

St. Catherine's Catholic VA Primary School

Meeting of the Local Governing Body Wednesday 28th September

Present: Ethna Jenkins (EJ) (Chair), Frances Guppy (FG), Lydia Vincent (LV), Ron Coatsworth (RC), Terry Hand (TH), Judy West (JW), Gill Toohill (GT), Wendy Holloway (WH), Georgina Coombs (GC), Chris Addis (CA)

Action

1. **Opening Prayer and Apologies:** FG led with a prayer. There were apologies from Fr. Richard, Chris Fearn, Sarah Betts and Siobhan Dinsmore. Athalia Stephens and Hugo Busby were absent.
2. **Declaration of beneficial interests:** Governors who hadn't previously completed forms for the new school year did so and no interests were declared.
3. **Election of Chair** EJ began by summarising what had happened at the previous LGB when a new Chair had failed to be elected. She explained that in November 2015 her term as Chair had been extended by another year in the hope that another governor would be ready to take on the role. CA felt that in another year, after becoming more familiar with the workings of the school, he might be in a position to step up to the role but now was not the right time. EJ had spoken to a retired Head but he reluctantly declined due to lack of time. FG knows of two ex-secondary Heads who may be a possibility and EJ said that she intends to approach someone she knows in the Parish. There are 6 weeks before EJ retires and in that time someone must be found. TH wondered if the prospect of Ofsted looming might be detrimental to anyone's willingness to be Chair and he asked EJ if she would be willing to mentor a new Chair even through the Ofsted inspection itself and EJ said she would do so willingly. Regarding the appointment of a new Clerk, FG has a possible applicant who is Clerk at Axminster and WH said that SD also knows of someone who may be interested. WH will contact SD and FG will arrange for the Clerk to visit St Catherine's.
4. **Minutes of meeting held on 8th September 2016** Governors had been given the minutes in advance of the meeting. EJ went through them, focusing particularly on the action points. The child with an EHCP will not now be coming to St Catherine's. CAST has agreed to honour the term's contract given to the TA employed to work with the child. FG said that an appeal has been launched for another possible pupil who has been disallowed an EHCP. Some moving around of staff has been done such as a TA working in the office rather than the classroom due to a health problem. The anti-bullying policy was completed before the summer but had not been taken to staff, it will now be sent out to governors for approval. NW said that she would contact SB re the previous minutes which need some more detail added. LV has added a sentence to the Admissions policy which needs to be sent back to County. FG plans to subscribe to the NGA with the new budget. GC and RC will be working together on the 50 year celebration.

NW

NW: SB

FG: NGA

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Action

5. **Matters Arising** LV told the governors that there have been a number of new children enrol at St Catherine's. One child has left Y3 and the governors were told of the circumstances. There are now 194 on roll. The classes are as follows:

R: 30; Yr1: 28; Yr2: 27; Yr3: 28; Yr4: 24; Yr5: 29; Yr6: 28

Staffing: a new TA has been employed to work 1:1 with a child in Reception. There are lots of new volunteers to help in school and LV has begun to meet with each of them. She has also done some training with the lunchtime supervisors and an induction with the new staff. LV and EJ have met with teaching staff separately to talk through any early issues and they know that they should let LV know of any problems they may have. It was pointed out that there has never been any stress related illness at St Catherine's and that pastoral care is high priority. Staff wellbeing is a governor objective also. Teachers AH and JW have been asked to spend some time supporting staff at St Mary's, Axminster. LV then told the governors that the teaching unions have made a number of changes to what teachers are asked to provide such as no requirement to do daily or weekly plans. 'Drop ins' are now taking place where LV visits class to observe how the children are learning.

SDP Governors had been sent a copy of last year's SDP prior to the meeting and LV talked it through carefully explaining the RAG rated outcomes. The term 'Pupil Ownership' means that the children are encouraged to take responsibility for knowing how to improve their work. They sometimes mark each other's work. The Ros Wilson Criterion Scale has been made more child friendly so that the children can read and understand it independently.

A letter has been sent out to parents explaining the spelling and it was asked if this could also go to the Literacy Governor. LV said that, to begin with, the 'Talk for Writing' programme had been quite challenging for those staff new to it but they were now much more confident. The Numeracy Calculation policy has a 10 minute slot at each Staff Meeting. In the Foundation Stage the Early Excellence Baseline testing was done and a modified school version is being used this year. Many more children are coming in to Reception with Speech and Language needs. Any reviews are now done in school in the hope parents are more likely to attend. Transition from Pre School to Reception is to be looked at in more depth next year with extra visits to Pre School.

FG, LV and the staff are currently working on this year's SDP. Once drafted a steering group meeting will be held prior to the next LGB to look at it. It will be presented and discussed with governors at the LGB at the end of November.

Steering
group

6. **Pay Committee/ HT Performance** Performance Management for FG was discussed and EJ asked if anyone would become part of the team. GC volunteered to do this. TH will liaise with Jon Wood and GC to set a date. CA agreed to join the Pay committee alongside RC and TH.

TH

7. **Appoint Link Governors/ Statutory Governors** It was again agreed that having photos of class link governors on their classroom doors would be a good idea. Governors were assigned to classes as follows:

R: WH/SB

Y1:HB

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Action	Y2: TH Y3: JW Y4: GC Y5: WH Y6: RC/SD
NW: SB	NW will ask SB if she will be the Reception link governor and LV will tell the staff who their link governor is this year along with a description of what the governor is there to do. It was stressed that governors are there to be involved with the class and support. They should liaise with their class teacher to organise dates for visits. Governors may write about their visit but in a positive way. EJ then asked the governors to agree on which subjects they would be looking at this year. JW will stay with Literacy
EJ/CA	CA agreed to take on Numeracy but asked what it entailed. EJ told him that he would need to meet with the subject coordinator (AH) at least once and participate in a Learning Walk. EJ will set up a meeting to brief CA on the role. It's hoped that SD, who was absent from the meeting, will continue with SEN and Pupil Premium. SB is the Safeguarding governor WH remains as the RE governor

8. **Set/Agree school values, aims and mission** everyone was happy that this should remain unchanged and is the same as the Home School Agreement.

9. **Budget** TH told the governors that when the proposal that FG should take on the helm at Axminster was first put to them he had hoped this might enable St Catherine's to balance their budget. However this was not the case. But on the plus side, what was expected to be a deficit of £47,000 is now likely to be down to £32,000 deficit. There are a number of reasons why the deficit hasn't come down more. There is an imbalance with the amount of time FG has to spend at Axminster. A number of staff have gone up on their pay grades. TH was able to tell the governors that in 2017/18 and 2018/19 the budget should be more positive. Staffing percentage spend is still of concern but is not likely to change. There has been a £7,000 drop in Pupil Premium for 2016/17. An excellent teacher who is high up on the pay scale has been employed to teach Y4 this year. FG pointed out that many schools will have taken on NQTs which would lower their staff spend. FG will go back to CAST re the budget and she will look at and map out spending over the next year with BG, finance officer. TH reminded the governors that St Catherine's had been underfunded for several years to the amount of £70,000, however future years will be funded on the correct pupil numbers. He was able to forecast that it's hoped 2017 will have a £5,000 carry over and in 2018, £3,000.

FG's contract with CAST to head Axminster is for one year only. Should it need to go on longer she will renegotiate.

There followed a discussion about how, historically, St Catherine's staff tend to stay and not move on which in itself means they are expensive. While this continues staffing percentage will always be high. The new regime of three St Catherine's teachers (1 at Axminster) supporting FG in her headship is proving

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Action to be very valuable and they are determined to make the most of it. The new teacher in Y4 is proving her worth too with new ideas coming in to school. FG said that most schools throughout the country are presenting unbalanced budgets. No staff absence insurance has been purchased this year to cut down on costs.

10. **Policies** Prior to the meeting governors had been sent copies of the policies: Child Protection, Choices (Behaviour), Marking and Feedback, Assessment. Everyone was happy to approve them with one small change to the Assessment policy. EJ proposed approval and TH seconded all of the policies, all governors were in agreement. Governors had also been sent the draft British Values Statement. There were a number of issues brought up. WH suggested that the website address for the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education organisation: www.smsc.org.uk be added to the document. JW asked if more than one child per year could sit on the school council. This idea will be put to the classes. WH felt that the wording in the Rule of Law needed some amendment and FG will take it to CAST for their views. She will also look at other school's BVS. LV, EJ and NW will be meeting on 10th October to look at all the school policies.

Governors

11. **School Reports: Safeguarding** LV said that the report had remained the same apart from one or two changes. Governors were invited to attend the Prevent training on 31st October and Whole School Child Protection on 22nd February next year which all staff will be attending. LV then talked about the number of pupils who have a Child Protection plan. Each plan has objectives set by Social Care.

NW: LGB agenda

The Intimate Care policy which comes under Safeguarding will be on the next LGB agenda.

NW had found out that the Safeguarding course CAST has organised for next year is equivalent to the County one. SB and CF are booked on it.

LV then showed the governors, on her iPad, the Cause for Concern programme which is used in school. Teachers use this when they have any concerns about a child and LV looks at it daily along with HC. The system is linked to SIMS. TLAs are still being trained to use it. Lunchtime staff use a notebook to record concerns. LV said that if a child transfers to another school, the data can be exported. It can also be uploaded to Social Health. LV is able to access the whole school whereas teachers can only see their own class.

EJ

12. **Review FG performance and effectiveness** EJ was mindful of how long the LGB had taken so far so she said she would report back on the last year by email. The governors' induction pack which needs updating will be sent to the new governors shortly. LV will contact the governors about the Learning Walk coming up early November. JW asked if an assembly could be held to introduce the governors to the children and it will be arranged for photos of governors to go on classroom doors. JW felt that the new website is not giving out a good impression of what goes on in school but as it's still early days it's hoped this will improve in time. A steering group will be timetabled in before the next LGB, LV to suggest a date and time. The structure of LGBs, with

LV

LV

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Action OFSTED headings will be discussed by staff first. It's hoped that subject coordinators will be able to meet with their link governors over the next few weeks. LV and EJ had planned out the first two LGB agendas and EJ will plan agendas for the remaining 4 meetings for the SLT to discuss. NW will email the next LGB's outline agenda shortly.

EJ

NW

NW

13. **Governor training** NW had enrolled governors on the CAST training programmes as specified in the last minutes. GC will need Performance Management training, NW to look for the appropriate course and let GC know. SB needs Safeguarding 1 and 2 training, again NW will source.

14. **Any other Business** None

Next Meeting of the Local Governing Body: Wednesday 23rd November at 5.30pm for tea, to begin at 6pm prompt.

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