



ST NICHOLAS CE PRIMARY ACADEMY
Minutes of a meeting of the Local Governing Body
Friday, 19th July 2019 at 10:00am.

Governors Present: Mr. Brian Sullivan: Chair
 Mr. Chris Dale (HT)
 Mrs. Karen Gunn (KG),
 Mr. Simon Molony (SM),
 Dr. Richard Webster (RW),
 Dr. Racheal Stone (SG),
 Mrs. Kerri Miller (KM) *left the meeting at 12:04.*

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

Clerk to the Governing Body: Mrs. Lorraine Bondzie-Mensah

Item	Procedural	Action by
1.	<p>Welcome, Prayer and Apologises: The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. NM led the Committee through prayer. Apologies were received and unanimously accepted from Mrs. Julie Brown, Mrs. Suzanne Guest, Mrs. Suzanne Bader.</p>	
2.	<p>Declaration of business interests</p> <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; as well as a member of the Governing Bodies of Palmmarsh Primary School and St Peters at Folkestone. • RW: Is a member of the Diocesan Board of Education. He is Chair for Nonington Church of England Primary School and Sibertswold Primary School. He is also a member of the Governing Bodies for Goodnestone Church of England Primary School and Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School. 	
3.	<p>Previous Minutes Approval The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22nd May 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meetings.</p>	
3.1	<p>Matters Arising The Code of Practice outlines the requirement for staff to be named within the SEND policy and therefore they were not removed as previously suggested.</p>	
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT		
4.	<p>Head Teacher's Report The un-validated data and a narrative from the HT was circulated in advance of the meeting. Combined results were up by 15% on the previous year. 4 children joined Year 6 in the summer term; none of whom were working at age expected standards. The target was 64% and 51.7% was achieved.</p>	

Comparison of KS2 2019 SATs to 2018 data

Standard	Subject	School Data	
		2018	2019
% achieving the expected standard	Reading, Writing, Maths	36.7%	51.7%
% working at greater depth	Reading, Writing, Maths	2.0%	5.2%
Progress scores*	Reading	-2.9	0.73*
	Writing	-0.4	2.52*
	Maths	-6.1	0.73*
% achieving the expected standard	Reading	61.2%	65.5%
	Writing	71.4%	72.4%
	SPAG	46.9%	62.1%
	Maths	42.9%	63.7%
% working at greater depth	Reading	22.4%	22.4%
	Writing	20.4%	18.9%
	SPAG	12.2%	13.8%
	Maths	4.1%	10.3%
Average scaled scores	Reading	102.5	102.6
	Writing	N/A	(101.9)
	SPAG	100.6	101.3
	Maths	98.3	101.9
Floor standard – based on 2018 measure	Above if : 65% meet expected standard in combined Reading, Writing & Maths OR progress scores above -5 Reading, -7 in Writing, -5 in Maths		ABOVE

(*PK 1 to 6, SS still to be advised along with 4 new children for whom we are still waiting for KS1 information)

There has been a significant increases of 20%+ in SPAG and Maths. Across the school, maths attainment is more secure and will continue to be a focus next year. The progress in SPAG was particularly good as it had been made between January and the end of the year. If progress continues at this rate, the HT is hopeful the results next year will meet national expectations.

Q1: Does the current Year 5 data suggest they will achieve national expectations?

R1: Maths is a concern. All children are already exceeding progress expectations. 2 classes have been split into 3, for maths. PiXL transition classes have already started in order to identify marginal children and every child knows their individual targets.

Q2: Will there be an increase in greater depth attainment next year?

R2: The school will continue to focus on raising standards to national expectations first and greater depth afterwards. The new curriculum includes building challenge for all children, not just the most able but for SEN and other vulnerable groups. The curriculum must be fit for purpose for all children.

Q3: [To the HT] are you happy the results are more in line with teacher assessments this year?

R3: The writing target was met. Every Year 6 child's writing was moderated by Margo Barraclough and by the local authority. KCC sent a letter of commendation to the school, stating their books were the best in any internal moderation this year. The target for Reading was 72% and 1 child, previously discussed, did not complete the paper. Then 1 or 2 other children did not achieve. The Easter booster school was a success as all but 2 of those who attended achieved Combined.

Q4: Were targeted children invited to attend the Easter school?

R4: Yes it was targeted at our marginal children. Some came in for specific subjects rather than staying all day. Greater depth is an issue and is a longer term objective for the school. The school were pleased with over 6 points of progress in Maths.

Early Years

GLD: 82.6% exceed the 71.5% benchmark and 6 children were moved up at moderation. However, this then puts a strain on progress for the following year. There is work to be done with writing GLD, as the majority of those who achieved were girls. Summer born boys in Year R are a key group for monitoring; this school has a particularly high level of summer born children.

Fine motor skills are an area for development and the school will be following a system known as BEAM – balance, education and movement. The programme has been written by physiotherapists at Maidstone. This strategy has not been used at this school before.

Q5: Is there a link between this issue and those who have not attended nursery?

R5: Communication and PHSE is an issue for those who have not attended nursery. The children are not used to larger groups and find it difficult to take part in the same way as the others.

Phonics at 84% was the 2nd year the school was above national. All but 1 PP child achieved. Year 2: 2 children did not achieve, 1 child is SEN and 1 child is in the process of applying for an EHCP. 1x KS1 class has 9 SEN children, 8 of whom are boys. Writing interventions have already started and parents have been contacted to keep the writing up over the summer. There will be 6 weeks of intensive support when they come back to ensure they are able to access the year 3 curriculum. The school is much better at interrogating the data now and knowing what interventions are needed.

Q6: How often will staff be asked to provide data?

R6: The school is reducing the number of tests being completed. Each test takes 1 week out of the curriculum timetable. Previously, it was 6 tests and it will reduce to 3. In between, there will be 'deeper dive sessions' where SLT and curriculum leaders will go into classrooms and cross moderate books against teacher judgements. The school will use PiXL tests, which will also enable the school to rank themselves against 2000 other schools nationally. These tests will take place, broadly, in Terms 2, 4 & 6. The school will be able to compare themselves to other local schools when the data is published in November, via the Kent publication 'making figures speak'.

Governors acknowledged the significant strides forward in attainment as a result of all the hard work put in by staff and students. The Governing Body congratulated the staff and pupils.

3 Year Development Plan

Up until now the school has had to intensively work to plug a number of gaps in teaching and learning across the school. When the HT joined the school, OfSTED stated there was no aspect of the curriculum which was fit for purpose. The school is now reaching a point where it is *maintaining* areas of standards rather than trying to improve all areas. Consequently, the school is able to move to a more traditional 3 year school improvement plan.

A draft 3 year plan was circulated in advance of the meeting. Maths continues to be core focus across all 3 years and the aim is to further build on this year's successes in Reading. Next year, the school aims to embed the SPAG curriculum started in January and progress the children's skills in Art and DT. These children are not as exposed to the Arts as they should be. Arts are an opportunity to promote the wellbeing and mental health of children and the HT is keen to replicate the level of arts recently observed at a local prep school. At the point of becoming the HT, CD gave the school a 7 year commitment and during that time he wants to ensure the school has the best arts and music facilities in the area.

Senior leaders from KCC came to visit last week and noted that the behaviour in school was outstanding. Every child was working hard and no one was misbehaving. The next focus is to work on the pupils' well-being. In particular, understand what we can do to make children feel better about being in school and when things go wrong, give them the skills to understand how they can help fix it themselves.

Christian distinctiveness and premises is also included in the plan. The school has been in a position to rely heavily on the very good Business Manager to ensure all health and safety matters are well managed. This has enabled the HT to focus on the core business of raising standards. However, the school and the Governing Body must return their attentions to site management. For example, there is no mains drainage in the school and it will cost £50k to add it to the main drainage system. Section 106 money should be coming into the area but appears to be directed to Folkestone and Hythe despite local residential developments putting a strain on local infrastructure. The school and Governors must try to tap into this money as the recent CIF bid for a better water management system was unsuccessful. Regardless of the success of the bids, the school must do something with the water tanks. Not only to reduce the risk of legionnaires but improve sanitation where 90 children are sharing 4 toilets.

The Trust is moving away from CIF and will be awarded single capital allocation (SCA) funds. This will provide them with the flexibility to support more projects as the CIF bid is limited to projects over £20k. However, the SCA will generate less money overall than the recent CIF bids. Governors are mindful of the balance between providing a learning environment which has a positive impact on the core business of the school but is also aware that repair & maintenance can quickly eat into the school's budget. Ideally, in the 3rd year of the plan, the school is aiming to remove the redundant water tower on site but it is lined with asbestos. The costs of removing it will be significant. Whilst undisturbed, it is safe but as soon as it is interrupted it becomes an issue.

Q7: Is there any budget being made available for the removal of asbestos in schools?

R7: No. The Trust doesn't have any budget, nor generate its own income. The annual capital fund of around £10k goes straight to the school. The Trust has to rely on accessing CIF.

The juniors school is riddled with asbestos but it has all been encapsulated. A full-site asbestos survey was carried out when the roof was replaced. The cost of removing asbestos from the whole school is so high it would have been cheaper to build a new school. The DfE require the school to keep up-to-date asbestos register.

Q8: Thinking of the children due to join us in September, where do you want the school to be when those children leave here in 7 years' time?

R8: There needs to be a strong church school vision and the HT wants this to be the school of choice in the area; having high aspirations for all children. A primary school should provide children with access to a broad range of experiences and enable them to make informed choices at secondary school. In the past, the curriculum was focused on Maths and Writing which is only good for those wishing to pursue a career in accountancy or journalism. The children should also have exposure to other subjects such as MFL. Parents also need to know their children will be happy here.

Q9: Do you have the expertise in your staff to deliver an enriched curriculum?

R9: The school will need to appoint a music specialist, as it currently relies on Kent Music School. The school has grown by a whole class size in the last 6 months. Greatstone have decided to reduce class sizes and yet St Nicholas has increased to 2 forms of entry. We have staff with a growing skills base and a sporting tradition. This is an opportunity to start developing different skills sets in school.

Governors approved the draft 3 year School Improvement Plan. It will be developed further before the final draft is submitted to the Governing Body in the new academic year. It will be a much smaller plan than before but middle leaders will develop detailed, individual plans in order to achieve the overall improvements aimed for the school.

5. **OFSTED**

A copy of the OfSTED inspection report was circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting. NM, on behalf of the Trust, thanked Governors for their support; they have been an integral part of leadership and management of the school. The lead inspector recognised the legacy issues faced by the school, which has skewed the published data. The school were able to evidence the school is now a very different place and Years R-4 had made better than expected progress. These are the year groups who have joined the school since the new team has been in place and the evidence showed they were making significant progress, more than any had before. SLT could demonstrate the school is on an upward trajectory and the HMI saw nothing but good teaching during the inspection. Consequently, standards would clearly continue to rise over time.

During the inspection, HMIs were trialling a new system whereby everything was being monitored live at OfSTED HQ. The HT was consistently able to prove the statements he was making with clear evidence. At the end of the first day, inspectors spoke about mobility issues and year group data. The HT and DHT stayed late that evening to ensure evidence for every single group was provided to inspectors the following morning. It was a tough and rigorous inspection. All Teachers, TAs and Admin staff are completely signed up to moving the school forward and they really delivered. In the past, there was a high staff turnover and transient staff simply do not have the loyalty that comes with a stable staff team.

Governors asked the HT to pass on to the staff how very proud they were of all their efforts. The inspection outcome has rubber stamped the vision and enthusiasm of the team and should empower them to move the school forward in the way they see fit. There is a very short list of recommendations on the report. Namely, the school plan was too large but the HMI understood why. The next step is to unpick these recommendations and ultimately make sure everything is solidly embedded moving forward.

Governors noted delegated leadership was not happening just over a year ago. Support from the HT has allowed others to develop and he now has confidence in the team around them. There has been a period of major development and now progress may plateau as they secure those strategies in place. The school still needs to move attainment forward but progress suggests it will be in line with national expectations next year.

6. **Monitoring Reports**

As a result of the inspection in Term 5, Governors chose to leave the team to finish the year without more monitoring from the Governing Body. However, the mid-year review by the School Improvement Partner was circulated to Governors. It is a positive reflection on how far the school has travelled in the last 12 months.

7. **Structure of Governance**

The monitoring schedule will be written in September when the final draft SIP is in place and approved. Governors agreed the structure of governance should be the circle model and monitoring will be carried out in pairs next academic year. Governors are mindful that the school is still in a vulnerable position and should not be carried away on its current successes. Good monitoring and tight observations should be maintained. Monitoring will be structured around key priorities rather than around year groups; with Governors reporting back at each FGB meeting.

Governors expressed an interest in monitoring the following areas:

- Safeguarding – KG
- Health & Safety - KM
- Finance – RW + KM
- School Data / Curriculum – KG + RS
- EYFS – RS + KM
- HT PMR – KG will replace SM

Training and Development as well as statutory compliance checks (Website and GIAS) would be a suitable role for a staff governor and a monitoring pair will also be required for Christian Distinctiveness. It is likely that 1 parent governor will be re-designated as a staff governor and therefore another parent election is likely in next term. The incumbent may be in a position to sit on the Governing Body without voting rights, as his current role in the Trust Board is a conflict of interest. Alternatively, the Trust may be able to secure the support of a member of the PCC. All Governors should commit to 3 monitoring visits a year. A new PTFA has been formed and the Chair of the parent council has been invited by the lead inspector to speak at his school.

ACTIONS:

- Clerk to chase up those who have not completed the skills audit and recirculate at the next meeting. CLERK
- Clerk to circulate competency framework to support those new to monitoring. CLERK
- NM to provide a full Governing Body training session on GRC-1. NM
- All Governors to complete at least 1 Learning Link training module next year. ALL

8. Chair & Vice Chair Elections

Chair: BS self-nominated to continue as Chair and was unanimously supported by the Governing Body.
Vice Chair: RS self-nominated and was unanimously elected by the Governing Body

OTHER

9. Any Other Urgent Business

SM notified the Governing Body he will be stepping down at the end of this academic year. The HT and Governing Body thanked him for his support; his insightful knowledge will be greatly missed. SM stated it was a pleasure working with the school and has been pleased to be involved with the journey of the school so far. He is assured of its future and is confident the great leadership + great teaching will continue to raise standards; the children of the local community will be all the better for it. The Governing Body can be confident that the teaching profile stands up to the most rigorous of OfSTED scrutiny and he warmly congratulated all staff for the excellent inspection outcome achieved.

Kerri Miller left the meeting at 12:04.

Admissions

A request has been received to delay the start of a child joining next year in Year R. The family have requested the child starts in January rather than September as the child may receive an EHCP and be looking for specialist provision. Legislation states parents can defer up until Easter or until the day of their 5th birthday, as long as it is in the best interests of the child. This was unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

Meeting Schedule for 2019/20:

Date	Start	End
Wed 16 Oct 2019	10:00	12:00
Thu 12 Dec 2019	10:00	12:00
Wed 12 Feb 2020	10:00	12:00
Wed 25 Mar 2020	10:00	12:00
Wed 20 May 2020	10:00	12:00
Wed 15 Jul 2020	10:00	12:00

10. Confidentiality

An element of Item 4 was deemed confidential and recorded separately.

11. Closing Reflections

Thank you to everyone for their work and time this year which has been vital in successfully moving the school forward.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 12:10.

Signed _____ Date _____
Chair of the Local Governing Body