



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 Wednesday, 16th October 2019 at 10am.

Governors Present: Mr. Brian Sullivan: Chair
Mr. Chris Dale (HT)
Mrs. Karen Gunn (KG),
Dr. Racheal Stone (SG) *left the meeting at 11:30,*
Mrs. Julie Brown (JB).

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 Committee through prayer. Apologies were received and unanimously accepted from Dr. Richard Webster, Mrs. Kerri Miller and Mrs. Suzanne Guest and Mrs. Suzanne Bader. This meeting was quorate only for items 1 – 7.	
2	Declarations of Interest	The annual review of the Register of Business & Pecuniary Interests was completed. <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	Code of Conduct	All Governors present, reviewed and signed the Governors Code of Conduct.	
4	KCSIE	All Governors present confirmed, either in person or via GovernorHub, they have read and understood the 2019 Keeping Children Safe in Education.	
5	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 th July 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meetings. The following minor amendment was made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-confidential minutes: page 4, R9, Greatstone has reduced class-sizes, not PAN. 	
6	Matters Arising	Governors reviewed the actions from the previous meeting and received an update regarding the confidential minutes, which was recorded separately.	
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT			ACTIONS
7	Head Teacher Update	The Head Teacher provided a verbal briefing and written reports will be submitted in terms 2, 4 and 6.	
7.1	Safeguarding	All staff have completed safeguarding training. SLT are considering staying open over the summer holidays next year in order to provide those eligible for free school meals with lunch every day. The HT aims to hold an event either side of	



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		<p>lunch so children have some activities to come in for too and it limits the possibility of children going without food when the school is closed. The school operates a food bank all year but so few families collect their vouchers. Every Friday, staff collect 40-50 loaves of bread, croissants and any other food Tesco will donate. This is left in the lobby of the children's centre for collection and by the end of the day it has all gone. There is real strife in the local community. There appears to be an increase in incidents of domestic violence, stress on relationships, and vulnerability in family life.</p>	
7.2	Year R update	<p>The new Year R children have settled in very successfully. A questionnaire was circulated to all new parents to gain feedback and the response has been incredibly positive. Parents often stated they had chosen the school based on word of mouth. The HT had expected the positive OfSTED grading to play a part in their decision making but is delighted to hear the positive feeling towards the school in the local community. 90% of respondents stated transition was good with the staff carrying out a home visit and children starting the term with half days. 2 families rejected a home visit. Some parents felt the move to half days, when their children are already in nursery full time, felt like a step backwards. However, the step up into primary school is a difficult process and the half days are only for 1 week, which start on Monday and the children are full time by Friday. The transition is very short, particularly in comparison to other local primary schools. Overall, approximately 50% of parents responded to the questionnaire, despite numerous reminders. The HT will ensure there is clearer communication about the step-up to school process in future years. <i>The remaining discussion surrounding Year R was deemed confidential and recorded separately.</i></p>	
7.3	Staffing	<p>The KS2 leader has resigned to become the Director of Learning at the Marsh Academy. The school is disappointed to have lost such an excellent member of staff, from January. She currently teaches Year 6 and will be replaced in the classroom temporarily by the DHT. The HT has contacted the CEO of the Trust but there are no supply teachers with the necessary skills to teach year 6 currently available and so the school has no option but to place the DHT in class. The school will advertise but it's unlikely to find a replacement at this time of the year. This will leave the senior leadership team short and the DHT may need to deliver the core curriculum in the morning and then someone else will cover the wider curriculum in the afternoon.</p> <p>The HT made a request to for 2 very good TAs to carry out HLTA training. A written training agreement will be put in place to re-coup the costs of training if staff leave within 2 years. APPROVED.</p>	
7.4	Site Development	<p>Section 106 money was allocated to the district council from the housing which is being built on part of the land behind the school. Money was committed for a sports pavilion to be built. However, as part of a new planning application, all section 106 money has been earmarked for Greatstone and not St Nicholas school, even though this school is the closest for any new families moving into the new housing. The HT has visited the town planning office and spoken to the</p>	



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7.5	PAN	<p>district and town councillor to find out why none of the £390k fund from the development has not been given to the school. The HT has provided his opinion to the local paper.</p> <p><i>Rachael Stone left the meeting at 11.30am and the meeting ceased to be quorate.</i></p> <p>Different solicitors were put in place to encourage a step forward with the development agreement as progress was slow. The developers planning application for a link road has removed St Nicholas as a recipient of section 106 money. The land has not been yet sold. Whilst KCC has apologised for delay, they are keen to work with this local developer. NM has spoken to Lee Round about it recently, who confirmed the land still belongs to KCC until a promoter agreement is in place. The school is likely to get their pavilion but no funding for growth. Expansion of Greatstone school was originally planned for 2019 but has now been pushed back to somewhere between 2024-26.</p> <p>The school currently has a PAN of 60 and is 14 pupils away from being full. 7 pupils are due to start next term. Without growth funding, the school may have to turn any new pupils away when the housing development is complete. School places are available across the district. Dymchurch and Lydd have a PAN of 45 but neither are full. The HT aims to encourage HTs across the district to consider whether or not to reduce their PAN. He would recommend that those who don't admit more than 30 pupils should reduce their PAN. This would push admissions back out to their natural position. For example, St Nicholas currently has 19 families travelling from Lydd. This is likely to receive opposition from the LA who would have to fund expansion in growth areas. Without collective action, those families within walking distance of the school will not get a place and will have to go to Brenzett or Greatstone. The HT recommended HTs could write unilaterally, as a group of schools, to the secretary of state to reduce PAN for Brenzett, Dymchurch and Lydd in September, or for those schools to start consultation for 2021 admissions. Families with a sibling link to a school would be unaffected as long as they haven't moved house. The full impact of these changes would not be felt for around 4 years.</p>	
8	SIAMS	<p>The school's vision statement was circulated to Governors:</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>Learning, loving and encouraging through Christ</i></p> <p>This will be at the heart of everything within the school. When the Governing Body is quorate, it will need to be formally adopted and hold the HT accountable for the delivery of this vision. SIAMS training was completed by SG and BS.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to circulate the vision statement to all Governors.</p>	CLERK



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<p>9</p>	<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</p>	<p>Writing and SPAG will be a key focus of the plan this year. A development day was held on 20th September and Maths will be looked at in term 2, in particular a focus on greater depth in maths. Starting next term, the school will be working towards obtaining a well-being award and will look at the effect of IRIS on developing teaching and learning.</p> <p>ASP data was circulated at the meeting which compares the school's attainment and progress levels with local and national benchmarks.</p> <p>Q7: Will the SIP include a focus on improving boys' achievement? R7: For the first time in 9 years, the school meets the national average in all areas. Progress continues to move forward but there is still an issue for boys. The current Year 3s are a particular concern but a number of boys are SEN. Boys are not as good as girls in writing and this is in line with the national trend. St Nicholas boys did not do so well in maths and very few are working at greater depth. Term 1 focused on English and ensuring new members of staff get to grips with the school's way of doing things.</p> <p>Q8: What was the impact of PIXL? R8: PiXL has helped pupils achieve a combined outcome. It is good at improving reading and writing. Combined improved significantly on the previous year.</p> <p>ACTION: The School Improvement Plan will be uploaded to GovernorHub for review at the next meeting.</p>	<p>HT</p>
<p>9.1</p>	<p>Monitoring the SIP</p>	<p>Monitoring visits should begin in November and Governors are encouraged to continue with their current monitoring responsibilities.</p> <p>ACTION: BS and the HT will map out the full monitoring plan and confirm at the next meeting.</p>	<p>BS / HT</p>
<p>10</p> <p>10.1</p>	<p>Governance Matters</p> <p>Membership</p>	<p>The Governing Body discussed the following governance matters:</p> <p>Concerns were expressed for the gaps in the governing body and the issues of today's meeting being limited by failing to be quorate for the whole meeting. This places the burden of governance on a core group of governors. A replacement for SM must be found and a parent governor has now become a full time member of staff at the school. The ex-officio position remains vacant and there is no staff governor.</p> <p>The HT requested the DHT and the Business Manager attend all governing body meetings moving forward, and for them to have access to GovernorHub.</p> <p>APPROVED.</p> <p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HT teacher to seek clarification whether the parent governor would like to stand as a staff governor or continue as a parent governor. • The HT will hold a staff governor election in term 2. 	<p>HT</p> <p>HT</p>



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<p>10.2</p> <p>Monitoring Reports</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HT to seek clarification from SG as to whether she has the capacity to continue as a parent governor given her increased work commitments. • The HT to ask for 2 members of the PCC to join the governing body to protect its foundation or nominate someone to attend in their place. • NM to advertise for a replacement governor to fill the vacancy left by SM. • Clerk to provide DHT and Business Manager access to GovernorHub. <p>Monitoring reports were circulated. The July HT performance management review from SM and the 12 month / year end monitoring from RW. The current future and financial health is secure. £7500 has been received from the Diocesan Board of Finance as back payment of rent from the nursery. This is being used for new computers as previously discussed.</p>	<p>HT</p> <p>HT</p> <p>NM</p> <p>CLERK</p>
<p>10.3</p> <p>Training</p>		<p>The final version of the skills audit matrix was circulated in advance of the meeting. There is a good cross section of knowledge but this could change if key members of the Governing Body leave. All governors must complete at least 1 training course in addition to statutory requirements such as safeguarding training which must be completed by all governors every 2 years. With the resignation of SM, another Governor will need to be safer recruitment trained. BS recommended a one day, face-to-face course available via the Education People.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to circulate information regarding safer recruitment training.</p>	<p>CLERK</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Finance</p>		<p>In addition to the monitoring carried out by the Finance Governor, the following finance matters were reviewed:</p> <p>11.1 Gift Registers</p> <p>Further to the updated Aquila Financial Admin and Control Policy, Governors requested further information on the newly introduced gift registers. The HT confirmed there was no requirement for a register for 2018-19 and no excessive gifts had been given during the year.</p> <p>11.2 Purchases £10k+</p> <p>The school currently has a very experienced Finance Governor who diligently checks any purchases over £10k. But Governors are mindful that his tenure may end this year and the Governing Body must ensure they pick up these duties effectively. In accordance with the Aquila Financial Admin and Control Policy, all purchases over £10k must come to the Governing Body for approval. The HT confirmed the only purchase has been for chrome books at a cost of £15k, this was signed off by the Chair and the Finance Governor. A contribution to the Trust of £60k is paid but this is not made in a lump sum. The secondment of a teacher from Willesborough Infants School was made for £11.5k. This was paid monthly. The secondment approval was minuted in last academic year.</p> <p>11.3 Pay Committee</p> <p>In accordance with Part B, Option B of the Aquila Pay Policy, the Governing Body has delegated pay decisions to a Pay Committee. The members will be BS, KG and JB.</p> <p>ACTION: The Pay Committee to convene at 1.30pm on Thursday, 31st October.</p>	<p>PC</p>



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		ACTION: The Pupil Premium and SEN Policy approvals were deferred to the next meeting.	HT
12.1	Risk Register	<p>The Risk Register was circulated in advance of the meeting and the next Chairs forum will be looking at the GRC-1 training. The school last looked at the register in detail on 5th July. The school's risk register is the best in the Trust currently, in terms of being up-to-date.</p> <p>The 2019 Academies Financial Handbook (AFH), which was circulated to all Governors via GovernorHub, outlines 2 significant changes to managing risk. Namely, the mandatory requirement to have a risk register and for this register to inform the system of internal scrutiny within the Trust. Internal control of academy trusts continues to be a key focus of the DfE. Moving forward, the internal audit visits received by the school, which last year were carried out by the Chief Financial Officer or her team, is no longer deemed to be rigorous enough to satisfy the ESFAs requirements in the AFH. The Trust Board must employ employee auditing professionals and instruct them on which checks need to be carried out.</p> <p>The risk register is the basis for what is commissioned and as GRC-1 works as a pyramid system, the Board cannot review an overall risk register for the Trust if the school-level registers have not been completed. Consequently, the Chair of the Trust Board's Audit Committee, Ms. S. Page, recently wrote to all senior leaders and Chair of Governors to urge them to complete their risk registers by 1st November. This is not relevant for this school but Governors should be mindful of this increased level of external scrutiny. For example, budgets would be considered a high risk area within education and schools / governors would ensure there is a mitigation against this risk such as regular monitoring of budgets and challenging HTs and Business Managers on their content. This would reduce the risk from high to medium. The internal auditors would be visiting schools to ensure those mitigations are robust and can be securely relied upon to reduce risk. In effect, they are testing that the risk register is fit for purpose. In order to reduce the burden of internal audit visits on colleagues within school, Governors should also be checking risk mitigations relevant to their monitoring visits.</p> <p>In accordance with the Risk Management Policy, governors should have risk management as a standing agenda item at every meeting and should be regularly reviewing risks. The register as a whole, should be reviewed at least once a year.</p> <p>ACTION: NM to ensure all Governors have logins to the GRC-1 risk management tool.</p>	NM
12.2	GDPR	There were no GDPR issues or breaches to report to the Governing Body.	
13	Safeguarding	<p>ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All governors to complete safeguarding training or notify the clerk of any training completed within the last 2 years. • Appoint a safeguarding governor at the next meeting. 	ALL BS



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14	Policies	<p>The following policies were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy – TRUST POLICY. This has been updated to include changes outlined in KCSIE. • Employee Handbook – TRUST POLICY. The core content remains the same but the key updates make clear the role of the Executive Head and Head of School; not relevant to this school. • Pay Policy – TRUST POLICY. The core content remains the same. Appendices only have been updated to reflect the changes in pay outlined by the government. <p>ACTION: Future trust wide policies must be individualised to St Nicholas before submission to the Governing Body for approval.</p>	CLERK
ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS			ACTIONS
15	Any Other Business	There was no minuted discussion.	
16	Confidentiality	Items 6 and 7.2 were deemed confidential and recorded separately.	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:39.

Signed:
Chair of the Governing Body

Dated: