

**ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

Minutes

Tuesday 22 March 2022 at 6:30pm via Zoom

Present:

Sara Sanbrook-Davies (Headteacher)	Chelsea Drake	Louise Ryle
Bettina Carlyon (Chair)	Daniel Meyer	David Roberts
Rosalind Goodrich (co-Vice Chair)	Rebecca Johns	Hilary-Anne Buckhurst
Peter Main (co-Vice Chair)	Pauline Lloyd	Steven Larwood
Bernadine Williams-Adebayo		

In Attendance:

Jane Cheadle (Clerk)

Actions:

2 (1.4;1.2)	Clerk to follow-up with N. Karim to confirm that all declaration of interest forms have been returned.	Clerk
2 (1.4)	Ofsted readiness pack to be circulated to all Governors once completed.	Headteacher
2 (3.1)	C. Johnston to compile a glossary of terms for governors to accompany the next safeguarding report. Arrangements to be made for C. Johnston to deliver contextual safeguarding training for Governors in the summer term.	C. Johnston
2.1	Headteacher to include a call-out to any prospective Parent Governor with financial experience and expertise.	Headteacher
2.3	P. Main to circulate the meeting date for the Resources committee to all Governors. It is hoped that more Governors will be open to attending (mentoring and pre-meet offered).	P. Main
4.1	To report back to the Chair of Governors via email once checking with C. Johnston regarding the bullying and racist incidents detailed in the Safeguarding and Headteacher's report (in response to Governor's question Item 4.1)	Headteacher
7.1	Any Governor interested in learning more about a particular area and being paired-up with another Governor/Committee Chair/Vice-Chair is to contact the Chair of Governors.	Governors
7.1	Resources Committee Chair, Headteacher and School Business Manager to arrange a pre-meet with any interested Governors in advance of the next Resources committee meeting to review the spreadsheets and outline finance matters and school context (by way of helping to familiarize prospective Resource committee members with these areas).	P. Main
7.1	Governor R. Johns to prepare a workshop or factsheet for Governors to ensure that all are familiar with the basics of the	R.Johns

	equalities policy (inclusivity, protected characteristics, direct and indirect discrimination and the de-colonization agenda).	
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1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: C. Johnston, A. George, Rev'd J. Perry

There were no interests declared.

2. Governing Body Administration

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held 10th February 2022 were agreed with the following corrections: (1.5.4) Costing was £16K not £16 and spelling of 'Pobble'.

Matters arising from the minutes (not covered by the agenda):

- 1.4 The Office has a record of the declaration of interest forms.
(1.2)
Action: Clerk to follow-up with N. Karim to ensure that all have been returned.
- 1.4 The Ofsted readiness pack is almost complete.

Action: Ofsted readiness pack to be circulated to all Governors once completed.
- 1.4 The Headteacher has confirmed the Foundation Governor appointments
(1.5) with the Diocese. The School website has been updated.
- 1.4 C. Johnston has forwarded the list of attendees for the Safeguarding
(1.6) training session to R. Goodrich.
- 1.4 The link to the maintenance fund has been included in the newsletter as a
(4.2) standing item.
- 1.5.4 P. Main has circulated dates for the upcoming Resources committee meeting. A full Resource meeting this term and training session undertaken. A date for the Summer 1 date has been agreed.
- 3.1 **Action:** Arrangements to be made for C. Johnston to deliver contextual safeguarding training for Governors (Summer term).

Action: C. Johnston to compile a glossary of terms for governors to accompany the next safeguarding report. Next term.
- 6.1 The Senior Leadership Team has reviewed into the ways that documentation is kept securely in the classroom. Documentation is kept securely.

2.1 Governing Body membership

L. Ward has handed in her resignation from the board due to personal reasons. She has taken compassionate leave from her governing roles in the past months. Governors asked that their thanks to L. Ward be recorded for all her energies and hard work over the past 4 years.

Arrangements for a parent governor election are under-way. Governors noted that financial expertise and skills would be beneficial to the board.

Action: Headteacher to include a call out to any prospective Parent Governor with financial experience and expertise.

2.2 Committee Reports

The minutes from the recent CLC meeting have been uploaded to MyDrive. Governor A. George has requested that any questions or comments be emailed to her as she is unable to attend the current meeting.

The minutes of the recent Health & Wellbeing committee have been uploaded to MyDrive. Governor A. George has requested that any questions or comments be emailed to her as she is unable to attend the current meeting.

The minutes of the Marketing sub-committee have been uploaded to MyDrive. C. Drake requested that any questions or comments be emailed to her.

The minutes of the Resources committee are available on MyDrive. The committee Chair's report and finance update is recorded below under item 5 .

2.3 Committee Membership

Governors noted the need for a more balanced membership between CLC and Resources. Governors agreed on the critical importance of the Resources committee remit. Governor scrutiny of the budget is essential, particularly due to Covid-19 and with the current trend of falling pupil rolls. Governors were urged to attend the committee and volunteer to join. L. Ward was an active member and has recently left. Governors R. Goodrich and D. Roberts have both accepted committee membership recently both have attended their first meetings.

Action: P. Main to circulate the meeting date to all Governors. It is hoped that more Governors will be open to attending.

2.4 Link Governor Updates

Rev'd J. Perry, B. Carlyon, P. Lloyd, and L. Ryle have visited the school recently to meet with staff as per their Link Governor roles.

R. Goodarich and C. Drake have arrangements to come in to the school shortly.

Governors were reminded to submit their reports via MyDrive, using the templates available. Any questions in this regard, please to email the Chair of Governors.

3. Headteacher's Report

3.1 Headteacher Update

The written report was circulated in advance to all Governors. Several Governors have submitted questions in advance via email, others were asked directly at the meeting.

Governor questions in blue italics

Are the additional sessions and tutoring offered in response to specific concerns or due to gaps that have arisen from the pandemic? Is there a reason that this support is given via additional lessons and not built into existing teaching sessions?

The Headteacher reported that the additional sessions run by the Headteacher and S. Larwood are designed to give a boost to the children and are less formal. The tutoring is held 2 days per week and looks to address both specific gaps and learning in the moment (whichever of the two the children need). The tutoring is available for Years 5 and 6 (tutoring for Year 3 has not yet commenced due to Covid-related delays). The tutoring is specifically to address gaps that have arisen. The sessions run by S. Larwood and the Headteacher are to support learning (reading and maths) and would have been on offer regardless of the pandemic. S. Larwood reported that the Year 6 gaps in learning are directly due to the pandemic/lockdowns (fractions and mixed numbers having been taught during lockdowns in their then Year 5). There are similar gaps seen in their writing. Governors were pleased to note that the Year 6 group, on the whole, are happy to take part in these additional sessions and seem to enjoy the them.

Regarding the 10 pupils for whom attendance is particularly concerning (low percentage), what strategies are in place and are there likely to be improvements?

The Headteacher reported that there are in fact more than 10 children who have a low attendance percentage this term. The majority of this absence is Covid-19 related. Of this group there are several who have been off for a significant period due to several other illnesses. There are 5 children for whom attendance is not solely down to these issues. Their attendance is not improving as much as the school would like and there are significant efforts being made to improve this. Work is being done to get the parents of one of these children on side and it is deemed possible for improvements to be made as a result of this. The remaining 4 children have very specific needs and concerns (all KS2). A number of supports in place for these children as well as regular conversations with parents and home visits. In addition to this there is a child who is reluctant to attend at present. Efforts are being made to engage and distract the child when coming to school in the morning. All available strategies are explored and deployed.

The Safeguarding Link Governor reported that she has discussed one particular child's attendance concerns with the Safeguarding Lead. A home visit had been made and the school's concern made clear to parents. The Local Authority has been contacted as advised (Early Help) C. Johnson. Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO) is supportive and proactive. This particular child's attendance has improved (with the exception of the current week).

What are the updates regarding the new outdoor gym? How will adequate training and safety measures be managed?

The gym is now fully installed. Three people are currently trained: two staff members and one parent (professional personal trainer). Children and staff are not allowed to use the equipment until they are trained. A further safety measure is required:

fencing around the one side. The costings for a fence running down the slope is being looked into (2 costings sought). Governors noted the importance of this safety work and discussed the current budgetary constraints.

How are pupils with complex needs progressing? What plans are in place to support their transition?

Transition are being planned and this will be an ongoing process over the summer. This group of children are all making progress. Small steps are already being looked into (as per the engagement model). Even smaller steps will be looked into as well (for pupil progress in the summer term). Attendance for the EHCP group is very good and one child is making exceptional progress. Several children are challenged cognitively and the school is conscious not to overload these children. Best ways to support learning is constantly being looked into with a broad range of interventions in place (several interventions have not gone ahead as yet due to Covid-19).

It is highly positive that the school has been able to remain open during this challenging period. Staff shortages have been a concern. What is the Headteachers view on the sustainability of the current arrangements and the potential for improvement going forward?

The Headteacher asked Governors to note that if the school were to carry on at the current staff absence rate, it would be likely that classes would need to be closed. It is hoped that this picture will improve, however. 18 staff members have had Covid-19 since January 2022. Several staff members have taken off 5-6 days but others have been off sick for 10 days or more. In addition to this, 21 staff been off for various other illnesses (serious illness in some cases). This has had a massive impact and overall school staff are very tired. The staff have been extraordinary in their flexibility and discretionary effort to cover the absence of their colleagues. Staff are paid for all the extra work they undertake. The Headteacher is looking into offering TA's additional days off in lieu once staffing levels return to normal. A high rate of illness of staff is the picture of schools broadly (Local Authority and Diocese). S. Meyer reported on recent Early Years meeting held with 12 other schools from the local area. These school reported similar difficulties with staff absence 'the worst it has been since the pandemic began'. The Headteacher noted that the current state of affairs is not sustainable. It is important for Governors to be aware of the current strain on staff.

How are the extra-curricular clubs financed? How are the clubs allocated? How are those children who are deemed to benefit from clubs able to access the?

The clubs are self-financing (parents pay directly). The school does not charge the clubs for the space (with the exception of Energy kids – where a percentage of the club's income is paid to the school). In exchange, the clubs make spaces available to children for whom the school deems would benefit from clubs. A large proportion of children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding are benefiting from clubs via this arrangement. Spaces in clubs are allocated on a first come first serve basis. An alert is sent out by the office informing parents and carers ahead of time.

What is the relationship between the basic number screening test and the multiplication test?

There is no correlation. The number screening test is a diagnostic tool used to identify gaps (questions are read out verbally to the children). The multiplication tables test is a statutory test check (undertaken online).

There appears to be a significant proportion of children who speak English as an additional language (EAL). How are these 70 children catered for in terms of their language acquisition needs?

The majority of these children are bi-lingual or tri-lingual and proficient in all two or three languages and have been through the English nursery system. Across the school there are less than 10 children who are actively learning English as an additional language. For these children, the Hounslow scheme is used to support and fall into an intervention scheme for a short period at least. Most children are able to make accelerated progress and reach their learning goals. Language screening is undertaken in Reception to pick up any issues that require support. Governors noted a case study of a child who came to the school with no speaking English in Year 1. She is now a fluent English speaker (in Year 6). There are some semantic structures that require work, but it is not otherwise possible to tell that she is not a native English speaker. This child has made incredible progress, as with many other children joining the school without spoken English.

It is highly positive that the school has been running workshops for parents and carers via Zoom. What has the response and engagement been?

The response and engagement has been highly positive. A minimum of 22 parents for each session (with 42 views of the Early Years YouTube video session). Sessions on KS2 stats, Early Years learning goals and assessment and KS1 maths have been offered so far. Sessions on KS1 SATS and Online and offline Safety will be delivered shortly. There has been higher uptake now that these sessions are available online.

Has the number of first choice applications for Reception increased this year? How many Church places have been allocated?

The 52 first choice applications is in line with those of the previous year. First choice applications has crept up over the past few years. The number of church allocated places is 11.

How can the school make it more widely known that there are spaces in the year groups? How do families find out about available spaces in years above Reception?

A message could be added to the school's website regarding the spaces available. Families normally contact the school to enquire about any spaces for in-year admissions. The Marketing sub-group has been developing a SWAY website '10 Reasons to come to St. Barts'. The message 'get in touch we have spaces in all year groups' is part of this. The Marketing sub-group will liaise with the Headteacher regarding updating the school's website in this regard.

3.1 Staffing Update

Staffing Updates were included as part of the Headteacher's report, above. Two further confidential items were discussed at the end of the current meeting (separate, confidential set of minutes).

4. Safeguarding and Health & Safety

4.1 Safeguarding Report

The Safeguard report has been uploaded to MyDrive – link circulated in advance of the meeting.

In the Headteachers report there is one instance of racial bullying noted. The Safeguarding report refers to two incidents of bullying (and one cyber bullying incident). Is the racial incident included in this category in the Safeguarding report or is it in addition to these incidents? Governors have previously requested that racial and bullying incidents are separated out. Has this been done?

The Headteacher will check with C. Johnston regarding the incidents detailed in the Safeguarding report.

Action: To report back to the Chair via email once checking with C. Johnston regarding the bullying and racist incidents detailed in the Safeguarding and Headteacher's report (in response to Governor's question Item 4.1)

4.2 Safeguarding Audit tool

Governors engaged in a brief session (Safeguarding audit tool for Governors). Governors took turns answering questions about evidence for safeguarding knowledge. The resulting crib-sheet is to be circulated and uploaded. Governors agreed that this had been useful learning exercise and that the resulting document would be a useful and adaptable 'crib sheet' when questioned on their knowledge of the school.

4.3 Health & Safety Report

These items are covered by the Headteacher's report (as has historically been the case). The Chair, School Business Manager and Headteacher have been in discussion as to whether or not it is beneficial to pull this item out of the Headteacher's report as a stand-alone item. This discussion is ongoing.

4.4 Health & Safety Monitoring Visit Report

B. Carlyon reported on her recent monitoring visit to the school. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled shortly. Monitoring walks are to be re-introduced in the Resources calendar (re-institution post pandemic).

5. Finance

P. Main reported on the recent Resources committee meeting. A comprehensive update had been received from the School Business Manager and Headteacher. The minutes are available on MyDrive for Governors to review.

Governors noted the committee recommendation that the overall budget (actuals) be agreed by the board and submitted in April 2022.

- The committee has reviewed up to month 11 (the final 8% accrued and forecasted with no radical change expected).

- A small surplus was seen this year, however this is due to be taken up by the very large energy bill (previously noted and discussed by Governors). There will therefore be an approximate net zero position expected.
- It is clear that this is a phenomenal achievement given the previous projections. This positive position is due to the school's prudence, sound finance management, increased income from funding and work undertaken by the Headteacher (Diocese) as well as the school's ability to cover staff absence in house and not resort to more expensive agency staff.
- The previously mentioned term time only expense is to be part covered by Schools Forum (60%). The remaining cost to the school will be significant but has been budgeted for.

The Headteacher reported that the Local Authority have written recently to inform the school of the expected increases to energy costs: electricity up by 100% and gas up by 122%. This significant increase will impact all schools. The school has undertaken work to ensure that the school is as energy efficient as possible (lights have been replaced, boiler replacement is under way and electricity meter in the kitchen).

The next Resources committee meeting will focus on the forecasting for the next years. Governor support in this process will be appreciated. The Headteacher and P. Main are to meet shortly to start this process – detailed look at the budget and anticipating costs going forward.

Agreed: Governors agreed to the overall budget actuals to be submitted in April 2022.

6. Policies

Health & Safety Policy: Covered at the previous meeting.

7. Governor Projects and Training

7.1 Governor Monitoring

Link Governor visits are detailed above (Item 2.4).

7.2 Governor Skills Audit

R. Goodrich presented on the skills audit that has recently been compiled (available on MyDrive). Governors self-identified areas for improvement – finance, budgeting, panels and certain areas of the curriculum. Skills are to be built in these areas.

A buddy/mentor system was proposed (in keeping with succession planning).

Action: Any Governor interested in learning more about a particular area and being paired-up with another Governor/Committee Chair/Vice-Chair is to contact the Chair of Governors.

Action: Resources Committee Chair, Headteacher and School Business Manager to arrange a pre-meet with any interested Governors in advance of the next Resources committee meeting to review the spreadsheets and outline finance matters and

school context (by way of helping to familiarize prospective Resource committee members with these areas).

Action: Governor R. Johns to prepare a workshop or factsheet for Governors to ensure that all are familiar with the basics of the equalities policy (inclusivity, protected characteristics, direct and indirect discrimination and de-colonization imperative).

7.2 Governor Training Reports

Governor training reports are to be uploaded to MyDrive.

8. Meeting Dates and Future Agenda Items

The next meeting will take place on **Thursday 19 May 2022 at 6:30PM**

Future meeting date: Thursday 30 June 2022 at 6:30PM

9. Any Other Urgent Business

Items to be arranged with the Chair at the start of the meeting.

10. Any Confidential Items

Three confidential items were reported on; recorded in a separate, confidential set of minutes.

The meeting closed at: 9pm

Signed: _____