



MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Monday, 27th March 2023 at 6.15pm
at the school

Participants:

Uel Barclay
Alison Bateman
Richard Bennett
Rushabh Haria
Hannah Lockey
Joe Lowther (online)
Michèle Marcus (Chair)
Francis Neal (online)

Eils Osgood
David Petrie
Dan Wells

Also present:

Fiona Whiteside (Acting Deputy Head)
Claire Jobbins (English Leader)

Angela Langford (AfC) Item 1 only
Rebecca De'Ath (Clerk)

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.” (1 John 3:16)

1. PRAYER

The Revd. Dan Wells led the meeting in a prayer to reflect the chosen verse, above.

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting – in particular Angela Langford (AfC Governor Support). Apologies had been received from Helen Taylor, Sara Bromfield and Chris Milsom. The meeting was quorate.

3. SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR GOVERNING BODY CHAIR (Angela Langford)

In the light of the FGB Chair leaving the governing body at the end of the Summer term, and there being no volunteers to date to step into the role, Angela Langford (the Head of AfC Governor Support) had been invited to this meeting to explain the implications of this, and give options for a way forward.

She began by saying that governors eligible to be Chair could show love for the school (and reflect today's prayer) by stepping up to ensure continuity of leadership for the governing body. Should no one come forward by the end of the Summer term, the FGB Vice-Chair would become Acting Chair in the Autumn. Legally, Maintained and Voluntary-aided schools had to have a Chair and Vice-Chair in situ at all times, or the governing body could not continue. Continuity of support for the Head teacher was also important.

The governing body had a responsibility to love the school and to want to achieve the best outcomes for the children, and support the Head teacher, but could not fully achieve this if its' leadership was deficient; the school would be marked down by OFSTED as having ineffective leadership if it did not have an FGB Chair.

A successor did not have to emulate the way the current Chair worked – it was a chance for someone to stamp their own style on the role. She suggested that co-chairing was a successful model, as it took some of the initial strain out of the

responsibility (although it would require a clearly-defined job description and set of responsibilities for each co-Chair, and clear communication of this to the Head teacher and other governors.)

An external candidate could be brought in to the governing body, and recruitment campaigns could target leadership skills and those willing to lead. This however could take some time to come to fruition, and existing governors would have to step up for the interim.

She urged governors not to lose the opportunity of using the next term to offer mentoring, shadowing or practice at leading meetings to those who might be interested in the role; this would help to instil confidence in the candidate(s) for September. There was a wealth of support to help potential Chairs in terms of training:

- New Chair's Induction Briefing on **16th May 2023, 6.30-8pm Virtual**
- Leading in Governance course (open to all) on **17th May 2023, 10-3pm**, Twickenham Training Centre
- There were also Chair's Networks which could support new Chairs, and
- Termly Briefings for Chairs at Twickenham Training Centre

If anyone had any questions about the role that they wanted to speak to Angela in confidence about, her contact details were available via the Clerk.

4. ENGLISH PRESENTATION: "What has changed at HTCE and what is the effect?" (Claire Jobbins)

Governors had been sent background documents in advance which detailed the changes that had been implemented over the past two terms since Claire joined the school. Highlights were:

- INSET day on 27th February, saw an excellent session on writing from Jane Considine. She had given positive feedback on what she had seen at the school, and staff had found her engaging and inspirational.
- Recent Writing moderation was carried out for all Teachers.
- Teachers had been given a list of Writing tasks for each year group, in order to assess pupils' writing.
- Teachers had worked through examples of pupils' work at each level of attainment.

Francis Neal arrived at 18.40hrs

Q: Can you tell us the starting point of the data that you were looking at; what did you find regarding English? *Overall, Reading had higher attainment, and Writing less so. We looked at the pupils' books, at Target Tracker data and called in the AfC English lead to look at Writing with her and come up with a plan which we have implemented since then. It is starting to show a positive outcome. On Handwriting and Reading, the main focus was to achieve a consistency of approach across the school Teacher Assessment Framework documents (TAFs) based on the National Curriculum expectations for that year group. Teachers should be using these to assess their children's work and also plan accordingly to cover these specific assessment areas in their planning and lessons. We will be using these to assess which Writing level (working towards, expected or greater depth) each individual student is working at. We have been upskilling staff, and they are now feeling more confident. We wanted to support staff, not add to their workload.*

Joe Lowther arrived at 18.41hrs

Q: When will we see the results of these initiatives? *We will hope to see improvements to these initiatives now, however, we are hoping to see continued progress at the end of this academic year – we will review and amend – then see further progress next year once everything is fully embedded. We are still incorporating work that we introduced two months ago, and will see results once these are embedded. Teachers are now assessing more robustly. We have also arranged Writing moderation with some local schools to share best practice.*

Q: Does the TAF document incorporate working from home (Covid)? *No, these are national curriculum targets. If we were moderated, we would talk about children-specific information. We are starting our pupils at the "Working Towards" level. Then we will move on to the "Expected Standard" level.*

Q: Thank you for all your data. You have a structure and a plan for improvement, but what could derail your plan – lack of training, resources? The main hurdle might be all the changes. Staff have to adapt to and get used to the new initiatives, and when staff turn over each year, new staff will have to be inducted into our processes. In particular we will have to keep a close eye on the new and current “scaffolding” and “differentiation” processes where we tailor the learning to the children based on their needs.

Q: Have you established the new tools and structures across all ability levels? Yes, they support middle, top and bottom abilities. The scaffolding and differentiation tools can also be used for some other subjects.

Governors were informed that in summary, new processes had been introduced for English, staff had been supported, the changes had been monitored, and they were working:

- Data tracking had shown that Spelling results had improved significantly. This was being supported by Reading for Pleasure, World Book Day, Poetry Day – all of which had gone well. (Three pupils had won a story-writing competition to have their stories published in a book. Recent Scholastic book fairs had raised £450 for new books for the KS1 library, and an anticipated £750 for KS2 books.)
- A recent Phonics screening had revealed that all but two pupils had passed, which was a significant improvement.
- KS1 assessment consisted of a mock SATS test last week; the results were positive.

Q: When is the next Phonics test? The end of May 2023.

The Head teacher thanked Claire for having achieved so much since she started with the school two terms ago. She had brought such energy, and it was gratifying to see consistency being embedded across the school in English. These sentiments were echoed by the FGB Chair, who thanked her on behalf of governors.

5. WRITTEN REPORT: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (by Jo Peet)

The RE Leader had written an update on her action plan which governors had read in conjunction with the RE Link Governor’s visit report. The meeting discussed the fact that there had been an RE questionnaire conducted among the staff; the results showed that not all the staff were yet comfortable with assessment in RE. This would hopefully be helped under the new SIAMS framework which simplified assessment to ‘expected’ or ‘not expected’. This would remove some of the uncertainty about what qualified as ‘greater depth’ learning in RE. At present the RE data for assessment was compared with Maths and English. However, this did not always compare well with the method of RE learning, so in future RE would be compared with Science which was a more practical approach and more akin to the learning in RE. On the whole the staff survey showed that teachers were positive about RE and felt well supported.

Q: Would this new assessment approach lead to dumbing down? No, the change stems from guidance from the Diocese, and follows the direction that Science is taking. It does not look at English skills, and as there are not as many RE skills to assess per se, the school is looking at introducing new books for pupils to record their work. This will help them see the progress that they are making, and the books will demonstrate that RE requires intellectual rigour too. We can also look at other schools and see if there is anything we can learn from them.

6. DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS INTERESTS IN AGENDA ITEMS

There were no business interests declared in relation to items on the agenda.

7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (30th January 2023)

The minutes of the January meeting were approved. The Clerk would mark them as “signed” on Governorhub.

8. REVIEW OF ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING

Actions from the previous meeting had been completed, other than the following which would be carried forward where appropriate:

- The school's SLA SPARK credits with AfC had just been used up for the year, which was the first time that the school has used up all the credits of its "Gold" package (on more external AfC support than previously commissioned.) If further AfC training, for example, was required next term, the school would pay the £86 per credit.
- The Faith Group Chair would meet with the Safeguarding Link governor in May regarding DBS clearance for volunteers in school. **ACTION**
- Governors were informed of the opportunity to change the committee that they were a member of if they wished. Richard Bennett was moving from Resources to Teaching & learning, and this would leave a vacancy on the former. The Resources Chair emphasised that members did not need to have purely financial skills; HR, property, energy, or staffing knowledge would also be suitable.
- The Chair had asked for a photo and bio from the new governors, and would ensure that these were uploaded onto the school website. **ACTION**
- Skills Audit – see item 15, below.

9. HEAD TEACHER'S WRITTEN REPORT

The Head teacher summarised her Report:

Pupil Numbers

There were now 412 children on the school roll as of last week. There were 51 in reception. The closing date for Reception Class applications had now passed. There were currently 39 first choice applications (38 last year), 16 of which were siblings (23 last year) with 208 applications overall (last year 203).

Q: I saw in the January Head teacher's Report that 23 new pupils had joined the school since September. What is the latest figure? I will bring this to the next FGB meeting **ACTION**

A School Place Planning Strategy for Richmond had been discovered which stated that consideration should be given to temporarily reduce Holy Trinity's Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 2 forms to 1 form entry if it was felt appropriate to do so in the future. It had been acknowledged by AfC, however, that the school's numbers had 'picked up' since 2021.

AfC had reported that the school's application numbers for this September's intake were almost exactly the same as they were for 2022 - 208 in total including 39 first preferences compared with 2023 and 38 last year, but the number of first preferences across the four schools in our place planning area was down by 26 - from 215 to 189. Overall, AfC anticipated that school would admit around 45 children again initially this September. 40% of these in-Borough applications were for pupils from overseas, 40% from the rest of UK and 20% were movement within the borough.

Q: What is the plan for class sizes if we have a cohort of 39 for Reception in September? Once we have over 30 pupils, we have to have two classes and employ staff to cater for both classes.

The meeting discussed the schools that year 6 pupils were moving on to, and the reasons behind the as-yet unplaced pupils were explained.

Q: Do we publish the list of schools that our year 6 pupils transition to? Yes, they are published in a school newsletter to parents in the Autumn term when all places are finalised.

Staffing Update

Lucy Ashby would be returning to school next term after her secondment, and Rachael Macklearn would be returning to her school. The Head teacher wanted to record her thanks to Rachael for all the work she had done on the curriculum and with subject leaders during her time with Holy Trinity. She also wanted to thank Fiona Whiteside for stepping up as Acting Deputy Head and taking on additional responsibilities alongside those she already held as Inclusion Lead over the last two terms.

Tesia Harrison had resigned from her curriculum teaching role in school in order to better support her ageing parents. She would still be running orchestra, mini-maestros and Rock Band in school. The Head teacher was excited to report that the school had appointed Nina Barclay as the new music teacher starting after Easter. Nina would teach all classes from Reception to year 6 and would run choir, and with her experience on the Faith Group, there was an excellent link between Church and the school.

Hannah Lockey would be leaving school at the end of the academic year to take up a post as Early Years Lead at Parsons Green Prep School and Mike Brown would also leave the school then to take up a post at Philip Southcote School (a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities School for students aged 11 to 19.)

SIP Termly Report

The School Improvement Partner had visited the school earlier in March and had focussed on the curriculum and the Pupil Premium group; her termly report was awaited.

School Development Plan

The Teaching & Learning and Pupils, Parents & Community committees had reviewed their relevant parts of the SDP at their recent meetings.

Standard Assessment Tests (SATs)

Governors were asked if they could volunteer to come in to school between Tuesday, 9th May and Friday, 12th May to observe the school's exam process. **ACTION**

The FGB Chair thanked the Head teacher for her report.

10. SAFEGUARDING

In her Report, the Head teacher explained that the AfC Lead Adviser for Online Services and Safety (Peter Cowley) came into school during Children's Mental Health Week (6-12 February), to speak to children in year 6 alongside their parents to discuss online safety. It was delivered during this week as much of young people's negative mental health issues were attributed to online activity and engagement.

11. SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION FORM (SEF)

While this was not statutory, the Head teacher explained that it was good to have this live, reflective, document to measure the school against OFSTED criteria. It showed a snapshot of what the school was like.

Q: How has the recent news report about OFSTED pressure on Head teachers affected you? It shows how vulnerable a Head teacher is. Heads do not want to let their communities down. There is pressure on Subject Leaders too.

Joe Lowther left the meeting at 19.47hrs

12. DRAFT BUDGET 2023

The meeting had heard from the Head teacher that many schools across the Borough were setting deficit budgets. Head teachers were finding it increasingly stressful at having to do more for less, for example there was the funding gap in relation to teaching SEND pupils, and the school was anticipating having more SEND children but no corresponding increase in funding.

The Resources Chair stated that the school was currently in a similar financial position to that which it had been in some 4 years ago. The school had done well to turn itself around since then. Drivers affecting the school finances were:

- The number of pupils
- The funding received per pupil
- Staff costs
- Energy costs

He warned that the financial picture could worsen if national negotiations over Teachers' pay ended in higher awards than budgeted for. This current draft budget would be reviewed again before the final submission date in mid-June (once further information on inflation, energy costs, pupil numbers etc became clearer.)

The budget figures for the next 3 years were explained; they did not take account of revenues such as the Reserves; they were based on the school having 391 pupils.

Year 1 – a good, balanced year

Year 2 – would use up two-thirds of the Reserves on staff costs

Year 3 – a negative position

The Resources Chair re-iterated that this picture was one which the school had encountered in the past. It reflected the national situation in education, and was not peculiar to Holy Trinity. The school team were doing a good job at controlling the finances.

The Resources Committee had recommended that the FGB approve this budget. It would be reviewed next term, and any changes would be brought back to the FGB.

The FGB approved the budget for 2023-2024.

13. FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

Faith Group

There were no minutes from the meeting this time as the focus had been on prayer space planning.

Teaching & Learning Committee

As the meeting had only taken place six days ago, the minutes were not yet finalised.

Admissions; Resources; and Pupils, Parents & Community Committee Minutes

Governors noted these minutes. There were no questions.

14. CHAIR'S VERBAL REPORT

Visits Made by Link Governors

The Chair thanked governors for taking the time to make visits to subject leaders, and for their excellent reports.

Marketing Update

On the basis of the good start made by the Marketing Officer as detailed in her report and the welcome revision to the school website, the Resources meeting had agreed that this contract be extended for 6 months.

Recruitment of FGB Clerk

The first recruitment attempt had not resulted in any applications. There was a second attempt in process, and the Marketing Officer had been very helpful with this campaign.

Link Governor Responsibilities

Chris Milsom was now the SEND Link Governor.

Eils Osgood had taken on the Deputy Safeguarding governor role, and Music.

Richard Bennett was responsible for Phonics.

15. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND SKILLS AUDIT

The 2022/23 audit of governors' skills had now been completed. The FGB Chair thanked everyone for filling in their questionnaires. The anonymised results were grouped under each Committee, and were available to view in the Training Folder on Governorhub. There was a good distribution of skills across the committees, and overall there was a good mix of skills across the FGB. There were no significant weaknesses at this time, and strong results were seen in most skill areas.

16. BEHAVIOUR POLICY REVIEW

Governors noted that this policy was unchanged since the year before, and that they Pupils, Parents & Community Committee had reviewed it and recommended its' approval. The FGB approved this policy.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No further matters were raised.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 15th May 2023 at 6.15pm at the school.

Supporting meeting papers are electronically-filed on the GovernorHub web portal.

The meeting closed at 20.05hrs

Attendance was 79%

Signed

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Item 8.	<u>Actions from previous meeting:</u> Faith Group Chair to meet with Safeguarding Link Governor regarding DBS clearance for volunteers at school. FGB Chair to obtain photo and bio information from Chris Milsom for the school website.
Item 9.	<u>Head teacher's Report:</u> Head teacher to report the latest figures for new pupils entering the school since September 2022 - to the next FGB meeting. All Governors – volunteers sought to observe the school's exam process during SATs week (May 9-12.)

APPENDIX 1.

EVALUATION OF GOVERNORS' DISCUSSIONS IN SUPPORT OF SDP PRIORITIES AND THE SCHOOL'S CHRISTIAN VISION

SDP OBJECTIVE	Agenda Item	Discussion Topic	Impact On School Improvement	Linked Aspect of Vision
<u>Leadership and Management:</u> 1.1: "Subject Leaders... communicate the Intent, Implementation and Impact of their subject areas..." 1.4: "Ensuring that all school systems ... consider staff wellbeing ... and staff are signposted to wellbeing support..."	4.	<u>English Presentation to the FGB, and questions to English leader:</u> Governors were able to question the English Lead about the initiatives that had been introduced this academic year, and how these were impacting on pupils' learning.	Governors are reassured that the recent changes made by the English team were working and resulting in better pupil attainment.	Loving Learning
	5.	<u>Religious Education Report for the FGB:</u> Governors asked how the new assessment approach (which would compare RE to Science learning) would work, and whether it was a robust approach.	Governors gain more understanding of changes to RE assessment methods, and can be reassured that the new approach remains rigorous.	Loving Learning
	11.	<u>School Self-Evaluation:</u> Governors asked the Head teacher how the recent news report about the effects of OFSTED pressure was affecting her well-being.	Governors receive feedback about the pressures faced by Head teachers in relation to future OFSTED inspections, which enables them to provide the necessary support.	Loving One Another
<u>Quality of Education:</u> 2.1: "Attainment to be above national averages, and at least in line with Richmond, in all subjects in all key stages (incl. SEN and PPG." 2.5: "Writing – to further improve writing outcomes throughout the whole school."	4, 5.	<u>English Presentation and RE Report:</u> See above section. In addition, the English Link Governor had visited the English Lead to determine what actions were being taken by the school in the light of disappointing writing outcomes last year, and her feedback report was circulated to all governors.	Governors are informed of the improvements the school is making to address the issue, and are reassured.	Loving Learning
	4.	As above.		Loving Learning
<u>Financial Management</u>	8.	<u>Head teacher's Report (New pupil numbers):</u> Governors sought an update on the number of new pupils expected in Reception this September, and on other new entrants to the whole school in-year, and asked about optimum class sizes.	Movement on pupil numbers informs governors of any potential risk to the school's budget.	Loving One Another
	12.	<u>Draft Budget:</u> Governors discussed the draft budget for next year and approved the figures.	Governors are aware of the school's finances and contingencies and future review-points.	Loving One Another

