

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
St Matthew's Primary School Full Governing Body (FGB)  
at 6.00pm at St Matthew's Primary School on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Present:** Christina Bates, Ricardo Herbane, Simon Richardson, Katie Hehir, Chris Jagger, Andrew Grieve, Aditi Vedi (Chair), John Parkin, Linda Jones, Neil Perry, Ananay Aguilar, Sonia Ingersent, Kate Spencer-Allen, Elizabeth Steel

**Apologies:** None.

**Attending:** Tony Davies (Headteacher, HT), Daisy Lawrence (Clerk)

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm and all participants were welcomed.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests**

There were no new specific declarations of interest.

**3. Head Teacher's Report**

The Headteacher (HT) shared his report with the FGB prior to the meeting and talked through a number of highlighted areas including attendance.

**Comments and Challenges:**

**Governors asked about the challenges of raising attendance figures. Will there be changes if the government changes? Is there a knowledge-transfer set up for the changes in administrative staffing? Is the school recruiting staff and the current vacancies being filled? Is the timeframe for the next Ofsted inspection known? Is the school aware of its strengths and weaknesses? Where are the data dips for this academic year? The FGB thanked the HT for the good report.**

A new attendance policy will be necessary due to the new guidance published by the government and new statutory duties imposed on schools. There will be need to be fines and prosecutions for unauthorised time away. Attendance figures have been much better this term and significantly improved on last year.

There is a national shortage of TAs and many other schools have huge vacancies. The school is working to increase the size of the admin team to cover the ever-increasing amount of work and responsibilities. There is a robust knowledge-transfer system in place to cover the long-standing member of the admin team who is retiring. The Early Career Teachers must have a half day release for preparation time and this will be covered.

Ofsted visits generally tend to go down the list of schools and in which case the visit to St Matthews could potentially be in summer 2025. The HT is very aware of the school's capabilities and strengths and weaknesses. He knows exactly what is not as good as the school and FGB would like it to be and why not and what is being done to address this. There are no Key Stage Two Statutory Assessments this year. The cohorts for both Year 1 and Year 6 are more challenging than previous years and so data may reflect this. Results have not yet been received. There are a large number of students with high needs. The Year 6 SATs results will be prepared and discussed in October.

#### **4. Minutes of the Full FGB Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous full FGB meeting were both a true and accurate record. Action points from the previous meeting were discussed and would continue to be actioned.

#### **5. Minutes of the TLOC Committee**

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous TLOC committee meeting were both a true and accurate record. Action points from the previous meeting were discussed and would continue to be actioned.

#### **6. Strategics**

The HT discussed the "live list" of strategic challenges and progress on the "big moves" of the school development plan. The SLT will be addressing these changes to the staff next term. To date, the leadership restructure is going very well.

#### **Comments and Challenges:**

**How much time do the EHCP applications take and is there a backlog? How are the staff able to manage the workload? Is there any back-pay? What changes are afoot for September? How will space be re-allocated to enable the new flexible groupings?**

There are a huge number of EHCP applications and many more expected for the new academic year. The school is set up very well to receive and process them and there are no delays from the school's part. However, the local authority are not meeting statutory deadlines for processing EHCP assessments. This is having a significant impact on the level of funding that the school is receiving. The staff have huge amount of experience understanding the best way to apply and have refined the process to better highlight the children's needs. Quite often the support is already in place and covered but the funding for it is not covered which presents a shortage. There is no back-funding for time prior to the application.

The introduction of Monster Phonics has been very successful. Staff have taken on a huge amount and the HT hopes to see this reflected in the data within two years' time. The current data would definitely be much worse without it.

The next big move within special educational needs will be more flexible groupings starting in September 2024. There is at least a year's work to embed the new set-up and train up the TAs (and an

expected six-month teething time) including a re-designation for two rooms. There will be more break-out sessions to bring together and help those who struggle to access the curriculum the most.

## **7. Behaviour Policy and Practice**

The Head will be reviewing the Behaviour Policy and Practice with staff. STEPS is now called Cambridge Therapeutic Thinking (CTT). In addition the new SLT post will cover a mental well-being support role. There will be a new focus to support class teachers and how to use CTT to focus on specific children and behaviours. The Senior Behaviour and Mental Health Lead will support class teachers to assess, analyse and plan for supporting children with more challenging behaviours. They will attend the three day CTT Tutor course, as will the HLTA supporting children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## **8. Safeguarding (SG)**

The Link Governor for online safety stated that the provision for online safety is excellent and that they are very happy with the tech provision overall and the policies in the meeting papers received.

Filtering and monitoring systems are in place and will be tightened. All teachers will be traceable and Chrome in STMPs will be monitored. The school's data is well-protected with cloud back-up and two-factor authentication. All staff and governors are required to have two-factor authentication to sign in to any school system including email.

All governors are invited to the safeguarding training for all staff on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September and complete the online PREVENT training.

Governors ratified the Online Safety Policy, Technical Security and Electronic Devices – Searching, Screening and Confiscation of Electronic Devices Policy.

## **9. Finances**

The financial situation is as the school and FGB thought it would be. There is a lot of dynamism involved in forecasting and re-forecasting the budget. The SEND support costs have increased with extra children needing support and the SEND income has lost £20k due to lagged funding which will not start in September but now more likely in November/December. It has been necessary to put a cap on nursery admission numbers to bring the budget back into line.

There have been other cost-savings measures and balancing with an SLT resignation and two Early Careers Teachers (ECTs) starting in September (the saving from the latter partly offset by day release costs for ECT training). Other significant cuts have also been necessary since the budget but have only just managed to bring it back to where it was originally thought it would be. The majority of Cambridgeshire schools have received a letter from the Local Authority indicating a second year of severe deficits showing the level of pressures all schools are under. St Matthews attempts to stay on track have been good in comparison although the situation is untenable long-term. A four-year return to budget surplus is a realistic prediction but there are numerous imponderables.

**10. Governance – Governor Vacancies**

The FGB currently has a good variety of governors with different views and skills but it's always good to have more. There is a website which aligns vacancies and those wanting to become governors and also the NGA to try. Although the FGB is currently quorate, there is capacity to invite additional governors to broaden the experience within the group.

**Actions Points:** HT to advertise staff governor co-opted vacancy and website/NGA to recruit. Old HT of Mayfield to be approached by ES. FGB to consider and send in suggestions to the HT. Longer term consider updating information on the role of the governor for the school website.

**11. Any Other Business**

Thanks to the governor for attending Parent Consultation Evening. Huge thanks to CB for their contribution to the LGB over the years.

**12. Dates of Future Meetings**

**3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024, 6pm** – Full Governing Body

**23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024, 6pm** - Resources Committee

**21<sup>st</sup> November 2024** – TLOC

**13. Close of meeting:**

20:06 the meeting ends.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_