

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING  
**ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CE PRIMARY**  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 6:30pm at the school

**Present:**

Bettina Carlyon (Chair)	Peter Main	Cathryn Johnston
Daniel Meyer (Headteacher)	Rosalind Goodrich	David Roberts
Bernadine Williams-Adebayo	Steven Larwood	Pauline Lloyd
Rev'd. Jim Perry	Chelsea Drake	Louise Ryle
Rebecca Johns		

**In Attendance:**

Jane Cheadle (Clerk)

*Governors attended an Equalities training session led by Rebecca Johns in advance of the meeting (from 5pm)*

*The meeting started at 6:50pm*

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Governors L. Juhel and H. Buckroyd (condoned).

**1.1 Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared at the start of the meeting.  
All declaration forms are up to date.

**2. Governing Body Administration**

**2.1 Election of Chair of Governors**

R. Goodrich nominated B. Carlyon for the role of Chair of Governors and the nomination was seconded by L. Ryle.

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to elect B. Carlyon as Chair of Governors for the term of one year.

**2.2 Election of Vice Chair of Governors**

B. Carlyon nominated R. Goodrich for the role of Co-Vice-Chair and the nomination was seconded by C. Drake.

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to elect R. Goodrich as Co-Vice-Chair of Governors for the term of one year.

B. Carlyon nominated P. Main for the role of Co-Vice-Chair and the nomination was seconded by D. Roberts.

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to elect P. Main as Co-Vice-Chair of Governors for the term of one year.

### **2.3 Election of Committee Chairs**

B. Carlyon proposed that Governors ratify the decision taken by the CLC meeting to appoint L. Ryle as Committee Chair and the nomination was seconded by R. Goodrich.

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to ratify the appointment of L. Ryle as Chair of the Curriculum and Learning Committee (CLC).

B. Carlyon nominated P. Main for the role of Resources Committee Chair. The nomination was seconded by P. Lloyd.

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to appoint P. Main as Chair of the Resources Committee.

The Chairs of the Working Groups will remain the same: C. Drake (Marketing) and C. Johnston (Wellbeing)

### **2.4 Minutes of the meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

The minutes were reviewed page by page for accuracy.

**Agreed:** The minutes of the meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were agreed and a copy was signed by the Chair.

A Governor proposed that better track be kept of the action items in the minutes.

**Action:** Clerk to record actions in such a way as to ensure that Governors have an overview of both the action items that are absorbed into the main agenda of the following meeting as well as those action items are carried forward for several meetings.

### **2.5 Actions & Matters Arising**

(1.1) All declaration of interest forms are completed, with the exception of the newly recently appointed Governor.

**Action:** Clerk to ensure that the new Parent Governor receives a declaration of interest form.

(2.2) The Chair, Clerk and Headteacher have liaised with Suhaib Saeed from Lewisham regarding the terms of the SLA.

(2.3.1) The Chair and Headteacher have met to review the school's Instrument of Governance. The co-opted Governor position is optional and not a requirement for the board.

## **2.6 Governing Body and Committee membership**

### **2.6.1 Parent Governor Election update**

Governors noted that a new Parent Governor has been elected. Governors look forward to welcoming Deborah Williams to the next meeting.

### **2.6.2 Co-opted Governor Vacancy**

Governors agreed that the first step should be to fill the current STBE Governor vacancy before taking a decision on whether the board would benefit from the skills and experience of a co-opted member.

### **2.6.3 STBE & Foundation Governor Update**

The STBE have been contacted regarding the vacancies. The Instrument of Government stipulates the need for two STBE appointed Governors.

Regarding the Foundation Governor vacancy, Rev'd J. Perry asked Governors to consider that given the make-up of the school community, it would be positive to look to recruit from a wider group of local churches (the Church can appoint, as long as the prospective member demonstrates that they are willing to uphold core Christian values).

**Q:** Is this proposal due to the fact that the Church is finding it difficult to recruit suitable candidates?

**A:** Rev'd J. Perry responded that although the Church has found it difficult to recruit, this is not the reason behind the suggestion. Rev'd J. Perry stated that he was of the strong opinion that it would be best to find a suitable candidate who would enable the board to be more representative of the school community.

**Governor Discussion:** Governors discussed the best way to recruit a member from local community church groups. Governors agreed that it would not be best to do this via the school newsletter, as the balance of interests in the board should

be maintained (parents are already well represented in Parent Governor and other roles).

**Action:** Rev'd J. Perry is to approach local church leaders and seek out an appropriate Foundation Governor candidate.

## **2.7 Chair's Actions**

There were no updates other than the regular Chair's actions to report.

## **2.8 Committee, Working Group and Link Governor Updates**

The minutes from the recent CLC and Resources Committee meetings are available for Governors to review on the shared MyDrive. A full Resources Committee update is detailed below under the Finance Report (Item 5).

## **3. Headteacher's Report**

### **3.1 Headteacher Update**

The Headteacher's report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Headteacher reported on the highly successful term.

- The school fare is due to take place shortly
- The recent choir event had been highly positive.
- The Headteacher had recently attended the Lewisham School Leader's briefing.

Governors noted the key issues, moving forward:

- There have been several vital items missed due to the fact that the role of the School Business Manager (SBM) has not been filled. The School's liability insurance had almost expired. Items such as this are being missed, falling between the office staff and Lewisham Finance. The Head is to follow-up on this as a matter of urgency. The Headteacher is to have a conversation with Lewisham to ensure items such as these are tracked.
- The Deficit Recovery Plan is being drafted and will be in place early in the next calendar year.
- The increases in costs associated with the catering contract has been discussed in detail in the CLC. The decision has been taken to remain with Caterlink.
- There are substantial building works required for the KS1 building and both playgrounds.

- The work of the Marketing Sub-Group continues to be very important in mitigating the fall in pupil numbers.

### *Attendance*

**Q:** In Year 2 there are almost double the amount of boys that there are girls. Is there a reason for this?

**A:** There is no particular reason for this. It may have been due to the particular make-up of this age group locally. This disparity is only seen in this year group, and not in any others.

**Q:** What percentage is seen as persistent absence?

**A:** Anything below 90% deemed persistent absence. The school is currently sending out letters to any that are below 95%, making the make-up of attendance figures clear to parents and carers.

**Q:** Have requests for authorized absences decreased? Has the school successfully pulled this back?

**A:** It is hoped that the shift is taking place. The school's expectation on attendance has been clearly communicated. It is hoped that by the summer term, attendance figures will be improved.

**Q:** How does the school respond to low attendance? When does the school contact parents and involve outside agencies?

**A:** Letters are sent out immediately once threshold is met. Monitoring takes place alongside this (attendance welfare officer). Governors noted that the members of the office team (Nicola and Caroline) are working hard to keep track of attendance figures, making parents aware of the expectation and making an evidence trail. C. Johnston reported on the benefits of working with parents, building a relationship with them in the best interests of the children.

**Q:** There is a lot of absence in Year 1. Are there clear reasons for this?

**A:** This is a combined figure. In general, the unauthorized absences are very small. Attendance is a key area of focus and measures to improve this are being looked into to improve this. Several of these absences are due to children attending appointments or procedures with professionals. Families have been advised to take the school letters to their appointments, asking that professionals consider the child's need to be in school when scheduling appointments. Much of the absence was due to illness. Governors noted the recent wave of Strep A and Scarlet fever in the local community.

**Q:** What are the reasons for the high absence figures in Year 5?

**A:** Several children have an underlying EHCP need. The Year 5 cohort is the one of most pressing need. There has also been significant illness for this group. A Governor noted that Year 5 has a significantly high number of children in receipt of Pupil Premium. One child in Year 5 is on a reduced timetable.

**Governor Discussion:** Governors discussed punctuality and the impact on attendance for those few children that that are moved out of Borough. One child had been moved to Dartford, whilst attending the school (the child has now left). The Headteacher reported that the office staff are rigorous at marking lateness. The lateness data will be helpful to measure and compare each term, as opposed to overall absence figures which are likely to reduce as the percentage of missed days will be proportionately smaller.

**Q:** Are there school rewards/incentives for attendance?

**A:** The school does not have a reward/incentive scheme. In general, children are not responsible for their own attendance. It is not clear that it is good to encourage children to come to school when ill has implications for spreading this to other children. One child in EYFS has Leukaemia and parents have been asked to not bring their children in to school when ill. It is positive that this particular child has not missed a significant amount of school (as a result).

#### *MIME Data*

**Q:** Early Years achievement is down some way on previous years for Phonics. What is in place to improve this?

**A:** To an extent, this data is very positive. This is a cohort that have had significant disruption to their learning experience due to the pandemic. The data compares well with local schools. The school's approach is that improvements can always be made, and this is the focus of Year and Phase leader meetings.

**Q:** The data on page 20 of the Headteacher's report clearly supports the objective for working on Writing at Greater Depth. Is there any specific reason why St Bart's is below the national average in this areas?

**A:** Yes, as previously discussed, this is an area that has been identified in the School Improvement Plan. There was a clear decision taken to not

consolidate in Year 1, allowing the children to develop writing (impact of lockdowns/ home working).

**Q:** Is it anticipated that the children in Reception in catch up to where they would have been (in the absence of the pandemic)?

**A:** Yes, it appears that younger children are making this progress at a quicker rate. The current Year 3 children are making progress in terms of closing this gap. Older children appear to be more impacted, as seen in the data.

**Q:** How is the difference between attainment and progress explained and tracked?

**A:** The CLC are to scrutinize this data as per the committee's remit. The committee reports back regularly to full Governors via the minutes of their meetings and verbal reports. The CLC ask: are our reaching their full potential or are the coasting? How can the data be analysed to understand the granular detail for the progress and attainment? What is being done with those who are achieving below what is expected of them? Conversations to be had with the Year 2 team are to ask: how best to support those children achieving well below expected? How can the mastery curriculum be harnessed? The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are working with subject leaders to focus on the bottom 20% of achievers. This is a particular challenge for the Year 3 cohort as many children are at expected. The message needs to be clear: no matter how well a cohort are achieving, teachers need to ask, what can be offered to help each child improve. This links directly to the SIP (adaptive teaching). Governors noted that formal assessment at greater depth can only take place at the end of KS1 and KS2.

**Q:** Regarding the mathematics levels in Years 4 and 5. Is the achievement have a connection to the higher number of children on the SEN register (for Year 5 in particular)?

**A:** In-school attainment and progress data is helpful in unpicking these underlying issues. Regarding SEND children, those children working 'just below' are those who should be able to access an expected level of development. Those children who sit below this have various and unique factors impacting on their learning. The CLC is tracking this closely. The Headteacher noted the percentage figure of those children who were not present on the day that the data was collected, and the resulting impact on skewing the data. There are several children in Year 5 who should have an EHCP in place. Governors regretted to note the delays in accessing EHCPs, as discussed later in the meeting. The

Headteacher reported that a strong team were in place to support the learning in Years 4 and 5 (teachers moved across accordingly).

*Governor Discussion:* mathematics appears to be falling behind the most for the current Years 4 and 5. A strong mathematics lead teacher is now in place. The significant year for introducing mathematics concepts is Year 3. This was a year that had been particularly disrupted for the Years 4 and 5, due to Covid-19 lockdowns. Governors noted that Year 6 is a year of consolidation for mathematics knowledge. Governors expect that this will be tracked and expect further updates in due course.

*Governor Discussion:* Governors discussed the writing data, noting that this will be compared by ongoing teacher assessment going forward.

**Q:** Will there be a data drop including protected characteristics?

**A:** Yes this will be pulled out from the Mime data and closely reviewed in CLC.

### *Behaviour*

Governors noted the new guidance on exclusions. Training in this regard has been attended by the Headteacher and Governor H. Buckroyd. The Headteacher reported on the changes that have been made to the language around exclusions. C. Johnston and the Headteacher have recently attended a fair access panel. There is a high level of need within Lewisham. The ethos is for the school to work with parents and families.

**Action:** Headteacher to circulate the new guidance on exclusions to Governors.

**Q:** Has the introduction of Zones of Regulation had any impact on improving behaviour? What is the measure and performance of current versus past behaviour in pupils?

**A:** This has only recently been introduced and it is therefore too early to measure or comment on impact. Anecdotally, the children appear to have more of a vocabulary when talking about their emotions, which is a positive step in the right direction.

**Q:** Is the school able to track the impact on teaching time?



**A:** C. Johnston is undertaking a piece of work currently to measure the demands on resources across the school. A cost analysis of this kind will inform a strategic approach, deploying quality first teaching (scaffolding) and additional support where most needed.

**SEND**

**Q:** There a higher level of pupils with SEND in Years 4 and 5. What impact does this have on the data?

**A:** The impact needs to be considered in relation to the size of each particular cohort.

**Governor Discussion:** Governors regretted to note the impact that underfunding of services has had on the children directly (difficult in accessing resources; professionals often not in attendance at meetings). C. Johnston reported on the delays that are impacting the setting of EHCPs (if they were in place, it would be easier to bring further support measures in place). The delays in the system were discussed in the recent meeting with Lewisham Headteachers.

The Headteacher was thanked for the detailed and inclusive report. Governors commended the format and layout of the report, making it a 'joy to read'.

### **3.2 Buildings and Estates**

Governors noted the update, as included in the Headteacher's report.

**Q:** Will the school be able to make use of the capital grants recently made available by the Government to support measures such as insulation?

**A:** It does not appear to be that the school will be eligible. The initial survey undertaken noted the double glazing and that the school is in a relatively good place with regards to energy efficiency (as opposed to other local schools in Victorian buildings and the like). There are works to improve energy efficiency currently under way.

**Q:** What is the update regarding the subsistence works? Has the SDBE been spoken to regarding the subsidence repair estimate of £200K? Is it any clearer as to who will pay for this?

**A:** Work will be undertaken over the Christmas holidays (the children will not need to be displaced). The boiler has broken down and the school is relying on the new heat pumps. The Diocese is picking up the slack by covering the £350K. It is still yet unclear as to who will pay for

the second phase. Lewisham have been contacted. The SDBE are responsible for the building and Lewisham for the playground. The defects were that of the original building. It is hoped that costs can be recouped (the repair estimate of £200K has been given). There will need to be some funding to cover this in the first instance due to the health and safety concerns.

**Action:** Working party of Governors to be set-up in order to follow-up on progress regarding the repairs.

### **3.3 Staffing Update**

Governors noted the staffing update detailed in the Headteacher's report.

### **3.4 Tackling Race Inequality in Education Update**

Governors have recently undertaken training in this regard (recorded below, under item Governor Training item 7.2)

Governor B. Adebayo reported that via Pupil Voice, the children have asked for more diversity and better representation in the curriculum. B. Adebayo will be working closely with Subject Leaders to produce an action plan and audit to bring much needed improvements in this regard.

Governors agreed that it would be positive if an Equalities Working Party were to be reinstated. The previous group had been comprised of R. Johns and B. Carlyon. All Governors are welcome to join.

**Action:** B. Adebayo to circulate several sentences regarding the remit and meeting commitments for the new Working Group. Any Governors wishing to join the group are to contact B. Adebayo directly.

#### **3.4.1 Race Equality Pledge**

Item not discussed, deferred to the next agenda.

## **4. Safeguarding and Health & Safety**

### **4.1 Safeguarding**

Governors reviewed the safeguarding report in detail. C. Johnston reported that C. Smith had attended the school for a face-to-face conversation in order to support referrals to Early Help.

Governors noted that one new child has been rehoused in temporary housing in Lambeth, a borough with different thresholds.

Governors regretted to note that the recent LAC review has been cancelled at short notice. C. Johnston reported that she has followed-up, but with little result as yet.

**Action:** Safeguarding Governor to provide support to the safeguarding team regarding the LAC review process.

**Q:** Is the lower number of children in receipt of Pupil Premium due to a lack of processing (Year 1)?

**A:** No, this is deemed to be due to a change in demographic of this year group.

#### **4.2 Health & Safety**

Governors received a detailed update regarding the development of the playground (ongoing issue). Governors asked that this be included as a standing item on future agendas until the matter is resolved.

### **5. Finance**

#### **5.1 November Budget Update**

Governors reviewed the budget headlines, noting that the school is in the financial position that has been predicted for several years: spending more than what is coming in. Expenditure is increasing, as expected. There is a 10% uplift on staffing, of the total budget. Spend per pupil is going up.

The budget has been to Lewisham in order to comply with the deadline. Governor L. Jehuel had reviewed the budget closely (she has expertise in this area). Governors agreed that in this instance they would formally agree to the budget as presented, in retrospect (different from the normal procedure).

**Agreed:** Governors agreed the budget, in retrospect.

Governors discussed the current £150K deficit. A meeting is to take place shortly to discuss and prepare for the Deficit Recovery Plan to be in place for January 2023. Governors will be given an update at the Resources committee meeting and at the full Governing body meeting in early 2023.

#### **5.2 Resources Committee Report**

The minutes of the committee are available on the Governor's One Drive.

## **6. Policies**

### **6.1 Safeguarding Policy**

The Safeguarding Policy was circulated in advance with the changes highlighted.

*Governor Discussion:* Governors noted that the policy was both thorough and detailed policy. Governors discussed the challenges facing children and the importance of preparing children for what they may be exposed to contextually or later in life across the borough (PHSE).

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to adopt the Safeguarding Policy.

### **6.2 Appraisal Policy**

The Appraisal Policy was circulated in advance of the meeting.

**Agreed:** Governors voted unanimously to adopt the Appraisal Policy.

## **7. Governor Projects and Training**

### **7.1 Governor Visits**

The Chair reported that she has re-organized the Governor Visit report section on Sharepoint. There are 8 reports for this academic year so far. The template for the forms are available and all Governors visiting the school are urged to fill these in and return this to the Chair of Governors.

### **7.2 Governor Training Reports**

All Governors attended Equalities Training (Law/Employers/Education) at the start of the current meeting. Three Governors have attended the Lewisham Race Inequality in Education Toolkit training in October 2022. C. Johnston and D. Meyer attended the Diocesan Equality, Diversity and Inclusion conference. The school has joined the 'Leaders Like Us' group and will host training events going forward. H. Buckroyd attended Exclusions training. The Headteacher attended Allegations Against Staff Training.

Any Governor undertaking training is please to email R. Goodrich.

The STBE and Lewisham training is circulated on a regular basis. Several Governors stated that they were not receiving updates from STBE.

**Action:** Chair to circulate this training STBE to all Governors.

## **8. Meeting Dates and Future Agenda Items**

The next meeting of the Governors will be held on Tuesday February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

*Governor Discussion:* Governors discussed the best days of the week to hold meetings. The current Clerk is not easily available on Thursdays. One Governor is unable to make any day other than Thursdays. Governors agreed that meetings should be held on a rotation of days. The next meeting will be held on a Tuesday and the following meeting will be held on a Thursday.

*Governor Discussion:* Governors discussed potentially moving the times of meetings to the daytime, on some occasions.

*Governor Discussion:* Several Governors noted the late running of the meetings. The Chair and Clerk were asked liaise on how to better time keep and arrange the agendas accordingly.

### Next Agenda Items:

STBE Governor Vacancy

Development of Playground (Standing Item)

Race Equality Pledge

## **9. Confidential Items**

Three items were raised, recorded in a separate set of minutes

*End of minutes*