

**ST MATTHEW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**FULL GOVERNING BODY - MINUTES OF ONLINE ZOOM MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021 at 17.30**

**PRESENT:**

D Lucarelli Stockwell (DLS) – Chair  
R Mottershead (RM)  
C Bates (CB)  
R Herbane (RH)  
C Jagger (CJ)  
J Murphy (JM)  
N Perry (NP)  
K Hehir (KH)  
J Parkin (JP)  
L Jones (LJ)  
P Waldmann (PW)  
A Grieve (AG)  
A Vedi (AV)

T Davies (TD)	Headteacher
L Steel (LS)	Assistant Headteacher
K Spencer-Allen (KSA)	Assistant Headteacher
A Lewis (AL)	Assistant Headteacher

**CLERK:** E Silver

Item	Agenda Item	Action
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> There were apologies for absence from R Warwick and M Tinkler. It was noted that the meeting was quorate.	
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF DIRECT/INDIRECT PECUNIARY INTERESTS</b> There was one declaration of interest – CB is H & S rep for the National Education Union (NEU).	
3.	<b>WELCOME TO NEW PARENT GOVERNORS</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the governors and staff for attending. The newly elected Parent Governors Aditi Vedi and Andrew Grieve were introduced to the Board.	
3.	<b>MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING/RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 6<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2021</b> The meeting unanimously approved the minutes as an accurate and complete record of the meeting.	
5.	<b>RAISING STANDARDS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Draft Minutes of the Teaching Learning and Outcomes Committee (TLOC) - 17<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021</b> Draft minutes for TLOC are awaiting typing and will be circulated before the next TLOC committee meeting</li> <li>b. <b>Head Teacher's Report</b></li> </ul> <p>TD highlighted the following from his report:  <b>Covid-19 Update</b> – lots has changed in the week since the report was written – there are now 13 cases in the school (down from 33), and outbreaks of infection come in waves. Four classes have had “outbreaks” – with 5 or more likely connected cases within a class. This is managed by the school by “ring-fencing” these classes –separate playtimes, lunchtime breaks and eating their lunch in the classroom. The peak in the school was a week after our local community transmission rate increased. Most pupils at the local secondary school Parkside have been vaccinated.  Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are currently “Enhanced Response Areas” and the time period has been increased to 5 weeks, giving the local authority the ability to bring in additional measures to reduce the risk of transmission of infection. For schools this has meant the reintroduction of some measures that St Matthews have had in place since September, including</p>	

staff wearing face masks in communal areas and online staff meetings where social distancing is not possible. This term seven members of staff test positive for covid 19 but fortunately all have made full recoveries after their ten days of isolation. As well as concerns for the staffs' wellbeing, it is also disruptive for the continuity of education since securing regular supply staff is difficult currently. It was noted:

- Many local schools forced to close classes or year groups because of lack of staff , however St Matthews has managed to remain open.
- Track and trace will notify us of any Omicron cases – it is uncertain whether a case of Omicron variant would result in class closure for 10 days
- governors will be informed of school/class closures, and given as much notice as is possible.

**Letter from 'Concerned Parents of Cambridgeshire'**

- The letter received by the school was read aloud by TD to the governors
- The letter claims it gives "Notice of liability", stating that the school can be held culpable, etc. one of the governors confirmed that a similar letter had been sent to Colleges.
- It was noted that there is no name on the letter – only a PO box 6945. Sent from an untraceable encrypted Proton account
- One of the governors advised that the authors of the letter could be held culpable under the Miscommunications Act.
- TD confirmed that there is no plan for the school to respond to the letter, as advised by the local authority, but he wanted governors to be aware of it

**Attendance** - Recent increase in covid cases has inevitably had an effect on overall attendance figures. This is of particular concern for Pupil Premium (PP) children where average attendance is even lower.

**Pupil Numbers** – only 11 unfilled vacancies in the school with Nursery numbers for the Spring term looking very healthy, given the drop in birth rate. This is very positive given that the prediction was that we would have 71 children and in fact we have 86 -only slightly less than the maximum of 90 children. It was noted that in the Reception classes over a third of the children come from out of catchment, a much higher proportion than previous years indicating that numbers remain high because we are pulling in children from other areas. Governors asked as to how predictions for school numbers were calculated and were advised that local birthrate is part of the calculation and then other factors, such as new builds in catchment are considered but there is no transparent formula. Tony advised that he is part of the Growth Funding panel that allocates money for new schools and predicting pupil numbers is both very difficult and often inaccurate. He noted that when the new school had been built the prediction had been that it would take 3-4 years to fill but in reality the school was full from the start.

**Sport** – St Matthews won the Cross-Country Championship again although Covid regulations meant only half as many children could take part. Good to be able to take part in inter-school competitions again.

*Sarah Barratt joined the meeting*

**c. Pupil Premium Strategy**

The St Matthews Pupil Premium Strategy document 2021-2024 was circulated with the papers - a very detailed long term strategy plan (format specified by DfE). It was noted that whilst this is a 3 year plan it will be reviewed annually as we consider outcomes of ongoing work. Alongside this a shorter report was circulated detailing the school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium for the 2021 to 2022 academic year) funding to help improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The school has identified 8 key challenges amongst disadvantaged pupils including academic, Social Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH), Oracy, attendance, enrichment, laptop poverty, parental engagement and parental support. The work being done to address each challenge and how the outcome is measured is detailed in the document, together with the budgeted costs for the year. This document contains many challenges previously identified with updated ongoing actions plus two challenges which have been specifically identified this year

- i) Oracy – area of ongoing curriculum development in the school
- ii) Laptop poverty – the pandemic has shown how critical provision of suitable equipment and access to wifi is, especially for more vulnerable learners so that they

have online access. The school is now using Google classroom routinely and the challenge is ensuring that all families can access this material.

SB noted that there have been changes in the Pupil Premium cohort:

- Numbers have significantly increased from mid 70s to now 99 PP children in school
- Previously over 30% of the Pupil Premium children were also in the SEN cohort but this has dropped to 25%
- Many children have had very difficult family situations over the last 2 years which has made tackling the issues more complex. Significant increase in SEMH issues including anxiety.
- More ethnically diverse group ( less than 40% are White British) and increasing English as an additional language needs.

Improving academic engagement and achievement must be seen as a long-term goal – there are no quick or easy solutions. Long term the most important factor for these children to progress is the school running as normal with the provision of additional support. With time, patience and hard work all these children will be able to make good progress.

SB thanked JM for her invaluable work in ensuring that all eligible families are claiming PP. There is £1320 funding per child available, but this money is not spent on individual children but on developing whole school provision that benefits these children. There are PP or SEND families that are struggling and the school is working hard to identify these children and ensure that appropriate resources are made available.

In answer to Governor's question SB advised

- there are a small number of children who did not have internet access during the school closures created by the pandemic and they have all been identified.
- With regards to equipment the situation is more complex and alongside families with no devices or just a parent's phone there are also families who share a device but for online education need multiple devices. A survey amongst both parents and older children is being done to identify families where access to a laptop is difficult or time restricted.
- 30 laptops have already been provided by the school where needs have been identified. The school will be able to order further devices from the DfE shortly.
- The school do have access to a Family worker and parents can self-refer where a specific need is identified, but their consent is needed for the school to be informed.
- The school used to have an Early Intervention Family worker but recruitment issues has meant that we have not had access to this service for a couple of years.
- Also there is a Mental Health Support team for early interventions at primary level including work on behaviour led parenting and supporting your child with anxiety. This can be one to one, group work, webinars and consultancy

Governors thanked Sarah Barratt for all she is doing to support the Pupil Premium children and other children where catch up is needed. NP, Pupil Premium Link Governor, confirmed that he will be meeting with Sarah shortly to look at this area in more detail.

**The FGB unanimously approved the St Matthews Pupil Premium Strategy document 2021-2024. This document will be published on the school website next term.**

#### **d. SEND Policy and Information Report 2021**

TD advised that CB, one of the staff governors, is a new addition to the SEND team but there have been no other significant changes to the school policy. A major review is scheduled for next year. The policy is displayed on the website and whilst teachers are aware of what is covered by the policy the plan is to move to a document that is more easily accessible to others including parents and includes helpful links to other resources. It was noted that St Matthews has good outcomes for SEND children and as a result is drawing in a higher proportion from out of catchment area.

**The FGB unanimously approved the SEND Policy and Information report 2021.**

*Sarah Barratt left the meeting*

#### **e. Covid Catch-up Grants – outline of planned spending and strategy**

There have been 3 grants from central government, including one from last year, which was carried over because school closures made it difficult to spend effectively on the planned tuition programme. This money has now been invested in additional teaching time, which is being used to release class teachers to improve marking and feedback for writing. The school has worked

hard to ensure that the range of grants can be used to identify and support all children in the school where catch up work is needed. The Covid Recovery Premium funding (£145 per Pupil Premium child) has been spent on the Nuffield Early Years Intervention (NELI) programme in Early Years and Year one, additional teaching assistant support in Year 1 to support learning behaviours in class and Maths intervention in Year 6. The school has recruited a Maths specialist teacher starting next term. It is planned that for the lowest attaining children in Year 6 there will be a daily Maths lesson in 6 week blocks in place of the normal Maths lessons to target identified gaps. This grant together with £107K of Pupil premium funding is reported on under the next item on Pupil Premium strategy. One of the Staff Governors advised the Governors that the additional Covid release time has made an enormous difference for her personally and that parents had mentioned how inspired the children were by the Music lessons that were being used to cover the time.

The School led Tutoring Programme grant is complex – the amount of funding is calculated on 60% of number of pupil premium children in Years 1 to 6. It assumes 15 hours of tuition at a rate of £18 per hour, and the government funds 75% of that tuition, however the children who receive the tuition do not necessarily have to be pupil premium. The school only receives funding for the hours of tutoring it delivers and any unspent funding is likely to be clawed back. The plan is to use this funding to target mathematics catch-up for specific children in Years 1 to 6. Currently 18 children are benefitting from this support which began just after half term. Support for these children will run for six weeks after which a second group of children will be targeted. The children have been selected on the basis of progress made over the last two years, thereby targeting those children whose level of attainment has been most adversely affected by the pandemic. The maximum amount of funding the school can access is £9500 and this will require a contribution from the school of £3159.

The Head noted that whilst the Covid catch up money has been very valuable it is quite limited – it only works out at £55 per child/per year over the 2 year period. Many other countries are investing significantly larger sums of money to ensure their children stay on track academically.

#### **f. School Development Plan Update (SDP) and Link Governor Visits**

TD advised that there had been no major changes to the SDP since the last FGB meeting. It has been updated for the following:

- Changes in the way that staff meetings are delivered – move from big groups on line to smaller groups (max 6-7 people – teachers from 2 year groups plus the leader) that are able to meet socially distanced. This will be helpful in getting across some complex pedagogy ideas which have been difficult to develop online. It allows more detailed conversations to be held
- It has been recognized that holding meetings online has slowed down the rate of delivery particularly for curriculum leadership work e.g Art Curriculum – this has been moved to the next term. There has also been recognition that a slower pace is better and more realistic given that many staff are exhausted from the strains imposed with Covid.
- Pleasing to note how many actions have been completed (marked in green) despite the challenges
- School travel Plan – work led by AL. Audit to be done to establish progress on encouraging families to take healthy routes to school e.g. using scooters or Park and stride. Future developments include setting up walking buses. This work has been delayed by operational work but it is hoped that there will be an opportunity after Christmas for the school to work towards accreditation. LJ noted that Living Streets may be able to help with surveys. One of the governors asked whether the school is able to help children to access suitable wheels for their journey to school. AL advised that we do help in this way for bikeability and it may be something that could be extended.
- School Road closures – it was noted that the 2 street closures on Norfolk Street and Broad Street are operated under different schemes leading to significant operational differences. Broad Street is a Covid emergency scheme and has a barrier manned by volunteers but on Norfolk Street we are part of a Clean Air Zone Research project to establish how effective different methods are and our project has signage but we are not allowed to do anything else that might affect the traffic such as talking to drivers having volunteers or a barrier. It was noted that whilst Norfolk Street still has traffic there has been a significant improvement. AL mentioned that she is thinking of establishing a working party who might review what is happening and talk to the Council about what is planned longer term – LJ asked to be part of this group. It was agreed that School Road closures will be on the agenda for the next FGB.

	<p><b>Action: Report on School Road closures to come to next FGB meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Governors noted that they were pleased to see that staff other than teachers e.g TAs and lunch staff were receiving training on 'My Concern' – the online scheme for logging child protection issues</li> <li>- Autism training day was noted</li> </ul>	AL
6.	<p><b>RESOURCES FOR LEARNING:</b></p> <p><b>a. Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee</b></p> <p>It was noted that these draft minutes had been circulated for information.</p>	
7.	<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p><b>Governor training</b> – it was noted there is updated Safeguarding training for all governors to do</p> <p><b>Action: Information and link to be sent to new Parent governors and any governors who have not yet done the training</b></p> <p><b>Committees</b> – AG to join the Resources Committee and AV to join the TLOC. Governors were reminded that whilst they are appointed to one of the Committees and expected to attend or send apologies that they are welcome to attend the other Committee for any meeting.</p>	LS
10.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>There was no other business. Governors were advised that there is currently online training on School Finances which other governors had found very helpful</p>	
11.	<p><b>DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>Teaching and Learning Outcomes Committee – Wednesday 9 March at 5.30pm Online</p> <p>Resources Committee – Wednesday 9 February/ 27 April – both at 5.30pm Online</p> <p>Full Governing Body – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March/ 4<sup>th</sup> May – both at 5.30pm Online</p>	
	<p><b>APPROVALS</b></p> <p><b>The Board unanimously approved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>St Matthews Pupil Premium Strategy document 2021-2024.</b></li> <li>- <b>the SEND Policy and Information report 2021</b></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION LIST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>LS to email new Governors with instructions as to how to access Safeguarding training and Governors to advise when completed</b></li> <li>● <b>Report on School Road closures to come to next FGB meeting (AL)</b></li> </ul>	

Signed:..... Date:.....