

**ST MATTHEW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL  
FULL GOVERNING BODY - MINUTES OF MEETING  
THURSDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> OF MARCH 2019 at 18.15 pm**

|                       |                       |             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <b>PRESENT:</b>       | Z Thorn (ZT)          | Chair       |
|                       | C Mills (CM)          | Vice Chair  |
|                       | N Perry (NP)          |             |
|                       | D Lucarelli (DL)      |             |
|                       | L Walker (LW)         |             |
|                       | R Herbane (RH)        |             |
|                       | A Gurria (AG)         |             |
|                       | K Blencowe (KB)       |             |
|                       | C Bates (CB)          |             |
|                       | K Hehir (KH)          |             |
|                       | J Murphy (JM)         |             |
|                       | R Warwick (RW)        |             |
|                       | R Mottershead (RM)    |             |
|                       | T Davies (TD)         | Headteacher |
| L Steel (LS)          | Assistant Headteacher |             |
| A Lewis (AL)          | Assistant Headteacher |             |
| K Spencer-Allen (KSA) | Assistant Headteacher |             |

**CLERK:** E Silver

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|      | <b>WELCOME</b><br>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the new parent governor Richard Warwick and all governors were introduced.   |        |
| 1    | <b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b><br>There were apologies from:<br>John Parkin (JP)<br>It was noted that the meeting was quorate.   |        |
| 2.   | <b>DECLARATIONS OF DIRECT/INDIRECT PECUNIARY INTEREST S</b><br><br>No additional declarations to note in any of the agenda items.  |        |
| 3    | <b>MINUTES of FGB held on 4<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2018 AND MATTERS ARISING</b><br><br>The minutes of the 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018 were <b>accepted</b> as a true record.<br><br>The following typos and corrections were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present: Noted that Kate Spencer-Allen had not been present at the December meeting</li> <li>• Correct spelling of new governor's name is Katy Hehir</li> <li>• Point 5b) - Apostrophe missing from St Matthew's</li> <li>• Point 5d) – stickers will no longer be given (instead of loner in first para)</li> <li>• Point 5d) – marbles punt in a jar – space missing (second paragraph) In answer to a question the Clerk advised that following discussion at an earlier meeting she normally does not name individual governors unless it is pertinent to the matter e.g. a Link Visit but that she will review her consistency in this matter.</li> </ul> |        |

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|      | <p>PREVIOUS ACTIONS (not covered by the Agenda)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions for the Pollution survey have been drafted and contact made with another local primary school that has looked at parking and safe car movements near the school. A copy of the proposed email was circulated to all the governors.</li> </ul>  |        |
| 5    | <p><b>Headteacher report</b></p> <p>The contents of the report were noted by the meeting. In answer to questions TD advised that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No reply has been received from Hazel Belchamber regarding the poor service from the Local Admissions office which has led to a reduction of £28k in funding for this year. There has been an interim response indicating that a period of consultation is taking place.</li> <li>• One of the governors asked why the ethnicity was mentioned for children who had been excluded. TD advised that this is given because governors play a role in monitoring whether any groups are disproportionately represented. The meeting was advised that exclusion is mentioned as part of the Behaviour Management Policy and there is published guidance on Exclusions.</li> <li>• Funds from the PTA have been used to develop the Foundation stage outside area and this had a tremendous impact on developing outdoor learning which was commended by Val Palmer, local authority school advisor on her recent visit. This information will be included in a Newsletter which will go out before the end of term. KSA confirmed that she has spoken to children and teachers and children and is just writing the article.</li> <li>• Very positive feedback from the recent Meet the Head meeting looking at the new Behaviour Management Policy. One of the governors asked if questions should be solicited in advance for this meeting but TD confirmed that he is keen to stick with the current more informal approach. No question is awkward and if he does not immediately have the answer, he will advise that he will find out the information. In the past minutes have been taken but it is felt that providing these mean parents might not attend the meeting.</li> <li>• Training for Maths had to be postponed because of illness but will be taking place this term</li> <li>• Governors commended the school on their achievements at Chess and Hockey</li> <li>• There are staff willing to take on the two additional Designated Child Protection roles and that the cost for the training is very small. The real cost is in staff time and these roles are needed because of the increase in the number of referrals. The school needs to feedback to authorities that cuts in other social services is putting the school under a very heavy workload. Some very significant issues have been raised recently which has resulted in the SMT staff spending an enormous amount of time on the phone to Social Services. One day TD was dealing with 4 ongoing cases, fielding simultaneous phone calls from social care from all four. Referrals are being made not just by the school but by other outside agencies regarding St Mathews children but social care resource to deal with these situations is very limited.</li> </ul> <p>At a recent Heads meeting the level of social service work was confirmed as being a significant problem and many Heads feel isolated without adequate support for the children involved. He noted that in the city a third of social work posts are vacant meaning that staff in post are very stretched and, in some circumstances, interim staff are brought in from other areas for short periods, so all continuity is</p> |        |

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|      | <p>lost, and many agreed actions remain outstanding. All of this increases the level of stress for staff, children and parents involved. TD noted that it is not just Social services support that has reduced but there have also been reductions in other areas such as Early Intervention teams and school nurses meaning that some children with additional needs are being picked up much later. Governors agreed that they would like to express their concerns about the level of support being provided and the unrealistic expectations about the level of support that the school can provide to children with difficult backgrounds.</p> <p><b>Governors unanimously agreed sending a letter regarding their deep level of concern. Suggested recipients including the Minister for Education, Social Services, Education department and relevant County Counsellors.</b></p> <p><b>Action: Letter to be drafted by Chair of Governors, reviewed by RH, RM, and LW and sent to TD to approve. This letter will then be sent on behalf of the Board to key people to express the Board’s concern about the lack of funding/external support available to the school.</b></p> <p>TD advised the Board that a St Matthews parent who is a professional journalist had recently interviewed him and written an article that was printed in the Guardian - he had received lots of positive feedback from parents.</p> <p>TD asked governors to note the letter from Cambridge Academic Partnership about their proposal to join United Learning from 1 September 2019.</p>  | <p>ZT</p> |
| 6    | <p><b>RESOURCES FOR LEARNING</b></p> <p><b>a) Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee – 13 February 2019</b></p> <p>The minutes were noted by the meeting. One of the governors requested that initials should be given for all governors at the start of minutes and it was agreed that this would be done in future.</p> <p>Governors asked about whether there was any further information about the proposed redevelopment of the pitch and fencing. They were keen to ensure that the school received the maximum benefit from any proposed work. A number of questions were asked about how the cage is used and whether there would be any improvements for girls and/or no footballing children. One of the staff governors advised that the children were themselves asking for portioning of the cage so that there were two 2 pitches width ways so more than one game could be contained. This would benefit other children by ensuring that football did not take place in other parts of the playground. In addition to the children using the cage it is also used at lunch time by premier Sport for coaching and for PE lessons so all children will benefit from improvements. Staff also noted that both boys and a number of girls use the cage for football. The school had looked at establishing girl only football sessions in the cage, but the numbers were very low, and the girls said that they preferred having the boys to play football with them. Discussion also focused on whether the school could find the money needed for matched funding. KB advised that Ian Ross of the City Council was currently preparing a Football Pitch strategy for the city and he would pass on the contact to the Head to see if there was any funding assistance available for the development work e.g. Section 106 money from nearby developments that has to be spent to mitigate the impact of new developments on the community. The location of the school in the city centre means this is a key area of interest for the council. It was agreed that we would need to establish level of funding possible before agreeing any designs. Other potential sources of funding such as community services and ARU (who use the pitches) need to be investigated. It was noted that the FA may be willing to</p> |           |

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|      | <p>fund more than 50%, possibly even as much as 75% but even at this point the school would still need to find £20k which in the current funding climate would not be easy. Governors asked the Head about the accuracy of the suggested cost of £80K. TD advised that the school would need to use consultants to get an accurate costing. RW advised that this costing seemed low for the proposed work but that there may be areas where cost savings can be made e.g. a simpler system for entry.</p> <p>It was noted from the minutes that not all the Financial audit sheets had been returned and this still needed to be done. It was agreed that all governors should complete a skills audit so that we had this information for both the Resources Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee.</p> <p><b>Action: All governors to complete a skills audit and return to the school office</b></p> <p>The meeting was advised that the Link Governor for Financial reviews (LW) had met with the Financial Manager and her report would go directly to the next Resources Committee.</p> <p><b>b) Update re budget for 2019-2020</b></p> <p>The Head advised that the school received information about the actual levels of funding that the school would get in this financial year two weeks before the start of the new year. He advised that the budget was reduced for 2 separate reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) The census taken at the start of October had shown the number of pupils on roll was low (16 less than previous year). The school had a waiting list, but slow processing of new admissions meant that the places had not been filled in time leading to a significant reduction in funding for the school. All but one of the spaces had now been filled and at the time of the census there were 8 children waiting for places who could have been counted if the admissions team had not been so slow. A letter of complaint has been sent to Hazel Belchamber</li> <li>ii) funding was reduced because the Heads were asked to agree to a transfer of money from the Schools' budget to the High Needs budget for SEN provision. The High Needs budget has additional costs since it is now responsible for education from 18-21 for children with special needs although there has been no additional funding. The Heads had been advised that the High Needs budget was considerably overspent and agreed the transfer.</li> </ul> <p>Overall this means that the school will have £60k less funding than originally budgeted for. TD and Adrian Strowger have put together a very rough first draft of the budget which has produced a deficit at the end of 2019-2020 of £30k (assuming there is £14k carry over). There is some outstanding insurance money from last year that the school has not received. TD has asked the local authority to consider refunding the £28k that the school lost because of their slow processing of admissions and if this were to happen then the school would be at break even.</p> <p>TD advised that he had discussed the matter with our external financial advisor Ray Byford who had advised that there were other schools in a much worse financial position. The frustration for the school is that if we were being funded for the number of pupils that we currently have on roll there would be no concern about the budget for next year.</p> <p><i>Neil Perry arrived at 19.05</i></p> | <p><b>All Governor<br/>s</b></p> |

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|      | <p>Governors expressed concern that children moving locally are not treated as a priority since there will be no increase in funding whereas children moving into the area are treated as a high priority and processed within 2 weeks. JM also advised that it is now the responsibility of the school office to carry out follow up phone calls once a place has been offered by the local authority. It was noted that historically the average amount of money spent on each Admission in Cambridgeshire is very low compared to other areas. As a local authority school St Matthews have to use the central admissions service whereas academies have a choice as to whether they buy in and may be given priority to retain them.</p> <p>Governors discussed the possibility of income generation but noted that there was limited scope for further future lettings of the buildings. Reductions in cost of staff was also discussed such as reducing number of agency staff or level of support staff. TD advised that in some schools the number of Teaching Assistants (TA) is already very low and they are only in Reception and with children that need 1 to 1 support. St Matthew's wants to avoid this situation. The SEND Link governor expressed concern that from what he had seen during his last visit any further reduction in Teaching Assistants would adversely impact many of the most vulnerable children including SEND and Pupil premium children. It was noted that one of the Assistant Heads (LS) is already teaching some of the most vulnerable children but that further use of the Assistants in this way would mean that there would be another area of their responsibilities that was not being done. Currently Higher Level TAs (HLTAs) are being used to cover short term sickness and the amount that they do this will be increased in future. The amount of cover that will be brought in for TAs that are off sick will have to be reduced. All of these limitations and stretching of resources can impact the morale of teachers and TAs.</p> <p><b>c) School Funding Campaign update</b></p> <p>TD advised that as part of the WorthLess? campaign on school funding he had been in the press including an article in the Guardian. The aim of the campaign is to make politicians aware of the extreme pressure that Heads in school feel they are being put under to make budgets balance. The government claims that additional funding has been put into schools, but this is money for specific purposes (supporting the pay increases for teacher's and mandatory pension increases) so although this funding has been included in the National funding formula it does not enable schools to spend in areas of need. It is not a genuine increase in funding to enable additional provision but a part funding of additional costs.</p> <p>TD advised that a meeting had been arranged by parents for later the same evening to discuss how they could help raise additional money for the school. He has advised them that if they want to do this then any requests must be for voluntary donations, ideally for the school to decide which areas have the greatest need rather than for a specified purpose. In answer to a question he advised that a Just Giving page had been set up by parents and the school would be looking at any legal implications of asking for money and how this money needs to be accounted for. It was noted that any money raised by the PTA for the school could be gift aided. In a normal year the PTA raises about £10k for a specific project such as an outdoor play space but ideally any money raised by them this year would be less restricted so it could be used wherever needed. Governors agreed that this is not the ideal way to raise money but in a crisis situation such as the present time might be considered acceptable as a one off. It was noted that there is enormous diversity amongst school parents in terms of their financial situation and whilst some parents would be willing to contribute there would be others who are not in a position to give. The importance of communication was highlighted to ensure there were no incorrect messages being conveyed about the project. The importance of good communication with staff was also highlighted to prevent</p> |        |

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|      | <p>anxiety amongst staff who will be concerned about their job security. Governors requested more information from the senior staff as to where the school would need to make additional cuts to bring in a balanced budget in the next year. TD confirmed that whilst he did not want the school to be asking for money, he is aware of the significant impact the reduced funding will have on the school. It has become clear that many parents do not understand the difference between the PTA and the Board and that this is an area where greater understanding would be helpful. The Board used to receive an annual report from the PTA, but this is not a mandatory requirement and has not happened in recent years.</p> <p><i>Katy Spencer-Allen left the meeting at 19.30</i></p>   |        |
| 7    | <p><b>RAISING STANDARDS</b></p> <p><b>d) Draft Minutes of the Teaching Learning and Outcomes Committee – 7 March 2019</b><br/> The minutes were not available at the meeting due to a mix up, but a brief review of the meeting was given to the meeting. It was agreed that the minutes will be sent to the next meeting</p> <p><b>b) Science Link Governor report</b><br/> The report was circulated to the Board. Governors noted that SEND pupils are not performing well in this curriculum area but other than that the majority of areas are performing at national standard level or above. The Link Governor (DL) advised that the Science lead, Melissa Hatcher, is carrying out a number of reviews including resources needed for the curriculum and consistency of marking across all year groups. She is planning a questionnaire to consult staff and children in relation to Science and a meeting with the Head to discuss implementation in relation to the School Development plan. She is also planning an event to raise the profile of Science in the school. Parents who are experts in a number of scientific areas will be invited in to the school during the Science festival or STEM week for a Science Fair. Governors agreed that the Action Plan for this area is very ambitious. TD advised that there is an evaluation process for Action Plans that should will help to identify whether they are both realistic for the level of resource available yet challenging enough. Work is ongoing at Staff meetings currently to help teachers to make these judgements. He agreed that this was a good plan but likely to be unrealistic for a busy Year 6 teacher to achieve in a year. In answer to a question TD advised that teachers get half a term when their class is taken for a Fruitrition lesson by someone else for an hour and this is the time that is allocated to working on the Action plans for their area of responsibility. There is also management time allocated weekly, shared between all curriculum leaders. This area was reviewed in some detail at the recent TLOC meeting. One of the governors suggested that another way of using parents with scientific skills would be to run a Science Club in the school.</p> <p><b>c) Updated Self Evaluation Form</b><br/> An updated SEF was circulated to all governors prior to the meeting for review as requested at the last Board meeting.</p> <p>The following items were raised at the meeting by governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On line volunteering data base and how it is used in practice. TD advised that quite a few parents have been invited in, but he will flag up us e of the resource at the next staff meeting.</li> <li>• Governors noted that this document is very useful in that it highlights areas identified as needing review.</li> <li>• The recent TLOC meeting had discussed the latest assessment data including trends and areas of concern.</li> </ul> |        |

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|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern that there is no mention in the document of the financial challenges that the school is currently facing. TD confirmed that this was following discussion with the local advisor Val Palmer who had suggested that it should not be included for Ofsted to see.</li> </ul>   |               |
| 8    | <p><b>RAISING STANDARDS – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE</b></p> <p>Governors reviewed the plan which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following matters were brought to the attention of the meeting: discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training in Spring term on Leadership</li> <li>Cancelled Maths training is about to take place</li> <li>The training on Book checks scheduled for the second half of March has been postponed to the Summer term.</li> <li>It was noted that the last page of the document refers to Governing Body activities. Governors noted that it is hard to tell if events have taken place.</li> <li>The importance of keeping Governor visits on track was noted – this responsibility is undertaken at TLOC. It was agreed that this area could be managed better to demonstrate that the FGB are carrying out the visits that are required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Governing Bodies section to be updated termly so it is clear what has been done and what is outstanding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting was advised that a Safeguarding audit will take place on 2/3 April.</li> <li>The Peer Review that had been discussed as likely to happen in the Spring Term will now be happening in June. Dates will be confirmed shortly.</li> </ul> <p>TD advised that all actions are on track for completion in the agreed timescales, though some actions relating to curriculum development are being reviewed in the light of the subject evaluation work that is taking place. He is pleased with the impact that training on Subject Leadership has had on getting work done in curriculum areas.</p> | TD            |
| 9    | <p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p><b>APPOINTMENT OF NEW PARENT GOVERNOR TO A COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that the new Parent Governor, Richard Warwick should join the Resources Committee. Richard confirmed that he was very happy with this decision.</p>   |               |
| 10   | <p><b>RAISING STANDARDS – GOVERNOR TRAINING: GOVERNOR DBS CHECKS AND SECTION 128 CHECKS</b></p> <p>TD advised that he did not have with him an up to date list of DBS/Section 128 checks for the School Office but was aware that there were some outstanding checks for governors.</p> <p><b>Action: Outstanding DBSs to be completed as soon as possible</b></p>  | All Governors |
| 11   | <p><b>FORWARD PLANNING – DATES OF MEETINGS FOR SUMMER TERM AND AGENDA ITEMS</b></p> <p>Resources Committee 24 April at 17.30<br/> FGB 1<sup>st</sup> May at 18.15<br/> TLOC 13<sup>th</sup> June at 17.30<br/> FGB 10<sup>th</sup> July at 18.15</p>  |               |
| 12   | <b>AOB</b>  |               |

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|      | <p><b>Pollution /Air quality</b><br/>RH updated the meeting regarding the traffic situation on Norfolk Street. Concern has been expressed by parents, carers and the community about the pollution/air quality near the school whilst the recent roadworks were being undertaken. It is important that this aspect is included in future H &amp; S audits undertaken at the school. It was noted that another local school had been able to reduce the cars close to the school by getting agreement that local pub car parks could be used – this might be possible in the morning. However, the school needs to ensure that any changes that are made help to improve access for children or parents with mobility issues, blue badge holders and any child that is brought by taxi (currently there are none being brought officially). Concern was raised as to whether an emergency vehicle could access the school at peak times.</p> <p>The survey on traffic will be sent out before the end of term.</p> <p><b>Acronyms</b><br/>RH advised that he has been compiling a list of acronyms which he is happy to circulate if it is of use to other governors</p> |        |
| 13   | <p><b>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES FROM MEETING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Letter to be drafted by Chair of Governors, reviewed by RH, RM, and LW and sent to TD to approve. This letter will then be sent on behalf of the Board to key people to express the Board’s concern about the lack of funding/external support available to the school.</b></li> <li>• <b>All governors to complete a skills audit and return to the school office</b></li> <li>• <b>Governing Bodies section of SDP to be updated termly so it is clear what actions have been done and what is still outstanding</b></li> <li>• <b>Outstanding Governor DBSs to be completed as soon as possible</b></li> </ul>  |        |

The meeting closed at 20.00

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