

THE GOVERNING BODY OF ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL

Minutes of the Governing Body meeting St Bartholomew's School on Thursday 18th March 2021 at 6 PM (held via Zoom)

Present:

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| Ros Sutton | Rebecca Johns |
| Sara Sanbrook-Davies | Peter Main |
| Bettina Carlyon | Daniel Meyer |
| Chelsea Drake | Louise Ward |
| Allison George | Rev Jim Perry |
| Rosalind Goodrich | David Roberts |
| Louise Ryle | Pauline Lloyd |
| Cathryn Johnston | |

In Attendance:

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| Jane Cheadle | Clerk |
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| Item | Action | Responsibility | Date |
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| 1.5 (1.3) | Newly appointed Governor, L. Ryle is to complete a declaration of interest form. Chair is to send this out via email. | L. Ryle Chair | 31/03/2021 |
| 1.5 (5) | Parental summary of the Remote Learning policy to be circulated to parents or pinned to the top of Google Classrooms. | Chair Headteacher | |
| 1.8 (b) | Any Governor willing to take on the role of Faith Group Chair is to contact the Chair of Governors. | All Governors | 31/03/2021 |
| 1.8 (c) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - D. Meyer to discuss the Class Link Governor roles with staff members and to draft a memo detailing expectations for this role. - This memo is to be sent to the Chair and circulated to all Governors - Chair to re-circulate visiting guidelines to Governors as well as target dates for when Governors are to make contact with their linked staff members and by when they should have planned to visit a classroom (virtually). | D. Meyer Chair | |
| 5.3 | Chair to write to all staff on behalf of Governors, thanking them for their efforts during this challenging period. | Chair | |
| 6 (a) | Governors to send any comments, questions or corrections on the Health & Wellbeing Policy to C. Johnston by the start of the Easter holidays 2021. | Governors | |
| 7 (c) | Chair to re-circulate the Lewisham training offer link to all Governors and to forward Governor training links to the newly appointed Governor, L. Ryle | Chair | |

1. Governing Body Administration

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| 1.1 | <p>Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Business for the Meeting</p> <p>Governor Bernadine Williams-Adebayo attended the first part of the meeting and gave her apologies. Governors congratulated her on the birth of her lovely baby son.</p> |
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| 1.2 | <p>Meeting arrangements including decision making No declarations were made.</p> |
| 1.3 | <p>Business critical decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Admissions Policy - Health & Wellbeing Policy <p>All decisions will be taken by a show of hands.</p> |
| 1.4 | <p>The non-confidential minutes of the Governing Body meeting held 28th January 2021</p> <p>Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held 28th January 2021. A copy was signed by the Chair.</p> |
| 1.5 | <p>Matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda.</p> <p>1.2 Governors have met to discuss the SDBE MAT proposal. Confidential minutes were sent out and the CEO has been informed of the decision.</p> <p>1.3 The Headteacher confirmed that all declaration of interest forms are completed and up to date, with the exception of the newly appointed parent Governor.</p> <p>Action: Newly appointed Governor, Louise Ryle is to complete a declaration of interest form. Chair is to send this to her via email.</p> <p>1.6 The updated SEND policy and SEND addendum were circulated and agreed via email.</p> <p>1.7 Governor Communication: The Chair has set up a WhatsApp group with the sole purpose of notifying Governors of communication in their My USO email account. L. Ryle is to send her phone number to the Chair if she wishes to join this group and receive notifications.</p> <p>2.1 b The Chair has written a letter to parents and carers on behalf of Governors.</p> <p>2.2 The Headteacher has circulated the updated risk assessment to Governors for approval via email.</p> <p>5 The Remote Learning Policy was agreed by Governors via email.</p> <p>Action: Drafting and circulation of the parental summary is ongoing.</p> <p>6 Health & safety training PowerPoint has been shared on MyDrive.</p> <p>9 Governors have agreed to the confidential minutes of the previous meeting via email.</p> |
| 1.6 | <p>Governing Body membership</p> <p>a. Louise Ryle was introduced and given a warm welcome as the newly appointed parent Governor. L. Ryle spoke of her teaching experience and ongoing interest in Governance.</p> <p>b. The Chair provided an update on the PCC Governor Appointment: the term of Governor D. Roberts has expired. The PCC has asked that D. Roberts continue in place until a PCC Governor election can be held.</p> <p>Agreed: Governors agreed unanimously that D. Roberts should continue on as PCC Governor in the interest of continuity. Governors thanked D. Roberts for agreeing to remain in post.</p> |
| 1.7 | <p>Chair's Actions</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SDBE MAT Update (confidential minutes). - A one-day school closure was agreed for Friday 5th March 2021 with the view of allowing preparation time for staff ahead of children returning on the 8th March 2021. The Headteacher and D. Meyer reported the day been highly useful, allowing for a deep clean and staff re-integration. Home learning had been set for all children on that day. |
| 1.8 | <p>Committees</p> <p>a) Committee reports</p> <p>i. <u>Children & Learning Committee (CLC)</u> B. Carlyon reported on the committee meeting held on 3rd March 2021. The Committee reviewed the following in detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguarding update, covering the extensive wellbeing work undertaken during lockdown as well as the preparations for the return of the children. - PHSE work on friendship (school book: <i>The Boy, the Fox, the Mole and the Horse</i>) - Children in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant. - The Single Central record is up to date. P. Lloyd is to attend school to review this when possible. - The Headteacher presented on the recovery curriculum and the focus areas for the return to school. <p>ii. <u>Resources and Finance Committee meeting</u> P. Main reported on the committee meeting held on 16th March 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new business manager, N. Karim had presented the financial report in preparation for the year closure and submission to the Local Authority. - Then in-year deficit and surplus figures were noted and the school's financial position has improved significantly from that previously reported. - The anticipated in-year deficit has been revised and there is expected to be an in-year surplus of approximately £60K. This is due to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Increase in income overall: more EHCP numbers, income from Headteacher consultancy and mentoring and success in claiming back some of the C19 costs from the Department for Education (Governors noted that the latter evidenced prudent school management of the claim and logging of these costs). o Reduction of budgeted spending: Maternity leave teachers covered by a combination of newly recruited NQT staff and existing staff and a reduction in the overall training budget (without impacting on the quality or amount of training available). - There has been a degree of movement in the figures. Budget items are being rationalized and clear records put in place by the new business manager, as well as running notes. - The end of year figures are to be submitted by the 26th Mach 2021 and finalized figures will be agreed by the Committee via email. - The Headteacher reported that she had asked the Committee to remain vigilant, noting that there remain several anomalies that need to be clarified. Although the Headteacher is quietly optimistic, she is mindful of the longer-term financial challenges. The school has been prudent and the needs of the school have not suffered, however there is still much work for the Headteacher and business manager to do. Support is being sought from another school's business manager and additional support may need to be brought in to support budget setting. The Senior Leadership Team has starting to think about ways of strategic re-deployment of staff to avoid any necessity for staff redundancy. <p><i>Governor Question: If the school continues to have a surplus is there a possibility that this can be clawed back?</i> The Headteacher reported that savings over 5% will no longer be clawed back – a change from previous policy.</p> <p><i>Governor Question: Is the maternity cover NQT a trainee or brand new recruit to the school?</i> The NQT is a new recruit (PGCE, Goldsmith). The Headteacher reported that the staff</p> |

member has taken on the Year 6 group with a proactive and energetic approach. The school currently has a Schools Direct trainee in another role. Both are assets to the school.

Governor Question: Regarding the surplus, would it be possible for The Friends of St. Bartholomew's to ask for money towards the maintenance fund going forward? The Headteacher reported that the surplus would only offset the anticipated deficit the following year. The costs of the school still outweigh its income from the Department for Education. It is not clear whether there will be any requests from The Friends.

Governors thanked the N. Karim, the Headteacher and her team for their continued prudent management of the school's finances.

iii. Admissions Committee

R. Sutton reported on the recent committee meeting:

- There have been 152 applicants for 60 places. It is not known if these were 1st or 2nd choices at this stage.
- 16 applications were received for foundation places.
- One claim was made for a place on the basis of exceptional medical needs. The child has an existing EHC plan. C. Johnston reported that she and D. Meyer have met with the child and with the Local Authority to request higher banding for the child (F, rather than D).
- One child with an existing EHCP has been accepted (sibling place).
- It is possible that there will be several more children with EHCP's joining the school. Training will be required to respond to their needs and there is sufficient time to plan in advance and manage transitions.

Governor Question: The report states there was a 62% decrease in 1st and 2nd choices. Is this correct? How does the school relate to other schools in the area with regards to applications for places? This is a typo and will be corrected. The figure is a 1% decrease. The school is in a much better place than many neighbouring schools and schools in other Local Authorities.

Governor Question: How many children will join the school with EHCP plans? Two children are confirmed and there is a potential for a further two children (to be confirmed shortly). In addition, there may be more children that have educational needs that are not yet identified.

Governor Question: Have any of the marketing discussions had an impact on those putting the school down for 1st and 2nd place? What are the reasons given for choosing the school?

D. Meyer reported that most parents and carers have said that they heard about the school through word of mouth and informal social media. D. Meyer is of the view that these figures could be further bolstered by a professional video tour of the school (as parents were not able to come in and visit the school before making their choice).

Governor Question: The applications for foundation places are low. Is this surprising? And what are the reasons behind this? If it is due to an older congregation, are there plans to boost younger uptake of these places going forward? The uptake of these places came from 14 other ecumenical bodies as well as St. Bartholomew's Church. P. Lloyd and C. Drake reported on the congregations demographic (primarily older). J. Murphy reported that it was the Church's aim to represent the widest scope of the community as possible, including younger members. Rev. J. Murphy and H. Buckhurst reported on the plans to boost younger uptake (Sunday school and Children's Church).

Health & Wellbeing Group

C. Johnston reported on recent meeting:

- The children's responses to the questionnaire were positive overall. The questionnaire will be redone to capture their views going forward.
- The group reviewed the universal level of need throughout the school community.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group discussed the supports currently in place, including Mental Health Support Hub referrals. <p>The Chair of Governors noted that the report highlighted the extensive work that A. Miles, C. Johnston and D. Meyer have undertaken in the interest of the wellbeing of the children. Governors thanked these staff members for their efforts in this highly important area.</p> <p><u>Marketing Sub-committee</u> P. Main reported on the recent Marketing sub-committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite being in an in-year surplus the group’s mandate continues. - The group will focus on numbers further up the school (how to retain or bring others in when places are available). <p>b) Committee membership Governors noted that there is a vacancy for the Chair of faith group.</p> <p>Action: Any Governor willing to take on the role of Faith Group Chair is to contact the Chair of Governors.</p> <p>c) Class Link Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chair reported that a list of Class Link Governors has been uploaded to MyDrive. - The move to create Class Link Governor roles is due to the difficulties posed to Governor monitoring (strategic role) during the successive lockdowns and requirements for social distancing. - Governors discussed the need for further clarity regarding this role and targets to be set to ensure consistency. <p>Action: D. Meyer to discuss the Class Link Governor roles with staff members and draft a memo detailing expectations of the role. This is to be sent to the Chair and then circulated to all Governors alongside the visiting guidelines and a date for the target (when Governors are to make contact with their linked staff member and by when they should visit a classroom – virtually).</p> |
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2. Headteacher update

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| 2.1 | <p>The Headteacher’s report was circulated to all Governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><i>Governor Question: The figures on mobility indicate that there have been a lot of children joining the school. Where have they come from and why have they chosen St. Bartholomew’s?</i> The reasons are predominantly due to moving into the borough. Some of the children have joined due to re-housing and one has come from abroad.</p> <p><i>Governor Question: What is the accurate and up to date Pupil Premium figure? There appears to be discrepancies in the different reports. Is this figure likely to change/increase?</i> There are 57 children in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant at present. The figure was previously 55 (two children have recently been added). The school is aware of several families for whom circumstances have changed recently. As such the figure is likely to increase, going forward.</p> <p><i>Governor Question: What are the reasons behind the SEND child who has left the school? Was the school supportive? And were there any other support measures the school could have put in place?</i> The SEN child in Year 1 has been moved to accommodate the family (sibling has place in another school). This was a mutually supportive act and the school was in communication with another church school to manage this process. The SEN child in Year 4 has moved, as the mother did not accept that the school had identified a need for their</p> |
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child (SEN). The mother has chosen to send her child back to the local school that the child had attended in the past.

Governor Question: Regarding the wellbeing plan, how does the school plan to identify children? Is this by observation or by what is known about family circumstances? Will the school attempt to identify changes in behaviour from before and after lockdown?

C. Johnson and D. Meyers reported that a combination of both would be used to identify children who require further support (observation and knowledge of family circumstance). Drafting a firmer set of criteria for threshold is currently a SENCO action item (SENCO referral form). These will be partly modelled on the Mental Health Support Hub Key Indicators. Information from the parental wellbeing survey and child wellbeing survey will be triangulated with teacher's views to ensure nothing is missed.

Governor Question: Does the school plan to publish the recovery plan? The catch-up grant is being used across the school for extra support within the school day (curriculum and classroom). There are currently no plans to publish these plans, however the Headteacher has taken on board Governor advice that the plans should be communicated with parents and carers to alleviate any anxieties.

Governor Question: What are the reasons for the worries reported by certain children in the wellbeing survey regarding someone with a weapon? How is the school supporting these children? This concern came from one particular class. It appears to be linked to the anniversary of the Dunblane school massacre. The children in this class are astute and avid followers of the news. The school has a lockdown alarm but has decided not to rehearse the alarm as this may cause anxiety for children. The children in question have been reassured that the school gates are locked and that adults will step in as per their duty in any such eventuality. The Senior Leadership Team is mindful of this group of children and will continue to monitor.

Governor Question: Is there a plan to as to how teachers will return form shielding following vaccination? One TA and one teacher are currently shielding. The government guidance is that shielding will officially end on April 1st 2021, however each staff member's individual risk assessment will need to be taken into account. It is not clear how the school will manage the workload after Easter 2021. The Headteacher has been providing cover for much of this, and continued cover by her will not be workable. The Senior Leadership Team is looking into the best ways to strategically manage staff and will await further government guidance.

Governor Question: What plans are in place to transition back to 'normality' once government guidelines allow (post Covid-19)? All safety measures will remain in place and kept to until September 2021.

Agenda Item: Long-term Covid-19 management

Governor Question: How are the EAL children being supported at the moment? A program of intensive support is in place. The TA who is shieling is running EAL classes for these children. Some of the catch-up fund has been put towards this. The Race-In to English scheme has been bought into and the TA is making use of this structured programme.

Governors were pleased to note the highly positive attendance figures as well as the book that has been introduced across the school (C. Johnson's idea).

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| 2.2 | Covid-19 Risk Assessment Update The updated Risk Assessment has been circulated to all Governors in advance of the meeting. |
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3. Safeguarding

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| 3.1 | <p>Safeguarding Report</p> <p>The report was circulated in advance. Governors noted the committee report and Safeguarding items included in the Headteacher's report, above.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>Health & safety Report</p> <p>Governors received an update as part of the Headteacher's report, above.</p> |
| 3.3 | <p>Contact with families</p> <p>This was reviewed by the Health & Wellbeing Committee, as reported above. Governors thanked the Senior Leadership Team for their efforts in this regard.</p> |
| 3.4 | <p>Online learning</p> <p>D. Meyer reported that a number of children are receiving online learning. The school continues to offer this as and when needed.</p> |
| 4. Finance | |
| 4.1 | <p>Finance Update</p> <p>Committee Report detailed above (Item 1.8.a.ii)</p> |
| 4.3 | <p>Any Other Critical Finance Matters</p> <p>None</p> |
| 5. Staffing | |
| 5.1 | <p>Staffing during Covid-19</p> <p>Shielding staff members (Headteacher report)</p> |
| 5.2 | <p>Staffing Update</p> <p>Maternity Governors noted (Headteacher report)</p> |
| 5.3 | <p>Ongoing support for staff during Covid 19</p> <p>Governors received a detailed update on staff members and the supports in place (as per the Headteacher's report)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both shielding staff members are currently well supported by Senior Leadership and their teams. - The Headteacher reported that overall, staff are reporting less anxiety and appear to be in a good place. - Staffs are considerably exhausted, however and the Senior Leadership Team is mindful of the impact that recent changes have had on staff. - Professional development meetings have been streamlined to focus on actions for the summer term – a robust pupil progress assessment is to be undertaken shortly and this will inform the strategic use of the catch-up fund. - The Senior Leadership Team is available to all staff for supportive conversations, both formal and informal. Staff are aware of this and many make use of Senior Leadership Team support in this manner. <p>Action: Chair to write to all staff on behalf of Governors, thanking them for their efforts during this challenging period.</p> |
| 6. Policies | |
| | <p>a. Health & Wellbeing Policy</p> |

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| | <p>Governors reviewed and discussed the proposed updates to the Health & Wellbeing policy. The policy is to be discussed at the upcoming Health & Wellbeing committee meeting and brought to Governors for ratification at their next meeting.</p> <p>Action: Governors to send any comments, questions or corrections on the Health & Wellbeing Policy to C. Johnston by the start of the Easter holidays 2021.</p> <p>Next Agenda Item: Health & Wellbeing Policy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">b. Admissions Policy</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed the proposed updates to the Admissions policy. Governors engaged in a frank and detailed discussion regarding the possible changes to the criteria for siblings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What would the purpose of the policy be if changed (ease of transport for families, cohesive school community, fairness)? - Would there be any unforeseen impacts of a change to the current siblings admission policy (such as a change to the socio-economic diversity or geographic demographic)? - Should the policy include a reference, signposting to the policy detailing in-year admissions? <p>These questions are to be debated by the Admissions committee and a draft updated policy is to be brought back to Governors at their next meeting.</p> <p>Next Agenda Item: Admissions Policy (siblings)</p> |
| 7. Governor Activities and Training | |
| | <p>a) Governor Monitoring Link Governor roles discussed above (Item 1.c)</p> <p>b) Governor Training Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - B. Carlyon reported that she has undertaken the Effective Chair training. This training had been helpful and full of insightful points. - B. Carlyon reported that she has recently undertaken the Dyslexia Friendly Classroom training. - P. Lloyd reported that she undertakes regular safeguarding training as part of her Professional role. - Revd. J. Murphy is shortly due to undertake NSPCC training on Safer Recruitment. - D. Meyer has signed up for the Unconscious Bias training to be held online on 29th March 2021. B. Carlyon highly recommended the Unconscious Bias training for all Governors. <p>c) Governor to identify future training needs</p> <p>Action: Chair to re-circulate the Lewisham training offer link to Governors and to forward Governor training links to newly appointed Governor, L. Ryle</p> |
| 8. Health and Safety | |
| | <p>Detailed report and discussion above, under both the Committee reports and report of the Headteacher.</p> |
| 9. Next meeting dates and agenda items | |
| 9.1 | <p>Governing Body meeting dates 2020/21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thurs 6th May 2021 at 6.30pm • Thurs 1st July 2021 at 6.30pm |

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| | <p>Governors noted that the advice from Lewisham is that meetings are to be held virtually at present.</p> <p>Committee meeting dates: Detailed on MyDrive</p> <p>Next Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Admissions Policy (siblings) - Health & Wellbeing Policy - Long-term Covid-19 management |
| 10. Charitable Fund for Families in need | |
| | <p>Governors noted the newsletter that has been uploaded to MyDrive. The Friends of Bartholomew's are advertising their charitable fund for families in need. The Chair urged Governors to consider this highly worthwhile cause.</p> |
| 11. Any confidential business | |
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The meeting closed with a prayer at 8:45PM

Signed by: _____

Date: _____