

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of St Mark's C of E Primary School held on
Wednesday 26th May 2021 at 6.00 p.m., online (via Zoom)**

Present: Mr Tim Ward (Foundation Governor and Chair)
Mr Peter Barfoot (Headteacher)
Mrs June Grant (Staff Governor)
Canon Angela Whittaker (Ex-officio)
Mrs Sarah Brooke (Parent Governor)
Mrs Shirley Miller (Foundation Governor)
Mrs Mary Cammack (Foundation Governor)
Mr Graham Day (Foundation Governor)

Clerk: Mrs Jennifer Gregory

Vacancies:

- Local Authority Vacancy
- Foundation Governor Vacancy
- Foundation Governor Vacancy

20/21 67. Apologies for Absence

- Apologies received from Graham Day who was unable to attend for personal reasons. Apologies accepted.
- Keith Robson absent.

20/21 68. Declarations of Interest

- None declared.

20/21 69. Welcome and Prayers

- TW as Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. AW opened the meeting in prayer.

20/21 70. Chair's Comments

- TW highlighted the three Governor vacancies and asked all members of the GB to consider who might be interested and suitable for these positions.

20/21 71. Minutes of the meeting held in March 2021

- Changes to be made to item 59, 2 Year 6 children going to the Queen Katherine School. Accepted as a true record by all present.

20/21 72. Matters Arising

- PB updated members of the GB
- 57. School Direct PPL position has been filled. Kirsty Klijn will be an employee of the St Mark's GB which will have duty of care.
- PB proposed inviting KK the next FGB so that all members of the GB can meet her.
- PB has contacted relevant parties in the LA but has not yet heard from them about the Allegations Against Staff Policy, the current version of which is out of date.
- Term dates on website still need to be updated, although new dates have been circulated to parents.
- All members of staff are taking lateral flow tests twice a week, recording their results on the Government website and in school. Up to now there have been no cases of Covid-19 among the pupils or staff.
- PB clarified student numbers moving on to Queen Katherine School from September 2021.
- Education Mutual (staff absence cover): a claim has been submitted one member of Staff.
- Grounds Maintenance: the school has a new contract with D & C Atkinson. The service provided has already proved to be very efficient and effective.
- SBM appointment: Denise Conroy appointed. PB proposed inviting DC to a FGB meeting, either face-face or via Zoom so that all members of the GB can get to know her.
- DC is on a zero hours contract so that paid induction and training sessions can begin prior to the substantive post starting in September.
- Cleaner-in-Charge: advert posted on CCC website 24.05.21. There has already been one expression of interest from a parent.
- MOSAICS: PB highlighted that the numbers are increasing and the trajectory for income is improving.
- Early Years: PB highlighted the new climbing prism which has recently been installed in the Reception outside area to encourage physical development.
- Water Safety quotes came back very expensive (between £4000 and £5000). As the works are not vital for safety the decision has been made not to go ahead with this work at the present time.

- Staff wellbeing questionnaire: this will be a repeat of the one sent in October, it will be going out to staff 27.05.21 (to be returned by 08.06.21)
- TLA meeting was moved to 25.05.21 and the minutes were sent to all members of GB on 26.05.21 prior to the FGB.
- DT, Reception Class teacher, met with TLA to explain the current NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) project and some of the changes to the EYFS from September 2021 (EYFS curriculum and the Reception Baseline Assessment)
- Overarching curriculum statement still to be done.
- Deep Dive into Reading: PB referred members of the GB to the minutes of TLA Committee meeting.
- Catch Up Programme: PB referred members of the GB to the minutes of the TLA Committee meeting.
- Floor was opened up for questions. No questions asked.

20/21 73. Correspondence

- PB received a letter from Sarah Collin, the current Chair of St Mark's PTA. She is resigning her position from September. She has served as Chair for 5 years.
- **Action PB: arrange letter of thanks to Sarah Collin**
- Cumbria County Council informed all schools of a full asbestos survey planned to take place in the coming months. St Mark's buildings were inspected early in the programme, on 21.05.21, full report to follow.
- TW received a resignation letter from CA (Year 6 Class teacher P/T) who thanked the members of the GB for the support she has had during her time at St Mark's.
- GF (MDS) is resigning at the end of this term.

20/21 74. Headteacher's Report

- PB gave verbal update.
- PB highlighted the Year 5 Viking Day, and thanked LW (Year 5 Class teacher P/T) for the work involved in preparing the full day of activities.
- Pupil numbers: one pupil has left St. Mark's.
- One new pupil will be starting in Reception after half term, following a family move. This will bring the roll back to 173.
- Attendance: in the weeks the school has been fully open attendance is at 97%.
- Persistent absentees: two issues of concern. PB in contact with these families.
- PB highlighted the large numbers of Year 6 (19, 83%) who are moving on to KKS this year.
- 21/22 Reception class intake – currently at 19 (although two pupils have requested to defer). PB is concerned over the low numbers. Total school numbers could fall in coming years as large KS 2 cohorts work through school with smaller EYFS and KS 1 cohorts following.
- LP has began work as a member of the MDS team after the Easter break, is enjoying the work and has settled in well.
- New volunteer working two afternoons a week with Year 3 and 4.
- French teaching from end of May will switch from Year 5 to Year 6 to provide them a language learning boost before Secondary School.
- Staff absence being covered by current TA team.
- Staff training – gradual increase in opportunities for face to face training as lockdown restrictions ease.
- Ruth Houston, Dicoesan consultant, now supporting St Mark's. Meeting with PB 13.05.21. Written report to be circulated to all members of the GB.
- **Action PB: email copy of Diocesan consultant visit to all members of the GB.**
- Q: A member of the GB asked about NQT training.
- A (PB): Mentor support from named staff in school throughout her NQT year. Final assessment to be completed and submitted in mid-June. There has been very little training offered beyond school due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- St. Mark's has two School Direct students completing extending placements during the summer term. One student is from last year's cohort and one on the current programme. Both placements are all going well.
- School Direct: successful recruitment of a Primary Programme Lead for School Direct Programme, KK. Recruitment for 2021 – 2022 cohort is nearly complete. It is planned that the recruitment process will close at 12 students.
- AW highlighted the visit from Year 6 to the Parish Church where they learned about Holy Communion. It was an interactive session and the children enjoyed joining in.
- PB spoke about the joint KCP and Wordsworth Trust Poetry Project. This year there will be three sessions at the end of June involving 10 children (2 children from 5 different schools).
- School Trips planned, Year 2/3 to watch the new Peter Rabbit film at the Brewery Arts Centre and Year 2 to visit Brockhole.
- PE and Sport: a sports coach provided cricket sessions for Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 in the first half of the summer term.
- The Leisure Centre contacted the school in the Easter break to say they were ready to welcome children back. 8 children from Years 5 & 6 were given intensive swimming lessons and all but one achieved the required level of competence in the water.

- Cross Country club is now running for children in year 4
- Parents' Forum meeting planned for early June. Main item to be discussed will be the new PSHE Education curriculum.
- TW asked for questions. None asked.

20/21 75. Committee related items

- **Leadership and Management**
 - SB updated the members of the GB.
 - Some works done over Easter (replacement of external window and door unit near the photocopier). Decoration of the kitchen is planned for the summer break. One of the boilers needs to be replaced, quotes are being sought.
 - The three-year budget has been agreed at committee level.
 - Within the budget the Committee has taken into account new appointments and any potential changes to staffing costs.
 - FGB to agree the three-year budget.
 - TW asked for questions about this budget.
 - PB clarified that the budget allows for continuation of the 7 class structure for the year 2021 – 2022.
 - TW also clarified that, although a three-year budget it will be looked at and reviewed throughout this time.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked about the smaller class sizes and whether or not this has been taken into account.
 - A (PB): Yes.
 - Q: A member of the GB also asked about the impact of the Pre-School on pupil numbers and raised the concern over limited 2 year old places due to a shortage of space.
 - A (PB) Good to look at the bigger picture, there are no school-based nurseries in the local area, other than the Natland and Oxenholme Pre-School, currently offering 2 year old places. It needs to be a future focus to support this aspect of provision as increasing numbers of families are requesting these places.
 - TW asked if all were in favour of accepting and adopting the three-year budget put forward by the L&M Committee. All in favour.
Agreed: The three-year budget accepted and adopted by the GB.
 - TW signed a copy of the budget.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked about the fence around the adventure play area.
 - A (PB): a quote has been received from D & C Atkinson (grounds maintenance contractors). Together a quote for ongoing repairs to the existing fencing to make it safe.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked if it is still safe for the children to use.
 - A: (PB) Yes, and it is checked regularly by staff on duty.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked what the purpose of the fencing is.
 - A (PB) Outside school hours, families with very young children from the community use the area and so a fence beneficial.
 - Q: A member of the GB also asked if the fence limited numbers using the play area.
 - A (PB): The fence and gates help in training children as to where they should/should not go.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked that if it is too expensive to maintain, would we consider removing it.
 - A (PB): PB to discuss with staff in school and grounds contractor.
 - PB highlighted a national change in provision for newly qualified teachers. From September 2021 they will be known as ECTs (Early Career Teachers). The Early Career Framework is designed to provide two years of funded support. In Cumbria a newly accredited Training School Hub known as One Cumbria and based at the West Lakes Academy is the local provider of training. This is be outsourced to Teach First, one of 9 national providers.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked for clarification on this.
 - A (PB): ECTs will have two years of training instead of one. This will guarantee teachers in their second year a certain level of training.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked about this training if a class teacher is part-time
 - A (PB): The training continues until the equivalent of two years' teaching is completed (as with current part-time NQTs).
 - TW asked if there were any other questions. None asked.
- **Community and Welfare**
 - AW updated all members of the GB.
 - PB has received no comments on, or suggested amendments to, the draft Social Media Policy, sent out to all members of staff earlier in May.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked if all staff will need to read and sign to show that they have read and understood this policy.
A (PB): Yes.

Action PB: send copy of Social Media policy to all members of staff and the GB, with request to reply to the email with the following wording: *I have read the Social Media Policy (May 2021) and understand my responsibilities relating to its contents and signed.*

- Q: A member of the GB also asks how the school would be able to prove that a member of staff had been made aware of the policy if they breach it.
- All members of the GB present voted in favour of adopting the proposed draft Social Media Policy.
Agreed: The Social Media Policy approved and adopted by the GB.
- Although not statutory, this policy will be sent out to all members of staff to read and sign via email.
- **ACTION: PB to send out Social Media Policy requesting all staff to read it and return an email to confirm that they have read and understood it.**
- PB updated the members of the GB about the anti-racism audit the school has completed for Anti-Racist Cumbria. PB had wanted to discuss this with staff but there has not been a forum to do this yet. PB asked members of the GB if they were happy to return the audit to Anti-Racist Cumbria or if they thought more work was needed.
- A member of the GB expressed how it was difficult to comment as the members of the GB had not seen it.
- Concern raised over what will happen to the information in the audit. PB suggested discussing with Anti-Racist Cumbria how the data/information given would be used. He reassured members of the GB that there are no names attached to the audit and so there is no data protection concern with it. Although he has not been able to discuss it through with staff or members of the GB the audit has led to good discussions with the senior leadership team.
- Q: A member of the GB asked if the audit is anonymised and if it is it compulsory.
- A: PB explained that the audit to see where the school is up to in ensuring that there is no detriment to pupils based on race or colour. There are some things that could come across negatively because the school does not have certain aspects of policy and practice fully in place yet.
- Q: A member of the GB asked if this audit could be sent to the committee.
- Q: A member of the GB asked that the audit not be sent yet.
- **ACTION PB: to arrange to discuss the audit with the C&W committee.**
- **ACTION PB: to seek clarification from Anti-Racist Cumbria as to how information from the school audit documents will be used once submitted.**
- AW highlighted the great reports received from KC (Pre-School), KC (MOSAICS) and RE (School Direct) and highlighted how good it was to hear about the work going on in these areas of school life.
- PB asked to be given deadlines by the GB for completion of the Data Protection Policy and Single Equality Scheme.
- JG suggested looking at the policies over the 6 week holiday as next half term is quite busy.
- Q: A member of the GB asked if PB could delegate this task.
- **ACTION: JG and PB to decide a deadline and PB to work from home to complete the Data Protection Policy and Single Equality Scheme**
- The C&W committee put forward the existing Complaints Policy to be re-approved and re-adopted by the GB. There had been no suggested updates from the LA.
- TW explained that all members of the GB need to agree this policy. It was clarified that the suspension of the timeline for handling complaints in school during the pandemic had ended.
- The members of the GB voted and all were in favour of adopting Complaints Policy.
Agreed: the current Complaints Policy was re-approved and re-adopted by the GB.
- AW mentioned SB's visit to the school to discuss safeguarding issues with JG.
- PB has distributed the NSPCC serious case review summaries for May as part of ongoing staff and GB safeguarding training.
- TW asked if there were any questions.
- PB highlighted the Diocesan consultant visit on 13.05.21. Ruth Houston visited the school for an informal chat. She has produced a written report which will be sent to all members of the GB. Conversation focused on vision and values. She was helpful with this. They also spoke about 'courageous advocacy' which is a concept in the current Church of England Vision for Education and is the idea of taking risks to do what is right. Inspectors in SIAMS will want to hear about examples.
- **ACTION: The report from this visit to be sent to all members of the GB.**
- Q: A member of the GB asked if members of the GB could provide comments following this report to the C & W committee.
- A (PB): Yes, but this is a job for September. There will need to be a Community and Welfare meeting just to look at this.
- PB reported feeling supported by the Diocese going forward.

- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

- Verbal report from meeting held on 25.05.21 (postponed from 17.05.21).
- New standardised national Pupil Premium strategy report framework to be used by all schools in future.
- KAHSC has provided useful model risk assessments covering Covid-19 related elements of educational visits.
- All national assessment programmes cancelled this year, and so there will no submission of data.
- However, Year 6 will complete a full set of KS2 assessments to ensure they have had the experience and to provide support for teacher assessment to pass on to secondary schools.
- PB reported how the year 6 children looked relaxed and well prepared. Staff very positive about the outcomes. SB believed they had done well not to put pressure on the children.
- The TLA Committee will meet to look at data from these assessments.
- Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check optional this year, but St Mark's will complete the process. The children are being prepared.
- OFSTED Deep Dive into Reading: as the core skill developed in primary school there will be a deep dive into teaching and learning of reading in any inspection. RS, English subject leader, has led a comprehensive audit of provision for Reading across the school.
ACTION PB: to send a copy of the Reading audit to all members of the committee.
- PB and staff in school are referring the government's 'catch up' programme as a 'recovery programme' which has a more positive and hopeful meaning.
- Reference made to SEND report.
- DT joined the Committee meeting and gave a verbal report on national EYFS developments and discussed the following with the committee:
 - the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) programme, which has been running for a group of identified children in Reception and Year 1 since Easter
 - revisions to the Early Years Curriculum (which are listed in the minutes).
 - new statutory Reception Baseline Assessment
- Half termly TA team meetings with SLT are now part of the staff meeting programme These have helped develop confidence and identity.
- JG highlighted that the TAs had had concerns over COVID and increased levels of contact with children during the last lockdown. However, they were very professional and did a fantastic job. Certain children really thrived in the small groups attending school each day.
- JG highlighted how positive the impact of the recovery programme has been on children's learning. She has been impressed with how the support sessions have been really tailored to individual children and have made a huge difference to the children's learning in phonics and spelling. This is evident in the children's confidence when they have come back into class. The sessions have made a big impact in a short time.
- TW asked for questions.
- PB emphasised the advantage of having the current staff structure which includes a number of class teachers on part-time contracts who are then able to work additional hours as supply cover or running programmes like the current recovery sessions.
- Q: A member of the GB asked if there is a SEND Governor.
- A (PB): Not currently. From September we need a named SEND Governor. Ideally it needs to be someone from the TLA committee.

20/21 76. Safeguarding

- SB explained that safeguarding needs to be appropriately managed in school, her role is to ensure procedures and policies are in place. Leadership team need to have all they need to ensure they are managing safeguarding effectively.
- SB visited the school on 26.05.21 to discuss safeguarding and to review the actions from the Safeguarding Audit completed by SB and JG in January 2020. SB discussed with PB and JG about the last year, what learning we need to take forward, anything we need to be doing to make sure all processes are in place.
- SB reported that she is very comfortable with where the school is in terms of safeguarding.
- School staff are handling the COVID situation very well. Monitoring of concerns and all systems are in place to ensure there are no problems.
- One concern is not knowing what impact the lockdown experience might have had on parents.
- There has been no recent increase in child protection referrals.
- SB explained the need to develop a programme of training for volunteers in school. JG to follow this up and ensure that volunteers know the content and expectation of certain key policies.
Action JG: to plan an induction programme for volunteers.
- PB reported that all new volunteers are asked to complete a basic information gathering form and that two references are sought for each volunteer and kept on file.
- JG reported that the Intimate Care and Toileting Policy has been read and signed as understood by all members of staff.
- PB suggested that like with SEND, there should be a structured safeguarding report prepared and presented to each FGB meeting.

- Q: A member of the GB asked if a report on safeguarding should be produced which could be sent to the FGB to record where we are up to.
- A (JG): It would be good to have something as evidence from each meeting and minutes of main points.
- **ACTION SB, JG and PB to draft a structured outline for a regular safeguarding report.**

20/21 77. Staff Wellbeing

- The staff questionnaire will be sent out on 27.05.21. This will be the same questionnaire as used in October 2020. It will then be possible to compare responses. It is a different time of year, and different point in time with staff relationships with their classes. Staff will not be pressurised to do it immediately.
- All members of staff will also receive a copy of the new DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter which includes expectations for schools, Ofsted and the DfE.
- The DfE are not asking schools to sign up to the charter yet but schools will be asked to sign up to it and agree to the charter later (most likely Autumn 2021).
- PB to ask staff to look at the charter. GB to then structure a policy based on this charter.
- **ACTION Clerk: DfE Charter to be made an FGB agenda item (expectation to sign up to Charter in September 2021)**

20/21 78. Governor Training

- Clerk briefly explained the NGA's online e-learning platform.
- **ACTION: Clerk to sign-up all members of the GB to the NGA e-learning platform.**
- SB has completed the National College Safeguarding Refresher training and recommended the short courses to the rest of the GB. AW has also completed this short course.
- TW suggested the committees each decide on relevant courses to complete together.

Additional Comments

- PB highlighted the staff and GB meeting planned for 4.00 p.m. on 29.06.21 which will be a review of the year.
- PB highlighted that in the recent school census which used data from ScholarPack, there was an anomaly with the persistent absence rate. This was not an accurate representation and on reviewing this it was found that some children who did not attend school during lockdown had been classified as vulnerable and therefore had been counted for certain days. MI and PB rationalised the data to reflect attendance during the lockdown. The census absence data matches that provided to the GB in the Headteacher's report.

Meeting finished at 19:50