

St Matthew's Primary School Full Governing Body Meeting

Wednesday 8th December 2022 at 6:00pm

Present: Debora Lucarelli-Stockwell (Co-Chair); Tony Davies (Headteacher); Annabelle Lewis; Aditi Vedi; Ricardo Herbane; Andrew Grieve; John Parkin; Neil Perry; Christopher Jagger; Linda Jones; Christina Bates; Liz Steel; Katie Hehir; Kate Spencer-Allen; Julie Murphy

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declaration of direct or indirect pecuniary interests in any of the following items

No further declarations of pecuniary interest were made.

3. Minutes of Full Governing Body/Resources Committee Meeting of 12th October 2022 - Matters arising/agreed actions update

Section 4: RM (Co-Chair) shared paper re: recent audit outcomes with TD and SBM
Section 5: AL clarified wording of attendance policy

Section 7: Traffic – more cars now with change of weather, some cars have gone through barrier and tailgated others, ignoring the barriers. More traffic since bike lane installed on East Rd. Observation by local authority governor yesterday (LJ).

Parent volunteer group contact to be provided to

Child needing taxi issue addressed with placard to be shown to the barrier volunteers to allow access beyond the barriers

Section 10: Safeguarding training. All governors to please do the Prevent training. Teachers in school have all completed this also (besides 2 as they were absent). Reminder email to be sent around to all governors by LS.

Craig Duncan – local authority advisor, annual visit tomorrow

Minutes approved unanimously

4. Raising standards

a. Draft Minutes of the Teaching Learning and Outcomes Committee, 1st December 2022

Data for last year and summative assessments had been reviewed, highlighting strong results in KS1 and KS2 statutory outcomes compared to national averages. As “Analyse School Performance” had not yet been published, data was taken from PERsepective Lite and the OFSTED Inspection Data Summary Report that highlighted 13 strengths and no “challenges” in relation to outcomes in statutory assessments. A governor asked if the school was satisfied with outcomes and TD replied yes, it was positive that the school had been able to mitigate some of the impacts of the pandemic to a greater degree than most schools. Challenges remained, particularly with the current Year One cohort whose outcomes in the EYFS were much lower than usual and a little lower than national averages, and with the current Year Two cohort heading into the 2023 statutory assessments. In some areas the reports highlighted that the school was in the top 20% of all schools nationally

A governor asked how this had been achieved. Children have been provided appropriate additional support in light of the effects of the pandemic on their learning using covid catch up funding to augment the usual systems and provision to support children’s learning.

Sonar has replaced *Target Tracker* for recording children’s assessment data. This December will be the first time teachers are using this system. It records whether children are on tracking to reach age-related expectations (or above or below these) each term rather than an assessment of where children are at the time of the assessment.

b. Head Teacher’s Report

Staffing – Hayley Tomlinson (Reception class teacher) is leaving at the end of the Autumn term and Rebecca Johnstone will be beginning maternity leave. The school has recruited Ashleigh Blackman-Doyle for Reception and Jack Ryan to cover Rebecca in Year Three. These were strong appointments in a challenging recruitment environment.

The IDSR and Persepective Lite reports discussed at TLOC had highlighted challenges in attendance. There were that persistent absence was higher than average in autumn term. Governors noted however that by the end of the year persistent absence was a strength of the school, showing the effectiveness of strategies to tackle this.

Exclusions – there had been no fixed term or permanent exclusions in St Matthews last academic year. The national average for fixed term exclusions would equate to approximately 3 for fixed term and 1-2 for permanent exclusions for a school of St Matthew’s size. This reflects the success of the Therapeutic approach to behavior management that the school uses.

c. School Development Plan Update

Progress on SDP discussed. Governors noted that RAG rating showed that most actions were on target to be completed.

One governor asked if the SDP was tackling the issues relating to the curriculum and the teacher surveys saying that it was difficult to cover all aspects of the curriculum in the light of the emphasis in the national curriculum of English and mathematics. It was noted that the first target in the SDP explicitly addressed this issue and that this was a work in progress.

A governor asked about French not being taught in Year 6. The head explained that this was about addressing the issues of the need for time in the curriculum. The length of language lessons had been extended in Years 3 to 5 to enable children to achieve end of key stage expectations by that point. This creates time for children in Year 6 to cover other aspects of the curriculum.

A governor asked if there should there be communication/feedback between KS2/St Matthews PS teachers and high school about high school readiness of our students. The head said that this was something he could talk to secondary colleagues at Schools South of the River. Secondary colleagues may feel a formal process may add to their workload. Statutory assessment outcomes suggest that our children are ready for secondary education.

A governor noted that our curriculum gets a lot of positive feedback from external visitors, as in as OFSTED report.

A Governor noted that the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) in the SDP should also be applied to Governor actions. This was agreed.

d. SEND Policy and Information Report 2022

The updated SEND Policy and Information Report was reviewed. A governor asked if there were any significant changes from previous years. It was explained that there were some updates in website links and some terminology (e.g. references to the use of Sonar replacing those of Target Tracker), but changes were relatively minor. A more significant review may be needed next year as the local authority will soon be launching a website with “Ordinarily Available Provision” on it. This will highlight the provision that a school should have in place to support children with special educational needs. It aims to ensure that all schools are providing a good level of support. Meetings suggest that St Matthew’s already provides strong support that would meet the requirements – St Matthew’s strong reputation for SEND has led to specialist teachers and other outside agencies recommending to parents that they seek a place at St Matthew’s for their child. This can create a significant pressure on SEND support resources in St Matthew’s and the Ordinarily Available Provision may help address this issue.

The SEND Policy and Information Report was agreed unanimously.

5. Safeguarding – Annual Child Protection Report for Governors

The Annual Report was reviewed by Governors. Governors asked if there was any significant change in the data. Governors were told that thresholds for Child in Need and Child Protection were high and children needed to be at a higher level of need to be receiving support. This affects the data. Safeguarding leads had to spend significant time following up referrals and assessments – it felt that social care was under significant pressure.

Safeguarding training for all staff was due to be delivered on 4th January. AV (safeguarding governor) will be attending.

RM will be organizing training for all governors by the local authority (2h in person or online). A governor asked if this was different to the training teachers received. It was confirmed that this was the case as it would focus on the governors' role in holding staff to account for procedures and practice whereas the teacher training was more focused on their role in implementation. Could be arranged as a governing body at St Matthews, for those governors who can't make that date, they should organise to do this directly with the local authority

LS will send the link for the Prevent training to governors again as this needed to be completed by all. It was noted that this training takes approx. forty minutes.

6. Resources for Learning

Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting of 19th October 2022 were reviewed. It was noted that the Local Authority Audit (9th November) went well. The budget had been reviewed in detail, particularly in light of the increasing deficit caused by the unfunded pay awards.

A governor asked if increasing use of school playground for income generation would make a difference. The playground is already used extensively after school and so opportunities are limited.

The government has announced increased funding for schools next year – St Matthew's will receive approximately £90,000 in additional funding next year. This will partly cover increased costs, but does not tackle the legacy of the unfunded pay increases and other financial shocks (energy costs) that has led to the deficit this financial year.

It was agreed that the school would have to adopt a strategy of cutting some provision to tackle the budget deficit. If the school could have an in-year surplus in its budget next financial year, and aim to bring the budget back into surplus over a two year period, this would be a good target to work towards. A governor asked if this would be backed by the local authority and how this compared with other local schools. The head said that over half the schools at Schools South of the River were facing budget deficits of various sizes. Some may share the information, some may be reluctant to do so. The head suggested that there be a budget meeting with Ray Byford where a draft budget could be drafted. If some governors (e.g. Chairs of Resources) could attend that meeting or part of it then that would be a good source of external accountability for governors.

Governors suggested a "Schools South of the River" for governors, to enable governors of local schools to share information. The head said that he would contact his local head teacher colleagues with the suggestion and would share the emails of the chairs of governors to facilitate this.

7. Governance

Governors need to contact staff directly to arrange their link governor visits. Contact details are on the governor list available on the governor google drive. TD will ensure that this list is updated.

The parent governor election process will begin in the spring term.

Julie Murphy's term of office as a staff governor is coming to an end Katie Hehir was nominated to replace her as a co-opted staff governor. This nomination was unanimously agreed. This creates a vacancy for an elected staff governor.

8. Any Other Business

St Matthews won the cross country, dodgeball and table tennis!

9. Agenda items for next meeting and dates for future meetings

Next full governing body meeting will include an interim review of the pupil premium strategy.

- 8th Feb 2023, 5.30pm Resources Committee meeting
- 8th March 2023 5.30pm TLOC meeting
- 22nd March 6pm for FGB meeting
- 26th April 5.30pm for Resources meeting
- 4th May 6pm for FGB meeting