

ST MARTIN'S CE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

FULL GOVERNING BOARD - VIRTUAL		DATE:	14th February 2021
CHAired BY: John Clements (JC)		CLERKED BY: Jacqueline Brooks (JB)	
GOVERNORS PRESENT:		Also Present:	
Steph Harvey (SH) John Clements (JC) Jason Knight (JK) Russ Green (RG) Liz Kane (LK) Sam Jamieson (SJ) Claire Morrison (CM) Melanie Jones (MJ) Gemma Tozer-Howe (GTH) Jennifer Elliott (JE)			
APOLOGIES:			
Absent without apology:			

Governor questions are highlighted in grey

Agenda Items	
1.	<p><u>Opening Prayer & Welcome</u></p> <p>1. Opening Prayer taken by JC.</p> <p>JC gave thanks to SH and the rest of the staff team for how they have managed the recent impact of very high numbers of Covid in school. JC noted how flexible staff have been, that remote learning was quickly implemented and that communication with parents and carers has been done well. The GB agreed with this. JC will send an email to staff to say thank you.</p>
2.	<p><u>Apologies and sanctions of absence.</u></p> <p>1. None.</p>
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest & Correspondence</u></p> <p><u>1. Declarations of Interest.</u> None</p> <p><u>2. Correspondence</u> Email received from the Diocese regarding SCA Capital Grant and the Condition Data Collection programme. This advised that the Capital funding amount is being changed following a review of</p>

	<p>needs in school premises. It has been identified that there is less need for premises work in Devon schools. This means that the current £10,000 funding will be reduced by 25% next year and 47% the following year. The GB were advised that this impacts upon the works needed to rectify the pipes issue in school. The quote for the pipes work is approximately £35,000 and the Diocese had said this would be covered by Capital Funding. However, they have now said that further clarification will be needed as to whether this can remain the case since this review. Given that the pipes issue is a problem related to the original build of the school and not due to any fault of the school SH has said that she will challenge any request that the works are funded from the school's general budget. The GB agreed that they would support any challenge required.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Approval of minutes from last meeting (6.12.21) and update on actions</u></p> <p>1. Agreed as accurate by the Full GB – to be signed by the Chair when next in school.</p> <p>2. Update on actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1 – completed • Action 2 – completed • Action 3 – JC and RG will be the new signatories for the Jackie Box Memorial Fund account. Action: JB to arrange JC and RG to be added to the account. • Action 4 – Completed. Summer term training will be Data Protection compliance and Trauma Informed working in school. Action: JB to arrange for DPO to deliver training for 9.5.22. • Action 5 – in process. Policies that have been reviewed by governors and staff have been updated and published on the website where appropriate. Action: JB to finalise the staff only reviewed policies from Autumn 21 and update the policy schedule.
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Headteacher Report and Data</u></p> <p>1. The report and supporting documents (Autumn Termly data Report, Risk Register) had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>2. SJ asked if SH could provide an update on the impact of Covid numbers in school.</p> <p>SH advised that the picture changes daily. Numbers of positive cases have decreased significantly from the peak of 167 children and staff being off school with Covid. On 11.2.22, there were still 49 children and staff off school. Covid has particularly affected Early Years staff and Years 3 and 4, but with no real pattern of development whilst numbers increased. SH is expecting that more staff will be off school. The school has had to work with very limited resources and being significantly understaffed but has managed to carry on despite this. Staff have all been pulling together to manage the situation e.g., office staff helping to cover lunch time duties. It has been an exceptional time. There have been further complications as staff experience post-viral fatigue, and with cases of staff being off on long-term sick and compassionate leave.</p> <p>3. JK referred to the current recruitment process for a non-teaching Deputy Headteacher (HT) and asked what the role will look like and how this might free up time for SH.</p> <p>SH advised that she had planned the structure with MT and NP. The new Deputy HT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for the Early Career Framework teachers. The support required to be given to NQTs has changed and is now very time-consuming • provide mentoring/teaching support • share planning of strategic development with SH <p>The appointment of a new Deputy HT will allow MT and NP to focus on supporting/managing their key stages.</p>

JK observed that this will be a long-term strategic position and a real commitment – there will be a need to monitor both the impact and pupil numbers to ensure it continues to be sustainable financially.

4. JC referred to the Learning Hub, as this is now a significant part of the school. JC asked if it could be arranged for governors to be involved in evaluating its impact and establishing clear outcomes.

SH advised that evaluation of the Hub takes place on an on-going basis to ensure it is being used most appropriately. It provides an emotional space for when children feel most challenged and enables the school to provide a nurturing alternative curriculum tailored to those in the Hub, rather than the previous approach of having these children being supported to try and access the main curriculum in tables in the corridor. External agencies have visited the Hub (e.g., the Virtual School) and their feedback on the Hub has been very positive.

It was agreed that CM and GTH (representing SEND & Inclusion and Data & Curriculum) will join JC to undertake a governance evaluation of the Hub. **Action: JC to feedback to the GB on findings of the Hub evaluation at 9.5.22 Full GB meeting.**

5. The GB discussed the Risk Register (circulated prior to the meeting) and that nursery numbers have been identified as the main current issue. Numbers are currently topped at 32. Taking two-year-olds following Covid has meant that the school is needing to work with some children who have had no socialization experience due to the pandemic – this means that more input and support from staff is required. This is being seen across many Early Years settings and the Early Years Advisor has commented that they think it will be a further three years until the situation will be as it was pre-Covid. There are also some children who have complex additional needs, but who are not eligible for more than £400 of additional funding unless they have an EHCP. Without being able to access further funding, this means numbers have had to be limited. Parents find this frustrating and question this.

SH advised that the easiest way to address the significant impact that ratios for two-year-olds and the level of additional needs are having is to adjust how places are offered and to return to only offering places to children in the term that they turn three.

MJ asked whether the school would continue to keep the existing two-year-olds. SH confirmed that it would.

Decision: The GB agreed to amend admissions to the nursery to the term that children turn three and no longer accept younger two-year-olds.

Action: JB to amend the Nursery Admissions policy and to publish the amended version on the website.

6. **School Improvement Plan (SIP) Monitoring Calendar**

1. This had been circulated prior to the meeting. Many of the actions were noted to have been completed. The data shows a positive picture of the school moving in the right direction. The Early Years section will be completed shortly – this was not possible to do prior to the meeting as MT has been off sick. Tatty Wilson (Diocese of Exeter) has reviewed with LS where the school is with regards to its SIAMS action plan, and it is all looking very positive. A SIAMS evidence file is held in school and is available for governors to look at if they wish to arrange a time to do so. Governors were advised that there is also one for OfSTED that is available to them.

2. SH advised that next steps have been identified as:

- April: introducing oracy and vocabulary work
- continuing to work with Jude Carter and Rev. Mark whilst the process to appoint a new Minister continues.
- further strengthening links with the Church through initiatives such as hosting 'Muddy Church' at the school

- looking to develop links within the local communities through Cubs and Scouts

3. The Parent Questionnaire has been completed and the majority of responses were positive. The questionnaire was reviewed by RG as Lead for Parent and Christian Community Links and will be reported on in his Lead Governor report this term.

SH reported that the school website is being continually refined and developed to best provide and display information about the school. The website is getting the most views it ever has.

7. Finance

3. Additional Classroom Build Proposal

SH explained that space in school is currently very limited, and the Yurt is limited in how it can be used due to its lack of visibility which means that it always needs two staff minimum to be working in there. Those children with sensory needs also find it a difficult space to be in due to the noise etc. from weather on the canvas. The Yurt has a base, Wi-Fi and electricity so SH is proposing that a timber-framed classroom be built on the base of the Yurt with a covered walkway to attach it to the school. This extra classroom could potentially be used as the Hub and be a place that the children can feel they have real ownership of. There has been a consideration given as to whether the school could in addition take children from other schools. This could secure additional funding for the school but would impact upon the autonomy of the school which SH is reluctant to allow to happen.

There is currently no other way of adding any additional space and previous enrichment spaces have had to be converted to office space as the original additional office areas are not suitable for use during Covid as they have no ventilation or natural lighting.

SH is currently seeking quotes for this work. The first received is approximately £32,000 plus VAT.

JK noted that this is feasible within the current budget but asked if there were any grants that the school could apply for to help towards the cost.

SH advised that as the budget for next year looks very comfortable, it is unlikely that grant applications would be successful.

JK asked what would happen to the Yurt if the build went ahead and queried if it could be sold.

SH advised that whilst it could be sold, she plans to initially explore whether it could be moved onto the field as a shelter/outdoor classroom.

CM referred to the wider context of how St. Martin's sits within the community and the planned continual growth of the town with new schools being built and potentially a special school. CM asked if having a new classroom will fit/be sustainable if these are all built?

JC advised that the developments are in the consultation phase currently and there is no set schedule for building works at present. He did not see there would be any short-term risk.

SH advised that St. Martin's was unusual as it started with all classes open even though not full, because it was a school transferring from another site. All other new schools only open with limited classes open so their growth is much slower and more gradual. This will be the case with any other new school which opens nearby so there will be no immediate impact on numbers at St. Martin's.

SJ agreed that an extension would provide different options to the school. SJ asked when a decision might be taken regarding whether provision could also be for children from other schools. SH did not have a timescale set at this time – the choice between it being used as in-school provision only or to include external pupils needs further consideration (see earlier point ref impact on autonomy).

The GB discussed that the current location of the Hub places it at the centre of the school, whereas it would be on the edge if it moved to the new extension if built – this might be less ideal. It has also been considered whether the new extension if built could house the staff room so that the Hub could remain in the centre of school. As it stands, there is not enough space in the current layout to meet the school's ongoing needs (e.g., guitar lessons are held in the Food Tech room).

The GB also discussed the ability of the Hub to provide a tailored curriculum to meet the needs of those within it. RG checks in and liaises with all classroom teachers to plan the curriculum. It has to be refined and flexible as the ages and needs of those in the Hub can and do change. Need can be a more difficult to anticipate when the child's primary area of need is SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health).

Decision: The GB all agreed that they were in support of the proposal to consider further the creation of an additional space in school.

1. Budget Monitor.

The financial position of the school is very much improved, with an in-year deficit projected now to be £34,000. The school will have a surplus that it will be seeking to spend. The 2022-23 budget is being drafted and will need to be agreed at the 9.5.22 Full GB meeting.

LK asked if the draft budget included the proposed classroom build. JK advised that it did not, but it does include the Deputy Head costs. SH confirmed that it also already includes increasing the Family Advocate hours and continuing the Hub. SH advised that there will not be any additional costs when the SENDCo begins maternity leave as the role will be covered by SH and RG.

2. Consideration of strategic financial planning needs.

JK advised that this would be possible once the 2022-23 budget is more finalised and will be reported on at Full GB when this has happened.

SH raised that there will be a need to consider the potential impact on the budget as members of staff move up to the Upper Pay Scale (UPS) and whether the number of teaching assistants could be increased.

There has not yet been confirmation that the PE grant will continue – if it does not, then this will create a financial impact. Currently PE is supported externally by Achieve for All to enable JS to run Coding in the Hub and for TS to support their trainee teacher. This will increase to three afternoons a week in the summer term.

SH also raised that teaching assistants often work longer hours than they are paid e.g., reading emails is done in their own time, they may need to wait past the end of school for a late parent to arrive. She feels that there is a need to assess the cost of adding time on to their contracts to reflect this – it is necessary to ensure that doing this would be sustainable in the long-term.

JE queried if additional hours could be given at least in the short term.

Decision: The GB agreed that they were supportive of plans to consider increasing TA pay to reflect hours actually worked.

8. Staffing

1. Monitoring of Headteacher work/life balance by Headteacher Appraisal Committee

JC advised that there is a review meeting due, and the Committee will report back after this. The Committee generally feels that SH's workload and hours are too high.

Action: Move item to agenda for 4.4.22 Full GB meeting.

9. **Governance**

1. Confirmation of completion of annual review of governor business interests

JB advised that this has now been completed. Due to governors being less in school over the last year due to Covid, some governors have completed the review on GovernorHub rather than on their paper declarations form. The paper forms will be re-signed as governors come into school.

2. Production of 2021-22 GB Impact Statement

It was agreed that JC would write this. **Action: JC to prepare initial draft of GB Impact Statement to be discussed at 29.6.22 Full GB meeting, with final version to be approved at 11.7.22 Full GB meeting.**

3. Collation of governor impacts from previous half-term

- JC has begun year group monitoring
- All governors involved in HT recruitment process – this has helped governors build stronger relationships with staff across the school, and given them a better understanding of the different areas within the school
- SJ noted that the GB is better at sharing their learning across the Board – there is more evidence of immediate sharing of resources or training learning between governors.
- CM and JC met with EK the new SENDCo to develop understanding of how communication works between staff and the GB.
- JK met with Year 6 teachers to look at the SATs plans and held the greater depth Maths sessions. JK also has been involved in year group monitoring with SH.
- JC has noted new governors getting involved with the school and introducing themselves e.g., JE has joined the ETHOS group.
- SH saw that through Covid governors have been offering support and to come into school to help – these offers have been brilliant to receive.

The GB noted that usual governor work over the last term has been delayed due to Covid and that governors have been able to come in less.

4. Note balance of Jackie Box Memorial Fund

This remains at £10.47 as no further donations have been received.

5. Reports/impacts from governors who have attended training this term

JC attended the recent DAG (Devon Association of Governors) Chairs Forum which focused on governor recruitment and retention processes. JC feels that St. Martin's does well in what it does and what it offers.

SJ has watched the online OfSTED video on understanding curriculum structuring and how subject lead roles work. She felt that this had been very useful and provided a broader understanding for governors. SJ will be attending the Staff Well-being Training next month.

JE attended the governor training ref Ethos and Vision in schools directly after attending St. Martin's own ETHOS group. She felt that St. Martin's was doing this very well and better than some of the example ones given at the training. JE found the ETHOS group to be very supportive and encouraging of each other and reflected well the school's overall ethos and direction.

SH was pleased to hear this feedback on the school's ETHOS group as this had been created without the support of the Diocese as originally planned due to Covid and therefore its development has been purely in-school.

10. **Safeguarding**

1. Outcomes of Safeguarding Audit (completed December 2021). SH shared the agreed actions from the audit with the GB. Key points of note were:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A different alarm system needs to be decided upon for lockdown drills so that the school is aware it is a different situation to a fire alarm. BT and SH are in the process of finalizing this. • An afterschool Young Carers Support Club is in the process of being developed • CPOMS analysis has been undertaken by SH to identify any patterns related to bullying, exclusion and safeguarding issues. • Changes have been made to the new staff induction process – the first day for all staff will be induction from now on. • Supervision for staff working with challenging issues will be provided by LB. • JW is undertaking Senior Mental Health training. <p>The only action not yet completed is the lockdown drill alarm.</p> <p><u>2. Termly Data Update</u> SH updated the GB on the most recent data for the school. Governors noted that it can be difficult making referrals to MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) due to the threshold level now in place for support being so high.</p> <p>The GB noted that the school continues to have assistance from other external support agencies as necessary.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p><u>1. Determination of 2023-23 Admissions Arrangements</u> Decision: The GB agreed to formally determine the Admissions Arrangements for 2023-24. Action: JB to confirm determination has been completed to DCC and the Diocese and to ensure determined version published on the school website by 1.3.22.</p> <p><u>2. Safeguarding</u> The GB were advised that the section of the policy on Allegations Against Staff has been amended following this section being rewritten in the model policy to clarify how it relates to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. This amendment did not warrant a full review or re-approval by the GB. Both JW and JC have seen the amended section. The updated version is now on the school website and the internal policies folder.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><u>Discussion: 'How has this meeting benefited our children and contributed to the Christian distinctiveness of the school?'</u></p> <p>The following were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RG – the discussion around the proposal for a new extension and the support for this shown by the Board demonstrates that governors see and understand the need that exists for further space. • JK – feels that the discussions around the role of the new Deputy Headteacher will be good for creating capacity • JC – the discussions around the budget position focused on how it can be used to benefit the children • Looking to recognize and reward teaching assistants for the hours they work will be positive and in turn benefit the children.

<u>ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING</u>		
<u>Action</u>	<u>Person responsible</u>	<u>Date to be completed by</u>
1. Arrange JC and RG to be added as signatories to the Jackie Box Memorial account.	JB	8.4.22
2. Arrange for DPO to deliver training for 9.5.22.	JB	9.3.22
3. Finalise the staff only reviewed policies from Autumn 21 and update the policy schedule.	JB	4.3.22
4. Feedback to the GB on findings of the Hub evaluation.	JC	9.5.22
5. Amend the Nursery Admissions policy and to publish the amended version on the website.	JB	1.3.22
6. Prepare initial draft of GB Impact Statement to be discussed at 29.6.22 Full GB meeting, with final version to be approved at 11.7.22 Full GB meeting.	JC	29.6.22 for first draft.
7. Confirm determination of 2023-24 Admissions arrangements has been completed to DCC and the Diocese and ensure determined version published on the school website.	JB	1.3.22

Items for future Full GB Agendas

- 4.4.22 Full GB Meeting: Monitoring report from HT Appraisal Committee on work/life balance of the Headteacher

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

- The GB agreed to amend admissions to the nursery to the term that children turn three and no longer accept younger two-year-olds.
- The GB agreed that they were supportive of plans to consider increasing TA pay to reflect hours worked.
- The GB all agreed that they were in support of the proposal to consider further the creation of an additional space in school.
- The GB agreed to formally determine the Admissions Arrangements for 2023-24.

Next meeting: Monday, 7th March at 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Signed as accurate by the Chair:

Name of Chair:

Date: