been a difficult year to progress new initiatives; although a bespoke curriculum has been implemented (for example), it has been difficult to do much monitoring of it. One governor commented that they found the RAG rating very useful. RAG rating of this kind would normally be done in consultation with governors, but this was unfortunately not possible as a result of restrictions.

6.4 During lockdown, there was a racial incident between children in the playground; this was followed up with both families.

7. Safeguarding update

7.1 Volunteers are needed to help JMcC with the safeguarding review on 29 April at 930. The LA will be attending for a 2.5-hour online review via Microsoft Teams; it would be good to have a governor present to observe the process. MY, LC and JW should all be able to attend. It is likely that the output will include some action points for the school, but it should be a very supportive meeting. It is very important that the school should be doing everything possible around safeguarding.

8. Admissions

8.1 It is very clear that St Alban's is oversubscribed and not meeting the local Catholic need. 17 new families applied this year, and the school is likely to have appeals, which have cost implications. A new definition of the catchment area needs to be agreed. Attempts to discover the precise parish boundaries have so far been unsuccessful. Could a simple distance be used, as other schools do? There was some discussion of a number of possible options, including using the river as a natural boundary. It was agreed that any solution needed to respect St Laurence's boundaries.

8.2 ACTION: JMcC to contact OLW MAT and St Laurence's to find out more about their admissions policies in order to fine-tune that of St Alban's.

9. MAT update

9.1 JMcC and LC have been invited to meet Flavio Vettese, currently CEO of the MAT, for a conversation at the end of the month. No other communication has been

received. A colleague at another school not currently in the MAT said that a promised review had not taken place. No further information has been provided on the reasons for the departure of the previous CEO and the executive head at St Mary's Ipswich. The vacancy at St Mary's has yet to be filled, which raises questions around succession planning. It is unclear what stage the financial due diligence exercise has currently reached.

10. Vulnerable children

10.1 Outcomes for Pupil Premium children are still being tracked. A catchup plan is in place, and can be viewed on the school website. Money in the sports grant has been ringfenced and carried forward in the budget. Any vulnerable or looked-after child that is not currently meeting their targets is eligible for further support. This should be scrutinised by the Performance & Standards committee at its next meeting.

11. AOB

11.1 One class had to be closed this week as a result of a positive Covid case.

Meeting closed: 7.28 p.m.