

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of St Mark's C of E Primary School held on Tuesday 20th July 2021 online via Zoom (rescheduled meeting from 12th July)

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

Clerk: Mrs Jennifer Gregory

Vacancies:

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

20/21 79. Apologies for Absence

- Apologies from Sarah Brooke who was on a family holiday. Apologies accepted.
- June Grant absent.

20/21 80. Declarations of Interest

- None declared.

20/21 81. Welcome and Prayers

- TW welcomed all members of the GB.
- AW was asked to pray at the end of the meeting.

20/21 82. Chair's Comments

- TW gave general housekeeping for Zoom meetings.
- The FGB meeting was originally scheduled for 12th July but had to be cancelled. Both PB and TW felt it important to reschedule this meeting and for all members of the GB to meet before the summer break. TW explained it would be a shorter meeting, with PB presenting all the items but there would be time for questions at the end.
- TW read out a message from a parent who thanked all those involved in education for their hard work over the last year.

20/21 83. Minutes of the meeting held in May 2021

- Accepted as a true record by all present. No amendments to be made.

20/21 84. Matters Arising

- JG has signed everyone up to the NGA eLearning/Learning Link Platform.
- Safer Recruiting Policy – Kym Allen has a model policy which refers to volunteers. There is an induction policy for volunteers in school and the L&M committee will need to look at this.
- PB has sent notes out to members of the GB from his meeting with Ruth Houston, Diocesan consultant
- PB has sent out the Social Media Policy to staff and members of the GB to read and sign.
- No one has written to Sarah Collin, former Chair of the PTA yet. **ACTION: TW to write and thank Sarah Collin.**
- PB thanked SM for organising the collection of money and organising gifts for Ian Walker (Cleaner in Charge) and Mary Illingworth (SBM). They had a very positive celebration of their time at St. Marks and were suitably thanked and given a good send off.

20/21 85. Correspondence

- PB has written to thank a parent who works at Hayes Garden Centre who has been generous and supportive in relation to retirement gift. The parent had commented on how highly emotional the year 6 Leavers' Service had been and how amazing the staff team had been.
- PB received a letter of thanks from one of the judges from the Cumbria in Bloom Competition. They had come to see the Hidden Haven, which Hazel Cook and Y3 look after. The letter highlighted the children's enthusiasm and the Hazel's integrated teaching.

- The Diocese have sent admissions policy guidance, a nuanced change which now refers to looked after children from overseas. Members of the GB voted in the amendment to the Admissions Policy unanimously and the new arrangements and policy document will be adopted with immediate effect.
- **Action PB: amend current Admissions Arrangements and Policy and publish on school website**

20/21

86. Headteacher's Report

- The School has been impacted by COVID-19 in the final weeks of the summer term. There are been bubble closures: YR, Y4, Y6 and Y5 (from today). These bubble closures have had an impact on the holiday plans of some families. The bubble closures have reflected the huge rise in cases nationally.
- COVID-19 has impacted events and activities, many of which could not go ahead. Sports Day had no parents present, Y5 could not go on their residential, staff could not attend Safeguarding training.
- There have been some new joiners to the school roll.
- 18 pupils enrolling into YR for September 2021 intake.
- There are some pupils leaving St. Marks.
- PB highlighted the net loss of pupil numbers. However, from experience, PB said that it is likely that more pupils will join as the year goes on.
- PB highlighted the high level of staff changes.
- As per LA advice volunteers have not been allowed in school recently due to rise in COVID-19 cases. The French sessions for Y6 were cancelled.
- Denise Conroy appointed as SBM and currently on a zero hour's contract. DC has had a handover period with MI and has been involved with the interviews for the Cleaner in Charge position.
- The interviews for Cleaner in Charge were successful and PB will make an offer to a candidate. Members of the GB will receive more information on this when appropriate.
- Dee Clarke has left post as Administrative Assistant.
- Cass Ainsworth has accepted a post at a different school. Anna Sykes has been appointed as part-time Y6 class teacher.
- Rachel Esposito has had a successful handover period with Kirsty Klijn, new School Direct Primary Programme Lead.
- School Direct Student placements have been very successful.
- Acts of Collective Worship have continued on Zoom with the theme: The Birth of the Church (in the Acts of the Apostles) and the growth of the Church world-wide. Guests from local churches have been invited to join via Zoom on several occasions: Bishop James Newcomb (CE), Rev. Melanie Green (Methodist); David Barfoot (Kings' Church).
- PB highlighted how successful this had been and how he is keen to invite guests to Collective worship sessions regularly from now on.
- PB highlighted the recent Parent Forum meeting which was a very positive discussion around the new PSHE curriculum.
- Q: A member of the GB asked if the PSHE had gone ahead this year.
- A: (PB) Yes, we have taught most of the units, including the new relationships curriculum from September as per original Government statutory requirement.

20/21

87. Committee related items

- **Leadership and Management**
 - PB gave a verbal update.
 - One of the school's boilers has developed a leak, quotes were sought and O'Connell and Bean (plumbers) will fix this over the summer holidays.
 - The kitchen will be redecorated in the next couple of weeks as will part of the Hall corridor, the area around the kitchen hatch and a section of the Year 5 classroom wall.
 - A failed window will be repaired by Cumbria Window Systems in the summer break.
 - The KS 2 corridor carpet has been replaced with carpet tiles and a section of cork matting near to the outside door and is far better quality than before.
 - Financial Audit. St. Mark's has not had a financial audit for 10 years. We were due to have one September 2021 but this has been deferred to January. PB had raised issue of fairness as we have a new SBM in place and his concerns were listened to.

- The move of Pre-School to a Governor-Led Nursery is now ready for a November start. There is a new staffing structure in place and this gives the nursery team time to settle into their new arrangements. There is still some work to be done on re-branding and marketing the change. The November takeover should be a point to celebrate.
- Q: A member of the GB asked if one of the current Pre-School Trustees could become a member of the GB.
- A: (PB) we have sown the seed of this idea.
- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment:**
 - PB referred to the unofficial assessment results which are useful as a marker. They indicate possible outcomes for the Y2 and Y6 cohorts.
 - The TLA are to pick this up next year.
 - PB highlighted the low scores in early years for reading and writing, but the higher scores in maths.
 - PB highlighted the depressed GLD score.
 - PB reflected on this and spoke about the impact of remote learning on phonics teaching as lots of key phonics teaching has been missed. Pupils have missed out on almost a full term of in-school learning.
 - The maths and reading scores for Y2 are really pleasing. This is a strong cohort and they responded really well to remote learning.
 - PB noted that writing is possibly the most difficult aspect of core learning to teach remotely.
 - The RWM percentage for the end of KS 2 is still equitable with the rest of the country.
 - Y4 Multiplication Test really pleasing outcome.
 - PB very pleased with the Y6 outcomes in reading and maths. These results are equitable with previous national levels.
 - This data is useful for members of the GB to ask questions and see where the gaps are or could be. PB emphasised the need for a focus on the teaching of writing across the school next year.
 - PB asked if there were any questions.
 - KR left meeting.
 - PB highlighted the Covid-19 Recovery Programme. The funding had enabled part time teachers to have more hours and lead the group and individual sessions. As the staff already knew the children, this worked really well. PB will be able to give more info to the committee when they next meet. PB now crunching data to make decisions on who will be involved from September 2021.
- **Community and Welfare**
 - Staff Wellbeing Questionnaire.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked: What do you read into the fact that so few members of the staff completed the questionnaire?
 - Q: A member of the GB questioned the length of time staff had to respond to the questionnaire, did they need longer?
 - Q: A member of the GB also asked: Were previous concerns addressed?
 - A member of the GB raised concerns that the staff team would have had no energy at the end of the year, and given it was an extremely difficult at the end of the year [due to the impact of COVID-19].
 - A: PB explained that an extension was given.
 - Q: A member of the GB asked how staff completed the questionnaire (online or on paper?)
 - A member of the GB expressed how the staff team would have been exhausted and perhaps it was seen as something more to do. Members of staff already have someone they can talk to.
 - A member of the GB suggested giving out the questionnaire again after the summer break and emphasising how important the members of the GB take Staff Wellbeing. Could this be given out and explained in a staff meeting?
 - A: PB talked about the all staff meeting where this data had been shared. From this meeting they received some helpful feedback and some positive changes from COVID-19 restrictions such as staff not having parents drop in on them without an appointment. Since then he has received more responses to how they have done this this last year, such as the practical issues caused by the staggered start. PB highlighted how he thought the team were too tired to think strategically and how staff have had longer days with children.
 - A member of the GB expressed his view that he would not be too worried about the number of responses to the questionnaire as the staff team is relatively small.

- PB explained how a deep rooted issue has come about from being split into two staffrooms as there was a lack of informal communication. This was reflected in the questionnaire. PB believed a lot of issues would be resolved in the autumn term when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted and staff will be sharing one staffroom again.

20/21

88. Safeguarding

- **ACTION: PB and AW to review the Safer Recruitment Policy**

20/21

89. Staff Wellbeing

- Staff questionnaire (May 2021) – discussed in item 87.
- DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter: this has been sent out to all members of the GB.
- **ACTION: Set DfE Education Staff Wellbeing Charter as an Agenda item for first FGB meeting, for possible adoption later in the school year.**

20/21

90. School Year 2021- 2022

- PB briefly explained why there were two plans for school organisation for the autumn term 2021. There is a Plan A and a Plan B as the Unions and School have concerns over the Covid-19 restrictions being lifted and the impact this will have on the start of the new term. PB highlighted the potential for Government to change guidance and how the school is planning for both outcomes. They will need to monitor things over the holiday.
- Queen's Platinum Jubilee: Schools will be granted an extra day's holiday in the year 2021 - 2022. KCP schools will need to work together to agree a date. PB will keep members of the GB informed.

20/21

91. Governor Training

- JG reminded members of the GB to email her regarding any training so that she can update the training log.
- **ACTION: AW to send Safer Recruitment training certificate to Clerk.**

20/21

92. Governing Body and Committee Meeting Dates for 2021/22:

- Dates had been sent in advance.
- A member of the GB queried some dates and a few changes were made.
- **ACTION: Clerk to send out revised GB Meeting Schedule 2021-2022.**

Additional Comments:

- PB showed the members of the GB the article in the Westmorland Gazette about the Y6 Amazon walk.
- PB also asked members of the GB to think about how they can develop the prayer life of the school. The school currently prays in Collective Worship and a prayer group and prayer board have been developed but PB would like to open this up to the wider community.

AW closed the meeting with a prayer.

Meeting finished at 18:30