

ST JOHN'S CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND (VA)  
FIRST SCHOOL

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

## The Governing Body

### Minutes of the Full Governing Body held on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019 at 6.00pm

**Governors present** Mr David Daniels – Co-Chair, meeting chair and Foundation Governor

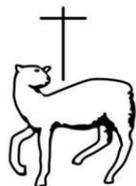
Mrs Beth Coates – Foundation Governor  
Mrs Louise Jenkins – Staff Governor  
Mrs Alexia Loundras – Vice-Chair and Parent Governor  
Mr Neil McCormick – Foundation Governor  
Mrs Fiona Puleston – Co-Chair and Parent Governor

**Attendees** Mrs Rosemary Conway – Business Manager and Clerk to the Governing Body  
Mrs Gill Driffield – Business Manager

**Apologies** Reasons accepted for: Mrs Claire Marsland – Headteacher  
No reasons given for: Mrs Helen White – Foundation Governor

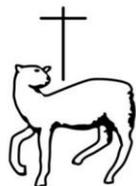
Key: **Decisions** **Challenge** **Actions**

Agenda Item	Discussion, decisions and actions	
1	<p><b>Standing items</b></p> <p><i>Opening prayer</i> Mr Daniels opened the meeting with a prayer.</p> <p><i>Declarations of interest</i> It was noted that Mrs Coates' interest of having a child at St John's ceased on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019.</p> <p><i>Apologies</i> Apologies were received as detailed above.</p> <p><i>Agree the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019</i> The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, and duly signed by the Chair.</p>	



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2	<p><b>Financial Management</b></p> <p><b>Month 6 report</b></p> <p>Governors discussed the month 6 financial report with the following of note;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs Driffield explained that the report had been prepared by the school's Education Finance Officer, Laura Devenish. Laura was on the whole happy with how the budget has been managed so far this financial year. There is an anticipated carry forward of £63,766.43 of which £25,580.89 is committed.</li><li>• It is anticipated that a carry forward of around £45,000 will be required in order to balance the budget in the 2020-21 financial year. This is achievable if there is little spending required that is not already budgeted for, but is not achievable if more spending is agreed and committed.</li><li>• The report makes some assumptions on spending for the rest of the financial year such as the curriculum cost centre being fully spent.</li><li>• There is anticipated to be a balance on the teaching cost centre, but Laura Devenish has advised that there should be no new spending on staffing and that Governors postpone any decisions on restructure of the Senior Leadership Team until the new financial year. As a structure is in place already for this academic year, any restructure could be timed for the start of the next academic year. Mrs Driffield advised that if the school recruits a new Senior Leader in the current financial year, it would be making a significant commitment beyond the current financial year when the position for the new financial year is not yet known. Governors agreed that a discussion should take place in January 2020 as part of planning for the new financial year.</li><li>• Mrs Driffield reminded Governors that the current year 4 cohort is over the Planned Admission Number (PAN) and so there will be a drop in the number on roll in the new academic year even if the school recruits up to PAN in the incoming reception cohort. This could change if there are in year admissions to other year groups.</li><li>• It is anticipated that the Lunchtime staff cost centre will be overspent as two new members of staff have been recruited. A new structure to lunchtimes has been implemented this week, which has resulted in some staffing teething issues. As each class is allocated a lunchtime supervisor, this has a significant impact when someone is away, which happens regularly.</li><li>• There will be some additional cost to the Premises staffing cost centre. As the school does not have a year round caretaker, a member of staff is paid overtime to unlock and lock the school each day during the holidays.</li><li>• <b>A Governor asked why the water cost centre is anticipated to be overspent.</b> Mrs Driffield responded that there have been some leaks identified, including a tap that nobody knew about in the PE store and elderly toilet cisterns in the upstairs children's toilets causing issues. The Diocese have suggested that capital funding will be allocated to refurbish the toilets and carry out a full survey of the water system in the school.</li></ul>	
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- Governors noted that the grounds cost centre is anticipated to be overspent following unexpected costs in relation to the Copper Beech tree and removal of the play equipment. **A Governor noted that the cost to remove the play equipment seemed very high.** Mrs Conway responded that removal involved grinding down stumps and filling in holes with costly rubberised surface. Governors were happy that savings are being achieved elsewhere in the budget.
- Mrs Driffield informed Governors that two unexpected needs for expenditure have arisen since the report was prepared.
  - The school has been informed that support to Windows 7 will cease in January 2020 and should no longer be used. There are 9 iBoards in the school currently on that operating system, which will require an upgrade. The cost for this is anticipated to be around £1,000.
  - The capital windows replacement project due to take place during October half term has not included any budget for replacement blinds for the windows. The school will therefore need to purchase some. A local contractor has been asked to provide a quote.
- Mrs Driffield informed Governors that the new printer lease paperwork has been completed. Mrs Driffield has provided the signature on behalf of the school. Governors agreed the expenditure in June 2019.
- **A Governor noted that the Early Birds and Twilight cost centres have one overspent and the other underspent and asked for more information.** Mrs Driffield responded that Laura Devenish has advised that the two cost centres be combined and renamed 'wrap around care'. With two cost centres, income is sometimes misallocated between them and also creates work for finance staff when parents wish to transfer payments from one club to the other. Mrs Conway informed Governors that there is an intention to review the structure of wrap around care to try and increase demand for the clubs. A Governor noted that the clubs provide a good selling point for the school on open days. Mrs Conway commented that some actions have already been taken to keep the clubs attractive to parents, such as bringing the rates in line for both clubs and registering to accept childcare voucher and tax free childcare payments. **Governors agreed to combine the Early Bird and Twilight cost centres to one Wrap Around Care cost centre.**
- **A Governor asked why the Free School Meals (FSM) cost centre is anticipated to overspend.** Mrs Driffield responded that the report assumes that all FSM children will take a meal everyday. In reality, this is not the case as some children choose to bring a packed lunch.

Mrs Driffield requested agreement for a virement as advised by Laura Devenish;

- To vire £1,000 from contingency to the admin and clerical staffing cost centre. The cost centre is currently overspent due to a one off cost from the old financial year appearing in the current financial year. **Governors agreed to the**



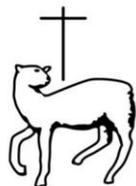
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	<p>virement.</p> <p><b>Unofficial Fund</b> Governors received the audit report for the Unofficial Fund. The audit was carried out by Laura Devenish.</p> <p>Mrs Driffield informed Governors that a lot of business has been moved from Unofficial to Official to become more accountable. This has been done on Laura's advice. She has recommended that more items be moved such as uniform purchases and after school club income and payments. Governors were happy for business to be moved to the Official Fund on Laura's advice.</p> <p><b>Schools Financial Value Standard</b> Mrs Driffield advised Governors that someone needs to engage with the new online process but could arrange to come in to school and look at it with a Business Manager. Mr Daniels offered to take this action.</p> <p><b>Action: Meet with Business Manager to review Schools Financial Value Standard.</b></p> <p><b>Governor Fund</b> Mrs Driffield provided an update on the Governor Fund;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ There is currently £3,600 in the Governor Fund.</li><li>○ Invoices totalling £3,545 have been received for the Governing Body's contribution to 2019 capital projects.</li><li>○ In addition to the above amount, £1,901.11 has been paid from the Unofficial Fund towards the Governing Body's contribution to 2019 capital projects.</li><li>○ The year 4 leavers' books for 2019 were funded from the Year 4 year pot rather than the Governor Fund.</li><li>○ The Governors will not be able to fund the year 4 Wells trip in 2020 or any capital projects in 2020 due to lack of funds.</li></ul> <p>Governors approved payment of the invoices received totalling £3,545.</p> <p>Governors discussed possibilities to raise money. All agreed it was difficult to ask parents for money and felt that many families would not understand why Governors may be asking for donations. A Governor suggested that fundraising be linked to specific projects and could spell out why Governors must contribute to capital projects in Voluntary Aided schools. A Governor asked if the Church could be approached for financial support. Another Governor responded that the Church is in a similar position financially and the Governing Body should also be careful not to alienate those parents who have chosen St John's for reasons other than its link to the Church. A Governor stated that the Church as a charity associated with it that is specifically to do with education and does not contain St John's in its title.</p>	<p>Mr Daniels</p>
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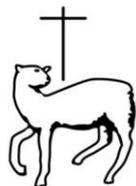
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	<p>Mrs Driffield informed Governors that the Rotary club and Frome Lions do give money out each year.</p> <p><b>Benchmarking</b></p> <p>Mrs Driffield tabled a breakdown of some benchmarking she had undertaken. She had benchmarked spending on premises and had chosen a number of Somerset schools of a similar size to St John's. Governors noted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spending on premises staffing is very low but it is higher on cleaning and caretaking. When the two are added together the school would appear to be spending quite a lot. <b>Governors agreed that cleaning and caretaking arrangements should be reviewed as part of the planning for the next budget.</b></li><li>• When benchmarking was done previously, St John's was the lowest on spending on maintenance. Since then, the school has prioritised more on maintenance to try and catch up on a backlog.</li></ul> <p>Mrs Driffield stated that any benchmarking needs to be viewed with caution as the results can change depending on the comparator schools selected.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Health and Safety and Premises</b></p> <p><b>Health and Safety Audit</b></p> <p>Governors discussed the audit report and action plan received following the Health and Safety audit that took place at the end of September. Mrs Driffield informed Governors that a second compliance audit had taken place the following day, requested by the Diocese. The report has not yet been received from that audit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The audit gave an overall score of 92%.</li><li>• The auditor wanted Governors to be more strategic in monitoring health and safety and to better understand their role and responsibilities as set out in the Burgundy Pack. Mrs Driffield distributed a copy of the roles and responsibilities document from the Burgundy Pack to all present.</li><li>• Mrs Driffield advised Governors that they could receive more management reports from the schools safety management suite, EEC Live.</li><li>• The report stated that Governors should visit school more often and include health and safety in all visits. For example, if visiting a subject lead, ask to see their risk assessment as part of the visit. There should be clear evidence of visits and issues noted or raised. A Governor asked if there is a form to document visits. The Clerk responded that it would be part of the Governor Visits policy. <b>Governors agreed that the Health and Safety Governor should coordinate his termly visits to take place shortly before the Business focussed meetings so a report can be made to the meeting. A Governor asked if there is a register for staff to report health and safety issues.</b> Mrs Driffield explained</li></ul>	



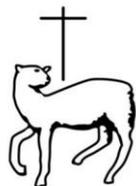
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	<p>that there is a book where maintenance issues are noted for the caretaker but that the Business Managers put the notes in there so that work can be prioritised appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The report noted a few risk assessments missing including some medical ones and a minibus one. Mrs Driffield explained that the reason they were missing was because the audit took place early in the term and the SENCO had not yet had a chance to transfer information onto the safety suite.</li></ul> <p>Governors completed the management response to the action plan.</p> <p>It was agreed that the health and safety item in the Governor agenda planner should be broken down so that Governors receive specific information rather than a general update. It was agreed that Governors should receive reports on accidents and risk assessments three times per year.</p> <p><b>Action: Add accident and risk assessment reports to agenda planner</b></p> <p><b>Action: Scan and email the completed action plan to all Governors</b></p> <p><b>Premises update</b></p> <p>Mrs Driffield tabled a premises update paper detailing works that have taken place over the summer, autumn term and those scheduled for the October half term. Governors discussed current premises issues with the following of note;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs Driffield informed Governors that Mrs Marsland has consulted with the two health and safety auditors about the Copper Beech Tree. Neither would commit themselves and explained that decisions about the area should be down to how to appropriately manage risk. A Governor asked if the tree posed more risk than any tree at any time. The general consensus was that it didn't and that the school has fulfilled its legal duty of care by carrying out the works recommended within the reports obtained. Governors acknowledged that Mrs Marsland has been clear that she feels that the only way to manage the risk appropriately is to restrict access to the area under the tree. Governors discussed whether the Governing Body should take the decision to reopen the area as the decision to close it was taken by the Governing Body. A Governor asked if Somerset Property Services has provided a tree management plan now that the school is paying in to the service. Mrs Driffield responded that no plan has yet been received. A Governor suggested that the Governing Body write to Chris Winn to request the tree management plan so that a decision can be taken about opening the area.</li><li>• A Governor asked Mrs Driffield to clarify what she meant about the trenches for the drain works. Mrs Driffield responded that the drain contractors did not have to dig very deep to carry out the repair works. Mrs Driffield also explained that the contractors believed that damage was done to the drains</li></ul>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Business Manager</p>
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	<p>when fencing was erected to create the reception outdoor area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs Marsland and Mrs Driffield have met with two play equipment suppliers for quotes for new play equipment. Mrs Marsland would like to use a mixture of sports grant, fund raising and grants to fund any new equipment. Designs will be brought to Governors after Christmas.</li><li>• The internal room changes project has been funded through a mixture of DFC and school funds.</li><li>• Legionella remedial works identified on the risk assessment have been completed.</li><li>• The Business Managers are expecting actions from the Diocese health and safety audit.</li><li>• Significant amounts of work have been done by the Business Managers to prepare for the audits.</li><li>• Coomber have visited to provide a quote to take on management of all school gates. The quote is awaited.</li></ul> <p>Mrs Driffield highlighted various maintenance priorities for the next budget, including painting of classrooms and new carpet to the Key Stage 1 corridor. A Governor asked whether there is budget available for these works. Mrs Driffield responded that DFC funding would need to be prioritised to these items.</p> <p><b>Action: write to Chris Winn to request the tree management plan</b></p>	<p><b>Mrs Puleston</b></p>
	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p><b>Pay Policy</b></p> <p>Mrs Conway informed Governors that the model pay policy had not yet been sent out but that the Head of HR had confirmed by email that the only change to be made to the model policy was to include the uplift in teacher pay. Therefore, if Governors were happy with the 2018-19 policy decisions, they could agree to follow the same policy in 2019-20 and add in the teacher pay uplift once available.</p> <p>Governors agreed to follow the same policy as in 2018-19.</p> <p>Mrs Driffield informed Governors that the Governing Body must decide how to apply the September 2019 teachers pay award and that HR and payroll must be informed. Mrs Jenkins left the room and the remaining Governors considered the three options available;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum &amp; Maximum Points Only (Statutory)</li><li>• Increase all Teachers salary points</li><li>• Alternative Implementation</li></ul> <p>Governors agreed to go with the second option, to increase all teachers salary points.</p>	



## The Governing Body

### **Performance Management**

Governors considered and agreed to adopt the model policy with the following decisions;

- Decision 1; include the extra paragraph
- Decision 2; leave it as is
- Decision 3; .... Will be one academic year. Mrs Marsland to complete the decision point
- Decision 4; option 2

**Action: update the model policy with decisions**

### **Admissions arrangements 2021-22**

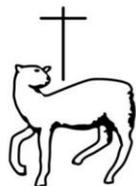
Mrs Puleston presented the draft admissions arrangements, prepared by the Somerset admissions team. Governors considered the proposed changes with the following decisions;

- It is proposed to change the oversubscription criteria of allocating places according to the distance of home addresses from the school via the safest walking route to distance as the crow flies. A Governor stated that they felt this should not be changed as it was being changed for an administrative reason and could significantly change the addresses deemed close to the school. As the school promotes families walking to school, it was felt that walking distance to school should be retained. A Governor suggested that the word 'safest' could be removed as that is very subjective and a system such as google walking routes could be used to calculate distances. **Governors agreed that the criteria should remain the same but removing the word 'safest'.**
- It is proposed that the church criteria be changed to be clearer. Governors were happy with the proposed change included in the draft arrangements.
- It is proposed to tighten up the home address definition. **Governors agreed to this change.**
- It is proposed that waiting lists will be kept for every year group as this is good practice. **Governors agreed to this change.**
- It is proposed to clarify further on deferred entry, delayed entry, full and part-time schooling etc. **Governors agreed to this change.**
- It is proposed to remove the word older from the sibling definition as if it is an in year application the sibling could be younger. **Governors agreed to this change.**

**Governors approved the draft admissions arrangements for 2021-22.**

**Action: Contact Somerset Admissions to pass on Governing Body decisions re admissions arrangements.**

Mr  
McCormick



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	<p><b>Admissions Arrangements 2020-21</b></p> <p>Mrs Conway informed Governors that a number of consultation emails have been received from other schools consulting on their admissions arrangements. Mrs Puleston offered to consider any such emails on behalf of the Governing Body.</p> <p>Mrs Conway asked Governors to consider the admissions form sent out by the admissions team asking Governing Bodies to commit to meeting various deadlines in relation to admissions for 2020-21. Governors were happy with the deadlines given and Mrs Loundras volunteered to by the Governing Body contact for signing off the ranked lists for the first and second round of applications.</p> <p>Mrs Loundras informed Governors that she visited school for the open days last months. Feedback from parents was really positive. They really liked children's tours and commented that behaviour was really good. Various Governors who had attended welcome meetings for their child's year group commented that the meetings were very positive and helpful.</p>	<p><b>Mrs Puleston</b></p>
	<p><b>Teacher Performance Management</b></p> <p>Governors were unable to discuss this item as it required input from the Headteacher.</p> <p>Mrs Driffield reminded Governors that any teacher progression needs to be agreed by 31<sup>st</sup> October. It was suggested that a couple of Governors be available for Mrs Marsland to discuss and agree any progressions by email. Mr Daniels and Mrs Puleston volunteered to take this on.</p> <p>Mrs Driffield reminded Governors that the Headteacher performance management must be decided by 31<sup>st</sup> December and communicated to the Business Manager to that payroll can be informed.</p> <p>Mr Daniels informed Governors that the current meeting would be Mrs Jenkins' last as Governor. Governors expressed their thanks to Mrs Jenkins for her contribution to the Governing Body.</p>	

**Meeting finished at:** 7.50pm

**Date of next meeting:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 6pm



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## **The Governing Body**

### **Summary of actions agreed**

<b>Action: Meet with Business Manager to review Schools Financial Value Standard.</b>	<b>Mr Daniels</b>
<b>Action: Add accident and risk assessment reports to agenda planner</b>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>Action: Scan and email the completed action plan to all Governors</b>	<b>Business Manager</b>
<b>Action: write to Chris Winn to request the tree management plan</b>	<b>Mrs Puleston</b>
<b>Action: update the model policy with decisions</b>	<b>Mr McCormick</b>
<b>Action: Contact Somerset Admissions to pass on Governing Body decisions re admissions arrangements.</b>	<b>Mrs Puleston</b>