

# St Mary & St John CE Primary School

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Headteacher: Elizabeth Burton



## Minutes of St Mary & St John CE Primary School Full Governing Body Meeting Monday, 23 September 2019 ('Term 0'), 7.00 pm, Meadow Lane

### Governors present:

Elizabeth Burton (LB), Headteacher  
Sarah Franklin (SF), Foundation Governor – *Chair*  
Robin Morris (RMO), Parent Governor – *Vice-Chair*  
Chimene Bateman (CB), Foundation Governor  
Tim Foster (TF), Parent Governor  
Emily Kerr (EK), Foundation Governor  
Philip Ritchie (PR), Foundation Governor  
Mary-Anne Sinclair (MAS), Foundation Governor  
Richard Tarver (RT), Local Authority Governor  
Jenny Worroll (JW), Foundation Governor

### In attendance:

Chris Chamier-Williams (CCW), Associate Member  
Sam Coleman, Associate Member  
Judy East (JE), Clerk, OCC Governor Services

### Apologies:

Sarah Blackwell (SB), Associate Member  
Beth Gibson (BG), Staff Governor  
Robert Green (RG), Parent Governor – *Apologies offered before the meeting but not noted at that time*  
Jane Godby (JG), Associate Member

The meeting opened at 7.10 pm.

### 1. Welcome, apologies, quorum

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance, including JE, temporary clerk. She noted that the purpose of the 'Term 0' meeting was to organise FGB business for the coming year. The minutes and actions from the Term 6 FGB meeting will be reviewed at the Term 1 FGB meeting, to be held on 14 October 2019. Apologies were received and accepted from governors and associates as listed above. The meeting was quorate.

### 2. Declarations of any other urgent business

None declared. SF was pleased to share a card received from Ash Class (2018/19), thanking governors for their work.

### **3. Declarations of business/pecuniary/personal interest**

It was noted that PR and MAS are members of the Parochial Church Council, and that RG has an association with a specialist external teacher, currently employed part-time by the school. No other declarations were made.

Governors were reminded to complete their annual return.

**Action 1: All governors and associates to complete their annual return for the register of business/pecuniary interests.**

### **4. Appointment of Clerk**

Governors agreed to appoint Judy East as temporary Clerk to the Governors, for this meeting.

### **5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors**

JE conducted the election of Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors.

Sarah Franklin was nominated for the role of Chair of Governors, and was elected to this role by unanimous vote.

Robin Morris was nominated for the role of Vice-Chair of Governors, and was elected to this role by unanimous vote.

Governors thanked Sarah and Robin for accepting these roles.

Governors agreed that Chair and Vice-Chair elections for the academic year 2020/21 would be held at the first GB meeting of that year.

### **6. Appointment of associate members of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body appointed the following as Associate Members of the Governing Body, by unanimous vote: Chris Chamier-Williams (CCW), Jane Godby (JG), Sarah Blackwell (SB), Sam Coleman (SC), Chris Warner (CW, Head of Comper Foundation Stage School), Bilqees Akhtar (BA).

### **7. Safeguarding**

*DBS checks for all members of the GB – report*

LB confirmed that DBS checks are up to date and Section 128 checks have been done. It was noted that governors and non-staff associates need to confirm their names and addresses every year. This can be done by checking and initialling the 'Mary & John Governing Body – list of governors and associates, 2019/20' document held by SF.

**Action 2: All governors and non-staff associates to confirm name and address details with SF.**

*Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 1 – review, confirmation read by all*

All governors and associates present confirmed that they had read Part 1. JE advised that guidance had been updated and it is a requirement for all governors and associates to have also read Part 2. JE asked all governors and associates to sign a Keeping Children Safe in Education register sheet, held by SF, to confirm that they have read both parts.

RM reported that he had raised a concern with the DfE that the flowchart of actions to be taken in case of concerns about a child does not reproduce legibly unless copied in colour.

SF reminded governors that in case of their having a safeguarding concern they should immediately contact LB, as Designated Safeguarding Lead, or one of the Deputy DSLs.

**Action 3: All governors and associates to read Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019), Parts 1 and 2, if they have not already done so, and confirm that they have read both parts by signing the KCSIE register sheet.**

### **8. Governor Code of Conduct – review, declaration of agreement**

SF noted that the Governor Code of Conduct had been revised last year, on the basis of work completed in 2017/18, and now includes the Nolan Principles of Public Life. The document had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

SF commented that the 'GB core functions' section was a helpful reminder; also highlighted the principle of collective responsibility, and the importance of governor training. Training plans will be discussed at the next GB meeting.

Governors confirmed that they had reviewed the Code of Conduct and agreed collectively to abide by it.

## **9. Governing Body and committees (structure and terms of reference) – review, approval**

An updated GB schedule of responsibilities, committee structure, terms of reference for each committee, etc. had been circulated prior to the meeting. SF reminded governors that these are working documents and can be adapted to suit the needs of the school and the GB. The principal change proposed this year was to simplify the remit of the Admissions & Attendance Committee. Monitoring of attendance is already done to some extent by the Curriculum Committee, and by the full GB via the termly Headteacher's report, and this will continue.

A governor recommended clarification (under 'Responsibilities of the Headteacher', p. 14), that the Headteacher's role includes the responsibility to 'manage' rather than 'monitor' monthly expenditure. Governors agreed.

With this change, governors approved the committee structure, terms of reference and schedule of responsibilities.

It was also agreed that committee chairs will review the schedule of meetings for their committees for the year ahead, with a view to reducing staff workload by reducing as far as possible the number of meetings.

## **10. Appointment of governors/associate members to committees, working groups, etc.**

A summary of the proposed membership of each committee together with nominated Chairs and Clerks had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting.

Governors agreed to these arrangements and the composition of committees as described in the document presented. It was noted that there was a vacancy on Admissions Committee. [Subsequent to this meeting, RT agreed to serve on this committee.]

In accordance with the usual arrangement, it was proposed that the Pay Committee would consist of the Chair of Governors, Chair of Curriculum Committee and Chair of FPS Committee (SF, JW, RMo), with LB in attendance. Governors approved this arrangement and SF was unanimously elected as Chair of the Pay Committee.

It was proposed that the Headteacher's Performance Appraisal Committee would consist of EK and SF, with Sarah Varnom (SV Education Associates) as external adviser. Governors again approved this arrangement, and EK was unanimously elected as Chair of the HTPA Committee.

Other committee chairs and clerks will be elected and appointed by members of those committees.

Regarding the Comper/Mary & John Partnership Group, SF thanked MAS for agreeing to become a regular member of this group, attending all meetings (with LB, JG, RG, SF). SF reminded the GB that all governors of Comper and Mary & John are welcome to attend this group and encouraged all M&J governors to attend from time to time, as this is a good forum for meeting face-to-face and fostering understanding between the two GBs of the partnership.

## **11. Appointment of governors with special responsibilities**

Governors approved the allocation of roles to governors as described in the document presented:

- *Safeguarding/Child Protection*, Mary-Anne Sinclair
- *E-Safety*, Robert Green
- *Pupil Premium Provision*, Sarah Franklin
- *SEND Provision/Inclusion*, Mary-Anne Sinclair
- *Premises*, Robert Green
- *Health & Safety*, Robert Green
- *Behaviour Working Group*, Chimene Bateman, Jenny Worroll

SF thanked governors for taking on responsibility for these roles.

## **12. General update, new school year**

### *School news*

LB reported that term had started very positively. The school is fully staffed, with the exception of one teaching assistant position, currently filled via an agency. The children who made the transition from Comper into this year's Year 1 had settled in very well, adapting well to the new environment. Results last year were largely positive. In SATs, phonics results were good as were the other Key Stage 1 results, all above national. At Key Stage 2, performance in reading and writing was strong, and results for spelling, punctuation and grammar were in line with national. Maths had been a disappointment however with results lower than expected and below national by 3%, and not enough children reaching 'greater depth', so maths will be one of the two key areas of focus for the school development plan

this year (see item 13). Children do well at Key Stage 1, but progress by the end of Key Stage 2 is not as strong as it could be. To give some context, LB reminded governors that across the whole school 11% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium funding and 11% are on the SEND register, but in last year's Year 6 the figures were 22% for both. Results were also good in comparison to neighbouring schools. A governor commented that within the summary results figures there were many cases of individual children who had made tremendous progress, having been very well supported by members of staff. Staff present reported also on a rigorous moderation assessment by the local authority for children's writing in school which had strongly endorsed the school's approach.

#### *Summer building and refurbishment work*

A remarkable amount of building and refurbishment work has been completed over the holiday, including work to the PLUS Base (after-school) area, now one room double the size, and a new activity area, extensive refurbishment of two toilet blocks and completion of the library in the space previously occupied by the old IT room. Space has been opened up in the middle of the school, lines of sight are greatly improved, and Key Stage 2 have their own shared area, equivalent to the area for Key Stage 1. Uneven paving around the school has been replaced by new tarmac as also have some unpaved areas prone to becoming excessively muddy, to allow use of outside areas in all weathers. LB congratulated Thames Ceilings, the main contractor, and thanked Grahame Godby the site manager for his role in managing the work, and the many other staff who came in during the holiday to help set up the new spaces and sort books for the library. Phases 4 and 5 of the work are in the planning stage with help from the Diocesan Surveyor. LB invited governors to see the refurbished areas of the school after the meeting.

#### *Homework letter to parents – review, approval*

In 2018 governors had agreed to do away with a separate homework policy document, and had agreed that the homework letter LB sends out to parents at the start of the year, updated annually, should stand as effectively the school's 'policy' on homework. Governors reviewed the updated letter. LB noted that current educational research still points to homework having very little impact at primary level, with teachers' time being better focused on good, well targeted teaching in the classroom. A governor asked whether homework is planned consistently across both classes in each year group; LB confirmed that it is. LB will add a note on planned use of the online resource Mathletics. Governors approved the letter, with this change, to represent the school's policy on homework for the year and for publication on the school website.

### **13. School improvement**

#### *School development plan, 2019/20 – outline, for discussion*

For the benefit of new governors, SF outlined the annual process of drawing up the school development plan (SDP). At GB meetings (Term 6 and Term 0) staff and governors agree priorities and aims for the year ahead. At the Term 1 meeting progress on last year's SDP is reviewed and LB presents the new SDP for the year ahead.

This year, as previously, the over-arching vision for the school for 2019/20 is to be:

*To drive school improvement towards outstanding provision by maintaining high standards with:*

- *consistently good teaching and learning;*
- *a highly motivated, committed and aspirational staff team;*
- *an enriched, broad and balanced curriculum.*

Within this framework, LB reported that she proposes to follow the pattern of previous years of identifying two specific areas for development: one curriculum-based aim, and a second one within the theme of 'developing the whole child' (identified a few years ago as a strategic priority for the school over the longer term). This year LB wished to focus on the following two aims:

- *To improve mathematics attainment and progress by July 2020;*
- *To further develop a school community which fosters personal well-being.*

Governors approved this approach and the two main areas for focus for the SDP; also discussed details of LB's report and questioned LB, CCW and other staff members present on proposed actions and possible barriers to achievement for specific groups of pupils.

A governor asked about whether work from last year focusing on writing would continue. LB confirmed that it would and that SC, as English Lead, would be continuing to develop a separate action plan relating to that, with monitoring by Curriculum Committee.

**Action 4: LB and the leadership team to draw up the SDP for 2019/20, for discussion and approval at next GB meeting, including how impact of planned actions will be monitored.**

#### **14. Policies, procedures**

##### *Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs policy – annual review, approval*

This policy is reviewed by the school and approved by the GB. SF noted that annual review is recommended for this policy, as advice can be subject to change. LB reported that the policy as presented followed current DfE guidelines. With one change, of 'parents and carers' in place of 'parents', governors approved the policy.

SF reminded governors that in the Term 1 GB meeting LB will confirm to governors (via Headteacher's report to the GB) that all staff training required to support this policy has been completed.

##### *Procedure for administering medicines to children in school – report*

Governors noted recent clarification of the school's procedure for administering medication for children during school hours. LB confirmed that it is not part of a teacher's duty to give medication, but the office staff undertake this role. Medicines must therefore be handed in to the school office, not to a teacher, and parents/carers must complete a form giving permission for this, including information about the medicine, dosage, etc. A governor asked how often the need for this arises. LB replied that it is not a common occurrence. Governors proposed that the wording of the letter should be changed for clarity and for better reassurance. LB agreed and will amend the letter for next time. LB also confirmed that when children are away from home overnight for a residential trip the school will require parents of children requiring medication to bring it in to school in advance of the leaving day to ensure good practice.

##### *Whistleblowing policy – confirm in line with current guidance and available to all in school*

This policy was reviewed by the school and approved by the Finance, Premises & Staffing Committee (FPS) in October 2017. LB confirmed that it is in line with current guidance and available to everyone in school. A governor asked if it is displayed on the staff room noticeboard and LB confirmed that it is.

#### **15. Governing Body self-evaluation**

SF reported that she had had review conversations with all governors over the summer break and thanked them for their time. Comments had been very useful and main points will be summarised in a report for the next GB meeting.

##### *Meeting effectiveness audit*

To complete this GB self-evaluation process SF asked all governors to complete a 'Meeting effectiveness audit' form as circulated (prepared by *The Key for School Governors*). A summary of responses will be included in the same report.

Governors present confirmed that they had access to the governor dropbox and the 'All Governors' gmail account. SF undertook to circulate to all governors and associates a renewed invitation to *The Key for School Governors*, which is a rich resource. Governors were also encouraged to sign up, via ParentPay, to receive all school mailings, which can give a good overview of the breadth of school activity during and outside school time.

**Action 5: All governors to complete 'Meeting effectiveness audit' form.**

**Action 6: SF to circulate to all governors details of how to access *The Key for School Governors*.**

#### **16. Dates of meetings for governors, 2019/20**

Governors noted the schedule of meetings for the year and agreed these dates provisionally, except that the date of the Term 2 Curriculum Committee will need to be rescheduled to avoid a clash with parent-teacher consultations. Dates will be confirmed in committee meetings this term and committees will also consider reducing the number of meetings, as far as possible, to minimise staff workload.

#### **17. Any other business**

SF asked governors to ensure that when emailing members of staff they use their school email addresses rather than any home addresses they may have access to.

## Future agenda items

- Child Protection & Safeguarding policy – approval (Term 1)
- School development plan, 2018/19 – final review (Term 1)
- School development plan, 2019/20 – discussion, approval (Term 1)
- Governor training needs – review, plans for 2019/20 (Term 1)
- Discussion of school and GB response to climate concern (Term 1)
- Annual Safeguarding report to Governing Body (Term 2)
- *Year plan of key Mary & John Governing Body tasks and dates, 2019/20*

## Next Full Governing Body meeting

Term 1 Full GB meeting: Monday 14 October 2019, 7.00 pm

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

## Actions from meeting

|          | Action (by Term 1 GB meeting, unless stated otherwise)   | Who                      | Outcome |
|----------|--|--------------------------|---------|
| Action 1 | All governors and associates to complete their annual return for the register of business/pecuniary interests.   | All Govs, all Associates |         |
| Action 2 | All governors and non-staff associates to confirm name and address details with SF.  | All Govs, etc.           |         |
| Action 3 | All governors and associates to read Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019), Parts 1 and 2, if they have not already done so, and confirm that they have read both parts by signing the KCSIE register sheet. | All Govs, all Associates |         |
| Action 4 | LB and the leadership team to draw up the SDP for 2019/20, for discussion and approval at next GB meeting, including how impact of planned actions will be monitored.  | LB, LT                   |         |
| Action 5 | All governors to complete 'Meeting effectiveness audit' form.  | All Govs                 |         |
| Action 6 | SF to circulate to all governors details of how to access <i>The Key for School Governors</i> .  | SF                       |         |

## Appendices – Documents presented/discussed

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|---|
| Agenda, Full GB meeting, 23 September 2019 ('Term 0' meeting)   |
| Register of Business/Pecuniary Interests form   |
| Register of Pecuniary Interests – Guidance Notes  |
| Mary & John GB – list of governors and associates, 2019/20  |
| Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2019   |
| Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, Briefing on key updates to statutory guidance for schools in England – NSPCC Information Sheet, September 2019 |
| Mary & John GB – Code of conduct – July 2018  |
| Mary & John GB – GB and governor committee structure & schedule of responsibilities, 2019/20 – September 2019   |
| Mary & John GB – committees, other designated roles and working groups, 2019/20 – September 2019  |
| Homework letter to parents and carers – September 2019  |
| School Development Plan, 2019–2020 – headline ideas   |
| Mary & John Supporting Children with Medical Needs policy – June 2019   |
| Medication administered during school hours – letter to parents/carers, 9 September 2019  |
| Mary & John Whistleblowing policy – October 2017  |
| Meeting effectiveness audit – audit form prepared by <i>The Key for School Governors</i>  |
| Dates of meetings for Mary & John GB, 2019/20 – September 2019  |