

ST MARTIN'S CE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL
GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

FULL GOVERNING BOARD - VIRTUAL		DATE:	17th October 2022
CHAired BY: John Clements (JC)		CLERKED BY: Jacqueline Brooks (JB)	
GOVERNORS PRESENT:		Also Present:	
Steph Harvey (SH) John Clements (JC) Russ Green (RG) Liz Kane (LK) Jennifer Elliott (JE)			
APOLOGIES: Gemma Tozer-Howe (GTH)			
Absent without apology:			

Governor questions are highlighted in grey

Agenda Items	
1.	<p><u>Opening Prayer & Welcome</u></p> <p>1. Opening Prayer taken by JC.</p>
2.	<p><u>Apologies and sanctions of absence.</u></p> <p>1. GTH had sent apologies which were sanctioned by the GB.</p>
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest & Correspondence</u></p> <p>1. No declarations of interest.</p> <p>2. No correspondence.</p>
4.	<p><u>Approval of minutes from last meeting (19.9.22) and update on actions</u></p> <p>1. Agreed as accurate by the Full GB - to be signed by the Chair when next in school.</p> <p>2. Update on actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1 – partly completed. Attendance issues are now being managed by AH. Action: JC to receive update from SH on safeguarding audit 21-22 action plan. • Action 2 – JB asked for the views from the GB on closing the Jackie Box Memorial Fund and donating the remaining monies held. The Board continues to not have capacity to undertake its own fundraising and the previously given donations are no longer received. Decision: The GB agreed to close the account. <p>Actions: JB to confirm process for closing account and to liaise with Sheila Watson to confirm if/how the remaining money can be donated to Vienysen.</p>

- Action 3 – in process. This is planned for 5.12.22 GB meeting. **Action: JC to confirm documentation for GB self-evaluation exercise which needs to be circulated with JB by 22.11.22.**
- Action 4 – completed
- Action 5 – In process. This will be approved at the Full GB meeting on 7.11.22.
- Action 6 – completed
- Action 7 – completed
- Action 8 – completed
- Action 9 – completed
- Action 10 – completed
- Action 11 – completed
- Action 12 – completed
- Action 13 – completed

5. Headteacher Report and Self-Evaluation Statement

1. Questions to SH on Headteacher Report

JC noted the increase in the percentage of SEND pupils and asked if the school was able to challenge DCC regarding the continuing delays in funding decisions and in funding being received.

SH advised that there had been a large intake of pupils last year generally and further to this, numbers of children with EHCPs continue to rise. The school currently has more EHCP decisions pending. SH advised the GB that she has raised her concerns about the ongoing SEND backlog with Jackie Ross, DCC SEND Services Director and how the backlog impacts significantly on SH being able to make strategic planning decisions around staffing etc. as funding levels have not been confirmed.

JC suggested escalating the concerns if there is no response from Jackie Ross. The GB agreed with supporting the school in challenging these issues and noted the impact this is having for both staff and pupils. SH advised that she has raised her concerns with multiple Service Leads at DCC but there are no responses or changes. In the meantime, this also means that nothing is happening for the children in terms of finalizing EHCPs and/or receiving funding.

JE asked how the funding delays had impacted upon staff recruitment and recruitment decisions. SH explained that plans to recruit another teaching assistant have had to be put on hold – until money has been defined and confirmed as allocated, SH does not know if the school can sustainably afford to recruit.

The GB discussed that a significant amount of money is being spent on the current Year 3 but that this is due to it being a cohort with eleven children with EHCPs. Without the level of money and support allocated to that year group, the children would dysregulate, anxieties would increase, and progress would reduce.

SH raised with the GB that SEND pupil admission consultations from DCC do not seem to be meaningful and gave a recent example where both St. Martin's and external services agreed a child's needs would be best met by specialist provision, but DCC did not support this and allocated the child a place at St. Martin's.

The GB discussed how the Hub is working and the impact it has for the children – it is essentially providing alternative provision within a mainstream school setting. SH advised that there are issues around recruitment – a TA could be recruited this year but that would lead to a redundancy process next year.

JC acknowledged the cost that exists in running the Hub but noted the impacts around progress being made by Hub pupils and the difference it makes for other classes. JC observed that individual progress made by Hub pupils is closely monitored and asked how the less quantitative benefits were

being measured and assessed (e.g., differences for those in other classes). JC also asked what the likely consequences would be if the Hub had to be disbanded due to costs.

SH advised that without the Hub the school would likely have to seek alternative external provision for some pupils, which could lead to increased numbers of suspensions. Challenging behaviour would be likely to increase along with pupil absence. The school is not able to use part-time timetables to support pupils. SH and RG are assessing which children should be able to work towards returning to mainstream classes. In the meantime, data reviewed for the Hub shows a huge reduction in part-time timetables, suspensions and absence issues.

SH advised that teaching assistants in the rest of the school are able to focus on providing interventions as opposed to managing behaviour which had been the case prior to the Hub being established. This is of great value to the rest of the school.

The GB discussed that if the number of children receiving provision in the Hub were in another, specialist, setting, they would have three times the amount of funding given to St. Martin's and there would be four members of staff plus a teacher. In the Hub, there is only RG and two teaching assistants, and the children do not receive high level funding from DCC.

RG met with the leader of specialist provision at another setting recently who confirmed that their key priority has to be the mental well-being of the pupils, before curriculum and academic progress. This is the same approach taken at St. Martin's, to ensure children feel safe and in a position to be able to learn. SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) steps are narrated individually for children alongside their academic progress. RG advised that they are able to evidence progress being made against the defined aims within EHCPs, and also gave an example of how those in the Hub following the whole school Phonics programme demonstrated there being parity between the Hub and the rest of the school.

JC asked what the next steps will be and how the GB could add value.

SH stated that it would be important to evidence the GB's ownership, support and commitment to the alternative provision that the Hub provides. The GB carried out a review of the Hub last year and its findings were very positive. JC confirmed that he would be reflecting this in the GB's Annual Impact Statement for 21-22, which he is in the process of finalizing.

Risk Register

The GB discussed the following:

- Nursery competition in Cranbrook is unlikely to be an issue until 2024. The nursery at St. Martin's is full for this year.
- Pay rises are deserved but will have a definite impact on an on-going basis
- Succession planning needs to be revisited, especially for roles where there is only one person e.g., caretaker
- Further discussion will be undertaken around potential risks regarding maternity cover costs and likelihood of job shares.
- SEND funding remains a risk but had been discussed earlier in item 5.1.
- Recruitment and retention are an issue – the school is working to support a positive ethos and staff wellbeing. However, staff asked to manage with fewer resources could potentially lead to staff questioning how they feel about continuing in the role.

JE raised that it is important to also consider SH's work/life balance and what is being asked of her.

Parental Engagement

JC asked whether there were any updates on the parental engagement strategy. SH advised that a parent consultation is planned for the second half of the autumn term. Parent volunteer numbers are growing at the school. SH is also working on recruiting reading volunteers from the local community and not just parents. AH has been engaging with families regarding attendance. BT has added St.

	<p>Martin's into the national school lottery and the contribution that St. Martin's will receive already exceeds the original goal amount set.</p> <p>LK asked what the anticipated lottery income was. SH advised that if over a year 50 people maintained their involvement than the school would receive £1200.</p> <p><u>2. School Self-Evaluation Statement</u> This had been circulated to the GB prior to the meeting. Governors noted that progress against key items from the last OfSTED inspection are recorded here, and this evidences which actions have been taken.</p> <p>It was noted that the Reading Policy is in the process of being updated.</p> <p>JE suggested that the EY curriculum be displayed as the St. Martin's cross on the website as it had been previously.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p><u>1. Budget Monitor</u> LK advised that last year's surplus will be mostly spent this year, with a projected £26000 remaining at the end of the year. This is due to known increases for pay rises and increased heating costs. The real impact of these increases will be able to be seen in early 2023.</p> <p>JC asked about the increased allocation of fund for ICT and the reasoning for this. SH advised that the school has had to explore how it will proceed when the current lease for the Promethean Boards ends. There are different options available to the school. Some iPads also need to be replaced to allow a particular programme to continue to be used.</p> <p>Governors noted that key interventions have been ring-fenced and acknowledged that although these do come at a cost, they are impactful for the pupils.</p> <p>LK asked whether the funds being considered for the extension building work had now been diverted. JC confirmed that after finding that the quotes were prohibitive, the funds were diverted into other areas of the school.</p> <p><u>2. Funding Consultation</u> LK advised that the school had agreed with the proposed pupil funding increase amount and had disagreed with the model that included top-slicing for services. DCC services are now either purchased as a whole block or not at all. None of the models were disadvantageous or advantageous for the school.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>OfSTED preparation</u></p> <p>1. Key information in the form of example questions and answers had been circulated. SH will update this and share with governors to ensure their knowledge is kept up to date.</p> <p>The GB discussed the importance of being able to articulate their sources of information and the triangulation of evidence. Governors will be expected to be able to talk about actions they have taken in response to observations they make during their work, and to talk about the impacts/changes that may have arisen as a result of their input. SH suggested that when governors come into school and meet with staff, they could ask the question: "how has me coming into today helped?".</p> <p>OfSTED training notes from JE have been shared with the GB, and JB continues to update the documentation in the OfSTED folder on GovernorHub.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Governance</u></p> <p><u>1. Confirm focus of training sessions 16.1.212 and 24.4.22.</u> This was agreed as follows:</p>

- 16.1.21 – AH and NP on using and understanding FFT (part 1)
- 24.2.22 - (1) Safeguarding Update from JW (2) AH on FFT (part 2)

It was agreed that JW will provide individual Level 2 Safeguarding training to new governors as part of their induction. SH suggested that there could be in-school training around talking to children in school and monitoring school aspects with children.

2. Confirm annual review of declarations of interest 22-23 completed

This has been completed.

3. Review of Virtual Meeting Protocol

This was reviewed and re-approved with no amendments.

4. Approval of GB Annual Impact Statement 21-22

This is in process and will be approved at the Full GB meeting on 7.11.22.

5. GB Self-Evaluation Exercise Planning

This is in process and will be placed on the agenda for the Full GB Meeting on 5.12.22.

6. Collate governor impacts from this term

Noted as follows:

- JE has spent time in the Early Years unit, undertaking her monitoring role
- JE has attended and contributed to the ETHOS Group
- GTH has spent time in school, meeting with staff and completing Lead Governor work for Data and Curriculum
- LK has attended the Funding Consultation event and training on Pupil Premium
- JC has covered vacant governor roles and has been undertaking SEND and Staffing work as well as his Lead for Safeguarding role.
- JC as Chair has been supporting Steph with a variety of issues.
- SH has noticed that governors need to discuss their roles with her less – they have more confidence in proactively undertaking their work.

(RG left the meeting)

9. Safeguarding

1. Key Points for governors and governor responsibilities in KCSiE 2022

A summary sheet of new responsibilities for governors around how online checks are carried out by the school was circulated to the GB prior to the meeting. SH shared the approach used by the OVF schools, where a letter is sent out to candidates summarizing how safer recruitment is adhered to and which processes and checks are undertaken. JC has already had discussions with BT as to how online checks could be carried out, but further clarification is required.

Action: JC to discuss online checks further with BT and methods for notifying candidates of processes used.

10. Policies

1. Behaviour Policy

The GB noted that updated guidance for behaviour, suspensions and exclusions was published by the DfE in September 2022. The policy has been updated to reflect the new guidance.

Decision: The GB approved the updated Behaviour policy

Actions: JB to add updated policy to website, update policy review schedules and ensure correct version is in internal policies folder.

11.	<p><u>Discussion: 'How has this meeting benefited our children and contributed to the Christian distinctiveness of the school?'</u></p> <p>These were identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are significant concerns for the school at the moment and the GB is showing it understands this and is not shying away from meeting these challenges so that children can still benefit • Reflections on the budget were taken with a focus on the best impacts for children • Active governance is happening as governors continue to fulfil their roles and spend time in school
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<u>ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING</u>		
<u>Action</u>	<u>Person responsible</u>	<u>Date to be completed by</u>
1. Receive update from SH on safeguarding audit 21-22 action plan.	JC	5.12.22
2. Confirm process for closing Jackie Box Memorial Fund and to liaise with Sheila Watson to confirm if/how the remaining money can be donated to Vienysen.	JB	5.12.22
3. Confirm with JB which documentation for GB self-evaluation exercise needs to be circulated to the GB.	JC	22.11.22
4. Discuss online checks further with BT and methods for notifying candidates of processes used.	JC	5.12.22
5. Add updated Behaviour policy to website, update policy review schedules and ensure correct version is in internal policies folder.	JB	7.11.22

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

- The GB agreed to close the Jackie Box Memorial Fund account.
- The GB reviewed and re-approved the Virtual Meeting Protocol
- The GB reviewed and approved the updated Behaviour Policy

Next meeting: Monday, 7th November 6-8pm – in school

Signed as accurate by the Chair:

Name of Chair:

Date: