

# St Mary & St John CE Primary School

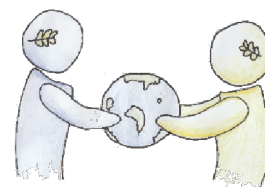
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Headteacher: Rebekah Stott



## Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes – Term 1.1

Monday, 11 September 2023, 6.00 pm

*Held remotely via Teams*

### Present:

Bex Stott (BS), Headteacher  
Sarah Franklin (SF), Foundation Governor – Chair  
Anna Ballance (AB), Foundation Governor – Co-Vice Chair  
Jenny Worroll (JW), Foundation Governor – Co-Vice Chair  
Tim Foster (TF), Foundation Governor  
Jane Godby (JG), Staff Governor  
Ben Klooss (BK), Parent Governor  
Tony Pound (TP), Parent Governor

Laurence Price (LP), Foundation Governor  
Charlotte Ryland (CR), Parent Governor

### Apologies:

Julia Bell (JB), Foundation Governor  
Philip Ritchie (PR), Foundation Governor

### In attendance:

Jenny Dyer (JD), Local Authority Clerk

### 1. Welcome, apologies, quorum

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Governors were advised that the Reverend Phil Ritchie would be moving to a new parish and therefore standing down as Foundation Governor after the October FGB Meeting.

As a trial during 2023/2024, and in line with the move away from sub-committees, matters previously covered by the Finance, Premises & Staffing Committee would be addressed at FGB meetings (see also agenda item 7.1). This meant there was no longer a role for associate governors. Ellie Armstrong, Deputy Headteacher, would therefore step down from her role as associate governor. She was thanked for all of her contributions to the GB since joining the school and would continue as a visitor to meetings on occasions.

Apologies were received as noted above and accepted.

The meeting was quorate.

### 2. Declarations of any other urgent business

There was no urgent business.

### 3. Declarations of business/pecuniary/personal interests, confirmation of eligibility

#### 3.1. Declarations of business/pecuniary/personal interest in any item on this agenda

No declarations of interest were made by any members of the FGB for any agenda items.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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### 3.2. Annual confirmations

Relating to the following documents, the Chair had reminded all governors to confirm their annual 'confirmations' via GovernorHub:

- Declarations of business/pecuniary/personal interest
- Keeping children safe in education 2023
- Governor Qualification and Disqualification criteria.

Governors were given opportunity for any outstanding confirmations to be completed during this agenda item. Those not attending would be reminded to complete as a matter of urgency.

**Action 1: All governors to confirm on GovernorHub (via personal profile, 'Declarations') that their declarations of interest are current and correct and that they are not disqualified from serving as a school governor.**

### 4. Appointment of Clerk to Governors

JD (Governor Services, Oxfordshire County Council) agreed to continue as Clerk for 2023/2024.

Governors **approved** the appointment.

### 5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of the Governing Body

JD conducted the election of Chair of Governors and Co-Vice Chairs.

SF had advised that she was willing to stand again as Chair of Governors.

There being no other nominations, SF was duly re-elected as Chair for 2023/2024.

Both AB and JW were willing to stand again as Co-Vice Chairs.

There being no other nominations, AB & JW were duly re-elected as Co-Vice Chairs for 2023/2024. However, it was noted that JW would not be continuing as Foundation Governor beyond December 2023.

Governors were thanked for their commitment to the GB and school during 2022/2023. Furthermore, they were congratulated on all that had been achieved during a very challenging year.

### 6. Governor Code of Conduct – review, declaration of agreement

#### 6.1. Annual confirmation of commitment to abide by the code of conduct

Governors were asked to confirm they agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct. Governors present gave confirmation in the meeting. Confirmation is also required via GovernorHub and this had yet to be completed by all governors.

**Action 2: All governors to confirm on GovernorHub (via personal profile, 'Declarations') that they agree to abide by the governor code of conduct.**

The Chair advised that the Code of Conduct was due for review in July 2024.

### 7. Governor Body roles and responsibilities

#### 7.1. Governing Body and committees (structure, terms of reference) – review

With governors having gained significant experience in matters of curriculum, finance, premises and staffing, it was proposed that the GB would move to a 'circle model' of governance whereby committees

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are dissolved and most items of business are brought directly to the FGB, with individual governors having responsibility for leading oversight in particular areas. Whilst SF was waiting to learn more about this model of governance from others already using it, she outlined interim proposals:

- **Curriculum** – Matters would continue to be addressed via the FGB.
- **Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee (FPS)** – This would be dissolved as a trial for 2023/2024 with matters addressed through the FGB.
- **Budget monitoring and some specific financial items of business** – These would be addressed through a Budget Monitoring Group, reporting to the FGB.
- **Premises items** – These would be addressed through the FGB.
- **Pay Committee** – The Pay Committee will continue to meet once a year to approve appraisal recommendations. This committee could also have oversight of staffing/HR business via ad hoc meetings convened as needed to address staffing items more appropriately dealt with in a smaller forum than FGB, with outcomes reported to FGB.
- **Headteacher’s Performance Appraisal Committee (HPTA)** – This would continue in its present format.

Governors **approved** to dissolve the FPS Committee and for roles and responsibilities to be distributed as outlined.

**Action 3: SF to prepare revised terms of reference for governance.**

#### **7.2. Appointment of governors to committees and other groups & 7.3. Appointment of governors to areas of responsibility**

The Chair had circulated a draft table of roles & responsibilities for 2023/2024 prior to the meeting via GovernorHub, based on expertise and in response to governors sharing their preferred areas of governance. Whilst pairs and individuals would have responsibility, governors were reminded that decisions would be made collectively by the FGB and not in isolation.

SF thanked governors for their responses to the google form relating to a review of governance during 2022/2023 and would provide a summary report of responses for the FGB1.2 meeting.

**Action 4: At the FGB1.2 Meeting, SF to present to governors an updated version of the ‘Governor Roles & Responsibilities document for 2023/2024.**

**Action 5: SF to provide a 2022/2023 governance review summary report for the FGB1.2 meeting.**

#### **7.4. Election of Chair of Pay Committee**

SF was willing to stand again as Chair.

There being no other nominations, SF was duly re-elected as Chair of the Pay Committee 2023/2024.

#### **7.5. Election of Chair of HTPA Committee**

AB was willing to stand as Chair of the HTPA Committee.

There being no other nominations, AB was duly elected as Chair of the HTPA Committee for 2023/2024.

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## 8. General update, new school year

### 8.1. General school news

BS provided governors with the following update:

- **Start of Term** – Despite the increase of children and families on the school site, there was a calm as well as positive atmosphere to the start of the term. The children had settled well; they were happy and enthusiastic, taking on board high expectations set and engaging with challenge. Parents said they were feeling well-informed and had commented on the clarity of communications received, ready for the start of term, and the overview of key dates across the academic year.
- **Staff INSET** – This had included a time of reflection and nurturing; staff were looking forward to the year ahead and feeling well-prepared for the future SIAMS inspection. JG reinforced the positive start to the term with new staff and that teams were settling well.
- **Premises**
  - **Aerated concrete** – Following a survey by a structural engineer, governors were pleased to learn there was none at Mary & John.
  - **Phase 2 alterations** – Jane Maharry, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) Premises Officer, had confirmed that funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) would meet 90% of the cost, the school to fund the remaining 10%.

Governors thanked staff for all their hard work during the holidays to ensure that classes were ready for the children at the start of term.

#### **Q: Governors questioned how the school was managing with the increase in numbers of staff.**

Staff meetings were enabling a cohesive staff and staggered morning and lunch breaks meant that all staff could be accommodated.

#### **Q: Parent governors conveyed concerns about congested areas at the start of the school day and enquired how this would be resolved.**

Parents of reception children and Year 1 would be asked to drop off their children at the gate after the October half term, thus reducing the number of parents on site, and leading to children's greater independence. The 'lunch choice board' would be relocated to ensure doorways were clear.

#### **Q: Governors challenged how the school was identifying families eligible for the Pupil Premium grant (PPG).**

BS confirmed that a communication had been sent to families, including those where circumstances might have changed.

Governors congratulated BS for the informative communications sent to parents.

### 8.2. Summer premises work

All the scheduled work had been completed within the timeframe.

### 8.3. Start of Reception Year provision at Meadow Lane

Whilst a very tight schedule, all the preparation work had gone well and was completed in time.

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#### 8.4. School development plan (SDP), 2023/24

The draft SDP overview was circulated prior to the meeting via GovernorHub, outlining three main objectives for 2023/2024:

- **Objective 1** - To develop subject leaders who are confident in the progression of their subject from Reception to Year 6, so that pupils achieve as well as possible in their first years at school.
- **Objective 2** - To use the feedback and assessment policy consistently across the school, ensuring misconceptions are quickly identified when pupils do not understand their learning.
- **Objective 3** - To develop a school culture of aspiration for all pupils, so that all children succeed and achieve regardless of their starting point.

**Q: As a key area of development, governors challenged the reason why ‘Outcomes in Maths’ was not an objective on the 2023/2024 SDP.**

Whilst there remained some differences in outcomes around gender, it was explained that due to the improvement in Maths’ data, there would not be a specific Maths’ objective for the 2023/2024 SDP. BS reassured governors that the 2023 summer assessment data would be interrogated in more detail and, as an existing action, presented to governors at the FGB1.2 meeting.

#### 9. Child protection and safeguarding

##### 9.1. DBS checks for all members of GB

Whilst the Local authority Designated Officer for safeguarding (LADO) had advised that DBS checks should be carried out every three years for staff, for governors these would be renewed every four years to coincide with their term of office.

BS confirmed that Enhanced DBS and Section 128 checks had been carried out for all members of governing body (GB) with the declarations yet to be entered on GovernorHub for three governors (see Action 1, above).

**Q: Governors questioned if all staff safeguarding training was up-to-date.**

Safeguarding training was confirmed as being up to date for all staff and governors.

##### 9.2. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), September 2023

All Governors had confirmed that they had read and understood the latest updates to this important document, available in the meeting folder on GovernorHub.

#### 10. Policies, procedures

##### 10.1. Admission arrangements

Approval to the modification of admission arrangements for September 2023 and 2024 had been granted by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator, as detailed in the ‘Determination’ letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and circulated via GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

In light of the approved modification to admissions, revised Admission Policies for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 were circulated to governors via GovernorHub.

Governors **approved** the revised Admission Policies for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

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### **10.2. Attendance information and statutory regulations**

Governors noted that a letter sent to parents had set out clear expectations and information regarding late arrival to school and regulations regarding holidays in term-time, in line with the aim to improve the school's overall attendance to above the 94.7% achieved in 2022/2023.

BS confirmed that the school is compliant with the most recent updates to statutory guidance on attendance, as of last year.

### **10.3. Homework letter to parents**

Letters sent to parents, outlining the approach to homework and clear expectations for promoting motivated, confident and independent learners, were made available to governors for information, prior to the meeting via GovernorHub.

### **Q: Governors queried the reference to Purple Mash and reading at home from online materials for Reception and Year 1 children.**

BS would look into this and report back to the next FGB meeting.

### **Action 6: BS to clarify intentions relating to Reception and Year 1 children reading at home via online materials.**

### **10.4. Whistleblowing policy**

BS confirmed that the current policy is in line with guidance and available to all staff. It is due for review this year.

### **11. Dates of meeting for governors 2023/2024**

Dates had yet to be finalised and would be communicated to governors via GovernorHub.

### **Action 7: SF to post on GovernorHub dates for the 2023/2024 FGB meetings.**

### **12. Any urgent business**

There were no matters of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 19:15

**Next Full Governing Body meeting (Term 1.2) – Tuesday, 10 October 2023, 6.00 pm, in person at school. Governors are invited to arrive from 5.15 pm to socialise and look at the new facilities for Reception and Key Stage 1, and to enjoy refreshments.**

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