

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 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 1.30pm

#### Governors present

Mr David Daniels – Co-Chair, meeting chair and Foundation Governor  
Mrs Claire Marsland – Headteacher

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

#### Attendees

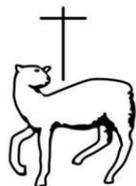
Mrs Rosemary Conway – Business Manager and Clerk to the Governing Body  
Mrs Gill Driffield – Business Manager

#### Apologies

Reasons accepted for:  
No reasons given for:

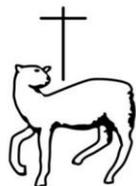
Key:    **Decisions**                      **Challenge**                      **Actions**

Agenda Item	Discussion, decisions and actions	
	The meeting was conducted remotely due to the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.	
1	<p><b>Standing items</b></p> <p><b>Opening prayer</b> Mr Daniels opened the meeting with a prayer.</p> <p><b>Declarations of interest</b> There were no new declarations of interest.</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> Apologies were received as detailed above.</p> <p><b>Agree the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020</b> The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, and duly approved.</p>	



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<p>2</p>	<p><b>Protocol for Electronic participation</b> Governors considered the Somerset Governance Services Model Protocol for Electronic Participation and agreed to adopt it.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed to adopt the Protocol for Electronic Participation</b></p>	
<p>3</p>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><b><i>Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) Report</i></b> Governors discussed the CFR report and list of end of financial year virements with the following of note;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Business Manager explained the format and purpose of the report. It details where money has been allocated according to Government level coding and states the end of year carry forward figure. It is checked by the school's Education Finance Officer.</li><li>• The Business Manager asked Governors to approve the year end virement list. She explained that the virements showed the committed carry forward and in which cost centres the committed carry forward should be allocated in the new financial year.</li><li>• The virements were for a mix of orders placed in the old financial year and cost centres where fund raising had taken place.</li><li>• The Headteacher had requested that any budget remaining in curriculum cost centres be carried forward to the curriculum development cost centre.</li><li>• <b>A Governor asked why there was a minus figure in the wraparound care cost centre.</b> The Business Manager responded that the Early Birds and Twilight cost centres had been merged and that the end of year position was complicated by the timings of staffing costs going out and income coming in. In addition, there had been no income since the school had entered lock down. The spreadsheets used in school for credit control would show a more accurate position.</li><li>• <b>A Governor asked why there was a minus figure for after school clubs.</b> The Business Manager responded that this was due to not all income being collected yet.</li><li>• <b>A Governor asked if the Liddington cost centre was affected by the pandemic situation.</b> The Business Manager responded that it was and that she needed to contact PGL soon to agree the ongoing position for the trip.</li><li>• A Governor asked to clarify if the bottom figure of the CFR report was the carry forward and if the virements would then be taken off that figure. The Business Manager confirmed that was correct.</li></ul> <p><b>Governors approved the end of financial year virements.</b></p>	



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### **Budget 2020-21**

Governors discussed the proposed budget for 2020-21 with the following of note;

- The Business Manager explained that the version presented was version 6 and had been worked on by the Business Managers, Headteacher and Education Finance Officer. It had been difficult to balance at the beginning of the planning process but a greater than expected carry forward had helped.
- The Business Manager stated she was really pleased with the budget as it included the expenditure requested by Governors. There was scope to recruit a Deputy Head if a teacher left at the end of the 2019-20 academic year. There was flexibility to be able to have other roles such as a new apprentice teaching assistant but also some savings would be possible.
- The budget included funding for new iPads.
- The school would be eligible to claim back additional costs incurred due to the COVID19 pandemic so there may be some additional income, not included in the budget. **A Governor asked if the school would be eligible if it had reserves in place.** The Business Manager responded that she believed this restriction was in place for schools that were due to build up a reserve.
- The Business Manager informed Governors that the number on roll was anticipated to reduce for the 2021-22 financial year and so the surplus of nearly £12,000 would be required to balance the budget.
- A Governor asked if it was likely the surplus may end up being higher than £12,000. The Business Manager responded that it was possible, if savings were achieved.
- The Headteacher asked about whether there would be income from insurance claims for teaching staff currently off sick. The Business Manager responded that payments would be received for staff off sick. Claims had been put in for those self-isolating due to the pandemic and supporting paperwork had been requested.

Governors expressed their thanks to the Business Managers and Headteacher for their work on the budget.

Mr Daniels proposed the budget for 2020-21 be approved and Mr Milverton seconded the proposal. Governors voted unanimously in favour. The budget was duly approved.

**Governors approved the budget for 2020-21**



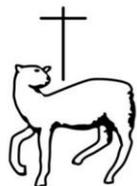
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	<p><b>Finance Policy</b></p> <p>Governors discussed the proposed finance policy with the following of note;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Business Manager explained that it was the Somerset model policy that had been updated in April. Any changes to the model policy were highlighted in red and any changes made in school were highlighted in yellow. School changes included changing instances of 'Finance Officer' to 'Business Manager' and adding in account signatories.</li><li>• The Business Manager stated that the school follows the policy well but that work was required on the inventory and the register of pecuniary interests. An inventory was in place, but was somewhat out of date. The Business Manager intended to get the Finance Assistant to do some work on this. It would also be beneficial for more spot checks to be carried out.</li><li>• The Business Manager informed Governors that the policy would form the basis of any financial audit.</li><li>• Once approved, the policy will be shared with administrative staff and budget holders.</li></ul> <p><b>Governors approved the Finance Policy</b></p>	
4	<p><b>Premises and Health and Safety</b></p> <p><b>Capital priorities for 2020-21</b></p> <p>The Business Manager explained that the school had received notification from the Diocese about capital projects for 2020-21 and stated that the Diocese and school proposed priorities for spending as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guttering and fascia work</li><li>• Resurfacing of the back playground</li></ul> <p>The school had been allocated money from the School Condition Allowance and the projects would also require funding from the Devolved Formula Capital Grant.</p> <p>The Business Manager informed Governors that air conditioning to upstairs classrooms had also been considered. The Headteacher stated that as there would be no more than 10 pupils per classroom during the summer months due to the pandemic, she felt that the playground should be higher priority. As new windows and blinds had been installed in some classrooms, it would also be useful to see if they had an effect on the temperature control.</p> <p>Governors were happy with the priorities.</p>	



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5	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>The Headteacher gave a verbal report, in line with Governance Services guidance issued on operation during the pandemic;</p> <p><b><i>Current operations in school</i></b></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that there were currently 18-24 key worker or vulnerable children in school each day and provision had been adjusted to take in to account the larger number. Children were now using Poplar and Fir classrooms with the hall being used for lunch. Children were getting used to being in a learning 'bubble'.</p> <p><b><i>Plans to extend provision from 1<sup>st</sup> June</i></b></p> <p>Following the Government announcement on 10<sup>th</sup> May that schools should prepare to extend provision from 1<sup>st</sup> June, the Headteacher had worked with other Headteachers within the Frome Learning Partnership. A statement had been sent out to parents the day after the announcement. The St John's statement was sent a little late due to the server going down following a power cut.</p> <p>The Headteacher outlined her plans to Governors;</p> <p><b><i>Numbers, Staffing and Communication</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• She was attending Local Authority briefings multiple times a week to stay up to date with the latest information and guidance.</li><li>• Schools had been informed at a recent briefing that many Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) were intending to close completely for the half term break. This was permitted as long as they supported key worker families to find alternative childcare for that week. The Headteacher had decided in conjunction with one of the Co-Chairs of the Governing Body that this would be the right option for St John's as it would give staff a break (as many had not had any break since February), allow for deep cleaning of areas currently in use and give key worker and vulnerable children a break from the groups they were currently in. They could then return in their correct year group. This decision was out of kilter with the rest of Frome, but the Headteacher felt it was right for St John's.</li><li>• A letter had been sent out to parents from the school and a letter from the Somerset Director of Children's Services, Julian Wooster. Some year 4 families had raised queries about how the Government guidance related to the three tier education system in Frome. They had asked if year 4 would be prioritised instead of year 6. A separate letter was sent to year 4 families reassuring them that the school was fully supportive of enabling some transition but that the Government had dictated year R and 1 as first priorities.</li><li>• A form had been sent to parents asking them to indicate if they intended to send their child to school. Responses indicating 'yes' had been received as</li></ul>	
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follows;

- Reception – 29
- Year 1 - 23
- Year 2 - 26
- Year 3 - 22
- Year 4 – 29

After adding in key worker and vulnerable children in other year groups, there could be around 76 children on site.

- **A Governor asked if there were enough staff to supervise this number of children.** The Headteacher responded that she had held a remote staff meeting with teachers, to carry out a welfare check and provide updates. They had been asked to indicate their capacity to work on site. Several teachers had raised concerns about capacity to come in and did not want to send their own children in to school. They had been advised to contact their unions for advice. At the time of the meeting 3 teachers had indicated they could work fulltime and others could do part-time. HLTAs and TAs had not yet been approached about work hours

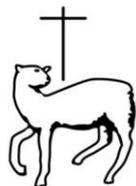
**A Governor asked if the Headteacher felt she would have enough staff.** The Headteacher responded that if there were not enough staff children would be prioritised for places according to Local Authority guidance as follows;

1. Key worker and vulnerable children
2. Reception
3. Year 1

A Governor asked what would happen if school opened for the planned numbers and then more children arrived. The Headteacher responded that quite a few parents had indicated to school that they felt unsure about sending their child in. The Headteacher was intending to use the policy that they can change their mind but a week's notice would be required to provide for them. This would be communicated to parents.

The Headteacher stated that more information about provision would be sent out and she felt that may help some families make more concrete decisions.

- A Governor stated that they had heard that a union had advised that a school should only open for a whole year group. The Headteacher responded that this was guidance and not statutory. She went on to state that she could be cautious and bring in reception first and then year 1, but that would create problems with key worker bubbles.
- The Headteacher informed Governors that she had received positive feedback from parents that communication had been clear. One more negative email had been received.



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- The Headteacher reminded Governors that things were changing all the time and that there was a good chance the school may not end up extending provision. The various Unions representing school staff had joined forces and were issuing joint advice.
- A Governor asked the Headteacher how she fitted in to the bubble structure. She responded that she shouldn't go from bubble to bubble and had questioned whether she should be on site as she could work from home. She would worry about leaving the school. A Governor commented that they felt she should stay out of the bubbles to minimise risk. They asked if she was speaking with other Headteachers about the issue. The Headteacher responded that schools were taking a mix of approaches but that many schools had a bigger leadership team. Of the teaching members of the Leadership Team, two were currently off sick and one had family commitments to balance with work commitments. The school administrator was another member of staff who would be on site but shouldn't mix with the bubbles.

### *Curriculum*

The Headteacher updated Governors on plans for the curriculum;

- She was working on plans for what the provision would look like. In order to reduce the planning required, there would be a whole school topic, and home and school learning would mirror each other. Emotional and social needs would be the basis for the topic.
- She was trying to get Zoom on the school network to enable a remote choir. This would be some face to face contact. Each year group could also do a zoom activity with children at home.
- She was thinking about pen pals between those at home and at school.
- She was building up the day in 20-30 minute activities.

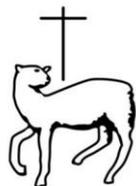
### *Premises and Health and Safety*

The Headteacher provided an update on the current situation;

- Somerset had provided some new risk assessments. They did not cover beyond opening to key worker and vulnerable children.
- Guidance had been received that if the school adhered to Local Authority guidelines then it could not be held liable in the event of legal action.
- The Headteacher expressed concern that some staff were not social distancing very well when in school.
- Cleaning was currently taking place in the middle of the day
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The Headteacher informed Governor of current planning for extending provision from 1<sup>st</sup> June;

- Children and adults would be arranged into learning 'bubbles' with staggered



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arrival and departure times and staggered break times. Lunch would be eaten in classrooms. The bubbles would not mix as far as possible. If someone within the bubble showed symptoms of COVID19, the whole bubble would be asked to quarantine.

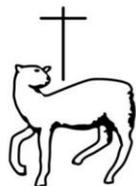
There were still some issues to be resolved, such as how staff would have breaks and getting everyone on and off site safely.

The Headteacher pointed out that the youngest children need the most physical contact. There were a number of children who would struggle without an adult right next to them. In this situation, they may not complete work and might then continue to think that would be acceptable when normality resumed.

- Various changes to the site were taking place including;
  - rearranging classrooms to space children 2m apart. There was a maximum capacity of 10 in each classroom and one classroom was being used to store spare furniture.
  - How to arrange the reception classrooms had presented some challenges. Mats could be used rather than tables and chairs.
  - A one-way system around school was under consideration.
- Various Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) had been ordered. Although guidance stated that masks were not required, some had been purchased for use during first aid treatment. An emergency pack of PPE would be available for staff required to be with a child showing symptoms of COVID19. An isolation room would be allocated for anyone showing symptoms, until they could go home.
- A Perspex shield and barrier were being purchased for the front desk.
- Cleaning protocols, including during the middle of the day needed to be considered.
- An additional risk assessment would be needed for fire safety. Adjustments to normal procedures (e.g. propping classroom doors open) needed to be put in place. The risk assessment would have to balance the risk of fire during the day and germ spreading. A new evacuation plan would be needed. Evacuation practices would be needed.

Governors discussed that social distancing was not possible if all children needed to gather at the muster point. In the event of a real fire, getting everyone safely out of the building would be higher priority than social distancing.

Governors expressed their thanks to the Headteacher and told her she was doing brilliantly.

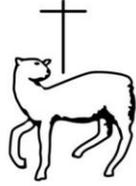


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	<p><b><i>INSET day</i></b></p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors that it was within their jurisdiction to set an additional INSET day. She asked them to consider setting one on 1<sup>st</sup> June. This would allow staff to be trained in new procedures before extending provision. She went on to say she was not yet sure if the INSET would cause complications for key worker children but she would like to have the option.</p> <p><b>Governors gave authority to set an INSET day on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 if it was required.</b></p> <p>The Clerk advised Governors that they should consider meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May, following the Government announcement due on 28<sup>th</sup> May. Governors would need to consider the risk assessments put in place and agree whether it was safe to extend provision from 1<sup>st</sup> June. Governors agreed this should take place. A meeting was set for 11.00 on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020.</p>	
6	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b><i>Parent Survey</i></b></p> <p>Mrs Loundras gave an update on the parent survey. She had prepared some questions but was not sure about timing. She felt that the survey should be on pause and then sent out when the pandemic situation lifted. That may mean waiting until October. The Headteacher highlighted that that would mean no survey taking place for 2 years. It would also mean that, of those being surveyed, 45 families would have only been associated with the school for a month (new reception cohort) and 61 families of current year 4 children, who had had their children at the school for up to 5 years would be missed. This could give a distorted view.</p> <p>Governors discussed the timing and agreed that although timing was not ideal, that could be said when sending it out and questions may need to be tweaked. Useful feedback could also be received on areas such as communication.</p> <p>The Headteacher stated that she had not seen the questions and asked that they be sent through before being finalised.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed to send out the survey as soon as possible.</b></p> <p>Governors expressed their thanks to the Headteacher and Business Managers for all their recent work.</p>	

**Meeting finished at:** 3.00pm

**Date of next meeting:** 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020



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

"LEARNING TOGETHER – AIMING HIGH"

## **The Governing Body**

### **Summary of actions agreed**

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### **Summary of decisions taken**

**Governors agreed to adopt the Protocol for Electronic Participation**

**Governors approved the end of financial year virements.**

**Governors approved the budget for 2020-21**

**Governors approved the Finance Policy**

**Governors gave authority to set an INSET day on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 if it was required.**

**Governors agreed to send out the survey as soon as possible.**