

ST MARTIN'S CE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL
GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

FULL GOVERNING BOARD		DATE:	13th May 2024
CHAired BY: Brian Gravenor (BG)		CLERKED BY: Kay Bishop (KB)	
GOVERNORS PRESENT:		Also Present:	
Brian Gravenor (BG) Gemma Tozer-Howe (GTH) Jennifer Elliott (JE) Rev. Jon Holder (JH) Amy Hardinge (AH) Lynette Bickers (LB) Mel Turl (MT) Ruth Marsh (RM) Vicky Harris (VH)		Brigid Thompson (BT) – School Business Manager	
APOLOGIES: Phil Wales (PW)			
Absent without apology: None			

Governor questions are highlighted in grey

Agenda Items	
1.	<p><u>Opening Prayer & Welcome</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome from BG 2. Opening Prayer taken by JH.
2.	<p><u>Apologies and sanctions of absence.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apologies were received from PW – these were sanctioned by the GB.
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest & Correspondence</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No declarations of interest. 2. Correspondence - none
4.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve Budget 2024-25 (including Capital budget) BT explained that the new budget had come into effect from 1st April 2024 which due to the

DCC timeframe means the GB approves it now. BG noted that the budget looks positive. BT went on to explain that the budget is as it stands now from April 2024 however there will be a brand new budget from 1st September 2024 if the school joins Ventrus and a proportion of the budget will go back to DCC, commitments and spending will be reimbursed. LB noted that there was a small deficit set aside for transition and BG explained that the school would be going from an April to March budget to a September to August which aligns with the school year. BT noted that the funding streams governed by DfE run from April to April. JE asked whether the teachers pay would be affected. BT confirmed that the budget anticipates pay rises for teachers and support staff but the budget does not determine this as they are nationally agreed and there is no decision making within the governors. Ventrus pay national pay scales. The school had already anticipated pay progressions and these and normal pay awards were already included in the budget.

VH joined the meeting.

Decision: The GB approved the budget 2024-25.

2. Note Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) Annual Report

BT emphasised that this was an annual report shown to governors and was of value when benchmarking against other schools and has coding which is used nationally by the DfE. It does not give anything additional to governors but the information is grouped in a different way. It is an end of year position for comparison and by CFR code rather than by budget line.

LB asked whether it was possible to pick up high costs of staffing in comparison to other similar schools. BT confirmed this could be done and was useful in benchmarking but as a standalone report, does not give meaningful information.

Decision: The GB approved the CFR.

BT noted the two big projects that the school were running using DfC (capital held by Diocese). LED lighting replacement and project to improve acoustics in hall - school budget share £28k, (budgeted for) and using all DfC money. BG confirmed that he had signed off the paperwork.

Decision: The GB approved the use of the money for the LED lighting replacement and acoustic improvement in the hall.

BG gave thanks to BT and senior leadership team for keeping the school in such a healthy state.

BT left the meeting at 18:25rs.

5. Approval of minutes from last meetings and update on actions

1. Approval of minutes from 4.3.24 and 18.3.24

Agreed as accurate by the Full GB and signed by the Chair.

2. Update on actions

4.3.24

- 1. Completed**
- 2. Completed**

18.3.24

- 1. Completed**
- 2. Completed**
- 3. No action needed as AH listed as DSL**

4. Plan a self-evaluation exercise once the decision on joining a MAT has been taken. A question is to be included to evaluate the experience/availability of governors to mentor new governors. BG explained the governing body would change on 1st September if the school joined Ventrus and once the scheme of work for the year is received, the self-evaluation exercise would be undertaken at that point. If governors wish to stay on once the school joins Ventrus, this is possible following certain checks being passed and a new DBS,

	<p>however there is not an allocation for a Local Authority governor but the school can co-opt a further 2 governors if needed.</p> <p>5. Completed.</p> <p>6. Add spiritual abuse to annual safeguarding training. Dates to be planned once NPDs confirmed.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Update from Chair on potential academisation</p> <p>1. BG confirmed that verbal conditional consent had been given at the SOGG meeting on 8th May and a confirmation letter would be sent in due course. Stakeholder consultation letter sent out 8th May, email address set up by Ventrus for any feedback, stakeholder consultation meeting set for Thursday 16th May for staff and parents. AH had confirmed that any contract type questions will be part of the TUPE consultation and not the stakeholder consultation. Formal TUPE consultation starts 12th June and pay, contracts and pensions will stay the same. Thanks given to BG, AH and GHT for work put into the SOGG submission.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Headteacher Report & Data</p> <p>1. Parental engagement: We have re-launched the pink boxes on the gates on a Friday and would welcome any suggested questions from Governors that we could ask which would see parents giving a ‘yes’ ‘no’ response by voting with a token. Governors gave the following suggested questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you get the opportunity to contribute your ideas to develop the school policies or procedures that affect you or your child? • Does the school have any positive involvement with community issues? • Does the school promote positive British values? • I know how to help my child with reading? • My child is happy in school? • I know how to access additional support for my child? And for myself? • Subject based questions - I know what my child is learning in Reading, Writing or Maths • I look at the school website? • I know the next term dates? <p>2. Attendance: JH noted that attendance as noted in the report was looking good. GTH queried the Reception figures. MT explained that the school were able to see patterns in the data and when attendance dropped, letters were sent out swiftly followed by phone calls. Parents are now aware that it is normal practice to be phoned. Reception had been hit harder due to parents taking their children on holiday before they turn 5. There were also 4 or 5 children whose parents did not want their child in school full time which had to be managed carefully. The local authority Attendance Officer had stated that those parents had made an active choice to start their child at school so they must be in full time. Some of those children were attending full time by October half term. Three children were on part-time timetables (EHCP) and although it had been very hard with the family they were being supported by the school. AH reported that following an ‘At Risk children’s’ meeting, discussions were starting on how the school can support the family throughout the six week summer break and continue to engage with them to ensure the children continue to attend school in September. Jo Westney (JW) is paid additional hours to the school calendar weeks to timetable in visits to the families with an eye on attendance as well as safeguarding.</p> <p>3. MT went on to explain that meetings regularly take place with Bridget Matthews to review the ‘yellow book’ (includes the names of everyone who isn’t at school) which helps show patterns and enables filtering of the different types of absences. MT felt it was important that attendance should be mentioned at the new Reception induction meetings to help parents understand the value of education and for their child to attend every day and how their child benefits. Every child’s attendance is noted but particular attention is given to those who were below 95%. The school had also been looking at how many children come to school every day over a term as it</p>

had been noted that Year 6 were particularly bad. Actual attendance data was not considered bad as they were not having many days off but there were only a few children who had succeeded in being in every day for the term, and for the others this would impact sequence of learning over time. Every 6 weeks, all staff are given a screen shot of attendance of all the children who are below where they need to be which enables them to see patterns and their last four drops and whether it is increasing or not which can help with parent conversations. MT described the effect of the Buddy project on a Year 5 pupil whose home life is tricky and awareness of times is not a high priority, who walks to school and home by themselves. Big Buddy (teacher) noticed the attendance pattern and set a little challenge to be in school on time, an alarm clock was bought for them and a chart set up. Once a trend was established, a medal was given to them for the biggest improvement in attendance. This improvement stemmed from the big buddy encouraging them to be in school on time every day with regular feedback, helping them with understanding about what time to leave. Power of buddy project – having another adult giving attention to child.

4. LB asked about the impact of the reduced hours of JW. AH stated that it was early days and that she is picking up safeguarding on a Friday and it is manageable. JW ensures that her work is tied up on a Thursday and does not leave any work for AH. Ali & Emily crossover is the natural progression as next year there will be no crossover. There is no impact on the children but it was noted there is some impact on AH/MT. MT went on to explain that the SENDCO is considered a team, emails are shared and children still have a person to go to. BG noted that the crossover was in place as Ali is experienced and Emily less so and these were considered training days. The school had invested heavily to ensure sufficient training was given as next year there will not be a crossover day and they will only be conversing via email. MT emphasised how notable it was for other staff that they were seen as a unit. It also highlighted the difficulties and challenges faced with high SEN cases as well as a shared understanding of running the Holly Room.
5. JE asked what the impact of the Holly Room had been on addressing the attainment gaps or progress? MT noted that the Holly room had been fundamental this year. Hard work and morale was challenged in the early days which AH felt was because TAs had thought that they were going to have to run the room and be in there all day with very high needs children but when it was seen it was not the same model as the Hub, attitudes had changed and now the TAs own the room which is then overseen by teachers. TAs are now giving ideas and suggestions as their own provision. Drawing club is run from the room. MT advised that the Holly Room had been brilliant however at each stage there was no final answer at what it would look like as it changes regularly due to the different high needs children attending. Staff work to ensure all groups working together to make the room successful and if it is not, then change can take place.
6. LB enquired about the pupil progress data and the concerns about the Year 3 data. AH explained that looking at the data only there was a slow rate of progress especially as they have experienced good teachers. During the data tracking meetings with those teacher's, it was evident they knew the children inside out and knew where the gaps were but unfortunately there had been a significant staff absence in one class due to a bereavement which is only settling down again now – this had hindered progress as well as a new job share in the other class as neither had job shared before and there was a need to over compensate when the other member of staff was off work with the bereavement. AH advised that there had been ongoing discussions on who is going to teach the children next year. Year 4's had made amazing progress when the teachers stayed with the children from Year 3. Current Year 4 teachers are really skilled so it may be better to send the classes to them. There have been unavoidable circumstances in Year 3 this year but the school is keeping an eye on it. The cohort is young and still lack resilience and need lots of scaffolding and self-regulation plays a huge part, which was the same as the Year 4 last year.
7. AH explained that from discussions in the data meetings, teachers could have given age expected in their assessments but several teachers (who teach in Year 5 or 6) do not believe

those children on the trajectory at the moment will reach standard at the end of KS2 so felt it was not fair to give the grading to them now at this point as they are not quite there yet so it is more about what a piece test of data can tell you as opposed to what they know about the whole child, so therefore the teacher has not just relied on test data and it has been more about the whole child and what they are seeing in their classes.

8. Safeguarding: AH noted that there had been 3 MASH referrals in the last two weeks.
9. Staffing: Congratulations given to MT for the DHT position. AH explained that there had been more teachers than jobs for next year due to someone returning from maternity leave. The situation had naturally played out in that one teacher on a temp contract had decided that the jobs the school had available were not suitable for her and her family so she didn't express an interest - this meant interviews were not needed for everyone on a temporary contract. There were a number of teachers on FWR having come back from maternity leave in September and AH had not been able to give them exactly what they wanted as the school cannot be run around their childcare. AH is able to offer part time working and with as much flexibility as possible to meet the differing needs - they have known for a year that changes in days would be required. Contracts not yet signed. Job shares to have PPA time together on the cross over times as this works the best. This enables data tracking meetings and SENDCO discussions to take place at the same time. From September 2024, hoping that everyone will be on permanent contracts apart from one maternity leave starting in September 2024, whose current job share has agreed to extend up to almost full time to cover it and that teacher will have a permanent 0.6 but will extend to cover to maternity leave.
10. Thanks given to AH for managing and balancing the needs of the school.
11. BG mentioned that he had been in contact with the two SENDCOs to arrange a meeting and they were drawing up an action plan in preparation.
12. AH stated that the SEND review undertaken by Ventrus had given robust feedback to the school. Had prompted the schools thinking around documentation. Ali & Emily had been asked to share information at the SEND network on number stats and provision mapping. Valuable in shaping the schools thinking in moving forward as well as giving staff confidence. Some staff who have been in the school a long time are not used to external scrutiny and that can be found difficult. Staff from other schools are more used to it and do not find it a threat. MT noted that coaching plays a part in teachers welcoming others into their room and talking about their practice and embedding that in the ethos of the school. Teachers are enjoying coaching. The route of the reciprocal pairs route rather than the expert coach with coachee model has not been used before by AH and she was unsure about the outcomes however after several reiterations the school have been trying to ensure the pairings were correct for both teachers and tweaks may still be needed for September 2024. Feedback will be collected from teachers around CPD and coaching, as well as finding out what professional development they found useful to shape CPD. Staff meetings have been cut down to an hour every other week to allow coaching to take place. Some difficulty around those that job share and not having enough to time to practice before your coach sees you again and for part time teachers it could be difficult.

8. Admissions

1. Report on in-year admissions for this half-term. Already covered in Headteacher report.
2. Approve Admissions Committee Minutes 20.3.24 and 17.4.24
 BG explained that two applications had been discussed on 20th March with one in Reception being refused due to numbers being 64 and Year 1 declined as year group was at 60 and the child already had a place at another school. LB asked how many in year admissions come and go quickly from the school? AH explained that a high proportion do not stay at the school and are placed somewhere else for their longer term future.
 At the meeting on 17th April, three applications with one in Year 5 being declined due to 62 in

	<p>year group, one in Year 2 which had 62 in year group and one in Year 1 had 60 in year group. BG went on to say that planning permission had been recently granted for a number of houses and a new primary school and if more children move in, the school may need to increase their PAN. The new school is likely to be at least 5 years away. The new nursery has been built but if the school becomes difficult to get into, parents will want to try and get them into the nursery as the school cannot fit the gap of 0-3 nursery. The school will ensure good contact with the nursery.</p> <p>Decision: The GB approved the minutes from the Admissions Committee meetings 20th March and 17th April 2024</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Governance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reaffirm process for Autumn election of Chair and Vice-Chair. Process for election will take place at first LGB meeting. 2. Receive reports from governors who have attended training and review impacts from training for the GB. GHT had booked training next term in complaint preventions and management & well-being. 3. Collate governor impacts from previous half term BG had recently visited the school and on entering a few classes was impressed by behaviour management and the children had appeared engaged. RM had asked whether Ventrus would have any influence over the curriculum for maths? Ventrus would not have any influence as it was the government who set the curriculum. Discussion took place on the how much better the teaching of maths had become. Governors were thanked for coming into school during SATs as an extra pair of hands. This enabled governors to be reassured that the school had robust processes in place. Thanks also given to Nat Padley for the timetabling work put in place.
<p>10.</p>	<p>Staffing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive confirmation from Headteacher Appraisal Panel that mid-year review completed. Confirmed received. 2. Receive report from Headteacher Appraisal Committee on the monitoring of the Headteacher's work/life balance. BG explained that conversations had taken place with AH. AH tries to manage it herself, taking time off to work at home when she can, AH feels able to leave the school in the capable hands of MT. Governors are conscious that a Headteacher is never off duty. JE asked whether AH or senior leaders' model positive working practices in reduction of admin workload? AH said yes, she felt that she and the others did by talking about it at every opportunity and not doing anything for paperwork's sake and working from home. AH felt that it was not necessarily about wellbeing but it was more about having a focussed time and not being interrupted and being more productive. When AH is not in the school, it shows she has faith in staff which is a positive message to them. Weekly diary meeting with AH, MT, SENDCOs, NP, JW and BT gives the opportunity to see where there may be pinch points. AH & MT involved in other activities and had taken a group of PP children to the theatre recently together with a parent and her two children whose behaviour needs are extreme. AH went onto explain that there had been some comments made about the school not being an inclusive school as some opportunities are offered to some and not others however PP funding is available to give additional opportunities to level things out. Responses to those type of comments need to be clear and unemotional from school. Governors gave their thanks for the theatre trip. 3. Agree governor membership of Headteacher Appraisal Panel 24-25, confirm governor training required and plan appointment of External Advisor. BG proposed not doing anything for the time being as it was likely to change when the school joined Ventrus. 4. BG asked KB to give a brief update on how governance would work once the school had

	<p>joined Ventrus. KB explained that she would contact the governors and ask them if they would like to continue to be governors on the new local governing body. Once confirmation had been received, KB would send out a Declaration of Business Interest form as well as a Declaration of Eligibility form which would need to be completed and returned to her. Once the forms had been returned, she would undertake the relevant checks including related party checking. Each prospective governor would also have to undertake a new DBS once the school were part of Ventrus and finally once the DBS certificate document had been checked by the school administrator, KB would provide a new Ventus email account which would enable governors to have access to their own LGB SharePoint.</p>
11.	<p>Term Dates amendments</p> <p>1. Discuss and agree proposed amendments to non-pupil days in 24-25 and 25-26 term dates. AH noted that Ventrus have a Trust-wide NPD on the last Friday in October before half term for training purposes and CPD etc. Proposal for 24-25 – 22nd April 2025 to move 25th October 2024 and moving 3rd September 2025 to 24th October 2025.</p> <p>Decision: The GB approved the amendments.</p> <p>Action: AH to write to parents to confirm amendments and change the dates on the school website</p>
12.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>1. AH presented governors with a training scenario in which a phone call had been received from another school explaining that they were worried about one of the children aged 11 years old who had been out and about in the community over the weekend, had been given a pill from an older child that they had taken and their presentation after taking the pill.</p> <p>2. Governors agreed that they would class this as concerning and that it should be dealt with by speaking to the child straight away. Once AH had spoken to the child, she became concerned that the child denied it and their presentation. Governors agreed that contact should be made with the parent/family. The parent was 'avoidant' in the conversation and governors went on to suggest that external support in the form of a MASH referral was needed to ensure that there was a joined up approach. AH explained that there is a level of need (separated into levels 1, 2, 3 & 4) that should be referred to when making a MASH referral, which 'beginning to experiment with alcohol and drugs' sits at Early Help - Level 2 but it does not give an age.</p>
13.	<p>Discussion: 'How has this meeting benefited our children and contributed to the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of the school?'</p> <p>1. Identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring - staff/TA's wellbeing as well as the pupils to ensure not being overloaded • Morning assembly about faith & trust – Christian based on school values • Theatre trip – mindful about levelling up to ensure that children have experiences and are able to find joy in the world – role to make it work • Treating people differently – equality of outcome - wanting everyone to be their best • Family approach to being open, trustworthy and honest • Celebrating the good news stories – Buddy/attendance/important to celebrate them • Fun times taking place in school – school disco • Leading by example, AH attending disco

ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING		
Action	Person responsible	Date to be completed by

1. Add spiritual abuse to annual safeguarding training. Dates to be planned once NPDs confirmed.	AH	
2. AH to write to parents to confirm amendments and change the dates on the school website	AH	

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

- The GB approved the school budget 2024-25 (including Capital budget)
- The GB approved the CFR.
- The GB approved the use of the money for the LED lighting replacement and acoustic improvement in the hall.
- The GB approved the Admissions Committee meetings 20th March and 17th April 2024
- The GB agreed to proposed amendments to non-pupil days in 24-25 and 25-26 term dates

Next meeting: Monday, 8th July 2024 at 6.15-8.15pm

Signed as accurate by the Chair:

Name of Chair:

Date: