

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 July 2021

No. 2020/2021 – 6

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Patrick Coughlin, Michael Yelton, Edward Acton, Keith Menary and Janet Muir

1.2 Present: Lia Campos (LC, chair), Cristina Alves Martins (CAM), Fr Alan Hodgson (AH), Tanatsa Jingura (TJ), Joseph McCrossan (JMcC), Jo Wager (JW), Rachael Beale (RB, clerk)

1.3 Apologies for lateness: Sarah Smith (SS)

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 21 April 2021

2.1 Confirmed.

3. Matters arising

3.1 Two new governors still need to be shown round the school – dates to be set early in the autumn term. Another governor asked what should happen with the notes of her visit to the school? They were to be presented to the Resources committee but the governor was not able to attend; she will write up her notes and circulate them via email.

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

4.1 The school will be signing up to the LA's service level agreement this year so will continue to have access to the LA's termly briefings; this had been postponed while waiting for further news from the MAT on what they might be able to offer. A governor commented that it would be good for everyone to try to attend at least two termly briefings per academic year in order to stay in touch with the latest developments.

4.2 The Performance and Standards committee has not met recently. The Pupil Premium strategy, drawn up last September, was circulated to all governors. An evaluation and review of the strategy is due to be published in September. Data is still to be analysed as it was only collated on the day of the meeting.

4.3 ACTION: JMcC to populate pupil premium and circulate via email

4.4 Most governors had had a chance to briefly review the new proforma (circulated ahead of the meeting). A governor had met with Mrs Richardson to discuss computing entitlements and also SEN – a good discussion, during which pupil premium pupils came up, and Mrs Richardson shared documents that she had also shared with JMcC. Reports from most subject heads had been circulated ahead of the meeting; art and design have not yet been received. JMcC shared onscreen the pupil progress data. Early Years standards are lower than usual this year, partly

because of the impact of the pandemic and partly because of a couple of pupils having significant impact on managing the class. Year 2 is also of some concern. Historically the school has always been very good at developing a culture of and enthusiasm for learning in pupils as they progress through the school; the impact of lockdowns will inevitably have been much greater on the younger years. The data will be unpicked and the impact specifically on the pupil premium children examined. A governor commented that this higher impact on the lower years had also come up in her conversation with a subject lead; older children were in a much better position to work independently. The staffing in KS1 had also been somewhat unstable; unfortunately this is likely to continue for a little while longer. Staff are being redeployed to make the best of teachers' talents.

4.5 Several governor entitlement visits had taken place (some online). An early years visit has not taken place this academic year, and the history visit had only happened in the first term. The RE visit has not taken place as the subject lead has been in transition, but JMcC has been in close contact with the appropriate governor. If it would be possible to do these visits in person next year, it is a good way of nurturing the connection with the school.

4.6 One governor asked whether it was still possible that SATs might not take place next year? Nothing definite has yet been received in briefings, and the school's expectation is currently that tests will be taking place. Tests will have to be managed carefully in line with the reduced learning levels as a result of the last year. The catchup strategy is intended to catch pupils up.

4.7 The annual child protection and safeguarding review still needs to take place.

4.8 The RSE curriculum is also a priority for next year, as are assessments and catchup, and should be on the agenda for next year.

4.9 The Resources committee also did not meet this term as the budget report was not ready. There was an anomaly – it appeared as if there was an overspend of nearly 100k, but it was because the allocation for June had not been received. The updated version has now been circulated. The school is anticipating a carry-forward of about 19k, which is healthy. An investigation into the drains is taking place; a contractor has been asked to look at the foundation in the basement as there is still a leak. There is no sign of subsidence, although there is a dip (not dangerous) in KS2 above one of the windows. Helen Bates at the Diocese is following this up. The drains need regular monitoring, after the KS2 playground overflowed – there was a crack in the drain from the church as a result of a new water pipe. Drains are therefore still an issue, but not as bad as they used to be. The conditions survey recommendations have been implemented. The school makes a couple of hundred pounds from the solar panels – heavy rain affects the sensors as it pushes them into standing water, and they then need re-seating.

4.10 The salary committee was discussed at the last meeting; JMcC wanted to recommend one change: incremental jumps for staff based on performance and sustained input and success of the school. A couple of teachers on UPS2 and UPS3 had requested increases, but there is an expectation that they must have a significant role in the school, and therefore are not being recommended for an increase. It is not usual for a primary school of this scale to have teachers at higher levels. JMcC is recommending that one teacher taking on a subject lead role, who has been on Mainscale 6 for 2 years, and has shown sustained and successful contribution to the school, be moved up to UPS1. It's important to pay careful attention to the teachers' pay and conditions scale. The school will save some money in paying an 'early careers development' teacher, but will also have to invest in their training. Both teachers

whose requests were turned down were able to accept the reasoning. One of the teachers is likely to be revisited when they have been on UPS1 for 2 years. The chair recommended that governors agree to these proposals and no objections were raised.

5. Reports from subject leaders

5.1 These were circulated ahead of the meeting. Priority subjects in particular have reported back. Maths will be a priority next year because of the new curriculum; Miss Brett has attended a 'mastery' course on this. Science will be under careful scrutiny because of Ofsted. Reading will continue to be a priority because of governmental expectation; early data for KS1 also might indicate a need for intervention.

6. Headteacher's Report

6.1 The headteacher's report was also circulated ahead of the meeting. A governor asked about the three 'logs of concern'? This has related to some pupil behavioural issues, but none were sufficiently concerning to require entry in the child protection register.

6.2 JMcC highlighted City Kids and the church. There is to be a significant increase in the rent; in the 'return to normality', the school will also have to consider City Kids' use of the school hall as it has been restricting what the school can offer its pupils. JMcC will be suggesting City Kids return to the parish hall, and asking for the future to be discussed in the next academic year. The increase is of 17% and it is not clear what City Kids will get in return for this. The plan was to open up the canteen area and use the upstairs area, but the hall is needed for the school; the numbers of pupils attending City Kids is critical. Any changes to Covid regulations will also need to be taken into account.

6.3 The MAT had asked JMcC to support St Laurence's; JMcC has said yes in principle, on the basis of using his professional expertise. This will be a contract of 1 day per week, in an advisory capacity, and will not require him to go into the school regularly, but to act more as a mentor figure. It will not be a full working day, but the equivalent of one day in terms of support provided. JMcC has also informed the LA that he will not be available for this kind of support for at least another year. It may be that once the new head of school at St Laurence's feels confident, then it will be possible to offer support to the LA again. Governors agreed they would like to support this.

6.4 School priorities have not changed much; once governors are fully inducted and set up with their subject leaders this will be green rated.

7. Pupil Premium report

7.1 Discussed under agenda item 4.

8. RSE update

8.1 It would be good to convene a subgroup on RSE. The school is implementing the recommended practice of getting parents involved, but this is done towards the end of the year, and really it should be happening at the start of the year. The Bishop in the past was not giving an indication of which programmes to use, but the 'Journey in Love' and 'Ten to Ten' seem to be the most prominent. The school had looked at 'Journey in Love' earlier. Year 5 and 6 parents have been satisfied with what the school has been using (for 14 years now), and the school believes that it is still fit for

purpose. A governor commented that 'Ten to Ten' might be worth reviewing in case any of it could be useful. By next year, the school believes it will have a clear programme and will be able to present it in the summer term to parents. As the link governor for RSE, JW is happy to lead this; LC would like to be involved and AH should be involved too.

9. Review of SDP

9.1 Another Vision Evening is needed in order to get a plan in place by next September. One governor commented that previously there was a significant drop-off between the first meeting and the followup in the winter; having a meeting in better weather would be a good idea, so perhaps consult stakeholders in the autumn, holding the Vision Evening in the spring term and the followup in the summer. By then there might be more clarity from the MAT also.

10. Admissions

10.1 The consultation in the autumn term with regards to the catchment area of the school will take place in October. The local authority has provided a statement regarding children that have been in state care that needs to be added to the school's admissions policy, and adopted. All governors agreed to accept this amendment.

11. MAT update

11.1 A meeting is set for 21 September with the Chief Financial Officer and Flavio Vettese (current CEO); on 28 September a meeting will take place with the vice chair, chair and JMcC attending a meeting of all schools in the proposed MAT. It would be useful if there could be a conversation about this before the financial officer meeting. The Resources committee was due to meet in the first week of September in order to do this. Wednesday 8 September was proposed; benchmarking of other schools was mentioned, scrutinising finances. Hopefully 28 September will cover the structure of the MAT and its leadership, which is currently unclear, and also how the governance will function.

12. Date of next meeting

12.1 Thursday 7 October, in school.

13. AOB

13.1 Governors were reminded that the school has NGA membership, and that there are many useful resources on the NGA website.

Meeting closed: 7.38 p.m.