



MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING OF ST OSWALD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON THURSDAY 8th DECEMBER 2022 AT 4.30PM AT THE SCHOOL

PRESENT

Anthony Hegarty – Chair and Foundation Governor
Mary Walsh – Headteacher
Cheryl Kirk – Foundation Governor
Ruth Hill – Foundation Governor
Tracy Gentle – Staff Governor
Colin Flood- Parent Governor
Cheryl Kirk- Parent Governor
Graham Manley- Foundation Governor

Also Present

Ian Strom – School Business Manager
Donna Hay – Deputy Headteacher
Lynn Hindley- English Lead
Scott Petley – Clerk

22/FG01 WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Action

All attendees were welcomed to the meeting. The Chair led the Opening Prayer.

22/FG02 MEMBERS PRESENT AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Joanne Jones and June Simm.

22/FG03 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

- I. Mary Walsh- employed at the school also with family member in school.
- II. Tracy Gentle- employed at the school.
- III. Donna Hay- employed at the school.
- IV. Ian Strom- employed at the school.

22/FG03 NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items for any other business.

22/FG04 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th July 2022 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

I. Accuracy

Mary Walsh proposed that the minutes were a true and accurate record, and this was seconded by Ruth Hill. This was agreed.

II. Matters Arising

Mary Walsh updated governors on the following:

- a) KS2 SATS papers were checked for pupils who did not receive a scaled score of 99. There were no changes after checking.
- b) Packed lunches are no longer brought into school in EYFS and KS1. This has been a success and the response has been mainly positive.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes of 7th July 2022 that would not be included in other agenda items.

22/FG06 COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Resources Committee 17th November 2022

Mary Walsh provided a report back and update from the Resources Committee.

- Increased energy costs and pay awards have placed considerable pressure on school budgets. A plan is in place to manage this but a potential deficit is currently predicted in years 2 and 3.
 - o A deficit recovery meeting has been attended by Liverpool City Council, Anthony Hegarty, and Ian Strom. The outcome of this meeting was that there was immediate concern of the financial situation of the school, however budgets had not been allocated and government grants not been allocated so school would not know final budget issues until February/March 2023. To give an idea of local and national context, around 50% of schools are predicting deficit budgets in the coming years.
 - o Anthony Hegarty added that the school faces uncertainties at the moment most notably the financial situation, academisation and increased pressures on school life such as attendance. In light of this, governor meetings should be face to face moving forward and governors should engage with training where needed to offer sufficient challenge and support to the school.
- The school has explored the preferred option for their MIS package and the decision was to move forward with Arbor. Work is now underway to begin migrating over to the new system. Training will be provided for staff in January. The finance system will be migrated over in January ready for the new financial year.

- Parents have started submitting applications for the 30-hour nursery provision offer. 9 applications have been received so far.

Governor Challenge

Governors challenged the following points:

1. When will staff be made aware of the current financial situation?

Mary Walsh responded as follows:

1. The situation is already apparent to staff particularly when asking questions about pay increases and staff currently employed on short-term contracts questioning if these contracts will be extended. There is some anxiety amongst staff but it would cause unnecessary concern if a formal meeting was arranged to discuss this at this stage.

b) Standards Committee 6th October 2022.

Graham Manley briefly went through the minutes but his main emphasis was on the fact that governors had missed a wonderful and informative maths presentation by Mrs McBrien. He commended the quality of the presentation and work that has taken place on the maths curriculum. The particular strengths were the direction of the curriculum and the positive impact the approach was having on SEND students. Student Voice shows that maths is increasingly the students favourite lesson which is very different from several years ago. Students are growing in confidence and this is a direct result of the mastery approach employed by the school.

Governors accepted and agreed the committee reports.

22/FG07 READING PRESENTATION

Lynn Hindley presented an update on the work that is underway on reading in the school. The main points were as follows:

- I. There has been a lot of change to the curriculum in the past 2 years. Much of this has been a result of the new DfE framework released in January 2022.
- II. The focus of the changes has been on vocabulary, the types of books the children read, access to books in the school library, systematic phonics and the use of decodable books.
- III. Quality assurance is completed by the phonics, reading and writing leads and is based on the questions typically asked by inspectors during an Ofsted inspection.
- IV. Reading skills across KS2 are developed through reciprocal reading strategies and cross-curricular comprehension.
- V. The reading curriculum is completely mapped out from nursery through to Y6 with story time, class reading, interventions and comprehension included.
- VI. Read Write Inc is being fully utilised and has been very successful, particularly in EYFS with many students progressing through the scheme faster than expected.
- VII. Learning walks of the teaching groups have taken place and have been very positive.
- VIII. Phonics teaching takes place in all year groups inclusive of KS2 for children who are still working below age related expectation.
- IX. All staff have received phonics training this term and during INSET. Coaching and mentoring is given by the school's phonics lead.
- X. Phonics has proven very beneficial for EAL students.

- XI. There have been some minor problems in KS1 with fluency but this is now developing.
- XII. The SIP has carried out a Shallow Paddle in reading. During the visit, they looked at policies, data and spoke to the children. They are very impressed with the work seen.
- XIII. Moving forward, the priorities are:
 - a. Continuing coaching and mentoring particularly with new staff.
 - b. One-to-one tutoring will commence in KS2 after successful implementation at KS1 this term.
 - c. Regular assessments.
 - d. Developing fluency through reading.
 - e. Promoting reading for pleasure further. Author visits have been planned this year to support this.

Governors thanked Lynn Hindley for her presentation and for her and her teams work on developing the reading curriculum. Lynn Hindley left the meeting.

22/FG08 HEADTEACHER REPORT

The Headteacher Report was shared with governors on Governorhub prior to the meeting. Specific reports and data returns relating to each area were also uploaded to Governorhub;

- I. School roll. There are currently 624 students on roll and numbers are rising. This will further support the budget.
 - a. 14 pupils have joined the school since the end of November. There have been 6 leavers due to families relocating.
 - b. Numbers across most year groups are high except in reception but this is a trend across the city.
 - c. There are 2 students dual registered at alternative provision. One at Sacred Heart Behaviour Unit and one at a language support unit.
 - d. Pupil Premium numbers are rising. In Y5 and Y6, PP represents over half of the year group. The rise is the result of schemes such as the winter fuel vouchers where families inform us of their circumstances in order to access them.
- II. SEND Report. SEND needs are growing. There are currently 116 students on the SEND register. This is partly the result of parents identifying potential conditions that then need to be followed up on in school.

Governor Challenge

Governors challenged the following points:

- 1. Are there any other reasons for the increase in SEND students?

Mary Walsh responded as follows:

- 1. The feeling among staff is that mental health is playing an increasing part. There are a number of students displaying signs of anxiety and depression. There are also situations of parental issues affecting students' mental health in school.

- II. Safeguarding report.
 - a. There have been 8 new Child Protection cases raised.
 - b. There have been 0 new Child in Need cases raised.
 - c. There have been 3 new EHATs raised.
 - d. There have been 0 allegations against members of staff referred to the LADO.

- e. There are 6 students registered as looked after by the local authority.
- f. There are 10 ongoing Child Protection Plans
- g. There are 6 ongoing Child in Need Plans.
- h. There are 9 ongoing EHATs.
- i. There have been 8 Operation Encompass notifications.
- j. Specific safeguarding training for governors has been offered by school facilitated by SIL. Governors agreed to undertake the training. Mary Walsh will provide a date for training.

Governor Challenge

Governors challenged the following points:

1. Is the Single Central Record up to date?

Mary Walsh responded as follows:

1. The SCR is currently in the process of being updated as some DBS certificates are due to expire. Some members of staff are still due to bring in copies of necessary paperwork to update.

III. Behaviour.

- a. There have been 180 incidents reported on CPOMS.
- b. This data has been skewed by a small number of students- 50 of these incidents are due to 5 students.
- c. There are a high number of incidents in Y3 and work is underway to ascertain the reason for this. This may be the result of inconsistencies in reporting by staff.
- d. Analysis shows that behaviour for learning is not an issue. Issues typically arise during unstructured times of the day such as break and lunchtimes.
- e. In Year 6, 3 children with EHCPs have skewed the data.
- f. There have been 2 sexually related incidents. One resulted in a risk assessment being completed, the other was related to inappropriate language and was resolved by contacting parents.
- g. There has been 1 exclusion of a Y1 child. There was a risk that this may need to become a permanent exclusion. This student is now attending Alternative Provision and an EHCP is being accepted.

IV. School Improvement. The SEF has been completed and uploaded to Governorhub for governors to provide feedback. The school SIP has agreed the judgements.

V. Staffing and Development.

- a. There are currently 2 members of staff on maternity leave.
- b. There have been 5 new members of staff joining the school so far this year including 2 ECTs. All have settled in well.
- c. There is 1 member of staff leaving this term. This will be a big loss to the school. Temporary recruitment has begun through agency and there is currently 1 promising candidate found through a supply agency.
- d. Teacher appraisals have been completed and targets shared with governors. Teaching assistant appraisals have started and targets have been set.
- e. Many CPD activities have taken place to support the School Development Plan.
- f. Wellbeing activities have been planned this year such as 'Wellbeing Wednesdays' and shopping days. Staff have been very appreciative of these initiatives.
- g. Absence. Data shows that St Oswalds is in the lowest 20% of schools nationally for staff absence. The attendance policy is in place and being followed. A meeting will take place in January to further emphasise the policy with staff.

- h. Smart Clinic a health provider has been considered as a resource for staff to access services such as virtual GP appointments, counselling services, physiotherapy, free flu jabs and eye tests. This service also includes occupational health assessments so will replace existing arrangements. The initial financial outlay appears costly but will pay for itself with improved staff attendance.

VI. Engagement.

- a. A lot of activities have already taken place this term such as parents' evenings, tea parties, nativities and class assemblies.
- b. Enrichment activities are planned for all year groups such as museum trips.
- c. Almost £1000 was raised by the recent Macmillan coffee morning.
- d. The school choir has sung at 2 care homes and at B & Q.
- e. The schools' social media channels are very active particularly Twitter and the Class Dojo scheme.

VII. Building Development. This has stalled due to issues with tenders. It was initially planned to commence improvement works to the roof but this was not cost effective. Due to issues with tenders, the deadline for funding was missed so this will likely commence during the spring early summer.

VIII. Curriculum Development.

- a. RE continues to be an integral part of school
- b. The Mastery approach is being developed within school and focuses on secure understanding before students move on to new concepts.
- c. Adaptive teaching has replaced 'differentiation' in the curriculum. This is a better strategy for supporting students which also reduces staff workload.
- d. Keeping up, catching up is in place as an intervention strategy to help keep students on track.

IX. Quality of Learning

- a. This is linked to the mastery approach.
- b. The focus of this is on basic skills.
- c. School is currently meeting or beating national and local figures BY THE END OF ks2.
- d. Many SLAs have been purchased to support the curriculum, such as Spanish and PE. Cycling has been a large focus this term in several year groups.

Governor Challenge

Governors challenged the following points:

- 1. Will these enrichment activities be able to continue with the current financial situation?

Mary Walsh responded as follows:

- 1. This will need to be reviewed but won't be necessary this year. These activities can sometimes be paid for using specific funding so have minimal impact on school budget. Ultimately there needs to be a balance between finances and providing a high-quality educational experience for students.

X. Progress.

- a. The school assessment practice has moved to two data collection points. Read, Write inc assessments, Opening Worlds and end of topic assessments take place at

the completion of a unit. Intervention assessments take place after the 6-8 week programmes.

- b. The IDSR released in autumn has been reviewed, there are not many significant comments but does demonstrate many strengths including amazing progress in reading, writing and maths. It also demonstrates the context within which the school operates; the school is in the 4th quintile (second highest) of deprivation measures with the children living in mainly the 5th quintile.
- c. SIP visits have taken place and have been very supportive. Shallow Paddles have been undertaken in Maths and English.

XI. EYFS. Presented by Donna Hay.

- a. The 30 hour provision has started. The impact of this will be evident next year.
- b. 'Understanding the world' has been identified as an area for improvement. Further opportunities for focus and skills progression have been incorporated into the curriculum.
- c. Language Screen assessments identified that 70% of nursery children have speech below the expected level or require additional support. Interventions to target this have begun. This is a high priority as it will impact on all other areas of the curriculum.
- d. Class Dojo has enabled increased engagement with parents.

Governors thanked Mary Walsh and Donna Hay for their reports and updates.

22/FG09 ACADEMISATION PROCESS INFORMATION

Anthony Hegarty updated governors on the current landscape of academisation.

- I. The Education White Paper is no longer being passed into law while the current government reviews the plans. This will mean that the process of academisation will likely slow down.
- II. Information on options for academisation have been shared on Governorhub.
- III. CMATs are looking to adopt a common Catholic ethos.
- IV. The proposed model of governance is not yet clear in CMATs.
- V. Academisation will remain a standing agenda item in future meetings as the landscape changes with new information from the government.

22/FG10 POLICIES

Copies of the policies requiring review by governors were shared on Governorhub prior to the meeting.

Governors agreed the following policies:

- Admissions policy
- Maths Bar Modelling policy
- Computing policy
- E-Safety policy
- English policy
- Geography policy
- History policy
- Maths policy
- PE policy

22/FG11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Full Governing Body is scheduled for Thursday 30th March 2023 at 4:30 PM.

There being no other business, the chair concluded the meeting at 18:30.