

# The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

## Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 at 6.30pm

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Present: Anna Brown Foundation Governor (Chair) (AB)  
 Sally Derby Staff Governor (SD)  
 Celine Carter Smith Foundation Governor (CCS)  
 Chris Hopkins Foundation Governor (Vice Chair) (CHo)  
 Catherine Hughes Headteacher (CHu)(HT)  
 Fr Adrian McKenna-Whyte Foundation Governor (AMW)  
 Catie Terry Parent Governor (CT)  
 Glyn Wallis-Jones Parent Governor (GWJ)

In attendance: Marie De Greef Clerk

Absence: Sheila Butterley Local Authority Citizen Governor (SB)  
 Francis Keeling (FK) Foundation Governor (FK)  
 Liam O'Connell Foundation Governor (LO)

| 1 | <b>Opening prayer</b>   | <b>Action</b> |
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|   | The meeting started with a prayer led by AMW.   |               |
| 2 | <p><b>Apologies and Opening Remarks</b></p> <p>Apologies received from Sheila Butterly, Francis Keeling and Liam O'Connell.</p> <p>Governors welcomed new staff governor, Sally Derby, to the meeting.</p>  |               |
| 3 | <p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p> <p>There were none.</p>   |               |
| 4 | <p><b>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</b></p> <p>MDG declared that CHo had been nominated as Vice Chair. No further nominations had been presented. CHo was elected unopposed as Vice Chair for a one-year term of office.</p> <p>CHo nominated AB to be Chair. No further nominations were received. AB was elected unopposed as Chair for a one-year term of office.</p> |               |

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| 5 | <p><b>Minutes of Last meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>A draft of the full governing board meeting held on 23/06/22 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the chair.<br/>There were no matters arising.</p>   |                          |
| 6 | <p><b>Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Status Update</b></p> <p>The HT provided an update on the Multi Academy Trust initiative. In summary:</p> <p>At the recent working party meeting it was discussed that the initial group of 8 schools would form phase one of the MAT but that Sean Maher (Head of Richard Challoner) was in touch with other Catholic schools including Holy Trinity in Kingston, and schools in Wandsworth, Merton and Sutton which would mean that there would be a phase two and three ensuring the MATs long term financial viability.</p> <p>Subsequent to this meeting it has been suggested that the Merton and Sutton schools are much closer to completing the academisation as a separate group which would contain some secondary schools that our pupils go on to attend.</p> <p>Governors were concerned about the viability of the MAT given that it is significantly below the numbers outlined for financial viability and there is not clarity on a phase two or three. This also has implications in terms of what additional capacity the MAT would provide for the school as there is only one secondary school and four one form entry primaries within the “phase one” group of eight schools.</p> <p>The school has been asked to complete documentation pertaining to the academisation and this is with the view of engaging lawyers and accessing funds (£25,000) to pay for the academisation process with the view to all eight schools joining the MAT in September 2023. The governors agreed to defer entry into the MAT in the first phase whilst maintaining their existing relationships with other Catholic schools and the option to join the second phase when more information would be available regarding what participation in the MAT would offer in terms of tangible benefits for the pupils at St Mary Magdalen’s.</p> <p>AB to contact the Education Commission.<br/>CHu to liaise with local Catholic schools to ensure the governors are kept informed of the academisation process.<br/>The HT to contact Richard Burke to discuss the Ascension Trust experience of academisation.<br/>Parent Governor (CT) joined the meeting</p> | <p>AB<br/>CHu<br/>HT</p> |

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| <p>7</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p> <p>7.5</p> <p>7.6</p> | <p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>The Governing Board Code of Conduct had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors approved this document and added their names to the signature sheet to confirm this, and to file in the Minute Book.</p> <p>Details of current committee membership had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that GWJ would be appointed to the Finance &amp; Resources committee and SD would be appointed to the Curriculum committee.</p> <p>Details of current named link governors had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors were encouraged to attend all meetings to ensure meeting quorate.</p> <p>The delegation to committee documents (curriculum, premises, admissions and pay) and the Finance &amp; resources Committee Roles &amp; Responsibilities document had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors approved these documents.</p> <p>Blank skills audit had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting for them to complete. Governors were reminded to email their completed skills audit to MDG and she will file these in the minute book and complete the skills audit matrix.</p> <p>The governing board protocol and etiquette document had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors agreed that this document was still relevant and that meetings were still being held remotely and agreed to continue to abide by it.</p> <p>MDG to collate all skills audits, declarations of interest and signatures relating to documentation and code of conduct</p> | <p>MDG</p> |
| <p>8</p>   | <p><b>Chairs Report</b></p> <p>AB's written report had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Items discussed included:</p> <p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>Currently only two governors have completed Safer Recruitment Training. The Headteacher invites a governor to assist in the recruitment process of teachers and in order to be able to offer this support more governors are needed to complete training. The Local Authority Achieving for Children (AfC) run training programmes throughout the year. Additionally, Diocesan online provision 'Firm Foundations' has a comprehensive module on safer recruitment.</p> <p>MDG to collate training updates from Governors.</p>  | <p>MDG</p> |

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|   | <p><b>Governor's Maintenance Fund</b></p> <p>A governor noted a lack of understanding amongst parents surrounding the purpose of the Governor's Maintenance Fund. Communication issues and the way by which the school and the PTA communicated with parents were also discussed. It was suggested that the various methods used (newsletters, social media, email and the school website) were contributing to the confusion. A discussion followed and it was agreed that a review of our communication strategy was required and that the school could work closely with parents with suitable expertise in its development.</p> <p>A governor questioned whether it was possible for parents to contribute to the Governor's Maintenance Fund by way of standing order rather than through Scopay. AB agreed to check, taking in to account any additional manpower and IT expenses.</p> <p>AB noted that the school had yet to receive the funds from the Governors' bank account which had been closed several months earlier. Historically there had been a lack of flexibility in the account (no standing orders possible etc.) As she has been unable to secure the successful transfer of funds to the school AB has now lodged a formal complaint with Nationwide and hopes this will expedite the process.</p> <p>Vice Chair (Cho) left the Meeting</p> | AB |
| 9 | <p><b>Headteachers Report</b></p> <p>The HT's written report had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Items discussed included:</p> <p><b>Attendance</b></p> <p>Attendance in general is improving and is slightly above national average. The particularly poor attendance of the SEND and PPG pupils is in part due to the poor attendance of three pupils. One Reception pupil has had a staggered admission to school on advice of EISS and this impacts attendance data. One Year 4 pupil is currently not attending school and the school has been working closely with the EWO and EISS for over a year to improve the child's attendance. A governor asked if this was a safeguarding concern, CHu clarified that it was not, however the school were committed to addressing poor attendance and would continue to give personalised support to the poorest attendees. The pandemic continues to have an impact on attendance figures. Some Parents are now taking holidays to attend weddings or to visit relatives abroad. The HT highlighted an error in the report due to a coding issue. The percentage of pupil premium grant pupils with poor (below 90% attendance) is 36%.</p> <p>The Curriculum Committee will look at the outcomes report in more detail when it meets on 16/11/22.</p>  |    |

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|      | <p><b>Dates for Governors' Diaries</b></p> <p>The HT drew Governors attention to the dates at the end of the report and mentioned that Governors are always welcome at these events. A discussion followed regarding Governors attending the Open Morning for current parents. GWJ agreed to attend.</p>  |  |
| 10   | <p><b>Safeguarding and Single Central Record</b></p> <p>In October governors were emailed a link to the document "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022." Governors confirmed reading this document and added their names to the signature sheet to confirm this. This will be added to file in the Minute Book.</p> <p>The SCR autumn term audit was reviewed by AB on 20/10/22.</p>   |  |
| 11   | <p><b>Committee Reports</b></p>   |  |
| 11.1 | <p><b>Curriculum Committee Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting will be circulated following the meeting on 16/11/2022.</p>   |  |
| 11.2 | <p><b>Finance and Resources Committee Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 18/10/22 was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The accounts showed since the last committee meeting on 21/6/22 the current projected in-year deficit had increased from c. £4,500 to c. £15,000. The current projection for revenue reserves at the end of this financial year, i.e. end of March 2023 has come down to c. £8,000, based on an in-year deficit of £15,000. CHo explained that the school supply costs had gone up and this was partly attributable to the fact that the school had to employ an extra Teaching Assistant (TA) at a cost of £120 per day to provide one-to-one support for a child in Reception with very high needs. The child had come from a private nursery and we had received no prior information with regards to the child's needs. A Governor questioned whether the school could rearrange home visits to before the summer term so any specific needs could be recognised in advance and better planning could be put in place before September. The HT explained that children often behave differently at home and the Stay and Play visits are too short so it is difficult to capture any issues in advance of the child starting in September.</p> <p>The HT explained that it would be a particularly challenging year ahead with almost no flexibility on the current staffing structure.</p> <p>A Governor asked if the school could consider financial corporate support, specifically targeting local companies. A discussion followed and the committee agreed that the school would have to</p> |  |

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|          | <p>consider a broader approach to fundraising. This may include applications for corporate grants, cash donations, pro bono skills volunteering and matched funding opportunities. The school's Parent/Carer base and the local parish were considered areas of untapped expertise and the committee discussed ways to harness such skills. The governors agreed that the PTA and Class Representative should be involved in developing the knowledge base. It was acknowledged that a communication strategy would have to be put in place so that the fundraising approach would not have a negative impact on admissions.</p> <p>GWJ agreed to work with the PTA to develop a strategy and initial approach letter.</p> <p>AB agreed to write to the Education Commission to consider any conflict of interest with the Catholic ethos of the school.</p> <p><b>GWJ agreed to talk to the parents at the open morning on 17/11/22.</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Subsequently it was agreed that CHo would speak at the meeting.</p> <p>The HT agreed to consider any insurance implications.</p> <p>AB and the HT agreed to follow up on the Estate Agent's boards and to encourage families to participate.</p> | <p>GWJ</p> <p>AB</p> <p>AMW</p> <p><b>GWJ</b></p> <p>HT/AB</p> |
| 11.2.1   | <p><b>Headteacher's Performance Management Meeting</b></p> <p>On 20/10/22 AB undertook performance management of the HT, the school's SIP, of performance to date and setting objectives in line with the school evaluation form and school development plan.</p>  |  |
| 11.3     | <p><b>Premises Committee Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 21/10/22 would be circulated before the next FGB meeting.</p>   |  |
| 11.4     | <p><b>Admissions Committee Meeting</b></p>   |  |
| 11.4.1   | <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2/11/22 would be circulated before the next FGB meeting.</p>   |  |
| 11.4.2-4 | <p>The Admissions Policy, Supplementary Information Form and Register of Interest for academic year 2024-2 were approved by the Full Governing Body.</p>   |  |
| 11.5     | <p><b>Pay Committee Meeting</b></p> <p>The meeting has been has been postponed.</p>  |  |

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| 12 | <p><b>Term Dates</b></p> <p>The proposed term dates for 2023-24 had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors noted that these proposed dates fulfil the statutory requirement of the 190 days for children’s attendance and 195 days for staff. Governors approved these dates, which will be published on the school website.</p>  |  |
| 13 | <p><b>Governor CPD</b></p> <p>Since the last full governing body meeting the following CP had taken place:</p> <p>AB completed the module on Child Protection from the Diocesan Online learning portal “Firm Foundations”</p>   |  |
| 14 | <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>There was no other business</p>   |  |
| 15 | <p><b>How are we improving outcomes for the children?</b></p> <p>AB - Governors ensure that safeguarding of the children is at the heart of their work by reading the Keeping Children Safe in Education and by actively attending Safer Recruitment training. Additionally, specific monitoring of the School Central record is evidence of our commitment to the safeguarding of our pupils.</p> <p>HT – Outcomes Report gives a bigger picture of data and the high quality of outcomes for pupils compare to national comparisons. Where this is not the case a clear plan has been put in place to raise attainment – for example in phonics.</p> <p>The school also seeks stakeholders’ feedback to inform our school’s development plan. This is all about using a range of quantitative and qualitative data to improve outcomes for children.</p> <p>Governors utilising these reports and that of the SIP also helps inform the school’s strategic direction.</p> <p>HT - Fr Adrian’s visits contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the children. Pupils benefit from the school’s close relationship with the parish.</p> |  |
| 16 | <p>Date of next FGB meetings:</p> <p>Thursday 9/3/23 – 6:30-8:30<br/>Thursday 22/6/23 – 6:30-8.30</p>   |  |
| 17 | <p>Closing Prayer</p>   |  |
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|  | <p>The meeting ended at 8.30pm</p> <p>Signed Anna Brown<br/>Anna Brown, Chair of Governors</p> <p>Date 9.3.23</p> |  |
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