

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ST MATTHEW'S GOVERNING BODY, HELD AT SCHOOL
ON THURSDAY 9TH MARCH 2017 AT 6.15 P.M.**

Governors: Zoe Thorn (Chair), Carole Mills (Vice Chair), Kevin Blencowe, Jill Tuffnell, Neil Perry, Melissa Hatcher, Sarah Ransome, Christina Bates, Rosa Mottershead, Angel Gurria, Debora Lucarelli, Lucy Walker, Tony Davies (Head Teacher), Ruth Platt attended to present Agenda item 4

In attendance: Liz Steel, Kate Spencer-Allen, Annabelle Lewis (Assistant Head Teachers),

Clerk: Lis Silver

Item		ACTION
1.	Apologies for absence	
	There were apologies for absence from Mark Tinkler and Gavin Ayliffe. Governors welcomed Annabelle to the meeting after her absence. The Chair advised the meeting that Christina is currently on Maternity leave and the FGB congratulated her on the birth of her baby.	
2.	Declaration of direct or indirect pecuniary interests	
	Governors had no additional direct or indirect pecuniary interests to declare relating to items on today's agenda. <i>Debora Lucarelli was asked to leave the meeting</i>	
3.	Appointment of new Co-opted governor	
	The FGB were advised that based on advice on good practice recommendations from the School Governance service a panel consisting of the Head, the Chair and the Chair of Resources had interviewed 4 candidates for the post of co-opted governor. All the candidates interviewed were parents at the school and had either stood in the recent Parent Governor elections or expressed an interest in becoming a governor. Following a skills analysis of the current Board required skills had been identified to strengthen the Board. Two candidates stood out as matching the required profile and the panel made the decision to recommend to the Board the appointment of Debora Lucarelli. Debora is a scientist at Addenbrookes Hospital with strong links to the University. She is a Laboratory Manager with both scientific and procurement skills. She is a parent of 2 children (Reception and Year 1) and was previously a governor at Brunswick Nursery. The Chair, Zoe, proposed the appointment of Debora as a co-opted governor and this was seconded by Kevin, Resource Committee Chair). One of the governors asked if there were any interests such as friendships with staff that the Board should be aware of and it was confirmed that there were not. The Board unanimously approved the appointment of Debora Lucarelli as the new co-opted governor Debora was welcomed back to the meeting and she introduced herself to the rest of the Board. She advised that her scientific background is in Chemistry and her role managing a laboratory for the University of Cambridge includes applying for grant funding and teaching. She is Italian and has Swiss citizenship.	
4.	Raising Standards – Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Policy	
	Ruth Platt (PSHE Co-ordinator) gave a presentation to the Board regarding the Sex and Relationship Education Policy. She organised an exercise to get the governors to think about what were the key aims of SRE at primary level and advised the meeting that the staff had already done the same exercise. It was clear from the answers that communication and developing good relationships early are critical – children need to establish	

	<p>who they are as people and this is at the heart of St Matthew's ethos. Ruth advised that SRE is not a separate subject but is taught within the PHSE curriculum and many of the key aims overlap with other parts of the curriculum. Topics covered include emotions, self-esteem, relationships, rights and responsibilities. This work is part of a continuous process of lifelong learning which starts before school and continues into adulthood. She advised that there is a 2-year rolling curriculum for Years 1-4 and then a curriculum for each year in Years 5 and 6. Different groupings are used where this approach is thought more appropriate e.g. single sex groups. The class teacher is responsible for delivering the SRE curriculum and extra training on tools and strategies is provided; this responsibility cannot be delegated to Teaching Assistants. However, all adults within the school are made aware that it is a shared responsibility for them to respond to a child's request for information. It is the Governor's responsibility to ensure through consultation that the Policy reflects the views of the parents and the local community. The SRE Policy is published on the website. After discussion, it was agreed that the Policy should be reviewed every 3 years by the FGB. It was noted that there was one option in the circulated Policy and it was agreed that both the major and minor aims should be listed in the policy.</p> <p>The following ground rules have been established to create a safe environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of scientific language • Asking and answering of personal questions – staff should not give out private information • Strategies for delivering or enabling children to access accurate information • Children cannot be promised confidentiality but in all cases staff will act in the best interests of the child. All staff are well trained in Child Protection matters and are supported when necessary by the Assistant Heads. • Parents can withdraw children from SRE but cannot take them out of the science teaching which is part of the mandatory curriculum. Parents are sent a detailed letter so that they are aware of what is being taught. <p>In general parents are very supportive of this teaching; they are aware that many children are exposed to similar information through the internet. There have been recent parental workshops for parents on eSafety, plus workshops for Year 5 & 6 children, run by the Cambridgeshire ICT Service.</p> <p>One of the governors advised the meeting that there have been some recent legal changes and free schools and independent schools are now required to provide SRE from the age of 11.</p> <p>The FGB thanked Ruth for a thought provoking presentation</p> <p>The Board unanimously approved the Sex and Relationships Education Policy</p>	
5.	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2016</p>	
	<p>The minutes were reviewed for accuracy. The following correction was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action on page 5 to be corrected to indicate that the Board approved the SEND (not Safeguarding) report <p>With this change the minutes were agreed as a comprehensive and accurate record.</p> <p>Matters Arising & Agreed Actions Update</p> <p>The following matters arising were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of training done still required from some governors – please ensure that the Clerk has been advised. 	<p>Clerk</p>

	<p>Action: Governors to supply Clerk with training done in last 5 terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding DBSs - Governors reminded that original documents must be brought in to school ASAP for School secretary/Head to see (DBSs are now mandatory requirement). Only portable DBSs can be accepted by the school if carried out for another organisation. <p>Action: Governors to supply DBS information and complete on line form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor information required for EduBASE –requirements circulated by email and hard copy at meeting – final document to be compiled by Clerk <p>Action: Clerk to compile document with EduBASE information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors requested instructions on using the Microsite Web App so that they could access school emails on their personal phones and be alerted to important messages. It was agreed that this could be done but governors would need to ensure their phones were password protected because of the confidential nature of some information. The head informed governors that the Microsoft Web App could be downloaded from whatever store governors may have for their phones. One governor advised that when she had done this previously it had caused problems with some of her other email accounts. <p>It was noted that at the previous meeting it had been agreed that to prevent delays in actions being undertaken a list of actions from the meeting should be circulated prior to the minutes but that this had not happened because the Clerk had been on holiday.</p> <p>Action agreed: List of actions from FGB to be circulated to governors at earlier date</p>	<p>/Governors</p> <p>Governors</p> <p>Clerk /Governors</p> <p>Clerk</p>
6.	<p>Raising Standards- a) Draft Minutes of the Teaching Learning and Outcomes Committee</p>	
	<p>The Chair briefly updated the FGB on the matters covered at the last meeting but advised that the assumption is that the minutes have been read and the time should be spent on any questions which arise. The meeting had included a report from the SEND Link Governor on his visit and a presentation by the INCO about recent changes to her role to better support children identified with the highest level of need. There had also been information on changes to the assessment processes and practice for Writing and the Link Governor report on use of the Pupil Premium money in the school.</p> <p>One of the governors asked if there was any update about the meetings with staff from a local school. The Head advised that he had met with the Head at Arbury school following their good results with Pupil Premium children at the last assessments. They had informally discussed strategies implemented in that school however it had been clear from the discussion that there is significant variation between different years which seems unrelated to strategy and is more dependent on the characteristics of children within the cohort. They have made a significant investment in counselling for the children they identify as being most disturbed and this does seem to be a valuable strategy in line with what St Matthews is already doing in their work with Hey Cambridge. The head was asked if the work of Hey Cambridge is targeted to Pupil Premium (PP) children. Tony advised that many of the children seen are PP, however time invested in non-PP children frees up other staff and resources for PP children.</p>	
	<p>Raising Standards – b) Head Teacher’s Report</p>	
	<p>The Board noted that an alternative source, Cambridgeshire Steps, has now been identified to deliver de-escalation/restraint training on behalf of</p>	

	<p>the Local Authority. One if the Assistant Heads has attended a taster session and it is planned to offer this training to all staff at an INSET day. This training will also be used to inform the school's review of behaviour management and anti-bullying policies next year.</p> <p>The school has addressed 5 prejudice related incidents this year. It has been noted that these are more homophobic than racist although the number is roughly in line with previous years and no single child has been involved in more than one incident. In answer to a question from a governor as to when a remark would be considered serious enough to be reported the FGB were advised that any remark that is overheard and considered not acceptable is recorded and handled appropriately.</p> <p>A new unit of work has been developed for Year 3 to look at different models of families in conjunction with the Kite Trust (formerly Sexyouality). The school intends to work with this organisation towards the Rainbow Flag award. This will build on the current whole school approach to tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and Inclusion. The Kite Trust will be coming into school to do sessions with year 3 and tear 5 classes and will spend an hour with each Year 6 class</p> <p>The governors congratulated the school at their recent successes in the Cross-Country County finals.</p>	
	<p>Raising Standards – c) School Development Plan update</p>	
	<p>The governors were advised that there had been a change in the Maths leader in the school. Caroline Bailey is now only working two days a week so stepped down and following a recruitment process Lowri Chatfield has been appointed to the post and to the Senior Leadership team. This has led to a delay on key actions including review of the Maths SDP. It was also noted that the TLO Committee had looked in detail at changes in Target setting for Writing at their last meeting.</p> <p>In the summer term, there had been planned a review of the Art curriculum following changes to the National Curriculum. This will now be delayed by the move of Lowri from the role of Art Co-ordinator to become the new Maths Co-ordinator.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Resources for Learning – Draft minutes of Resources Committee</p>	
	<p>The Chair advised the meeting that he was willing to answer questions arising from the notes of the last meeting. The Salary Committee had also met briefly after the Resources Committee. A panel of 3 Governors had met with the Local Authority advisor and made a proposal regarding the annual pay rise for the Head Teacher. This proposal had been accepted by the Salary Committee.</p> <p>The meeting was advised that salaries in the school were about 85% of budget and a question was asked as to whether this is usual for a primary school. Tony advised that the percentage varies with the size of the school and this is about the right level. He noted that under the new funding some schools have reported that salaries will be 95% of their budget – a position that is not sustainable long-term.</p> <p>He advised that through the School Forum local schools have agreed to continue de-delegation (money that the school is required to pay for central services) for the CREDs service (Cambridgeshire Race Equality Diversity Service for an additional year until the new funding is brought in. If this were not done, then schools could choose to be very cautious and not to buy in services this year and this might lead to the end of services which were not well supported prior to the new funding being agreed. Under the new funding arrangements money will in future go directly to the school and they will have free range as to how and where they spend it. Governors expressed concern about whether there are services at risk that St Matthews currently buys in and if alternative suppliers need to be identified.</p>	

	<p>Resources for Learning – School Funding</p> <p>Tony summarised the discussion that had taken place at the Resources meeting regarding the concerns around the new funding. There are concerns not only about the proposed distribution of funding (core funding per school and funding per pupil) but also about the size of the overall pot being too small to fund basic running costs. At schools like St Matthews money given for disadvantage are needed for core costs and other money such as lettings income and fundraising are needed to provide extra resources.</p> <p>It is anticipated that costs in all schools will rise by approximately 8% over the next 5 years, in part due to increases in pension costs, so even schools that are retaining the same level of funding will need to make changes to save money. In Cambridgeshire, there will be an increase of 1.8% across the board with two thirds of schools being better funded, a third getting reduced funding and about 10 schools like St Matthews who will see no significant change. Small schools will be badly hit because of a drop in the level of core funding that all schools receive of about £40k per school. Additional funding will be available to schools based on levels of deprivation, EAL and low prior attainment.</p> <p>Tony advised that local MPs have been very supportive of the concerns of the schools and have been involved in raising the issue.</p> <p>The Recent “Meet the Head“ meeting for parents generated lots of discussion about actions that the school and parents could take to highlight their concerns. A letter is currently being drafted to be sent to all parents to make them aware of the issues and actions that they can take if they have concerns. As Chair of the Cambridge Primary Heads group Tony will be making a copy of this letter available to other schools to use as they think appropriate. In answer to a question Tony advised that since local MPs are already campaigning about the cuts to schools funding it would be better to send letters to Justine Greening or Phillip Hammond and for parents to sign on-line petitions such as Change.org. He asked the FGB to consider whether they were happy to recommend that this letter is sent to all St Matthews parents. In response to a question Tony advised that the letter focuses on the disparity of the levels of funding in different school and different locations rather than making a political statement. He also noted that the formal consultation on funding closes on the 22nd March but advised that the letter is not targeted as response to the consultation. The letter will be sent out in the next week and it is hoped that it will generate significant action by parents which will influence MPs in their decision making on future funding. The letter asks for parents to express their personal concerns to MPs and Ministers - it is hoped that a range of personal responses will be more effective in conveying the level of concern.</p> <p>One of the governors asked a linked question, which he had been intending to raise as AOB but seemed relevant to this discussion, requesting an update on what is currently happening with regards to Cambridgeshire schools becoming Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). St Matthew’s position on this was discussed last summer by the FGB and it was agreed that an update would be useful to the meeting. Tony advised that Academies are also struggling with the changes in funding. A number of small schools have looked to join a MAT as a solution to their funding issues but are unable to find sponsors willing to take them on with a predicted deficit budget under the new funding arrangements. It is anticipated that the proposed changes may lead to the closure of smaller village schools leading to increased transport costs for children getting to school and impacting the communities where the school acts as a central focus.</p> <p>The FGB were advised that the DfE Agenda with regard to academisation has stalled and shortly after the meeting to discuss the position for St</p>	

	<p>Matthews there had been a move away from mandatory requirement. The Regional Schools Commissioner's Office have said that academisation is only being agreed where it is demonstrated that it will lead to school improvement. They said that two proposals have recently been received but turned down since there was no evidence that the change in status would provide significant improvements in the school's position. It is clear that the Government's underlying aim for all schools is still academisation but there are no longer the same financial benefits for schools going this route so other benefits need to be clear. In terms of discussions at Heads' meetings, and Chairs' meetings too, this topic has become much less visible.</p> <p>The FGB approved that the school should send the letter to all parents explaining the financial issues under the new funding formula and requesting that they lobby decision makers.</p> <p>The Head noted one other issue that governors should be aware of. Cambridgeshire is a growing county in population terms and the local plans include new schools being built near to Cambridge. However, it is unclear how the funding for these new buildings will be managed – this area of planning has not been well defined. Currently growth funding comes out of the local schools' budget. Proposals in the National Funding Formula consultation are unclear but seem to suggest that new schools may be funded as though full even when only one form is operating. One possible solution is a move to lagged funding with school being paid based on pupil numbers. Kevin advised that he had attended a workshop regarding a new primary school being built north of Cherry Hinton and concerns had been expressed about the impact of this new school on funding for other local schools. Schools are often built early to help attract families to a new area but proposed changes mean that schools could only open when all the surrounding houses are full to ensure adequate pupil numbers and linked funding.</p>	
8.	Governance	
	<p>New Complaints Policy The Head advised that a new model Complaints policy had been issued by the local authority. It was noted that on page 12 there is an option as to whether paragraph 3.7 or 3.8 is adopted regarding the methods for review of complaints. After discussion, it was agreed that paragraph 3.7 should be adopted and review of complaints will always be conducted in writing.</p> <p>The FGB approved the School Complaints Policy with inclusion of paragraph 3.7</p> <p>It was noted that on page 5 there is reference to the Governor's Communication Policy and that this should be deleted and information added to modify the procedure to inform parents of how concerns can be raised</p> <p>Action: Updated Complaints policy to be published on the school website and information to be reviewed to ensure there is clarity about communication of concerns. Paper copies of Complaints Policy to be available from the school office on request.</p> <p>Process for Succession re Co-opted Governors/Co-opted Governor Vacancies It was noted that following the reconstitution in 2015 co-opted governors were appointed for a 2-year term of office and that this will end in September 2017. Since there are a significant number of co-opted governors and they finish their term of office at the same time consideration has been given as to whether something can be done to stagger reappointments next time. It was noted that 3 of the 9 co-opted governors (2 co-opted staff governors and the newly appointed co-opted governor) will not need reappointment in September. In order to facilitate this process</p>	

the Chair advised that she will be speaking to all the other co-opted governors to see if they would be seeking re-appointment. One co-opted governor has already advised that they will not be seeking reappointment. The school governance team was contacted to see if governors could be appointed for different periods of time and the advice is that all the terms of office should be the same length but that the Board could extend the term of co-opted governors to 3 or 4 years with the approval of the FGB. It was noted that Parent Governors are elected for 4 years so it would seem sensible to have a similar term of office for co-opted governors. Good practice advises that Governors should rotate regularly and 2 terms of office or 6-8 years is considered a good length of service with a longer period if a governor takes on a role such as Chair or Committee Chair. The local authority governor noted that she would not be asking to renew her term of office, but this is currently different to that for Co-opted governors. The length of period of office already served, attendance and contribution to the work of the Board should also be reviewed before a recommendation to reappoint. In answer to a question governors were advised that co-opted governors do not have a specific link to the school and are chosen for the skills they bring and a degree of independence. It was noted that there are 9 co-opted governors and 1 local authority governor.

Based on the process used to choose the recently appointed Co-opted governor the Chair has drafted a procedure which will be submitted to the School Governance team for the consideration of appointments/reappointments of co-opted governors. The procedure should be finalised and brought to the next FGB for approval so that it can be used to recruit a candidate since there will be at least one vacancy. Analysis of skills indicates that a volunteer from a local business or a local school such as Brunswick Nursery or Parkside would be a valuable addition to the Board. The Chair has drafted a letter that can be sent out to local businesses. In addition, SGOSS or a professional body could be approached.

Action: Clerk to ask School Governance team if 2-year extension terms could be given to reappointed governors and then 4 year terms and for approval of drafted procedure for Co-opted appointments

The FGB unanimously approved that approaches could be made for recruitment of another co-opted governor

Feedback from Parent Governor Election Working Party

The FGB were advised that based on the guidance from the County Council the Head had drafted a Policy for Parent Governor elections. Both the Head and members of the Working party were surprised by how ambiguous the guidance was and that some critical issues were not defined e.g. there was no information on exactly who or how many parents could vote. Given past issues the Head together with the working party members had sought to add information that ensured consistency, clarity of details, removal of any ambiguity and removal of any opportunities for fraud. The guidance had included options on electronic voting but after discussion and consideration of current capability the recommendation from the working group had been that electronic voting should not be included. This is because there is no clear mechanism locally and uncertainty about how fraud could be prevented. The FGB confirmed their approval that electronic voting should not be included at this time. The proposed procedure had been agreed by the working party members and whilst time consuming for the Head and the Clerk is felt to be a robust mechanism that should ensure a fair outcome. The only area that the working group had been less clear on was whether it was acceptable for parents to canvas. All parents are given an opportunity to provide a photo and 200 words in support of their application but it was unclear about whether there should be limits on canvassing support e.g. through social media, standing at the gates with leaflets or using contacts such as the PTA mailing list

	<p>After discussion including input from the current Parent Governors it was agreed by the FGB that intensive canvassing is not appropriate but that too strong a definition on what is allowed could lead to accidental issues e.g. there are likely to be informal discussions on social media. The possibility of the school running a hustings session was considered to give all the candidates an equal opportunity but decided against on the basis that it would be extremely hard to organise something that all candidates could participate in. In addition, the gladiatorial aspect might put off some potentially excellent candidates.</p> <p>It was also noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The times for voting (8am -6pm) need to be extended since Breakfast club now opens at 7.30am – so voting should start at the time that the first drop off can be made. • Children in the Nursery school are below compulsory school age and are therefore treated differently in the guidance. It was agreed that for St Matthew’s parents of Nursery school children would not be treated differently to parents in the rest of the school and were eligible to both stand and to vote. <p>Action: The Policy to be updated with revised changes and sent for final scrutiny by the School Governance team before approval at the next meeting</p> <p>The Chair thanked the members of the Working Group for their work on the policy.</p> <p>Governor Training One of the governors reported back from the Spring Term Briefing for Governors. She noted that there had been a presentation on the Learn Together Hub with some feedback at the meeting that it is proving difficult to navigate. Key points for safer recruitment had also been highlighted at the meeting. The importance of providing training for Governors was also highlighted since Ofsted now required to consider this when making judgement about the effectiveness of school leadership. The possibility of using on line training for Governors will be investigated and the website GEL was highlighted as a source of useful information provided by the local authority which governors can access since St Matthews subscribe.</p> <p>One of the new governors advised the meeting that she had attended Induction training, Finance training and Performance Management.</p>	
9.	Meet the Head	
	Minutes from the last Meet the Head meeting were circulated with the papers – there had been a focus on school funding as highlighted earlier in the meeting. Governors complimented the Head on the meeting and noted how supportive the parents attending had been.	
10.	AOB	
	Paperwork re DBS and EduBase Governors were requested to ensure that they replied to the recent emails from the Clerk and supplied the information needed for EduBase and brought in paperwork for outstanding DBSs.	
12	Dates of future meetings and Agenda items Resources Committee – Wednesday 26 April at 6.15 p.m. Full Governing Body - Thursday 4 th May at 6.15pm	

13	<p>School improvement actions and outcomes from meeting</p> <p>Board Approvals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appointment of Debora Lucarelli as the new co-opted governor • the Sex and Relationships Education Policy • that the school should send out a letter to all parents explaining the financial issues under the new funding formula and requesting that they lobby decision makers • the School Complaints Policy with inclusion of paragraph 3.7 • that approaches could be made for recruitment of another co-opted governor <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors to supply Clerk with list of training done in last 5 terms • Governors to supply DBS information and complete on line form • Clerk to compile EduBASE information supplied by Governors • List of actions from FGB to be circulated to governors at earlier date • Updated Complaints policy to be published on the school website and information to be reviewed to ensure there is clarity about communication of concerns. Paper copies of Complaints Policy to be available from the school office on request. • Clerk to ask School Governance team if 2-year extension terms could be given to reappointed governors and then 4 year terms and for approval of drafted procedure for Co-opted appointments • The Policy to be updated with revised changes and sent for final scrutiny by the School Governance team before approval at the next meeting 	
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Signed.....

Date.....