

MINUTES OF MEETING



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

School: Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
Meeting title: Autumn term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Monday, 13 November 2017, at 6.00 pm
Location: At the Parish Centre, 99 Carlton Hill

SCHOOL DISPLAY

Membership
'A' denotes absence

A	Mrs Ann Jackson
A	Mrs Antonietta Gardner
	Mrs Elisabeth Cooper - Chair
	Mrs Helen James
	Mr Joseph Wheat
	Mrs Karen Taylor - Headteacher
	Mrs Maria Molloy
	Mr Reg Carter – Vice Chair (acting chair this meeting)
	Mrs Trudy Clayson

In attendance
Emma Walton (clerk to the governors)
Richard Pearson (observer)

Reverend Wheat opened the meeting with a prayer.

GB/32/17 Apologies for absence Action

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Elisabeth Cooper and Mrs Antonietta Gardner. It was

resolved

that the governing body consent to these absences.

GB/33/17 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

The clerk drew governors' attention to the new combined form now available for download from GovernorHub. The clerk advised that all governors update their Register of Business Interest/Declaration of Eligibility form and pass on to the school administration for filing. **Governors**

GB/34/17 Review of membership

Governors received and noted the governing body membership list, which had been previously circulated.

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

- 1 x Co-opted governor vacancy
- 2 x Foundation governor vacancies
- 1 x Parent governor vacancy

It was noted that Mr Richard Pearson's term as a foundation governor had expired on 31st October 2017. Mr Pearson spoke to governors, explaining that he felt that

he should not take on a further term as a governor. For personal reasons Mr Pearson advised that he was unable to guarantee a sufficient level of attendance and commitment to the governing body of the school. The headteacher commented that Mr Pearson's IT knowledge and experience was a valuable asset to the governing body and the school. Governors thanked Mr Pearson for his invaluable contribution and asked if he would be prepared to continue to advise the school in IT matters on an informal basis. Mr Pearson confirmed that he was happy to do this.

Governors discussed the need to fill the vacancies on the governing body and it was **AGREED** that Reverend Wheat would appeal in the Parish for suitable candidates for foundation governor to come forward.

JW

GB/35/17 Determination of term of office for chair and vice-chair

It was

RESOLVED

that the term of office for chair and vice-chair should be one year, that is until the date of the meeting of the full governing body in Autumn 2018.

GB/36/17 Election of chair

Mrs Elisabeth Cooper, the preceding chair, was absent at this meeting but the headteacher confirmed that she had stated that she was happy to continue as chair if nominated.

Mrs Cooper was duly nominated, proposed and seconded as chair. There were no other nominations. It was unanimously

RESOLVED

that Mrs Cooper be re-appointed as the chair of the governing body.

GB/37/17 Election of vice-chair

Mr Carter was duly nominated, proposed and seconded as vice-chair. There were no other nominations. It was unanimously

RESOLVED

that Mr Carter be re-appointed as the vice-chair.

GB/38/17 Approval of minutes of summer term meeting

The minutes of the summer term meeting held on Monday, 5 June, 2017 at 6.00 pm, having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the chair.

Review of actions

Governors noted that, unless detailed below or otherwise on the agenda, all actions listed had been addressed appropriately.

GB/19/17 – governors agreed to delay election of a parent governor until foundation governors who were not parents had been appointed, otherwise the number of parent governors on the governing body would exceed the maximum ratio allowed.

Next FGB meeting

Action

GB/21/17 – with regard to the amount of detailed comparative data in the headteacher's report, governors advised that this was still ongoing, and discussions about the layout and content of the report between the headteacher and the governors would continue.

Next FGB meeting

GB/39/17 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

The chair confirmed that the minutes of the previous Finance and Personnel Committee dated XXX and the Pupils and Ethos Committee dated XXX had been previously circulated.

There were no matters arising.

The minutes of the Achievement and Curriculum Committee dated XXX had not yet been circulated and this was to be actioned by Janet Timewell.

JT

GB/40/17 Financial Reporting

The chair summarised the current financial situation as reported and discussed at the recent Finance and Personnel Committee, which was chaired by Mrs Gardiner.

He confirmed that the outturn for the previous year had been excellent, and the budget for this school year was sound and being managed extremely well. He commented that whilst it was early in the school year the budget looked on track for a positive year-end once again.

GB/41/17 Headteacher's report

The headteacher presented her report which had been previously distributed to governors.

The chair then invited governors to question the headteacher on any aspects of her report.

A governor **questioned** why the state of the playground surface was so poor following the recent remedial pipe works carried out by CPA. She commented that there was a large "hump" which presented a significant health and safety issue.

The headteacher replied that she had questioned David Burrows and CPA with regard to this and been informed by them that the hump was a normal consequence of the work and would "settle down" over time.

Governors were very unsatisfied with the response from CPA and it was AGREED that the chair would write to CPA expressing the unhappiness of the governing body and the school with the work and requesting an immediate remedying of the problem. This letter was to be copied to Ken Daley at the Diocese. Reverend Wheat advised the headteacher to discuss CPA's work with colleagues at other schools to advise and compare with their experiences.

Chair

HT

A governor **questioned** why assistant headteacher Andrea Burton did not appear on the Staffing 2017/18 table, and also asked the headteacher to clarify whether Mr Williams was full-time or part-time, as he was stated as part-time on the same table.

The headteacher advised that she had omitted Mrs Burton by mistake and she would add her to the table. The headteacher confirmed that Mr Williams was in fact full time and this was an error which would be corrected.

HT

A governor **questioned** whether having two part-time assistant head teachers rather than one full-time assistant headteacher was the best way to structure the senior management team going forwards. He suggested that the headteacher could draw up a report of positives and negatives with regard to having two part-time roles for the governors to review. Mrs Clayson commented that governors needed to be careful with regard to the wording of any questions raised by such a report, as the governing body must be wary of being discriminatory towards part-time workers.

The chair requested the headteacher to consider the senior management structure in time for discussion at the next Finance and Personnel Committee meeting, where the committee could firm up suggestions and costings in connection with this matter for consideration at the following full governing body meeting.

HT

The chair advised that he would raise this subject at his next Pax Christie Trust meeting for comment and suggestion by the Trust's board members.

Mrs Clayson advised the headteacher that she had some standard questions that she could send to her to assist in her consideration of the structure.

Chair

A governor **questioned** why the attendance figures detailed on page 15 of the headteacher's report were so poor.

TC

The headteacher replied that parents were continuing to take their children out of school on unauthorised absences for holidays in particular, and this was particularly noticeable around the beginning/end of term and half-term. The school was advising parents that this was unauthorised absence but this was having little noticeable effect.

The chair said that this level of absence was unacceptable and he asked if the school was fining parents for taking their children out of school? The headteacher advised that at the current time no parents had been fined. A governor questioned whether it was the school or the Local Authority's decision to fine, and Reverend Wheat advised that it was the school's decision to refer cases where they felt a fine was appropriate to the LA, who would then make the final decision.

Governors **AGREED** that the headteacher should draft a letter to all parents reminding them that unauthorised absences were unacceptable and that parents should always book holidays out of term-time, and also that parents should endeavour wherever possible to ensure that they booked dental and/or medical appointments out of school hours. The letter should advise parents that the school would have no choice but to refer cases of unauthorised absence to the LA if they continued at the present level.

HT

Mr Pearson (observer) asked what "GAP" stood for in the headteacher's report. The headteacher advised that this acronym referred to "Gedling Area Partnership", a team of people who provided schools within Gedling with support with pupil behaviour. GAP had been working to provide the school with support for a small number of pupils and also providing some workshops for parents of children at the school. Mr Pearson asked if this support was proving effective, and the headteacher replied that she thought it was working well, and parents had given her positive feedback.

A governor **questioned** the length of the report and the necessity of presenting all of the data within it at each full governing body meeting.

The headteacher advised that she did include some standard but updated data in each report, and she wanted to include this as she felt it was important that governors were aware of all data in case of queries from Ofsted. She asked if

governors would like an index so that they could more easily find what they wanted within each report. Governors advised that rather than so much narrative, they would prefer lists and bullet points. It was AGREED that the headteacher and governors would continue to look at the best way of presenting relative data, as stated elsewhere in these minutes.

The chair handed over the acting chair role to Reverend Wheat and left the meeting with apologies at 6.45 p.m.

A governor **questioned** whether it was necessary to allocate link governors for SMSC/British Values, PE and Humanities, which were showing as vacant on the headteacher's report. Reverend Wheat said that governors should be allocated for key areas agreed by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing body.

Mrs Clayton advised that she was now link governor for maths only and not RE as per the headteacher's report.

The headteacher advised governors that the sports grant had been extended for another school year.

Mr Pearson commented that voluntary contributions by parents towards the cost of school trips had been very low and had this improved at all? The headteacher advised that letters were being sent out much earlier to remind parents about the need for contributions and the situation had improved considerably.

GB/42/17 Review of:

Exam Results – nothing to report at this stage.

Admissions – the Admissions Policy had been cleared by the diocese and the Pax Christie Trust and was ACCEPTED by governors.

Draft SIP – this was detailed in the headteacher's report and feedback would be made at the next Achievement and Curriculum meeting.

GB/43/17 Update on appraisal process for headteacher and staff

The headteacher's appraisal had been carried out by Mr Adrian Francis.

The headteacher advised that all teaching staff's appraisals had been done.

Reverend Wheat commented that ALL staff should have appraisals and the headteacher agreed to organise a schedule for appraisals for non-teaching staff prior to the next Finance and Personnel Committee meeting in January.

HT

GB/43/17 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

The clerk presented the reports to the governing body.

Admission arrangements

Reverend Wheat advised that with regard to this report, admissions arrangements had already been dealt with.

Ofsted judgements – Key findings arising from good and outstanding schools being judged as requiring special measures

Governors discussed the report and were satisfied that they were aware of the issues raised and satisfied in respect of the school's situation at this time.

Fire Safety in School Premises

The clerk explained why this report had arisen and advised governors to look at the actions they may need to take to ensure that appropriate fire safety measures are in place.

Teachers' Pay Scales, September, 2017

The headteacher confirmed that the issue of teachers' pay scales had been dealt with at the recent Finance committee meeting and the decision had been recorded in the minutes. She confirmed that a response had already been sent to the LA.

GB/45/17 Safeguarding children in education governors' compliance checklist

The checklist had been completed following a recent safeguarding audit by the headteacher and Reverend Wheat. It had been agreed by Reverend Wheat with the headteacher that the checklist would be signed off following a safeguarding spot check which was to be carried out at the school imminently, and it would then be sent back to the Local Authority prior to 22nd December 2017.

JW/HT

It was CONFIRMED that all governors had attended the LA safeguarding training on 12th September 2017.

GB/46/17 Communication

From Chair: in the chair's absence, the headteacher advised that the chair had received a letter of complaint from a parent. The chair and headteacher had responded in writing to the parent, and no further action had been taken. (NB the parent had since removed the child to another school but this was due to the fact that the child's sibling was already at the other school and the child in question had been waiting for a place at the sibling's school for some time, and the removal was not related to the complaint.)

From Clerk: The clerk highlighted various articles from the most recent Governor Newsletter, including:

- Annual Governors' Conference – Saturday 10th March 2018, Eastwood Hall
- Updated for 2017 – "What governing boards should expect from school leaders and what school leaders should expect from governing boards" – NGA, ASCL, NAHT and LGA
- Government response to primary assessment consultations
- Admission consultations 2019/2020
- Replace of DPA with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 25 May 2018
- Safeguarding update
- School funding: revised national funding formula
- Early Years provision in schools

The clerk mentioned the Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future letter and document that were available on GovernorHub and encouraged governors to read it.

GB/47/17 Report from training co-ordinator including review of governor training requirements for 2017/18

All governors had recently attended safeguarding training as recorded in GB/45/17. There was nothing else to report at this time.

GB/48/17 Skills Audit – Feedback and Outcomes

Governors requested the headteacher to contact the diocese for the results of the most recent skills audit so this could be reviewed.

HT

GB/49/17 Governor Monitoring Visits

Mrs Gardner visited the school on 5th October 2017.

Mr Carter visited the school on 7th November 2017 for a SEN update with Andrea Burton.

Future visits are diaried in for 7th December for Reverend Wheat/Mrs James (RE) and Mrs Jackson (English).

GB/50/17 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Governing body impact on school improvement:

- Attendance letter being sent out to all parents
- Voluntary contributions towards school trips have increased
- Appraisals/performance management being opened up to all non-teaching staff
- Letter to CPS regarding unsatisfactory work to school playground

Holding the school's leaders to account:

- Reviewing the senior management team structure
- Questioning of the headteacher with regard to her report to governors

GB/51/17 Confirmation of dates for 2018

The governing body **agreed**

Spring term – Monday, 5th March, 2018 at 6.00 pm

Summer term – Monday, 4th June, 2018 at 6.00 pm

GB/52/17 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that all papers and reports be made available as necessary.

The meeting closed at 7.13 pm.

Signed (chair) Date 

