



Cambridgeshire
County Council



St. Laurence Catholic Primary School

Through God's grace, a community growing in knowledge and understanding

Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Body

Thursday 3rd December 2015 @ 4.00pm

Present: Mary Jane O'Sullivan (Chair), Sonali Kumarakulasinghe, Harry Roberts, Terry Taylor-Crush, Clare Clark (Head), Fr Pat Cleary, Phyllis Maynard, Shauna DeWolf, Claire Southgate, Paul Robertson

Associate Members: Lizzy Bennett

Clerk: Eric Smith

Apologies: Janet Scally, Rebecca Imhagwe, Charlotte Woodford, Joan Brierley and Nick Fraser.

1. Welcome, apologies and opening prayer

The Chair, Mary Jane O'Sullivan, formally opened the meeting, extending a welcome to all those present and led a prayer invoking guidance for the proceedings. Fr Pat Cleary and Phyllis Maynard were slightly late to the meeting; however, the Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

Apologies from Janet Scally, Rebecca Imhagwe, Charlotte Woodford, Joan Brierley and Nick Fraser.

2. Declarations of interests relating to items on this agenda

None

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held on Thursday 15th October 2015

The Minutes were approved by the Governing Body as a true and accurate record and signed as such by the Chair.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held 15th October 2015

Page 4 - Item 10 – Standing Reports – Learning & Achievement Committee. The next meeting will be held on 8th December not 24th November as in the minutes.

Action by

Page 4 - Item 10 – Standing Reports – Link Governor for Training. To a question on the Education Health Care Plans (EHC Plans) the Head confirmed that one set of parents were appealing against the refusal of the LA to grant an EHC Plan for their child and that a date for the appeal hearing had been set. To a further question the Head confirmed that in the view of the school and parents criteria for the EHC Plan had largely been met but that the LA Panel reviewing the application for the EHC Plan did not approve the application. The Panel however, had requested input from the Educational Psychologist in preparation for the appeal, which was beneficial to the child irrespective of the eventual outcome and would have been welcomed earlier. The Head also noted that cuts in the LA budget could result in a reduced service from the Educational Psychologist team.

5. Head Teachers Report

The Head Teacher circulated her report ahead of the meeting, updated Members and answered questions accordingly.

To a question the Head confirmed that teachers were leading collective worship.

To a question the Head responded that the school was 'finding its way' through the new 'Assessment without Levels'. Teachers are assessing children half termly and updating Target Tracker accordingly. Writing has been moderated and the school will soon be moderating reading and maths. Testing materials from NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) will be used to benchmark pupil's attainment in the Spring and Summer Terms.

To a question on attendance the Head noted that a sizeable proportion of the 'Persistent Absentees' (18 in total) were from Reception. The Head confirmed that the EWO was involved in these cases but noted that under the LA budget constraints the EWO Service may disappear. To a question the Head confirmed that the school could cover all the functions carried out by the EWO. To a question on whether involving parents in dealing with poor attendance improved attendance, the Head confirmed that the recommended process of sending letters did have a short term impact but was not a 'Magic Bullet'.

To a question on the 3 children that have left the school but are still on the school roll the Head confirmed that there will be a positive impact on the current whole school attendance percentage when they are taken off roll.

To a question on the 'Wednesday Word', the Head explained that it was a Catholic publication aimed at baptised Catholic families that do not regularly attend Mass. It was 'child friendly' and an excellent reading resource and is being used by teachers for collective worship. It is a success in other Catholic Primary Schools and this school has committed to one year initially. Governors with children in the school confirmed that it was excellent.

Members congratulated the school on the low absence rates for teaching staff.

It was noted that the school had handled 2 incidents of racist language.

6. Governing Body Membership

The Chair reported that Janet Scally is in the process of being re-adopted as a Foundation Governor by the Diocese to serve for a further 4 years.

Sonali Kumarakulasinghe is coming to the end of her first term as a Local Authority Governor and is prepared to continue in the post, endorsed by Members. The Clerk was instructed to contact Governor Services to confirm that this Governing Body wanted Sonali as its LA Governor.

The Chair reported that Paul Robertson was resigning as a Governor as of 31st December 2015 and the Head will commence the election process in January 2016 to fill the vacancy. A Governors Newsletter will be published very soon and will announce the vacancy caused by Paul's resignation. The Chair will circulate the draft of the Newsletter to all Governors. The Clerk will notify Governor Services of the resignation.

Paul sat on the panel for the Head Teachers Performance Review. Claire Southgate is to take the training to enable her to participate and the Chair requested that a further Governor take the training to become active on the Panel as of September 2016.

The Chair confirmed that Committees had to have a Clerk and it was noted that it was not good practice for the Chair to also be the Clerk for a Committee meeting. It was agreed that the 3 Committees would review their clerking arrangements and report to the next meeting of the FGB.

Action by

Clerk

Chair
Clerk

All

All
Comms

9. Standing Reports as Appropriate

Equality Working Party. Members agreed that this item should be brought forward to allow Paul Robertson to report to the meeting prior to him leaving the meeting.

Paul noted that the working party had met; a 'log-in' had been prepared for the Equality Award and a directory created for storage of documents. Paul added that the working party was dependent on the new schools website going live. Historically he had carried out an 'Equality Walk' which had produced good evidence of equality in the school.

Paul agreed to stay on the Equality Working Party.

7. Adoption of the Terms of Reference for Committees

Learning & Achievement Committee – Adopted

Finance & Personnel Committee – Adopted

Premises, Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee – Adopted

To a question on the 'Wellbeing' aspect for the Premises, Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee it was noted that there was an overlap with the Finance & Personnel Committee; however, minutes from the Committees were circulated to all Governors.

8. Academy Status

The Academy Status working Group met recently. The message from the Diocese is that Catholic Schools can only be part of a Catholic Multi-Academy Trust (CMAT) with other Diocesan Schools. The Head reported that Catholic Schools in Norfolk and Suffolk were proceeding towards their own CMAT leaving this school to negotiate with the Catholic Schools in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Head also reported that the

Catholic Schools in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are not moving towards Academy Status with vigour. Members noted that the school has introduced a rigorous School Improvement Plan and wished to see this being successful prior to a move to Academy Status. Members agreed that research will be conducted by the Working Group into other Catholic Schools that could be part of a CMAT. The Head noted that she was attending all the Catholic Heads meetings where Academy Status could be debated. There are no meetings planned for the Working Group in the immediate future although this may change if there is something significant to discuss.

9. Standing Reports as Appropriate

Learning and Achievement Committee: Meeting the week following this meeting of the FGB

Finance & Personnel Committee: Not met recently

Premises, Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee: Met on the 17th November; minutes circulated. The Committee name had been changed to reflect the responsibility of Wellbeing. Joan Brierley had joined the Committee. The H & S Audit had been carried out; the first with external assistance; Harry Roberts reported that the results had been very positive. Liz Taylor had put in a lot of work and Members wished their thanks be minuted. The Wellbeing Policy had been adopted. To a question on the parking issues at the front of the school with inconsiderate and sometimes dangerous parking, the Head responded that the PCSO had been contacted. It was police not a school issue as the inconsiderate and sometimes dangerous parking was not on school premises. Members noted that the situation could worsen as the school grows.

Governors Monitoring: Shauna Dewolf updated Members, reminding all that feedback on all monitoring visits was required. Shauna noted that there was one monitoring slot to be filled – to understand from school subject leaders how the New Curriculum was progressing.

Paul Robertson left at 5.16pm

Governor Development Sub Committee: Will be meeting in January. The Sub-Committee will comprise Shauna Dewolf, Mary Jane O'Sullivan (Chair), Sonali Kumarakulasinghe, Janet Scally and Claire Southgate.

Link Governor for PTFA: AGM held and a new committee formed. An indoor table top sale on 7th November raised £200; a 'Book Giveaway' raised £81 in donations. There will be the Family Disco on Friday 11th December. The PTFA is paying for the Christmas Pantomime (Jack & The Beanstalk). Calendars for 2016 have been completed.

Parish: It was agreed that the Sunday Mass between Christmas and the New Year that would have been held in the school will now be held in the Church. Fr Pat reported that the loud speaker system for the Sunday Mass held in the school was not yet working properly; when working properly can be used by the school.

Clerk

Policy Review and Adoption Cycle:

Discipline Procedure/Grievance Procedure: Clerk to add to the Agenda for the next meeting of the FGB

Behaviour Policy: Adopted

Admissions Policy 2016 - 2017: Adopted

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy: Adopted

Link Governor for Training: The Chair reminded Members of the 2 free training opportunities, the details of which have been circulated:

- Developing the arts and creative learning in the curriculum as part of school improvement.
- Improving Efficiency and Performance Related Pay

The Dates for the Termly Briefings for Governors for the Spring Term have been circulated, all Members welcome to attend.

10. Dates for FGB Meetings for the Academic Year 2015 – 2016

28th January 2016 @ 4pm

17th March 2016 @ 4pm

5th May 2016 @ 4pm

14th July 2016 @ 3.45pm to hear the report from the School Council

11. Embedded Risk Management

None

12. Other matters appropriate to the Governing & School

None

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.27pm.

Signed as a true record *Mary Jane O'Sullivan* Date *28th January 2016*
(Chair)