

The Governing Body

Minutes of the Full Governing Body held on the 17th March 2020 at 1.00pm

Governors present

Mrs Fiona Puleston – Co-Chair meeting chair and Parent Governor
Mrs Claire Marsland – Headteacher

Mrs Alexia Loundras – Vice-Chair and Parent Governor
Mr Brent Milverton – Foundation Governor

Attendees

Mrs Rosemary Conway – Business Manager and Clerk to the Governing Body

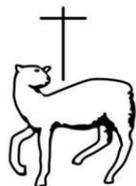
Apologies

Reasons accepted for: Mr David Daniels – Co-Chair, meeting chair and Foundation Governor

No reasons given for:

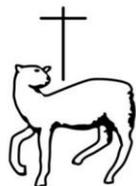
Key: **Decisions** **Challenge** **Actions**

Agenda Item	Discussion, decisions and actions	
1	<p>Standing items</p> <p>The meeting was held during the COVID19 pandemic in the lead up to national school closures. The meeting was required to be as brief as possible.</p> <p><i>Declarations of interest</i> There were no new declarations of interest.</p> <p><i>Apologies</i> Apologies were received as detailed above.</p>	
2	<p>Finance</p> <p><i>Draft Budget 2020-21</i></p> <p>Governors discussed the draft budget for 2020-21 with the following of note;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The budget version presented at the meeting showed a substantial in year deficit that could not be balanced by anticipated carry forward from 2019-20. The Headteacher stated that the Pupil Premium and Sports Grants had not yet been allocated and that the budget was likely to balance once this	



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	<p>had been done, but she wanted Governors to see how reliant on these grants the school was in order to balance its budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Governor asked why there were some yellow boxes on the budget plan. The Business Manager responded that these are items changed in school and highlighted to show the school's Education Finance Officer what had been changed.• The Headteacher stated that the school would challenge the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) contribution as it did not have access to the outreach of existing PRUs.• The budget assumed income for the Headteacher acting as Co-Chair of the Frome Learning Partnership.• The staff budget assumed that any teachers eligible to progress on the pay scale would do so.• A Governor asked if the budget included funding for a Deputy Head. The Headteacher responded that it did, but that Governors needed to consider the long term sustainability of such a post.• The staffing budget included funding for two Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). The Headteacher stated that she was considering not recruiting the second and using the funding for a Parent and Family Support Adviser (PFSA). This would require thought on what to call the role and whether it should be part of the Senior Leadership Team. Work would be needed on how it would fit in with current funding for these types of post. A Governor asked if the Frome Learning Partnership employed PFSAs. The Headteacher responded that they did and that there was a referral process that had been in place for a couple of years. Previous to that, they were attached to specific schools and tended to focus their time just in those schools. The two middle schools and College had their own PFSAs but also accessed the Learning Partnership PFSAs.• The Headteacher stated that budgets had not yet been included for capital and furniture• The budget did not account for any financial hit from the COVID19 pandemic. The school had already incurred additional cost in purchasing more cleaning products than usual.• The school was waiting to hear whether it could make claims on its staff absence insurance for teaching staff who had been advised to self-isolate for 12 weeks due to underlying health conditions.• The Headteacher stated that she did not feel the school should try to keep a substantial carry forward as it should be allocated for the children in school at this time. A Governor asked if there was a substantial carry forward. The Headteacher and Business Manager responded that there was but that it was only achieved through making savings in the current year's budget.• The Business Manager informed Governors that the budget for 2021-22 would be challenging as there was due to be a drop in the number on roll in	
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September 2020. The Headteacher stated that decisions would need to be made on safe staffing levels.

- The Headteacher informed Governors that the school would take a financial hit due to the long term absence of a Senior member of staff. An insurance claim had been made but the cover required was expensive.
- A Governor asked what was the next step? The Headteacher responded that she and the Business Managers needed to allocate the Pupil Premium and Sports Grants and check the staffing budget with the Education Finance Officer.

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

Governors discussed the SFVS with the following of note;

- A Governor stated that they were considering an accountancy course that would give them additional finance skills.
- A Governor suggested that the Governing Body review its constitution to reduce the number of vacancies on the Board. The Clerk advised that the statutory guidance in the 'Constitution of governing bodies in maintained schools' stated that foundation governors must outnumber all others by at least two in a voluntary aided school. As the number of non-foundation governors could not be reduced from five, the number of foundation governors could not be reduced from seven. The Governing Body therefore could not be reduced in size from 12.
- The Business Manager read out the SFVS action plan and suggested actions. Governors noted that there was an action for each question that had been answered either 'no' or 'in part'.
- The Business Manager reminded Governors that the data used to produce the dashboard was taken from the 2017-18 financial year and was therefore of limited value in terms of current financial health.
- **A Governor asked what the 'Teacher Contact Ratio' was and why it had RAG rated as red.** The Business Manager responded that she had not been able to find out. When preparing the SFVS, she and Mr Daniels had played around with the data in that field to see what level of staffing would be required to put it to an acceptable level. The result was that the school would need around 14FTE on its teaching staff. This would not be financially viable for a school of 10 classes.

Governors approved the SFVS



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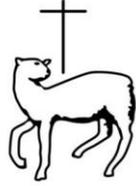
COVID19 Update

The Headteacher tabled the current COVID19 action plan and provided a verbal update on action taken in response to the pandemic;

- A Governor asked about children with underlying health conditions. The Headteacher responded that parents were keeping their child at home if required.
- A Governor asked if the website was ready for home learning. The Headteacher responded that staff were putting packs together that day and that she would review them. Paper copies would be provided for those who needed them.
- A Governor asked about attendance levels. The Headteacher responded that 61 children were absent, 38 of whom were self-isolating. The school had moved to email absence reporting. The Headteacher had received advice from the Somerset Association of Primary Headteachers (SAPH) that any absences due to parents being fearful of sending their child to school should be unauthorised. The Department for Education had left such decisions to Headteacher discretion. The Headteacher stated that she was currently authorising such absences.
- The Headteacher informed Governors that there were 8 members of staff absent, not all with symptoms. 2 of this number were teaching staff. There had been a significant impact to lunchtime staffing and teachers were supporting with supervision at this time.
- A Governor asked what would happen if the school was required to close completely. The Headteacher responded that learning would be provided for children to undertake at home.

Meeting finished at: 2.00pm

Date of next meeting: tbc



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

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

The Governing Body

Summary of actions agreed

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