

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

Minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Board held via Zoom videoconference on
Wednesday 23 June 2021 at 7.30pm

Constitution and Membership

Membership Category	Appointed By	Name	End of Term of Office
Foundation (7)	Archbishop of Southwark	Anna Brown (AB)	31/8/22
	Archbishop of Southwark	Celine Carter-Smith (CCS)	1/2/25
	Archbishop of Southwark	Chris Hopkins (CHo)	31/8/22
	Archbishop of Southwark	Francis Keeling (FK)	22/5/23
	Archbishop of Southwark	Fr Adrian McKenna-Whyte (AMW)	18/12/23
	Archbishop of Southwark	Liam O'Connell (LO)	16/12/23
	Archbishop of Southwark	<i>Vacancy</i>	
Local Authority (LA) (1)	Governing Board	Sheila Butterly (SB)	25/11/24
Parent (2)	Parent election	Josh Desouza (JD)	13/3/22
	Parent election	Catie Terry (CT)	12/11/23
Headteacher	Ex officio	Catherine Hughes (CHu)	n/a
Staff (1)	Staff election	Melissa Farrell (MF)	3/9/22

bold = absent

Also attended: Jan Hopkins – Clerk to the Governing Board

1	OPENING PRAYER	ACTION
1.1	The meeting commenced at 7.30pm with a prayer led by AB.	
2	APOLOGIES AND OPENING REMARKS	
2.1	Apologies had been received from LO.	
2.2	Since the last full governing board meeting Serena Sexton had resigned as a Foundation Governor. Serena had been a Foundation Governor since 2014 and held the role of Curriculum Committee Chair since 2018. Governors expressed their great appreciation for her dedicated service to the school and AB will arrange a token of their thanks to be sent to her. A replacement Foundation Governor will be identified soon.	AB
2.3	Since the last full governing board meeting CT had become named link governor for BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic), and joined the Curriculum and Premises Committees.	
3	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
3.1	There were no declarations of pecuniary or personal interest for this meeting.	

	<i>(AMW joined the meeting at this point)</i>	
4	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING	
4.1	The draft minutes of the full governing board meeting held on 11/3/21 (Appendix 4.1) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting.	
4.2	JH will add an electronic version of AB's signature, and today's date, to these minutes and file them in the Minute Book.	JH
5	CHAIR'S REPORT	
5.1	AB's written report (Appendix 5.1) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Highlights included:	
5.1.1	<p>Deputy Headteacher Recruitment</p> <p>This had taken place yesterday (22/6/21) and MF had been the successful candidate. The process had gone very smoothly, with participation from Daniel Coleman (DC), Adviser for Religious Education and School Standards at the Education Commission for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark. It had been good to do a face-to-face interview, with the interview conducted by the pupils being a particular highlight. AB will write a formal letter to MF confirming her appointment with effect from 1/9/21.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(CT joined the meeting at this point)</i></p>	AB
5.1.2	<p>Governor Visits</p> <p>Governor visits had now resumed, with AMW frequently visiting the school, rotating his time around the classes. CHu had put together a timetable for forthcoming visits linked to the School Development Plan (SDP) and priorities, ie a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) visit will take place in the autumn term 2021, a Safeguarding visit will take place in the spring term 2022, and a Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) visit will take place in the summer term 2022.</p>	
5.1.3	<p>Governors' Maintenance Fund (GMF)</p> <p>Gift Aid claims are being made on parent/carer contributions made to the GMF. Regarding new parents/carers of Reception children from September 2021, a letter will be sent to them in July 2021 giving details of the GMF. New Reception class parents/carers will visit the school in small groups which was considered particularly important as they had not been able to visit and ask questions when selecting the school, but there would not be an opportunity for the new Reception class to have a 'stay and play' as it was felt too challenging when they would then have to go back to their current nurseries; mass gatherings of people then going back to other settings was not considered a good idea. Parents/carers will however be offered the opportunity to come into school for refreshments although it was acknowledged that some parents/carers might not feel comfortable with this but there would be a further opportunity to do this in September. If parents/carers would like to come into school in smaller family groups, then this is another possible option.</p>	
5.1.4	<p>Diocesan Initiative</p> <p>Discussion on this subject had never progressed beyond discussion amongst Chairs of Governors and Headteachers and had gone quiet recently because the Kingston schools</p>	

	<p>had formed a group, led by Richard Challoner School in New Malden although CHu had heard that the group is not a purely Catholic group. CHu is meeting with Michelle Lunney (Headteacher of St Osmund's Catholic Primary School in Barnes), Jane Hines (Headteacher of St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School in Richmond), and the Headteacher of Richard Challoner School tomorrow (24/6/21) at 5pm to ascertain where we are on this subject. It was noted that St Mary Magdalen's school is close geographically to Wandsworth which could be a possible affiliation.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.1.1</p> <p>6.1.2</p>	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p>CHu's report and appendices (Appendices 6.1/6) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Highlights included:</p> <p>PPG Strategy Statement (Appendix 6.3)</p> <p>This is in place for children who come from low-income households, and the school can see that the number of children in receipt of the PPG has risen substantially within the school. The school used to employ someone one day a week to do a session with these children but looking at the evidence it needs to be a shared responsibility, so this is a big cultural shift. CHu has worked with someone from AfC who has helped to develop the school's PPG strategy, as well as Jennifer Anderson (part-time PPA cover Teacher), who works three days a week at the school and is the PPG Lead, to have a more cohesive, collaborative approach. It was acknowledged that anything received by PPG children benefits all children at the school in a way that is not at their expense and working to help those most vulnerable is at the heart of everything the school does and fits in with its Catholic mission. The PPG Statement used to look quite different in that governors had not seen it in that much detail before as it is now broken down into three primary categories which it was acknowledged was good. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) does a lot of educational research and disseminates it in an easily understandable way, looking at issues that are evidence-based, and the quantitative data around it. An abridged form of this PPG Strategy Statement will be published on the school website.</p> <p><i>Q: Is there any correlation between PPG children and the core group with low attendance levels?</i></p> <p>A: Sadly, the twelve low attendees represented the highest percentage of PPG children. Over 50% have low attendance with the poorest attendance among the most recent joiners. As an example, a child recently joined from another school where their attendance was 50%, and now has 72% attendance however that involves staff members going to the child's home. There are very vulnerable families in the school, as there has always been historically, but a lot of them are now new to the school, and AMW has helped a lot with this. There are families who have had bad relationships with their school in the past, eg they have been banned from school premises, so the school is trying to grow these relationships, supporting them in areas such as hygiene and the provision of furniture and food.</p> <p><i>Q: Is there a useful list of acronyms that could be shared with governors?</i></p> <p>A: Yes, CHu is compiling a list of acronyms and will circulate these in due course.</p> <p>Staff Reorganisation (Appendix 6.2)</p> <p>The Finance & Resources Committee had requested a rationale about potential recruitment which had been circulated. Paula Carlton, the school's part-time Music Teacher, was leaving at the end of this term, and it was intended to replace her, as well as recruit a Modern Foreign Languages Teacher, which has remained vacant this</p>	<p>CHu</p> <p>CHu</p>

academic year, but it was hoped to look at doing this in a way to add more value to the children's curriculum and enrichment activities, so it was hoped to also recruit an Art Teacher so that in the long term the school could have an arts morning, working on art, drama and music, possibly working towards exhibitions, presentations and performances. Interviews for all three of these posts were being held next week and applications from good quality candidates had already been received so it was hoped that this staff recruitment process would be successful. Having a greater number of specialist teachers would have a good impact on the children, and should incur a nominal financial saving, but the more important benefit was that class teachers could then plan and assess together. CHu had worked with a similar model before which had proved to be effective.

6.1.3 SDP Update/Subject Leader Reports (Appendices 6.4/5)

The SDP Update has not changed greatly. It was hoped to roll a lot of this over into next year. All subject leader reports had been circulated, with a lot of time over the year being spent developing subject leaders, a role which all staff have, and they are all in different places in that journey. MF had gone through these reports and has gone back to staff with feedback to support their professional development and understanding of the strategic leadership role. Along with curriculum mapping this has been a big piece of work.

Q: Could the first autumn term Inset day be a joint Inset with governors to look at either the SDP or safeguarding?

A: The SDP needs a big rethink. It needs restructuring, looking at the EEF and the criteria there, but always considering the SDP priorities. It was considered that September 2021 was too soon to consider it – the pandemic having a big impact - but perhaps next year it could all be done, perhaps with a small working party of governors. CHu said that stakeholder input to the SDP was important but until a clearer plan had been established this was not possible. It was acknowledged that this process should not be rushed and that it should be carefully worked on with the intention of delivering a new format SDP in the academic year 2022-23.

6.1.4 CPD

Staff had carried out a lot of CPD, but it was intended to slow the pace of this to a certain extent. Networks and moderations will still take place but there was a lot to do with specific training related to new initiatives within the school, eg new interventions, and it was now a time of reflection and consolidation.

6.1.5 After School Club

The new After School Club is enhancing the school offer in an incredibly good way. The company will also run a summer school in school as well, offering quite a few free places for vulnerable children, offering support for part or all the holidays if needed.

Q: Are childcare vouchers valid for the After School Club, and for their summer provision?

A: Yes, they are valid for both provisions. Fortunately, the After School Club takes care of all its own administration and is totally independent.

6.1.6 Sport

Unfortunately, there was no PE; only Sports Day was going ahead.

Q: Do NSSport have qualified first aiders?

A: Yes, they do. They also pay for all cleaning, ensuring any area they use is cleaned.

<p>6.1.7</p> <p>6.1.8</p> <p>6.1.9</p>	<p>School Summer Fair 2021 The Summer Fair is also going ahead on Saturday 26/6/21. Health and Safety in the LA are very thorough, and the school has taken advice because we are in Stage 3 so there is no reason why the Fair should not go ahead as it is an outdoor event although there are a few additional issues that the PTA and CHu have to do, eg ensure that there are no queues of people. The only reason that inter-school events were cancelled was because of insurance which is why the borough sports are not able to take place.</p> <p>Collective Worship and Catholic Life of the School First Holy Communion took place in the church recently and went very well. It was acknowledged that teachers love AMW coming into school to do lessons with the children. Lesson observations had taken place this week, with writing being a focus as something that had impacted on the children during the pandemic, but also RE, so AMW had given the school some pointers, and was helping with the development of staff who are new to the school.</p> <p>Solar Together Project <i>Q: What is the status of the solar panels issue?</i> A: It was not considered financially viable for the school to consider this initiative now. There are already working solar panels on the roof, but it is not known where the power from it goes and despite best endeavours to investigate this it has not been solved.</p>	
<p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING AND THE SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR)</p> <p>The SCR has not been checked since March 2021 when there had been a couple of technical issues, eg the date of birth of AMW, and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) details of CCS.</p> <p><i>Q: Is there another governor who could undertake the termly SCR visit?</i> A: Yes, CCS is the other Safeguarding and Child Protection named link governor and will be undertaking the safeguarding visit in the spring term 2022 with AB.</p> <p>Safer Recruitment issues are now always taken on board, ie references are taken up before interviews, and candidates are asked to bring the necessary documents for DBS checks when they attend the school for interviews, so it is hoped that successful applicants have already begun their DBS processing, with any unsuccessful applicants' copy documents being shredded.</p>	<p>AB/CCS</p>
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p>SEND</p> <p>SEND Information Report (Appendix 8.2) It was considered that this report was particularly good, with its Q&A speaking both to current and prospective parents/carers, and full of helpful information. Preparation of the report had been a big job especially in terms of being transparent. More systems have now been put in place with more regular scheduled interaction between parents/carers, teachers and the SENCo (Wendy Burns, WB). WB had worked extremely hard, with the support of Sarah Hibbert, AfC's Lead Education Adviser (SEND), which had been particularly useful. Credits from the school's Spark package had been used to enable this CPD. Governors approved this report which will be published on the school website.</p> <p><i>Q: Does WB's time and effort working on this administration reduce the time she is with</i></p>	<p>CHu</p>

<p>8.2</p>	<p><i>teachers?</i></p> <p>A: WB does do a lot of the administration, ie children who identify as requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) have one written by WB but it should be in collaboration with the teachers, parents/carers, and pupils. According to the SEND Code of Conduct it is important culturally that all stakeholders respond. This also represents an opportunity to upskill staff who want to know how to best support the children in their classes; it is the most requested CPD subject, so it is a good way of collaboration to consider support strategies. WB shares her expertise with parents/carers and staff, and this ultimately frees up her time.</p> <p>SEND Policy (Appendix 8.1)</p> <p>The SEND Policy had not changed much. Governors approved this policy which will be published on the school website.</p>	
<p>9</p> <p>9.1</p> <p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p>	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER (SIP) REPORT</p> <p>The summer term meeting with Jenell Chetty, the school's SIP, had taken place but unfortunately the report has not yet been written up. Once received, CHu will circulate the SIP report to all governors as it has questions directed to all governors that they can then raise with CHu.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that schools previously awarded an 'Outstanding' grade by Ofsted will, from September 2021, come back into the Ofsted inspection cycle. Governors of currently 'Outstanding' schools will be offered training to get ready for inspections.</p> <p>The meeting was reminded that a review had taken place some two years ago where AfC had carried out a mock inspection of the school and given feedback which had fed into the school's SDP, which was good to carry out as part of a regular monitoring cycle, and it was hoped to do this again once staff were better equipped, having been trained and supported.</p>	<p>CHu</p>
<p>10</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.1.1</p> <p>10.1.1.1</p>	<p>COMMITTEE REPORTS</p> <p>CURRICULUM COMMITTEE</p> <p>The minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting held on 8/6/21 (Appendix 10.1) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Religious Education (RE) Policy (Appendix 10.1.1)</p> <p>AMW advised that that the RE Policy could be further developed as 'catholic' means universal, ie God's love is for all. The school is blessed to have children from other faiths, and from no faith, which is only mentioned, along with spiritual and moral development, at the bottom of the policy. A broader spectrum of other faiths as part of the Catholic ethos being welcoming and embracing other people needs to be recognised so this policy needs tweaking in the future. Governors approved this current version of the policy.</p>	

10.1.1.2	<p>Attendance Policy (Appendix 10.1.2) Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Policy (Appendix 10.1.3.i/ii) School Behaviour Policy (Appendix 10.1.4)</p> <p>These had all been approved by the Curriculum Committee at their meeting on 8/6/21 as part of their delegated responsibility and had been circulated to the full governing board for information only.</p>	
10.2	<p>FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE</p> <p>10.2.1 The minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meetings held on 19/3/21, 7/5/21 and 11/6/21 (Appendices 10.2.i/ii/iii) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>10.2.1.1 Budget Plan 2021-22 The committee had reviewed the final budget plan for this year in their meeting on 11/6/21. In summary, the revenue reserves as at the end of the last financial year (31/3/21) was £78,636. The budgeted in-year surplus for this financial year is £6,532. Therefore, the projected revenue reserves at the end of this financial year (31/3/22) is £85,168. It was acknowledged that this is a good budget thanks to the sound financial management of CHu and Evelyn Fernandes (EF), the School Business Manager. The committee now recommended that the full governing board approves this budget plan, which EF will now submit to the LA by the deadline of 30/6/21. Governors approved the budget plan.</p> <p>10.2.1.2 Anti-Fraud Policy & Fraud Response Plan (Appendix 10.2.1) Charging and Remissions Policy (Appendix 10.2.2) Debt Recovery Policy (Appendix 10.2.3) Data Protection Policy (Appendix 10.2.4) Fair Processing Notice (Privacy Notice) (Appendix 10.2.5) Photography and Video Consent Form (Appendix 10.2.6)</p> <p>These documents had all been approved by the Finance & Resources Committee at their meeting on 11/6/21 as part of their delegated responsibility and had been circulated to the full governing board for information only.</p>	CHu
10.3	<p>PREMISES COMMITTEE</p> <p>10.3.1 The minutes of the Premises Committee meeting held on 13/1/21 (Appendix 10.3) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>10.3.1.1 Lockdown Policy (Appendix 10.3.1) This had been circulated to the full governing board prior to the meeting. Governors approved this policy.</p> <p>10.3.1.2 Governors acknowledged that the family of foxes living under one of the classrooms was a problem. Ensuring the fence is sufficiently secure could help but the foxes will still dig down under it. The potential cost of £3-5,000 to solve the problem was not considered currently worthwhile.</p>	

10.4	ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE	
10.4.1	The minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings held on 11/5/21 (Appendix 10.4) had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting.	
10.4.1.1	Thirty places had been accepted for the Reception Class in September 2022, with six pupils on the waiting list who had been written to advising them that the school would love to welcome them, and they have also been invited to attend the forthcoming Summer Fair. There have been 18 in-year admissions, with ten leavers, seven of whom had occurred after the 11/5/21 meeting. CHu advised that the trend is for families moving out of London, and out of the country. Since the committee meeting, there have been some changes, and it is now looking like there will be a maximum of 28 children in Reception in September, and the school roll in September could be as low as 197, depending on possible relocations, which would be 82% capacity, ie below this year. A 31 st child was expected in Y4, and a set of twins had started in school on Tuesday. The twins' family have relocated back into the country and their older sibling who previously attended St Elizabeth's, has returned to that school, and is expected to remain there.	
10.4.1.2	CHu advised that since the meeting she knew of two families who would not be coming to the school but had not yet declined. A further place had been declined by another family, but the place had been filled so the picture is always evolving. A further family relocating from abroad was also expressing an interest in the school.	
10.4.1.3	It was also acknowledged that reaching out to families in the Kew parish was a good idea. DC had mentioned a school in Croydon who had successfully reached out to their own wider community and CHu was going to ask him for that school's contact details so that she could discuss their strategy with them. It was agreed that ensuring the school is a visible presence in church was also good, and a church noticeboard with information about the school was planned. The children singing in the church once a month was a further visual reminder, and information about the school will regularly be included in the church newsletter.	CHu
10.5	PAY COMMITTEE	
10.5.1	Since the last full governing board meeting the committee had not met; they planned to meet in September 2021.	CHo/CHu
11	SCHOOL WEBSITE	
11.1	It was hoped that Antony Cooper, Owner and Director of Firefly Digital Marketing Ltd, who designed the new school website, would be able to provide training soon, with a member of the school's administration team, a Senior Leadership Team member, and JH all participating to take ownership of the website, troubleshoot it, but also make it more dynamic.	CHu
12	POLICY REVIEW	
12.1	Complaints Procedure (Appendix 12.1) Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy (Appendix 12.2) It was recommended by the LA to review these policies annually. Governors approved	

	these policies.	
13	GOVERNOR CPD	
13.1	Since the last full governing board meeting the following online LA CPD had taken place, representing an impressive commitment of governors to their training. It was acknowledged that Safer Recruitment and Performance Management were important training sessions for governors to attend in the future:	
13.1.1	<i>Sheila Butterly</i> 15/3/21: Schools Revenue Funding Workshop 29/3/21: The Role of School Governors in Championing the Needs of Children Looked After 20/5/21: Schools Financial Management Part 1	
13.1.2	<i>Celine Carter-Smith</i> 20/4/21 and 27/4/21: Safeguarding: The Governing Board's Role Parts 1 and 2 11/5/21 and 13/5/21: New Governors: Understanding Your Role Parts 1 and 2 15/6/21: Safeguarding: The Governing Board's Role: Online Safeguarding for Governors	
13.1.3	<i>Josh Desouza</i> 5/5/21: Health and Safety for Governors 18/5/21: The Role of the Parent Governor	
13.1.4	<i>Melissa Farrell</i> 18/5/21: The Role of the Staff Governor	
13.1.5	<i>Chris Hopkins</i> 25/3/21: Director's Termly Briefing for Chairs and Vice Chairs	
13.1.6	<i>Liam O'Connell</i> 5/5/21: Health and Safety for Governors	
13.1.7	<i>Serena Sexton</i> 9/6/21: Safeguarding: The Governing Board's Role	
13.1.8	<i>Jan Hopkins</i> 23/3/21: Clerks' Briefing	
14	HOW ARE WE IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR THE CHILDREN?	
14.1	Governors are committed to improving their own skills and knowledge base through their CPD.	
14.2	AMW is working with families to improve their outcomes, ie every PPG interaction is an intervention because it is building a relationship.	
14.3	The work done by the SLT to improve attendance is noteworthy. AB advised that she continues to receive requests from parents/carers to take their children out of school during term time, so the Attendance Policy is effective. Staff also visit families in their homes, supporting them in a variety of ways.	

15	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
15.1	A governor asked what the best method was to raise questions to CHu/FGB outside of the committee/FGB meetings as, eg the timing of the Curriculum Committee meeting currently had a firm end time which did not facilitate sufficient time for presentations, debate and questions. It was agreed that the Curriculum Committee meeting timing needed to be more flexible so that governors did not feel under such pressure so the timing of this meeting will be considered. It was agreed that questions should be minuted, and it was considered that ad hoc questions could be put to the committee chair who could then table them at the next committee meeting, but with the flexibility to ask questions at the meeting itself.	
15.2	A governor asked if it would be possible to use a comparison/track changes tool so that when updated documents are presented to governors, any amendments could be clearly identified.	
15.3	It was agreed that CHu, AB and JH would liaise to ascertain the best methods going forward to deal with both these issues.	CHu/AB/ JH
16	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
16.1	The full governing board meetings for the academic year 2021-22 will be as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thursday 18/11/21 6.30pm-8.00pm - Thursday 10/3/22 6.30pm-8.00pm - Thursday 23/6/22 6.30pm-8.00pm 	
17	CLOSING PRAYER	
17.1	The meeting ended at 9.05pm with a prayer led by AMW.	

Anna Brown

Signed: _____
Anna Brown, Chair of Governors

Date: 18 November 2021