

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

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting  
Thursday 22nd June 2023 at 6.45pm

Present:	Anna Brown	Foundation Governor (Chair) (AB)
	Sally Derby	Staff Governor (SD)
	Celine Carter Smith	Foundation Governor (CCS)
	Catherine Hughes	Headteacher (HT)
	Catie Terry	Parent Governor (CT)
	Claire Grindal	Foundation Governor (CG)
	Glyn Wallis-Jones	Parent Governor (GWJ)
	Fr Adrian McKenna-Whyte	Foundation Governor (AMW)
	Sheila Butterley	Local Authority Citizen Governor (SB)
	Chris Hopkins	Foundation Governor (CHo)

Apologies:   Liam O'Connell                                   Foundation Governor (LO)

1	<p><b>Opening prayer</b></p> <p>The meeting started with a prayer led by AMW</p>	<b>Action</b>
2	<p><b>Apologies and Opening Remarks</b></p> <p>Apologies received from LO There is currently a Governor Vacancy as FK's term of office ended in May.</p>	
3	<p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
4	<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>Minutes</b> Draft minutes of the full governing board meeting held on 9/3/2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the chair.</p> <p><b>Meetings</b> Proposed timings for meetings in 2023 - 2024 had been circulated in advance of the meeting with one full GB meeting per term. CG is currently only on one committee - Curriculum - as other meetings are currently during her working day. Meeting times may be changed to evenings depending on commitments of Governors.</p> <p>CG left the meeting at 7.15</p>	

5

## **Safeguarding and Behaviour**

### **Safeguarding**

CH organised a Safeguarding review with AfC in March.

There are 50 action points in the report (many of them minor) but this is not a cause for concern - it is just a very thorough review to help schools become a beacon of best practice.

The school has everything in place that it needs to be safe.

Some points have been put into action immediately such as a fortnightly monitoring review of cpoms incidents. This monitoring schedule will allow for trend identification.

CHo commented that there are many points but no list of priorities and so asked which should be actioned first?

CH explained that none of the points were prioritised as none were critical. CH has therefore made decisions regarding priorities.

AMW commented on point 4 that feedback to Governors should be more detailed and asked whether this was appropriate. CH explained that this detail would be provided in the Headteacher's report.

CH explained that the Governors report would include the number of racist/homophobic etc incidents as directed by the review.

To date, there have been no recorded homophobic incidents and 1 racist incident recorded in the Headteacher's report.

AB asked if a section on British Values was needed on the website and CH agreed this would be beneficial and could form part of a wider piece of work related to the schools vision and values and feeding into its behaviour policy.

CCS noted that the review mentioned the need to adapt to the local context and asked if our local context had been defined. CH noted that this can be in relation to school specific issues including geographical (e.g. near level crossings) and socio-economic make-up of the school and some is to do with the wider local context e.g. historically issues relating to county lines, high levels of emotional abuse and self-harm. These are often shared with DSLs during briefings.

AB asked about the self audit. The School will conduct an internal review of safeguarding and a website audit will be conducted by CHo (by end of the summer term if possible).

### **Governor email address and Google Drive storage**

The safeguarding review plus our IT support ClickonIT advise Governors should be using school emails not personal or work emails for enhanced security.

A Governors' Whatsapp group has been established for meeting dates. It was agreed that a Whatsapp will be sent when documents are sent out to alert governors to check their school email address. Documents will be stored in the google drive in the Governors folder

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/OAKuOgN2sHkpaUk9PVA>

AMW asked who would be responsible for uploading documents to the google drive. CH confirmed that this would be the role of the clerk to the Governors. A clerk needs to be appointed for 2023 - 2024 as much of the clerk work this year has been conducted by CH together with Marie De Gref who has covered the role in 2022 - 2023.

### **Behaviour**

	<p>CH said behaviour should be a focus next year, linking behaviour management to our values. Pupil surveys had revealed behaviour was thought to be an issue. The input of the new Head will be important in this area.</p>	
6	<p><b>Chair of Governors Report</b></p> <p>The Chairs Report had been previously circulated. Main points included:</p> <p><b>Headteacher Recruitment</b>  Appointment of the acting Headteacher has been communicated and safeguarding checks are currently underway.</p> <p>CCS asked if this would include online checks as per the safeguarding review. CH explained that this would mean Governors searching social media as the Safeguarding advisor had not been able to provide more specific guidance in this area.</p> <p><b>Academisation</b>  Meetings are still being held with those schools still involved in the process but the secondary school has withdrawn.  Tom Dixon felt the only logical academisation for us would be as part of a larger South West London Group as the current Christ the Redeemer trust only contains one secondary school.</p> <p><b>Thank you letter for donations</b>  AB to thank parents for their donations and the events organised by the PTA  CCS asked about the possibility of matched funding.</p> <p><b>Thanks to Catherine</b>  AB thanked Catherine on behalf of all the Governors for all her hard work over 3 years as Head and 6 years at school and presented a gift of flowers and a card</p>	

## Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher's Report and appendices had been previously circulated. Main points included:

### Admissions will be down for September 2023

At the moment, 21 children are confirmed with 2 other potential joiners. One parent has requested that their child stay back a year in Reception.

Potentially 24 in total

CCS asked about the potential to recruit in year.

CH mentioned that some schools have banners outside to advertise that they have in year vacancies. However a banner would not get many viewers outside the school due to the location.

CH mentioned the chance to take Year 6 pupils into local nurseries to read a story and thereby bring the school to local parents' attention. CCS mentioned that nursery parents could remain unaware of this visit as they may only notice posters outside the nursery.

GWJ and CCS agreed that many local people are unaware that there is still the possibility of a child receiving a place at St Mary Magdalen's even if they are not attending Mass weekly and that therefore they do not apply as they do not think they will meet subscription criteria.

AMW mentioned his experience at De La Salle Secondary in Lambeth when subscription criteria were changed.

CCS suggested streamlining the categories in the criteria without changing the substance of the criteria.

CH stated that parents always ask if they will get a space as they are not Catholic. CHO agreed with CH. It was agreed that it needs to be made clear on the website that places are offered to non Catholics.

CT suggested that it needs to be clearer that the Mortlake Summer Fair is the school fair to raise awareness of the school in the wider local community.

### CHo left the meeting at 7.50

CH suggested visiting the CofE church to speak to the congregation to welcome them to St Mary Magdalen's school.

A decision was made to review St Elizabeth's admissions policy and to ask the Diocese for any models to review admissions policy.

A decision was made to advertise at nurseries.

CT suggested a presence of Richmond Festival of Running in September with a banner could be useful

CT commented on the need to use social media more to publicise the school.

SB to co-ordinate the Governors response in this area.

### School Stability

CHu explained that the children who have joined in year admissions have tended to have a higher level of need.

The home visits for the new Reception cohort have been moved to June to identify additional needs in advance.

Current end of KS1 results reflect the instability of that year group.

#### **Staff Recruitment**

Two LSAs have been recruited - one three days a week

#### **Attendance**

Attendance has improved for everyone.

A certificate was received from the FFT to celebrate good attendance.

However, Year 5 stands out with a core group of poor attendees. CHu planning to write to those poor attendees to stress the importance of good attendance in Year 6. CCS questioned whether that would encourage better attendance. CHu explained there were a number of different reasons for poor attendance in that class.

CHu explained that attendance generally nationally is poorer than pre-pandemic. The pandemic contributed to less of a feeling that school is compulsory.

CCS noted that in year holidays have become a generally accepted norm.

GWJ and CT commented that this has become more common due to the cost of living crisis and the fact that families can only afford to take holidays in term time.

Currently only two children have declining attendance.

#### **PSHE**

The Ten Ten RSE scheme of work Life to the Full will be expanded from RSE to full PSHE programme in 2023 - 2024 (Life to the Full plus).

AB asked whether the questions for Governors regarding budget implications in the report had been answered by the Finance Committee.

#### **Premises**

GWJ explained that the school has procured £155,000 from the Diocese for the new fire doors and to replace the lights as the fluorescent lights used in school are no longer made. The cost of replacing the lights was £37,000 more than expected.

AB commented on the proactive approach.

Catherine thanked the Governors and especially AB for all the time they have given to the school and AMW for his kindness.

8	<p><b>School Improvement partner</b>  Tom Gibson is currently the acting SIP and the new SIP (Christine Chen) will visit in September.  CCS queried why there was no report this term. CHu explained that Rosemary Hafiz will write the SIP for this term.</p> <p>CHu said that Governors should consider what they want to buy into at AfC. Is the full package of support needed - CPD, SIP, Governor Support, Governor Training. CHu to send a breakdown of cost.  There is the potential to re-engage Jenell Chetty as SIP on a private contract.  AB to ask the new Head for his needs for support. The financial cost of engaging Jenell Chetty is thought to be beneficial to the school to help the transition year for the new head.</p> <p>GWJ asked how valuable other governors had found training from AfC. GWJ is also using TES for training. CCS is using GovHub.</p> <p>Finance Committee to investigate this further.</p>	
9	<p><b>Committee Reports</b></p> <p>CHu distributed a list of suggested Governor responsibilities for 2023 - 2024 for feedback. This is to be on the agenda at the FGB in the first half term of the academic year.</p> <p><b>Curriculum Committee Meeting</b> - The Curriculum Committee Meeting will be held on 7th July.</p> <p><b>Finance and Resources Committee</b>  The minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meetings held since the last FGB were circulated.</p> <p>The final budget for 2023 - 2024 was approved.</p> <p><b>Premises Committee</b></p> <p>£135,000 was received from the Diocese</p> <p>GWJ explained a decision had been taken to spray areas more regularly to deter foxes. Quotes for metal grilles under the huts has been received (£5,000)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AMW left the meeting at 9pm to return to the church.</b></p> <p>CCS suggested children should have a session on safety with wild animals given the presence of foxes on site.</p>	
10	<p><b>Policy Review</b>  The following policies were circulated to all governors prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>list to be updated</b></li> </ul> <p>CHu discussed the Behaviour policy and thanked GWJ for input. The policy is to be approved in early September</p>	

	<p>10.2 Two letters of complaint have been received regarding SEND provision and will be investigated. Copies of the complaints policy has been sent to the parents and a meeting has been arranged.</p> <p>The Policies were approved.</p>	
11	CG, CCS and GWJ have completed CPD which has been noticed on the Central record.	
12	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>SB said thanks to Catherine and all Governors echoed her thanks.</p>	
15	<p><b>How are we improving outcomes for our children</b></p> <p>CHu said that the safeguarding review is ensuring that our children are safe in school. The Governor reorganisation is ensuring Governors individual expertise is applied in the correct areas.</p> <p>Our curriculum is cohesive and planned.</p> <p>Our phonics programme is in place</p> <p>Attendance has improved.</p> <p>AB noted that the Improvement of premises keeps the children safe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AMW returned to the meeting at 9.10.</b></p> <p>CHu added that Governor committee meetings, SEND visits and strategic questioning provides an extra level of scrutiny in terms of what the school is delivering. Furthermore, Governor access to the school's Evaluation and Strategic Planning documents shows that the board has oversight over the provision ensuring the children are placed at the heart of everything the school does.</p> <p>.</p>	
16	<p><b>Dates of next meeting</b></p> <p>TBC</p>	
17	<b>Closing Prayer</b>	
	<p>The Meeting ended at 9.15</p> <p>Signed Anna Brown Anna Brown, Chair of Governors</p> <p>Date 2 November 2023</p>	