



St Nicholas provides a welcoming and inclusive learning environment at the heart of its community. We nurture, encourage and support all children, adults and their families to be the best as God intended. Following God's example of love and trust, we develop resilience and creativity in all we do.

Learning, loving and encouraging through Christ.

St Nicholas CE Primary Academy

Non-Confidential Minutes of the Governing Body Thursday, 12th February 2020 at 10am.

Governors Present: Mr. Brian Sullivan: Chair
Mr. Chris Dale (HT)
Mrs. Julie Brown (JB),
Mrs. Kerri Miller (KM),
Mrs. Hilary Andrews (School Business Manager),

Additional Attendees: Mr. Nick Morgan, Head of Governance & Estates Aquila Trust

Clerk: Mrs. Lorraine Bondzie-Mensah

PROCEDURAL MATTERS			ACTIONS
1	Welcome, Apologies and Prayer	The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting. NM led the Governing Body through prayer. Apologies were received and unanimously accepted from Mrs. Karen Gunn, Dr. Racheal Stone, Mrs. Victoria Turner.	
2	Declarations of Interest	The following declaration is relevant to today's meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BS: Chair of the Governing Body for John Mayne Church of England Primary School Biddenden, and for Greatstone Primary School. 	
3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 th December 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.	
4	Matters Arising	Governors reviewed the actions from the previous meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACTION: Governors to review the training notes added to GovernorHub by BS regarding PE. <p>Q1: Was there any indication given as to whether the Sports Premium will continue at its current level, next year?</p> <p>R1: No. It is likely to continue but returning to its original level of funding. The school and the LGB should develop an understanding of what the impact will be if the funding is cancelled in its entirety. It is recommended that schools should spend the current funding on resources and ensuring staff are well trained.</p> <p>HT: the main sports curriculum offer would be unaffected by a drop in funding but there may be a need to scale back some of the extra activities.</p>	ALL
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT			ACTIONS
5	Head Teacher Update	Last week, the school was closed on Thursday as there was a power cut in New Romney at 11:15. After 45 minutes the power had not returned and SLT assessed the impact on the school. Namely, the canteen could not provide school lunches and the fire door magnet locks + the fire alarms were compromised. The toilet system also relies on electric as it is not connected to mains drainage. The HT spoke to the CEO of the Trust and then closed the school. The HT was off site and when he returned there were only 8 children still waiting for collection and of those 8, 4 belonged to members of staff. It is clear that the cold and severe	



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<p>5.1</p>	<p>Staffing</p>	<p>weather protocols work well as the school had been cleared within 45 minutes. The HT has since wrote to the parents to explain the reasons for closure.</p> <p>The school is advertising for an Early Years teacher. SD has notified the school that she will not be returning from maternity leave and so the school will also need to recruit a KS1 leader to start in September. Interviews are taking place on 27th March.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to notify Clerk if they are available to join the interview panel.</p> <p>4 TAs have been appointed to support children in Year R but 1 has since withdrawn and the post will need to be re-advertised. Additional staffing costs are being fully met by HNF. CPD this term was a dance workshop and is a result of the feedback from staff's completed skills and competency questionnaires. There has been an unprecedented level of staff sickness this term which has had a particular impact on Year 3, more than other year groups.</p> <p>Q2: How did the school cover this absence?</p> <p>R2: Foundation stage have the capacity to provide cover internally as a TA is also a qualified teacher. Year 3 was covered by a HLTA and the TA role was filled with supply. As a result, governors can expect to see an increase in supply costs but this will be offset by insurance.</p> <p>The process for managing staff wellness is managed by SLT who closely monitor any absence which may be approaching a key trigger and take appropriate action as outlined in the school's policies. However, teachers may be given support at any time depending on the needs of the individual. The Deputy Head is a Mental Health First Aider and the school is committed to protecting the wellbeing of all staff and pupils. The current system for support is under review as part of the school's work towards accreditation for a wellbeing award. Regardless of the reason for illness, there are times when SLT may recommend a referral to Occupational Health. This has worked well in the past as it has given the staff an opportunity to have a longer consultation time then they would normally have with a GP and on two occasions there has been an opportunity for the OHT to challenge the course of treatment currently being received by the employee. This has led to a better treatment plan being put in place for those individuals. The school is also engaging in a pilot scheme with Shepway Sports which includes CPD for staff. This programme will offer classes in term 5 and 6 for Year 5 on yoga, mindfulness and more. It is hoped that this programme can be rolled out to the whole school next academic year.</p> <p><i>The remaining discussion was deemed confidential and recorded separately.</i></p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Specialist Resource Provision (SRP)</p>	<p>Since the last FGB meeting, the Chair and HT have met with Louise Hickman (LH) and a copy of the minutes from this meeting were shared with Governors in advance of the meeting. This provided an opportunity to discuss more in depth, the concept of an SRP and why it should be located at St Nicholas. The HT</p>	



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acknowledged that historically, a large number of SEN children within the school had struggled to settle and did not do so well. However, there have been considerable strides forward and after several visits to the school, LH had noted the excellent work being delivered in the nurture room and support being offered around the school. She made a recommendation that the school develop an SRP and the HT discussed it in greater detail with SLT.

Further discussions with the Local Authority and the Trust Board evidence that this is the right place to have a primary SRP. This should never be a resource to place children which other schools want to get rid of but must be a provision aimed at supporting them into mainstream secondary provision or to seek the right provision for the child's needs. KCC met with the Trust Board at their meeting on 5th February 2020; the Trustees are ultimately accountable for the provision. The Board discussed the risks associated with opening an SRP and the requirement for assurances from the LA on funding and capital investment. Trustees are supportive of an SRP at this school. Geographically, they are also aware of the local need and how the school has the necessary transport links and capacity to provide this support. However, there are clearly more things to be considered over the coming months. The LA are keen to get things moving and discussed the possibility of a "soft" opening with children already on the school's roll. In addition, there is an expectation that the Governing Board will ensure it also has the skills and capacity to manage an SRP. A significant amount of money, per pupil placement, is being provided and the LGB must ensure the best possible standards of education are being delivered to these children. Governors must also consider the long term risks of opening an SRP. This is not a temporary measure; it will be a permanent, established provision. The children could be in the provision for 7 years and are to be an integral part of the school. The LA and the Trust's CEO must now develop a business case for the provision and there will need to be a community consultation. There were some reservations from KCC as to the issue that St Nicholas had been a failing school for the best part of 15 years and they required assurances that there had been enough long term improvements to ensure this provision is successful. The HT assured Governors that the school is now better equipped to manage the needs of all its children. KCC confirmed there is no other community in Kent where SRP children can attend both primary and secondary provision without the need to travel outside of their local area. Children will be allocated to the provision based on their EHCP, which will name the school as the setting which best meets their needs. A specialist teacher will need to be recruited.

A SRP Planning Team will consist of the Chair, the HT, the SBM and NM from the Trust. Lee Round from KCC will visit to carry out a site feasibility study. The key issue will be that KCC see this school as a 1.5 form entry school but in order to meet the needs of the children, the LGB agreed the school could operate with 14 classes. In order for Members to release capital investment from KCC, the school will need to build a strong case of why these 14 classes must continue and additional accommodation must be provided for the SRP.



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		<p>The opportunity to develop an SRP continues to be positive but considerations still need to be given to developing its own exit and entrance, as well as ensuring there is sufficient funding to make it fit for purpose. The development of the provision should never be to the detriment of the children already in school.</p> <p>The LGB unanimously agreed to continue to move forward with the development of a SRP.</p> <p>Q5: What sort of documentation will be provided which outlines the school and KCC's engagement in the SRP?</p> <p>R5: There will be terms of engagement and this agreement will be reviewed annually; however, this will not change the funding. There is a depreciable scale of funding as the total number of children increases; as there is an expectation that there will be economies of scale. KCC will front load funding to cover initial costs and then it will be profiled more evenly in future years. KCC also asked for the current financial health of the school and needed to know to what extent the school could continue to support these children if funding rates were changed in the future.</p> <p>ACTION: HT to circulate a model agreement to Governors. The Trust already have an SRP at Reculver and this agreement may be available for circulation but Governors should be mindful that this is a different type of provision to the one planned here.</p> <p>The HT will be completing the Expression of Interest forms over the half term.</p>	HT
7	<p>Governance Matters</p>	<p>Membership – Suzanne Bader has resigned and Suzanne Guest has self-disqualified as a result of non-attendance. Therefore, there are now 2 vacancies on the Governing Body for a parent governor and a staff governor.</p> <p>ACTION: HT to begin the process for staff and parent governor elections.</p> <p>The Chair of the Trustees is also the current parish priest and due to a conflict of interest is unable to be the ex-officio on the LGB but is seeking volunteers to join from the church community. A consultation has taken place to join the Lydd and New Romney benefices and this may provide the LGB with an opportunity to draw members from a wider area. The merged parishes will be known as the Romney Marsh benefice. The LGB are mindful of the need to also recruit a Governor with SRP experience and an advert will be placed on Inspiring Governance by NM.</p> <p>Monitoring Reports and notes of visits for December were circulated via GovernorHub. The School Improvement Partner visits have not identified any issues not already outlined in the SIP. The HT was off site during the last visit and it shows what good progress the school has made, when a good visit report is still issued in his absence. Her review of the changed English curriculum was very positive and noted the school is delivering above national standards.</p> <p>The HT expressed his sincere gratitude to all those involved in support of the SIPartner visit. The SBM is very good at running the fabric of the school and this</p>	HT



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		<p>enables SLT to focus on the core purpose of supporting the educational needs and welfare of the pupils within school. Governors noted there have been letters of commendation received from the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, outlining outstanding financial and site. The Health & Safety portal is consistently at a high rate of compliance and there are only ever a very small number of actions outstanding at any given time.</p> <p>Q6: [To HA] In the past, as part of governor monitoring, the list of actions on the portal has seemed quite large?</p> <p>R6: The actions are planned into the work of the site team and are at an achievable level. Actions appear as part of a timed framework, of which the school are already aware and have built these actions into their schedule. The list of actions outstanding, as in they have exceed this timeframe, are very few.</p>	
8	Finance	<p>The current financial position of the school is that it continues to run with good balances and the long term financial position of the school is healthy; helped by an increasing roll. The school continues to be on track to meet its year end predications and will use less of the rollover than originally anticipated.</p> <p>Q7: Has the Diocese released the money they owe the school?</p> <p>R7: No. After this meeting, NM and HA are writing the proposal to draw down these funds which will be used to improve the water management issues in school. Access to the funds now requires a formalised bid which will be submitted on 25th February. This money will be a contribution towards the significant cost of improvement.</p> <p>There are planned changes to the statutory requirements of Sex Education later this year and the HT took part in a meeting with other schools to discuss strategies moving forward. Both Kingsnorth and Reculver primary schools use a very good system called Jigsaw which the HT would like to recommend to the LGB. This is not in the current budget and whilst the Trust have offered to see if they can negotiate a trust-wide discount, the current cost is £1900. It provides an excellent scheme of work for 2020. Every lesson plan is written so could be used immediately, reducing the impact on staff workload and could be a useful tool when presenting to parents the key changes to the curriculum. APPROVED</p> <p>The kitchen contract is due for renewal in June. The options for the school are = stay with the current supplier, tender for a new supplier via frameworks or consider taking the kitchen supply in house. The HT's preferred option is to manage the kitchen within school as this would provide an opportunity to increase the quality and proportion size of the meals. Management of the kitchen is currently run based on costs. The HT requested approval to further investigate taking on the kitchens and he confirmed the Trust's CFO has no objections. The school would TUPE over the current staff. The impact might be on other schools within the Trust who may be benefiting from a trust-wide discount which might now decrease if schools withdraw from the agreement. It is possible that the school could help smaller schools such as Brenzett by including them in the provision of meals from our kitchen. Governors approved</p>	



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		<p>in principle and require it to return to the LGB for consideration after further investigation and before a final decision is made in June.</p> <p>Q8: How many kitchen staff would be affected by this change? R8: 5. The school would continue to employ all 5 members of staff. They currently cook 200 meals a day and this is viable with 5 members of staff. Governors are concerned about managing staff sickness in the kitchen and the cost effectiveness of finding cover internally. This will be included as part of the investigation work carried out by HA. The equipment is already owned by the school so any expenditure might be in purchasing small cost items such as cutlery.</p>	
9	Risk Management	<p>The Governing Body received a presentation / training on GRC-1 from NM, which outlined the mechanics of how the system works as well as the Governors duties to monitor & review the information contained within it.</p>	
9.1	Risk Register	<p>Internal audit will review the top 3 risks across the Trust and will visit each school to test the mitigant(s) in place. Governors were reminded that this audit is based on a consolidation of all risk gradings across the Trust and as a result, their top three risks might not be the top three risks of this individual school. Close monitoring of these risks must continue at school level.</p> <p>Q9: Who defines the target grade of each risk? R9: The school. Governors must test how the school came to this conclusion and ensure regular and timely review of these risk assessments take place. The perception of risk is different to each person and this is why it is so important to have more than one person risk assessing and validating those decisions.</p>	
10	Safeguarding	<p>A Safeguarding Report was circulated at the meeting and outlines the staff training which has taken place. It evidences the number of referrals and incidents since September. Governors noted that the level of safeguarding concerns appears to have settled down since the very busy first term of this academic year. The HT reports all safeguarding incidents to the Chair as and when they occur.</p>	
11	Policies	<p>The following policy was approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety <p>The Chair and the HT signed the Health & Safety statement for display in the school's reception.</p>	
ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS			ACTIONS
12	Any Other Business	<p>There was a request to change the date of the next Governing Body Meeting but this was not compatible with the needs of the school and was confirmed as 25th March 2020.</p> <p><i>The remaining discussion was deemed confidential and recorded separately.</i></p>	
13	Confidentiality	<p>Elements of the staffing and AOB matters were deemed confidential and recorded separately.</p>	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:20.



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Signed:

Chair of the Governing Body

Dated: