

ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, KENILWORTH

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

HELD ON TUESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7.00PM

Present: Mr Trevor Martin, Mr Darren Barrow, Mrs Rebecca Augustus, Ms Ruth Cooper, Mrs Beth Cordrey, Miss Katie Harrison, Mr Daryl Molyneux and Mr Richard Owen

In Attendance: Mrs Cathy Weir (Clerk to Governors)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Trisha Coopey. No conflicts of interest were declared for the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 12TH SEPTEMBER 2017

The minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body held on the 12th September 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Review of Terms of Reference

Mr Molyneux and Mrs Weir had met and considered the model Terms of Reference that had recently been published by the Local Authority. These include both Terms of Reference for a Governing Body with two standing subcommittees and a range of Terms of Reference for individual committees. Mrs Weir is in the process of pulling together a draft Terms of Reference for the full Governing Body, standing and ad hoc committees which can then be reviewed by Governors.

Action: produce draft Terms of Reference for review (Mrs Weir)

Head Teacher Performance Review

Mr Martin confirmed that the Head Teacher Performance Review Committee had met on the 21st September and had reviewed Mr Barrows performance against his 2016/17 objectives and set objectives for the 2017/18 academic year. The minutes of the meeting had been circulated to all Governors on the 22nd September and all Governors had approved the recommendations. Mr Martin confirmed that the Head Teacher Performance Review process had now been completed.

Safeguarding Audit

Mr Martin reminded Governors that Mr Barrow had produced a document summarising the inspection criteria from the Ofsted "Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings" guidance (paragraphs 10-30). Mr Martin, Mr Owen and Mrs Augustus had met to

review these criteria and assess the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements against them. A document setting out the evidence and conclusions of the review had been produced, and a couple of minor recommendations had been made to Mr Barrow mainly concerning consistency of the DSLs named in various documents.

Mr Martin noted that the review document was a valuable resource and it would be sensible to retain this. It was agreed that the review document would be attached to the Appendix to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy covering safeguarding standards, as evidence that the school is meeting those standards.

Governors suggested that a simplified version of the review document could be included on the safeguarding notice board in school. Mr Barrow was in agreement with this, and Mrs Augustus undertook to produce the simplified document.

Action: produce a simplified version of the governors' safeguarding review document (Mrs Augustus)

Children's Centre Update

Mr Martin informed Governors that the outcome of the Local Authority's consultation on the future of Children's Centres was that the St John's Children's Centre would continue to be operated by Barnardos with a reduced budget for between twelve and eighteen months. This is intended to act as a transition period to a model of operation which is yet to be agreed. Mr Martin stated that he felt that the consultation had delivered a poor outcome for Kenilworth with no long term Children's Centre provision for the town. Mr Martin will continue to lobby the local MP but is unsure whether any more can realistically be achieved.

Mr Barrow commented that the Children's Centre staff are naturally very disappointed in the outcome. He felt that the Children's Centre and school had worked hard to put the case for Kenilworth and it was disappointing that this had not been successful. Mr Barrow is working with the Local Authority to develop a community-led model for the future, but it is unclear what if any funding will be available for this. Mr Owen asked what the timescale for moving forward on a community model was: Mr Barrow replied that he had a meeting with the Local Authority early in December and hopefully the funding position and timescale would become clearer at this point. Mr Barrow highlighted that Barnardos had not yet agreed to the extension to their contract proposed by LA, so this could influence timescales.

4. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT FOR THE AUTUMN 2017 TERM

The Head Teacher's Report for the Autumn 2017 term had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. Mr Barrow took Governors through some of the key points in the report.

Miss Paulina Poplawska has been appointed as a Year 3 teacher to cover Mrs Tennant's maternity leave. Miss Poplawska is a newly qualified teacher and as such will require additional support, but the cost of this will be covered by the reduction in salary costs. Miss Poplawska has

received her induction and is currently working alongside Mrs Tennant to ensure a smooth transition.

Mr Barrow highlighted the challenges presented by the current Reception cohort, who have an unprecedented level of need. Mr Barrow explained that the school had been approached by the Local Authority to take two pupils which would take the cohort over the maximum number of thirty: Mr Barrow had refused this request due to the complexities of the cohort and the lack of any guaranteed additional funding. Although there have been rumours that St John's may be asked to take two Reception classes in 2018, nothing has been confirmed as yet. Mr Barrow will keep Governors informed of any developments.

As a result of his appointment as a National Leader in Education, Mr Barrow will receive a bursary which he intends to use to upskill the middle leadership at the school. This will help strengthen the leadership team at St John's, which will be beneficial when Mr Barrow is deployed at other schools.

Mr Duncan Sharp has taken on the role of Online Safety Lead. Mr Barrow explained that as part of the ICT support service purchased by the school from Warwickshire Education Services the school receives a report on internet usage, including any inappropriate use. Mr Barrow proposed to include a summary of this report in his termly safeguarding report to Governors.

Mrs Tennant is due to start her maternity leave imminently. Mrs Baker is also expecting and will commence her maternity leave around April. Mr Barrow explained that the most logical solution for covering Mrs Baker's Deputy Head duties would be for Mrs Eastham to take on the role of Acting Deputy Head. Mrs Eastham would increase her working hours and remain non-class based. Mrs Baker's curriculum responsibilities can be distributed amongst staff, and it is hoped that Mrs Baker will be able to utilise her Keeping In Touch days to monitor the data. A part-time teacher will be recruited to cover Mrs Baker's teaching responsibilities.

Pupil progress meetings, a diagnostic day and lesson observations have been carried out. The diagnostic day identified some areas to be addressed in Year 1 and a rapid action plan had been put in place. Ms Cooper has met with Mr Barrow to review the rapid action plan and how it is being followed up: Ms Cooper confirmed that she was happy that everything that needed to be done was being done.

Mr Barrow provided an analysis of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including the percentage of pupils with differing levels of need at St John's compared to the national average. This indicates that overall St John's has around a percentage point fewer pupils with SEND than the national average, and that there is a higher proportion of pupils with lower level needs at St John's than nationally, but a lower proportion with higher level needs.

Mr Barrow reported on progress on the actions identified in his last safeguarding report to Governors. He raised some reservations around the outstanding action to consult parents when the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed, stating that he felt that this would be onerous and difficult to manage, and given that much of the policy is driven by statutory

requirements could mean that it would be difficult for parents to have much influence on the content. Governors agreed with this and the action will be removed from the report.

Mr Barrow's performance targets for the 2017/18 academic year have been finalised and included in his report. The latest rapid action plans were also included and progress rated Red/Amber/Green: the only red action cannot be implemented until Summer term 2 hence its rating.

Mr Owen had raised a number of questions on the report in advance of the meeting, which are detailed below together with Mr Barrow's responses.

Is it anticipated that the application for EHCP funding for the second reception pupil will be successful?

Mr Barrow informed Governors that since his report was written confirmation of EHCP funding for the second Reception pupil had been received.

Why has Key Stage 1 attainment been flat for the last 5 years? When will data be available to establish progress in this area?

KS1 attainment has remained above the national average for the last five years. However, St John's has not shown that continual upward trend that would be positive in terms of data. There has been a lot of historical work to undo that takes time, including inconsistencies in teaching, a legacy of over assessment at the end of KS1, and a legacy of not diagnosing special needs early enough and providing intervention. There was also a particularly underachieving Reception cohort (16% Good level of development) that meant accelerated progress needed to be made in KS1.

The change in curriculum and assessment means that, for the last two years, although attainment hasn't moved, what the children need to cover is far more comprehensive than it ever has been. We are still working on getting the transition secure from Reception to Year One and on addressing the gap between the Early Years Curriculum and the National Curriculum. We are also only in our second year of consistency with the staff in KS1: every year prior to this staff have underperformed and left, or have left mid-year to move to another post. Stability, consistency and thorough monitoring will ensure that we start to move forward.

Are the recent pupil admissions having an effect on progress, or are they likely to do so in the near future? Is there any detriment to the established pupils?

Whilst it is desirable to have a stable cohort for the year, and a cohort that has been with us from the beginning is also advantageous, we should remember that parents are now actively choosing us over other schools in the area. This is something that has historically not happened at St. John's.

We have had a mixture of children join the school:

- English as an Additional Language: these children receive a thorough assessment on entry and we work hard to plug the language gap. Usually children pick this up very quickly and have frequently developed into some of our more able children. Those that don't pick up English as quickly continue to make good progress, but may be behind on attainment;

- Looked After Children: these children generally require more emotional and nurturing support and there is usually an adjustment period in the initial few weeks, but they typically settle quickly and again these children make good progress;
- Children moving to the area: these children generally settle well and form good friendships. Our children like to buddy new arrivals and often they change the dynamics of a class in a positive way.

New pupils do not have a detrimental impact on the established children in the class. Any new arrival is inducted carefully and sensitively.

Regarding leadership development: with Mrs Baker's impending maternity leave and Mr Barrow being off site due to his work as a National Leader in Education, would it be beneficial for the school to train another Designated Safeguarding Lead?

We have recently trained Mr Adam Lee as a designated safeguarding lead. This means we now have five DSLs, including Mrs Caroline Condillac at the Children's Centre, which is more than most schools the size of St John's have. At the moment this is considered sufficient. My National Leader in Education work will be timetabled with St. John's needs first. Logistically it will be extremely rare that all DSL's are off site at the same time.

In relation to your National Leader in Education work deployments, is it possible to predict their frequency and duration?

I cannot say at this point. I have had informal conversations about supporting two schools, but I am currently unclear as to the level of support they will need. I would anticipate allocating no more than two days per half term, ie twelve days per year, to school to school support work. It will be up to me to manage my timetable and work load effectively.

How many midday supervisors are required for the school to have a full complement? How is the staffing shortfall managed when midday supervisors are absent? Is there any increased risk to the children arising from the shortfall in staffing?

We need another two midday supervisors to ensure there is one per class. The main area that we have risk assessed is wet lunchtimes. Myself, Mr Lee and the midday supervisors have worked together to put together a structured plan so that zones are fully supervised on wet days. This ensures there is an adult present at all times and Mrs Merry, Senior Midday Supervisor is on hand for first aid or to relieve staff.

Is Teaching Assistant sickness still high? What further steps can be taken to improve this?

Teaching Assistant sickness is still higher than teacher sickness. Key messages regarding attendance are reiterated every term. I would welcome any additional ideas for improving this area. Mr Martin undertook to review the staff Absence Policy.

Action: Review the Sickness Absence Policy (Mr Martin)

Were the reports from the mid-term phase leader pupil progress meetings circulated to governors?

No, Governors will receive termly pupil progress reports.

How effective do you think the recently appointed Family Support Worker is proving to be, do you feel the position is value for money, and what are your future intentions regarding the post?

I do feel the Family Support Worker role is providing good value for money. As is always the case it is about assigning the right person to the right family. We have a strong team of DSL's who still have families assigned to them. The appointment of the Family Support Worker has reduced my workload, but required a lot of input, support and logistical management at the beginning.

As the future of Kenilworth Children's Centre is now public, I have made it very clear that Family Support should still be readily available to families in our reach. I am working with the Local Authority to develop a community led model which should hopefully give us some more Family Support services.

I am aware that our Family Support Worker has found that the transition from Children's Services to a school environment has made her question whether her true vocation lies with Children's Services. I will keep Governors updated on this.

Mr Martin thanked Mr Owen for his excellent questions.

5. ACADEMY CONVERSION

6. SCENARIO PLANNING FOR THE FORECAST BUDGET DEFICIT

Mr Molyneux informed Governors that Mr Barrow had presented a number of longer term financial scenarios to the Resources Committee. These options largely centred on alternative staffing and WES fees options. None of the options were particularly palatable but are probably the only feasible means of making significant budget savings. Mr Barrow added that once the budget forecast had been tidied up, for example removing teaching staff in line with assumptions on reducing numbers of classes, the size of the forecast deficit was more manageable than originally indicated. The Resources Committee will keep a watching brief on the size of the deficit and options to address it, and will also consider the impact of any future changes that will impact on the forecast, for example the introduction of the National Funding Formula.

Ms Cooper asked whether there were any options to increase income generation at the school, for example by letting the school's facilities or expanding the Out of School Club. Mr Barrow replied that the main option would be to look at ways of restructuring the nursery provision, but in order to develop a robust business plan for the nursery the school would require some support.

7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Performance and Standards Committee

Minutes of the Performance and Standards Committee meeting held 20th September 2017 had been circulated to Governors. There were no questions raised.

Resources Committee

Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held 4th October 2017 had been circulated to Governors. There were no questions raised. Mr Molyneux informed Governors that the Resources Committee had discussed a proposal to purchase thirty Chromebooks to replace the equipment in the ICT suite, which is no longer fit for purpose. The cost of the Chromebooks

would be in the region of £8,800. The Resources Committee were supportive of the proposal but given the level of expenditure final approval would be required from the full Governing Body. Governors approved the purchase of thirty Chromebooks.

8. GOVERNOR SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

Governors reviewed the actions arising from the Governor Self-Assessment Workshop held 11th July 2017. Mrs Cordrey volunteered to take on the task of producing a termly Governor newsletter and it was agreed that this should be distributed to parents as part of the general school newsletter.

Action: Publish a termly Governor newsletter (Mrs Cordrey)

Governors discussed the action on improving Governor-parent communications. Suggestions included having Governor representatives attend parents' evenings, parent questionnaires, and a governor 'clinic' on the playground at pickup. Ms Cooper noted that it was important that parents understood what matters were appropriate to bring to Governors: one way of achieving this would be to publicise what topics are on the agenda for the next Governors meeting. Another suggestion was that Governors are represented at meetings of the Parents' Forum: Mr Barrow stated that he would welcome this.

It was agreed that Mr Owen, Ms Cooper, Mrs Cordrey, Mrs Augustus and Mr Barrow would work to develop an approach to Governor-parent communications. The actions from the Governor Self-Assessment Workshop will be reviewed at the next meeting of the full Governing Body.

Action: Develop an approach to Governor-parent communications (Mr Owen, Ms Cooper, Mrs Cordrey, Mrs Augustus and Mr Barrow)

9. GOVERNOR TRAINING

Mr Martin emphasised the importance of Governors attending training events and developing their skills and competencies. Governors selected training courses that they would be interested in attending in the spring 2018 term, and Mrs Weir undertook to book these on their behalf.

Action: book Governor training courses (Mrs Weir)

10. APPROVAL OF POLICIES

Admissions and Appeals Policy

Mr Martin had reviewed the draft policy and, other than some presentational changes, was happy with the content. Governors approved the Admissions and Appeals Policy.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Mr Molyneux asked whether the school published equality information as required by the draft policy. Mr Barrow replied that the performance data looked at the relative performance of various subgroups, for example by gender or special educational needs and disabilities, and this is in the public domain. Governors approved the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Fire Risk Assessment

Governors approved the Fire Risk Assessment.

Charging and Remissions Policy and Unofficial Funds Policy

These policies had received minor updates to include changes to Nursery charges resulting from the introduction of 30 hours funding, and to reflect changes to job roles. Governors approved the Charging and Remissions Policy and Unofficial Funds Policy.

11. CLERK TO GOVERNORS

Mr Martin informed Governors that Mrs Weir had resigned as Clerk to Governors after six years in the role. Governors thanked Mrs Weir for her support.

Mr Martin explained that Mrs Margot Brown, former Head Teacher at Priorsfield Primary School, had been approached with a view to her taking on the role of Clerk to Governors. Mrs Brown currently clerks for Clinton Primary School. Mr Martin informed Governors that he had met with Mrs Brown and discussed the position, and is of the view that she would be an excellent clerk. Mr Martin therefore proposed that Mrs Brown be appointed as Clerk to Governors with effect from 1st January 2018. Mr Owen asked whether there would be any conflict of interest arising from Mrs Brown clerking at both Clinton and St John's: Mr Martin replied that this should not be the case and it was commonplace for clerks to work for more than one school. Governors approved the appointment of Mrs Margot Brown as Clerk to Governors with effect from 1st January 2018.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

An update on the Children's Centre had been provided by Mrs Condillac, Children's Centre Manager.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the full Governing Body will be held on Monday 5th February 2017, commencing 7pm at the school.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

CONFIDENTIAL

Present: Mr Trevor Martin, Mr Darren Barrow, Mrs Rebecca Augustus, Ms Ruth Cooper, Mrs Beth Cordrey, Miss Katie Harrison, Mr Daryl Molyneux and Mr Richard Owen

Clerk: Mrs C Weir

5. ACADEMY CONVERSION

Mr Martin reminded Governors that an Academy Working Group had been established with the remit of developing an action plan to ensure that St John's is academy ready. Mr Martin stated that he felt that the time was now right for St John's to approach other primary schools in Kenilworth to gauge their interest in joining a multi-academy trust. Mr Martin proposed that Mr Barrow contact the Head Teachers of the other non-church primary schools in Kenilworth to find out whether they might be interested in joining a MAT if St John's were to establish one.

Mr Barrow stated that St John's had always maintained that it would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower in the academy conversion process. Being the lead school would mean that there would be greater control over the MAT's ethos, vision and values. Mr Barrow noted that his vision had always been that St John's would set up a MAT with an existing school and then develop a proposal to bring in the new primary school planned for Kenilworth. However, this is only one scenario and there would be nothing to stop St John's looking outside Kenilworth for a school to partner with.

Mr Molyneux suggested that it would be prudent to wait for the outcome of the forthcoming budget, to ensure that there is no change of government policy regarding academy conversion. Mr Martin commented that joining a MAT would provide economies of scale and would reduce the negative financial implications of being a single form entry school. Mr Molyneux asked whether there would be merit in approaching the Department of Education to send someone to provide advice on academy conversion: Mr Barrow replied that the school already has a designated contact in the DfE for this purpose.

Governors agreed that Mr Barrow should contact the Head Teachers of the other non-church Kenilworth primary schools to gauge their interest in joining a MAT. Mr Martin informed Governors that Mrs Sue Casey, Chair of Governors at Kenilworth School, had offered to share Kenilworth School's plans regarding academy conversion and Mr Martin intends to accept this invitation.

Action: Contact the Head Teachers of the other non-church Kenilworth primary schools to gauge their interest in joining a MAT (Mr Barrow)