



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Malmesbury
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
(virtually via MS Teams)
27 January 2022 at 6.30pm

Present

Gregory Fauvarque – Chair (GF)	Rachel Copeland – Vice (RC)	Sue Woods (SW)
Colin Kershaw (CK)	David Bryson – Vice (DB)	Dave Talkowski (DT)
Helen Lever (HL)	Janine Birkin-Hewitt (JBH)	Kieron Lillis (KL)
Lorna Howarth (LH)	Steve Croft (SC)	Theresa Adams (TA)

Nicki Warne (Clerk)

Minutes		ACTIONS
1.	Opening Prayer and Welcome GF opened the meeting with a prayer.	
2.	Apologies - none	
3.	Register of Business Interests and Code of Conduct All governors confirmed they had no changes to declare for the Register of Pecuniary Interests. SC had signed the Pecuniary Interest declaration and had nothing to declare. SC had also signed the Code of Conduct Governor Training Record: It was agreed that this accurately reflected the training that had been undertaken.	
4.	Confirming the roles of Chair and Vice Chair – vote Following the reversal of the governor removal at appeal, GF asked governors to confirm that they wanted GF and RC to continue in their roles as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. The Governing Board agreed to go into a closed minute. The clerk took temporary control of the meeting and invited comment. Following discussion an anonymous vote was taken. GF and RC returned to the meeting. The clerk announced that Governors had voted in favour of GF and RC remaining in their positions as Chair and Vice Chair for the remainder of their term of one year by majority vote. GF resumed chairing the meeting.	
5.	Minutes of last meeting: The minutes of the FGB held on 14 October 2021 were accepted as a true record. (To be signed by GF)	GF
6.	Matters Arising & carried forward The chair confirmed all actions from the last FGB were complete.	
7.	Notification of AOB 1. Foundation Governor vacancy 2. Governor References 3. Dates of next meetings	

<p>8.</p>	<p>Governor Matters</p> <p>a. Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>This had been extensively updated from the version approved at the last FGB and had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It now included all the amends agreed by the board at the Oct FGB, along with the merging of the two committees (L&S and M,V&E) into Mission, Vision & Learning (MVL). GF invited any comment.</p> <p>A governor pointed out a hanging sentence on P.12 and it was agreed that this would be looked into and resolved. On that basis, Governors voted to adopt the Scheme of Delegation unanimously in favour.</p> <p>b. Associate Members</p> <p>The clerk informed governors that some guidance had come to light regarding Associate Members. As Associate Members are not governors but can be appointed to bring certain expertise to a committee, the expectation was that Associate Members would be linked to a particular committee. The clerk proposed that Brian Birkin-Hewitt (BBH) was appointed to Resources committee and Steve Boughton (SB) was appointed to MVL committee. This was agreed unanimously. The clerk informed governors that these Associate Members did not have voting rights at committee and were not required to attend committee meetings. Anita Druce, however had been appointed with voting rights at Resources and Admissions committee meetings. There was a discussion surrounding whether Ellie Green should continue as an Associate Member and it was agreed that SW would discuss this with her. In the meantime, Governors agreed to appoint her to MVL. There was a discussion about changing the term of Associate Members from four years to one year, which could be reviewed annually at the same time as committees were reconstituted, and it was agreed that this issue would be revisited at the October FGB.</p> <p>In the meantime JBH agreed to share with the clerk her information about the removal process for Associate Members and NW would report back to the board.</p> <p>KL took an action to update the Whistleblowing Policy to refer to SB as the Governing Body's representative for Whistleblowing (rather than Whistleblowing Governor).</p> <p>It was noted that the website had also been updated to refer to other Associate Members in a similar way, and clarify their roles.</p> <p>c. Strategic Review</p> <p>JBH reported back from session 1 of the strategic review, which took place on 06/11/21. DB, RC, KL, JBH, KL and GF had been working through the SWOT analysis and would shortly be circulating a summary document to the governing body for discussion. The plan was to then liaise with staff to talk about the school's value and strategic intent. There would then be a further opportunity to discuss with parents at a meeting, which would become an annual Governor and Parent meeting. The aim would be to bring all parts of the school together. JBH informed governors that she expected to call an additional meeting to review the strategic document before the next FGB. Following guidance from the appeals panel, which suggested the governing body undertakes an external strategic review, JBH informed Governors that she was currently talking to National Leaders of Governance about securing funding for such a review.</p> <p>The Governing Board agreed to go into a closed minute.</p> <p>e. Link Governors</p> <p>GF reminded Governors of their responsibilities with regard to their link governor role and directed governors to refer to the previously circulated Governors' Monitoring Schedule for the expected frequency of visits, as only three reports had been received from the eight expected for this monitoring</p>	<p>JBH</p> <p>SW</p> <p>JBH/NW</p> <p>KL</p> <p>JBH</p> <p>ALL</p>
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	<p>period. He reiterated that feedback on the SDP was particularly important and supports the school’s leadership team to drive improvement. A governor emphasised that Ofsted would be expecting evidence of link governor reports and this was an area from improvement from the last Section 48. SW asked Governors to support her by ensuring that staff are working to overcome any issues they flag up.</p> <p>GF proposed to remove Health & Safety (H&S) inspections and BBH from the Governors’ Monitoring Schedule as Health & Safety reports were an operation matter, for which BBH liaised directly with the school. All agreed.</p> <p>f. Exit interviews GF reminded Governors of the process regarding staff exit interviews. The school uses a questionnaire for exit interviews, which is conducted by a member of SLT or a governor or both, whichever the exiting member of staff would prefer. The feedback from exit interviews was shared with the SLT and a summary would be shared with the FGB annually. This was with the aim for the continuous improvement of the school. A governor was pleased to hear that all of the reports were shared with the school’s leadership team. GF summarised the outcomes of the exit interviews from the previous year. The feedback was, on the whole, positive and the positive feedback reflected the school values. There was some feedback about a lack of resources, the change in leadership style and the visibility of governors, and it was hoped that the visibility of governors would be addressed within the strategic review. Some other ideas to improve the visibility of governors were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up-to-date signage of who the governors are – a poster for the staff room. - An informal open house to governors at coffee break on the last Friday of every month. SW and GF to follow up. - Having a governor present at parents’ evening. - Training staff about the role of the Governors. - LH to provide a personal statement for the website. <p>Governors were informed that the changeover of staff had also left some surplus in the budget and it was hoped that this could be used for staff development and investing in teambuilding within the staff team.</p> <p>LH updated governors with moves to improve the links between the school and the parish including more family Mass and coaching from another parent to encourage children to read at Mass.</p>	<p>GF</p> <p>SW/GF</p> <p>LH</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Headteacher’s report A detailed report and the updated School Development plan (SDP) had been circulated prior to the meeting and the HT invited questions. A governor thanked the Head for a really good and clear report. A governor stated how pleased they were to see the school’s high attendance data.</p> <p>Questions from governors were as follows: A governor queried how the new approach of teaching maths by year group would be monitored for success. The HT informed Governors that she had conducted a learning walk to ensure that the new approach was set up and all resources were in place. This would be reviewed again at the end of February when the HT would be meeting with members of staff to look at books and assess impact. There was a discussion surrounding the reasons why pupils leave the school and how that was reported back to the FGB. A governors asked for the reasoning behind choosing to work with ‘The Write Stuff’ scheme. The HT informed Governors that it was trialled last year after being recommended by a number of people and it was highly regarded by the School Improvement Advisor (SIA).</p>	

	<p>There was a discussion around staff absence and the Head explained how the school was now monitoring staff absence.</p> <p>A governor enquired whether the school was accessing the school-led tutoring, 75% funded by government. The Head informed Governors that tutoring had been trialled using Pupil Premium money and had had no impact and so there were no plans to take up the school-led tutoring this time.</p> <p>a. Safeguarding</p> <p>Safeguarding was discussed at length at MVL, for which Governors had received the minutes. There were no further questions.</p> <p>b. Pupil Premium / disadvantaged pupils</p> <p>Nothing further to add</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Resources Committee</p> <p>a. To review minutes and actions where necessary</p> <p>JBH invited questions following the circulation of the minutes.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the successful SCA (School Condition Allocations) bid for the re-build of the toilets and the new Reception area, which would need to be spent before March 2022. The HT informed governors that a more reasonable quote had been received but it was still £40k more than the original bid. The school had approached the Diocese to make up the shortfall. The alternative would be to submit a new bid.</p> <p>A governor enquired about the costs to date in relation to the SAR request, and appeal, which amounted to £1,670, and how this affected the school budget.</p> <p>The governor concerned was asked whether he would continue with the SAR request, which remains an ongoing expense.</p> <p>The governor said that the school had a legal requirement to complete the SAR request.</p> <p>The Chair of Resources asked the governor whether the SAR request still served a purpose and asked for it be retracted? The Chair of Resources asked for it to be minuted that said governor had failed to respond to her question in the meeting.</p> <p>The governor insisted that these are costs that have been incurred by the Chair and Vice Chair in commencing the governor removal process.</p> <p>The Head stated that the SAR request was sent directly to the school and had created a huge cost to the school and, in her opinion, was not linked to the appeal.</p> <p>The governor had been emailed about this matter by the Chair of Governors and agreed to reply to said email.</p> <p>HL was actioned with checking SEND reports on the school website as some tracked changes remained present.</p> <p>b. Pay Panel summary</p> <p>The Pay Panel met in November and dealt with those staff members who were recommended for pay awards. All those recommended were approved.</p> <p>c. Sign off Income & Expenditure Return</p> <p>The Income & Expenditure Return was signed off by the Chair immediately after the meeting.</p> <p>d. Policies:</p> <p>Health & Safety Policy and Gritting Policy had been circulated to Resources committee in advance of the meeting. The committee agreed to adopt these policies.</p>	<p>SC</p> <p>HL</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Mission, Vision & Learning (MVL)</p> <p>a. Review minutes and actions where necessary</p> <p>RC invited questions following the circulation of the minutes.</p>	

There was a discussion over whether a clerk could be sourced for the meeting.

b. Admissions Policy 2023-24

The clerk explained that this is a common admission policy from the Diocese. The updates from the last approved policy are the dates and the insertion of the in-year admissions form into the policy as an appendix. In addition the In-Year Admissions Form from the current Admissions Policies (2021-22 and 2022-23) were presented to the FGB for approval. This was to reflect the changes to School Admissions Code in July 2021, regarding the definitions of looked after children.

There was extensive discussion over whether the Diocese's In-Year Admission form was fit for purpose. The additional administrative burden it placed on the school and the relative merits of the LA's online In-Year admissions process were highlighted. This had already been discussed with the Diocese and **SW** and **GF** agreed to co-sign a letter to the Diocese about the problems with the In-Year Admissions, with a view to resolving this issue for the next Admissions Policy.

The Governors agreed to adopt the Admissions Policy for 2023/24, as well as the updated In-Year Admissions forms for the 2021-22 and 2022-23. All passed with an unanimous vote in favour. **NW** to upload to the school website.

SW/GF

NW

c. Staff Survey

An anonymous staff survey was held in November. There was an 85% response rate, which amounted to 19, and feedback was broadly very positive. The survey highlighted some areas for improvement. **KL** would circulate a formal report shortly and a response to the staff would be planned. The plan was to run the staff survey annually and it was suggested that the results should also be compared with exit interviews.

KL was thanked for all of the work that he put into the staff survey.

KL

d. School Profile and Categorisation Grid

This had been completed in conjunction with the SIA and had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. **GF** explained the process behind creating the document, which had been completed independently by the SLT, the Chair and a Vice Chair before being compared and compiled into one document. They were pleased to note that their independent assessments of the school's position and recommendations for action and improvement aligned very well. As a result of this exercise the SIA had rated the school as secure overall. The document demonstrated that for each area of improvement the Governors and the school were taking actions. The document would be useful to feed into the strategic review and drive the school's improvement journey.

e. Policies – Digital Safety Policy; Governor Visit Policy and Form

The Governor Visit Policy and Form were circulated in advance of the meeting, with the tracked changes. **RC** invited any comment. It was agreed that the committee would finally approve this via email after the meeting. **RC** to send the approved Policy and Form to the clerk to circulate with the minutes and upload to Sharepoint.

RC

The clerk enquired about the Digital Safety Policy, now called the Online Safety Policy, and was informed that this had been approved by Governors via email on 25/11/21.

Governors were alerted that **MVL** were working on a new Walking Home Policy. They have a proposed policy, which had been prepared by a parent, and had been circulated to **MVL**. Everyone agreed that **MVL** could proceed with approving this policy.

<p>12.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>1. Foundation Governor vacancy The clerk explained that GF's term of office would expire on 16/05/22 and asked for recruitment to commence for a new Foundation Governor, who was not a parent of a child at the school. GF to talk to SB about organising an advert in the parish newsletter and raising in church. Also add to school newsletter, whilst making it clear that it could not be a parent as the number of Foundation Governors, who are also parents at the school, is at the Diocese's limit.</p> <p>2. Governor References The clerk explained that, due to changes in the safer recruitment guidance, the school had asked for references to be undertaken for all existing governors. This would only be required for LA and Parent Governors (as the Diocese and school already undertake references). The clerk would email the governors affected and commence the process. NW to consider using the Diocese's governor reference form, rather than the school's one.</p> <p>3. Dates of next meetings There was a discussion surrounding the timing of the next meetings. FGB was moved to 05/05/22, MVL was moved to 24/03/22 and MVL Admissions was confirmed as 10am on 03/03/22 with TA, KL and LH in attendance. NW to circulate new dates.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>The meeting closed at 9.10pm.</i></p>	<p>GF</p> <p>NW</p> <p>NW</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Date of next meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. M,V&L (Admissions) – 3rd March 10am b. Mission, Vision & Learning – 24th March <i>(note new date)</i> c. Resources – TBC d. FGB – 5th May <i>(note new date)</i> 	