



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Bridport
Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting
5.30pm 26th April 2017

Live, Love and Learn Together

Initials	Attendees	Initials	Attendees
CA	Mr Chris Addis	TS	Mrs Teresa Sturtivant
JW	Miss J West	FG	Mrs Frances Guppy
HB	Mr Hugo Busby	LV	Mrs Lydia Vincent
GC	Mrs Georgina Coombs	JonW	Mr Jon Wood
SB	Mrs Sarah Betts		
SD	Mrs Siobhan Dismore	TC	Tan Cox (Clerk)

Ref	Agenda Item	Action
1	Apologies: Mr Chris Fern, Mr R Coatsworth, Father Richard Meyer	
2	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Eligibility: No Declarations were received	
3	Budget and Financial Matters: BS and CA had met on Friday 21 st April to discuss the financial situation of the school and particularly review the budget for 2017/18. CA explained to governors that if the current status of the school remained ie pre Axminster, then the school budget for 2017/18 would have a deficit of £90,000 at the end of the school year (31 st August 2017). CA made it clear that the current arrangements were not sustainable. and is seeking a meeting with CAST to discuss the deficit and to put forward a plan that will produce a balanced budget over the next 2 to 3 years.	

Minutes approved: Chair of Governor's signature



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	<p>FG said that she was in a meeting today with CAST and that she had provided them with the figures relating to the potential deficit 2017/18 and she understands that this will go to the CAST boards' Finance Committee for consideration.</p> <p>SD Challenge: Asked whether it had been known at the time of the sharing arrangement how it would affect the school's budget. From memory she said, it had not been part of the discussion and governors had not been aware that the arrangement would put the school into this position.</p> <p>CA said that prior to the sharing with Axminster the deficit forecast for 2016/17 was approximately £47,000 and that the budget review for 2017/18 excluded any involvement with Axminster.</p> <p>There was much discussion around the budget deficit and the shared arrangement with Axminster. Governors were concerned that to rectify the budget shortfall the school would have to cut costs, and that this would likely be teaching staff.</p> <p>CA agreed that the largest cost to the school was its staff and that it is the case that governors may need to be a little more creative about how the teaching staff work and their working patterns. He gave an example of there being 11 teachers and only 7 classrooms, saying that this is because of the part-time nature of some of the teachers and that this causes overlaps in staffing which is an additional cost burden to the school. He referred also to the number of TAs employed by the school and gave an example of how some schools hire young teachers who who fulfill TA roles and deputise for absent teachers.</p> <p>JonW said that it is likely that CAST will take a view on how the deficits are to be managed as many of CAST's schools have similar deficits. It is likely that schools with large surpluses will have to give them up to fund schools with deficits.</p>	



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	<p>CA referred to a letter received from CAST which confirmed that schools with surplus budgets would be subject to clawback in order to balance budgets in other schools.</p> <p>FG said that she is aware of CAST schools using their reserves to prop up their budgets and said that unfortunately St Catherine's does not have any reserves to do this.</p> <p>JonW said that schools with large surpluses will need to make a business case to keep them, they may have them ring-fenced or earmarked for future spending he said at the end of the day, it will be the CAST board that makes the decision about how to fund school deficit budgets.</p> <p>JonW continued by saying that CAST will want all schools to start the new school year with a level playing field and that it is very likely that the deficit will be cleared, however going forward the school will need to manage their budgets carefully and not build or maintain deficits in the expectation that they will be cleared by CAST.</p> <p>GC Challenge: Asked whether the school will know whether the deficit will be cleared / will all of it be cleared and if so, will governors know before they agree to make any changes to the staffing structure.</p> <p>JonW thought it likely that CAST would not delay in informing schools about their financial status going forward, however he said that CAST will have their own timetable.</p> <p>CA summarised the discussion saying that the best-case scenario would be for the debt to be written off and the school starting the new year with zero debt. He added that the school would need to work on a plan to maintain a balanced budget going forward.</p> <p>SD Challenge: Asked about the current vacancies in the school and whether they were going to be filled. There is a vacancy in reception.</p> <p>FG responded by saying there would be some restructuring to fill the vacancy. HC/LC were mentioned. FG said that ultimately the original member of staff will be returning to their post.</p>	



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	<p>Support Staff Pay Increments</p> <p>CA referred to the document emailed prior to the meeting detailing the current grades and uplifts relating to the school's support staff.</p> <p>Governors agreed the Support Staff Pay Increments</p>	
4	<p><u>LGB Minutes:</u></p> <p>The minutes from 9th February 2017 were reviewed. There were several matters arising - detailed below:</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canon Richard Meyer – CA referred to page 2 of the minutes in particular to the paragraph detailing RM's status on the governing board. CA understands that this issue has now been resolved and RM is content to remain a co-opted governor. • Performance Management of School Staff CA asked when this would be happening. FG confirmed that PM reviews are scheduled for July 2017. <p>SD Challenge: Asked whether the PM reviews included the head teacher.</p> <p>FG said that this will be done in July and will be with HW (Chair of ESG) and the Chairman (CA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Sub Committee CA said that this will tie in with the new committee structure. See page 6. • Skills Audit CA thanked all governors for submitting their skills audit form to him, he referred to his email that he sent governors on 18th April in which he had explained the 6 categories and the various analysis and overall picture. • Meeting with CAST HR and JonW re Axminster CA said that there had been no meeting yet and confirmed that it would be a key part of how the school moves forward. There was a lot of discussion about this and JonW confirmed that CAST's preferred option is to employ a headteacher for Axminster, he said that the advertisement is out and that the closing date is Friday, 28th April. 	



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	<p>CA Challenge: asked whether the two schools could combine.</p> <p>JonW said that CAST want the headteacher option, but that the situation is so fluid that this may not happen and alternative arrangements may have to be put into place. He said that it will be CAST's decision at the end of the day, but that governors should have their preferred option ready so that they can make their case should the opportunity arise. He said that the sharing option had been a one-year arrangement and that had come to an end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors Page on Website JW confirmed that this had been completed, she asked whether all governors were happy with the emailed version she had previously sent them. All governors were happy and JW will now send to LT to upload onto the school website. • Governor Biographies CA asked whether all governors had passed their 140 word biographies to TC for forwarding to LT, two governors had not done so: HB and SD, both agreed to do this shortly. • School Council FG advised governors that the school staff had decided that the school council was not an activity that they wished to pursue therefore it was not progressing. She confirmed that HC had written to those parents who had expressed an interest advising them of the decision. There had been no adverse reaction. 	<p>JW</p> <p>HB/SD</p>
5	<p><u>EGM Minutes:</u></p> <p>The minutes from 2nd March 2017 were reviewed. There were two matters arising - detailed below:</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairman's Open Forum with Parents (following release of Ofsted Report) CA confirmed that he had met with approximately 15 parents and had maintained a constructive discussion with them, including providing examples of how the school will be moving forward. • Reinstatement of the Committee Structure for effective governance CA said that this will be discussed later on in the meeting (see page 6). 	



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6	<p><u>Strategic Items:</u></p> <p>Governance Committee Structure</p> <p>CA referred to the EGM Action Plan and confirmed that he had received ToR from the clerk that help explain the roles of the various committees. He asked governors what committees they wanted and who wanted to sit on them.</p> <p>A lot of discussion ensued and TS advised that it would be good to work with 2 additional committees, mainly to ensure that there were enough governors to sit on them and to share the burden. The following two committees were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Committee This will cover health and safety, buildings, environment and HR issues, and include a separate Pay Sub-Committee. <p>Governors were canvassed as to their preference, and the following governors agreed to sit:</p> <p>CA/JW/CF/HB/RC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning Committee Governors were canvassed as to their preference, and the following governors agreed to sit: <p>JW/GC/SD/SB</p> <p>CA asked TS when the committees should become active and she advised that they should be set up to begin from the Autumn Term. However, she advised CA to meet briefly once during the Summer Term to consider what areas will be covered, allocate tasks and responsibilities, decide what to monitor and how monitoring will be done and how it will be reported. She advised governors to use the school development plan as a guide.</p> <p>SD Challenge: Asked whether there had been any decisions on the recruitment of additional governors. She said that she would be willing to move into a foundation governor role so that a parent governor place becomes available. CA advised her to speak to Canon Richard about this as he would need to progress it.</p>	



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	<p>TS advised that CAST require more foundation governors than other classes. She said that it would be prudent to recruit extra governors to aid succession planning and to ensure that the right skills are available.</p> <p>CA said that ideally, he wants a governing body who are active and willing to contribute, he said that it does not always follow that those appointed by the church are willing to contribute.</p> <p>CA referred to a letter that he wrote in the local newspaper responding to the negative opinions expressed by residents regarding the school and its Ofsted outcomes. He said that he will write a follow up piece which may result in recruitment of interested individuals. CA said that he would be happy with an active governing body of 12.</p> <p>TS referred to the guidance that CAST have published relating to the average numbers of governing body members. She said she would forward to the clerk for onward transmission.</p> <p>There was further discussion around this and it was suggested that governing body recruitment could also be mentioned in the school's newsletter (now being sent to parents by email).</p> <p>ESG Powerpoint / Reporting Years Data including SDP and Ofsted to date</p> <p>There followed a presentation by FG/LV based around the handout entitled Enhanced Monitoring Group – key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLT to look at all current data for each year group including progress from last starting point to ensure all children are on track, identify children who need to be targeted. • SLT will ensure teachers target children not meeting ARE, SLT will review predictions and make comparisons to previous years, including previous years' national standards. <p>FG explained the impact of these measures would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children sufficiently challenged and on track for personal learning path. • SLT understand where key years are in the school in relation to national standards and previous year standards • SLT will have identified target children and have an understanding of the monitoring process – ongoing assessment, observations, drop ins and book scrutiny. 	<p>CA</p> <p>TS</p> <p>FG</p>



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	<p>FG explained the next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers continue to ensure targeted children are on track • SLT to feedback progress review information and to monitor progress and attainment. • SLT to update performance management reviews in light of outcomes of current assessments <p>There was general discussion around Yr6 R, W, SPAG and Maths, including the combined predictions for 2017.</p> <p>FG confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock SATs completed and QA'd and cross referenced to standardised scores using the KS1 and KS2 VA calculator. • Employed Matthew Farnham for 5 mornings per week (Yr6 Maths) <p>FG explained the impact of this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading - WTS children reduced from 18% to 11% • Writing - 71% working within expected. Predicted that L3 children will make GD. • Maths – 10% of class working at GD <p>FG referred to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and that these will help ensure all staff are teaching at the appropriate level of challenge. She confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPIs for Yr2 and Yr6 already in place • Introduction of KPI in other year groups <p>Teacher confidence has improved in other year groups through CPD and sufficient challenge of Yr2 and Yr6 pupils through book scrutiny, assessment data and teacher confidence. There are also clear pathways of next steps in regards targeting children and adapting planning to suit children's requirements.</p> <p>FG said that KPIs need to move into non-statutory assessment year groups and CPD needed for SLT. Comparative Judgement trialing with HC to attend St Nicholas School. Roll out expected in Summer.</p>	



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	<p>FG referred to the changes surrounding the start of the school day, and to HW's walk around the school (prior to the start of the school day). HW had provided some recommendations for consideration which have now been implemented. The main change is that – all classrooms are open from 8.30 and the doors close at 8.40 for official start of the day.</p> <p>FG explained the impact of this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One hour per week gained / time for targeted literacy work • Positive feedback from teachers and parents • Clearer, safer car park and road outside school • Reducing lateness <p>Next steps are monitoring teachers to ensure doors are opening and closing at the right times, and monitoring lateness of pupils.</p> <p>Governors were delighted with the presentation, and JonW said that he is impressed with the depth of detail that the SLT has been able to gather in order to move the school forward.</p> <p>Feedback from Teresa Sturtivant on Governance Review</p> <p>TS described for governors the Governance Model that she was using to complete the review and explained the 3 main responsibilities of governing bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction • Holding the headteacher to account • Financial matters and ensuring money is well spent <p>TS explained the work that she had completed so far which included various interviews and meetings with staff and governors, she said that she had also looked at agendas and minutes, headteacher's reports, other internal documents and external reports in order to reach her conclusions.</p> <p>TS referred to a section of the Model that focused on Effective Governance and provided a summary of where the governing board is at the current time. She said that she believed they were on their way to being good governance practitioners, but that they still had some way to go.</p>	



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	<p>She referred to the change in governance committee structure introduced by the previous Chair of Governance in 2016, and said that although that particular model works in some schools, she did not believe it was appropriate at St Catherine's mainly because many of the governors were new and lacked experience of governance generally. She was pleased that the governors had decided to go back to the original committee structure and said that they needed to make sure it worked for them and the school.</p> <p>TS also spoke about the Clerk and Chair and to the positive strengths they could bring to the governing body.</p> <p>She referred also to the positive feedback received from the external ESG Chairman HW who commended the school on their swift response to the Ofsted report. She also saw good evidence that school staff are fully supportive of the SLT's leadership and that this has been a positive force for improvement.</p> <p>What could be done better – TS said that roughly a third of the governing body have engaged in training but she said that there are gaps and that some governors could do more to improve their skills. She said that over time best practice changes and new initiatives are launched by central government which change current practice and thinking – governors should be able to demonstrate that they are up to date with the latest thinking on a range of subjects, and without current training this is unlikely to be the case at St Catherine's for some governors.</p> <p>She referred also to the lack of feedback that is provided to the governing body when a governor attends a training course and said she will be recommending that any governor attending training should provide a 5-minute presentation to the rest of the governing body on the key points learned.</p> <p>TS said that she has written a report that will be fed back to governors, initially at the next ESG and afterwards to the LGB. She reminded governors that her report will be RAG rated and that most areas will be amber, signifying that the governing board is 'working toward' a goal, she said there are a few red areas and some green areas, and that her recommendations will be included in her feedback.</p> <p>TS also referred to 'A Competency Framework for Governance' which she said governors would find useful. She will forward it to the clerk for onward transmission to governors.</p>	



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	<p>FG thanked TS for her presentation and to the work completed, all governors agreed and look forward to reading the report and feedback.</p> <p>Learning Walk to Reception Class TS had recommended CA include a brief interlude (walkabout) for governors part way through the agenda, and it was agreed that the first of these should be to the reception classroom. LV provided a good summary of the teaching aids and equipment in the reception classroom and explained how children learn numbers and letter and their progress in producing joined-up writing.</p> <p>Safeguarding: LV had already circulated the report on Safeguarding Children to governors and she went through the report explaining that she had two separate audits to deal with regarding safeguarding, one for Dorset County Council and the other for CAST.</p> <p>LV went through the various audit action plans and confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is up to date (both governor and staff) • All actions are either completed or on track • The Equality and Diversity Policy needs updating and all others are up to date. <p>LV explained that there was still a significant piece of work to do which may involve governors at some stage and this was the cross-referencing of all policies.</p>	TS
7	<p>Accountability and Monitoring Items: CAST Health and Safety Policy CA referred to the latest update from CAST. Governors agreed that it could be uploaded onto the website.</p>	FG/LV
8	<p><u>AOB:</u> There were several items of AOB as follows:</p> <p>Availability of the SDP CA explained that he had attended the course run by CAST entitled Strategic Importance of Governance and that in order for governors to carry out their monitoring role the SDP should be prepared and with governors by 19th July. He also said that two governors should be selected to work with the SLT in drafting the Plan.</p>	



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	<p>There was much discussion around this and FG said that she would not normally start the work on the SDP until after the SATS; week beginning 4th July. She also said her availability to work on the SDP during July was limited due to other work commitments.</p> <p>CA said he would like 2 Governors to work alongside the SLT in the development of the SDP.</p> <p>JonW said that it is a good idea for two governors to work alongside the SLT, and that the SDP does not need to be the finalised version as it is a living and working document that will evolve over time anyway.</p> <p>SD Challenge: Referred to a visionary plan, which in her experience is a 3-year strategic plan and asked why the school didn't have this.</p> <p>TS responded to this explaining that although some schools in CAST did have 3-year strategic plans many did not.</p> <p>CA said that governors need something more modest that contains key strategic aims, it does not need to contain detail just key milestones.</p> <p>TS reminded governors that CAST has sent an email saying that it has signed up to KEY, which is an on-line resource centre for schools, she said there will be lots of different models for your SDP on the website.</p> <p>JW said that the school had signed up to the NGA and that this body may well have models for consideration.</p> <p>It was agreed that SLT would work with two governors, these being SD and GC on the over-arching headlines of the SDP and key areas within it. This should be enough to facilitate the decisions of the governing body on the monitoring activities it will carry out.</p> <p>Religious Life of the School GC said that she is yet to meet with Joan Wright however a meeting is planned. She said that Easter services had happened, as did Holy Communion. FG added that the Mary's Meal Appeal had also taken place. The school is the last in line to be subjected to a Section 48 review (Catholic Life Inspection), which is due in 2018. FG also said that the Bishop is visiting the school on 23rd June to celebrate the school's 50th year – there will be a concert in the afternoon.</p> <p>Meditation Practice JW referred to the school's meditation practice and to the positive feedback that she had received on this. She said that it was to be replicated in another school.</p>	SD/GC



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	<p>Departure of Jon Wood (Area East Adviser) CA said he was disappointed to learn of the resignation of JonW and said that he had been a real asset to the school. All governors wished Jon well for the future.</p> <p>Foundation Governor Resignation CA announced the resignation of Athalia Stephens as at 10th March 2017.</p>	
9	<p><u>Items for next Agenda:</u> No suggested topics</p>	
10	<p><u>Future Meetings</u> Date of next ESG: 16th May 2017 @ 1.30pm Date of next LGB: 24th May 2017 @ 5.30pm</p>	

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Action	Owner	Page Ref:
Regarding governors page on website – the completed version should be sent to LT to upload onto the school's website	JW	5
Regarding governor biographies – 140 word max biographies to be sent to the clerk	HB/SD	5
Regarding newspaper article – another article serving as a recruitment piece to be written	CA	7
Regarding average number of governing body members – CAST guidance to be sent to Clerk	TS	7
Regarding school newsletter – mention the need for recruitment of governors in next school newsletter	FG	7
Regarding Competency Framework for Governance – guidance to be sent to Clerk	TS	11
Regarding CAST Health and Safety Policy – upload to website	FG/LV	11
Regarding the drafting of the SDP - two governors would work alongside SLT	SD/GC	12