

**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 3rd October 2024**

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

Online: Simon Richardson, Sonia Ingersent, Andrew Grieve

Apologies: None.

Attending: Anthony Davies (Headteacher, HT), Daisy Lawrence (Clerk)

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm and all participants were welcomed. No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

All governors have filled out the business interest form and there were no new specific declarations of interest.

3. Governance Matters (Part One)

The Chairs of Governors and Vice-Chair were confirmed. All on the board agreed that they would adhere to the Code of Conduct. Several possible parent governors were discussed (a science curator parent, Head of Mayfield or governor from The Perse or Parkside CC). It was decided there should be a discussion of different ways to potentially structure the FGB board, Link Governors, meetings and activities.

Action Point (AP) – AD and ES to approach potential candidates.

AP – Governing body to send in comments on the structure of the governing body should they wish.

4. Minutes of the FGB Meeting on 4th July 2024

It was noted that some amendments were necessary to tidy up the minutes. The notes were agreed in principle subject to these changes.

AP – Chair and HT to highlight amendments and send to the Clerk to finalise.

5. Head Teacher's Report

The Headteacher (HT) shared his report with the FGB prior to the meeting and talked through all the items.

Comments and Challenges:

Governors asked about the latest safeguarding audit. What challenges have their been with the budget. Why can't an accurate analysis to check the school is on track with budgeting be made at all times. When was the last accurate budget snapshot? What controls have been put in place by the Finance Manager? Is it a statutory duty to 'top slice' the school? Could it help if a letter were sent to the LA acknowledging the difficulty the poor system makes for the school and to ask what is being done about it?

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 report.

The SG audit was very positive and very useful. The school has significantly more referables than many other schools. This creates a huge workload identifying the needs and training staff appropriately. Many useful ideas arose from the SCR and some other new policies were discussed.

The Local Authority's (LA) systems stopped working in July and the school were not able to access budget forecasting therefore it was impossible to tell if the school was on track with their budget. There are also often mistakes and it is thought the software may not be fit for purpose anymore. The last accurate snapshot was in June/July. The school will be broadly on track now due to the re-organisation and staff savings with one member of the senior leadership team stepping down.

Much of spending is fixed. Delaying spending to keep it to a minimum only causes delays in the issue being resolved. Certain decisions need to be made. The longer-term issue is that SEN funding goes up and down and there is a long process and therefore time delay in receiving funding. This is all out of the control of the school and management and a huge amount to mitigate. The LA is obliged to take the top slice and there'd be no harm in a letter from the GB although it is likely the system will be working by the time that happens.

The school has a new Management Information System (MIS) and will be able to do much more reporting for the GB. It will not mean any duplication of administrative work as it will feed in.

AP – HT to send the SG report to the FGB. SG is central and should be included at every FGB meeting.

AP – Linda to check that this has been raised with the local councillors.

AP – AG to discuss software system with the Finance Manager in more depth.

AP – GB to send a letter to the LA. LJ to draft and send it from CJ on behalf of the FGB.

6. Resources for Learning

There was a discussion to the change made to the Pay Policy.

Comments and Challenges

Why has there been a change? The downside may be that under-performers can ride under the radar. Overall it looks to be a good hybrid system which will retain good teachers.

The school has always tried to develop their staff and the new system aims to create a more supportive and developmental process. Demonstrable and improvable teaching is always encouraged.

AP - The policy was ratified.

7. Raising Standards

The school is working broadly in line with the national average. The HT and GB discussed gross and motor skills, as well as phonics, reading, writing and maths, and understood how the statistics would look including and excluding their higher than average SEND cohort.

The SEND Policy and Information Report was discussed. There was a significant amount of work done on this last year and a new SENCo is now in place carrying on the good work

Comments and Challenges:

Are there many SEN and disadvantaged children at the school? Is it always writing that is the lowest level? Are there any ways to help improve the figures for Pupil Premium (PP) children?

There are a number of SEN and disadvantaged children but this changes constantly and varies cohort to cohort. Year 6 is currently well above in all areas with a very strong set of results despite many challenges. Reading is at 9.0 for example and writing at 7.2. It is thought that writing levels are lower because it all related to communication and depth of vocab and these cohorts didn't have that interaction during Covid 19. The areas that do better and worse change over years. It was maths a few years back.

The same patterns are replicated with the PP children. The school would like to address reading levels of PP children next. It is a very difficult issue to solve as PP children are not uniform in their issues and adverse childhood experiences. The school always prioritises these children and are aware of who they are and where they sit in each class. The next data checks are in January 2025. The school looks into what the potential barriers to learning are and then adopt the most appropriate strategies to combat these.

AP – The SEND Policy and Information Report 2024 – 25 was ratified.

8. Safeguarding (SG) Update

All governors must carry out regular SG training, PREVENT and online safety training. At this time, governors must be aware and have read the changes to the current Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024. A section on exploitation has been added. The annual child-protection report for

governors was discussed. The set up and process of an Ofsted inspection plus the change to using single word judgements forthcoming was discussed. It is essential that the FGB are aware of the whole process and expectations and assimilate all the information. The self-evaluation forms are also important and should include staff, parents and carers and children.

The Key has all the documents and online training including Safer Recruitment, PREVENT, and the KCSIE 2024 update.

AP – The draft Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was ratified.

AP – Please send photo to the school office for up-to-date colour-coded lanyards.

AP – Please could the GB advise ES of the training which should be included in the audit.

AP – Awareness made of the E-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement and signed off.

AP – The Google drive includes the Ofsted Handbook and should be fully understood by the FGB.

9. Governance – Part Two

Committee membership and Link Governors were discussed. The FGB currently has a good variety of governors with different views and skills. A Committee for the performance management of the HT is required and usually rotated each time.

AP – AV will lead the performance management committee with SR and JP.

10. Any Other Business

No other business.

12. Dates of Future Meetings

23rd October 2024 – Resources Committee

21st November 2024 – TLOC 6-8pm

4th December 2024 – FGB 6-8pm

13. Close of meeting:

19:58 Meeting ends.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____