



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 22nd October 2020 at 3.45pm

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

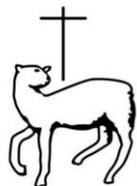
Mr Hugh Haines – Foundation Governor
Mrs Alexia Loundras – Vice-Chair and Parent Governor
Mr Brent Milverton – Foundation Governor
Mrs Fiona Puleston – Co-Chair and Local Authority Governor

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

Apologies Reasons accepted for: Mrs Marsland (up to 4.50pm)
No reasons given for:

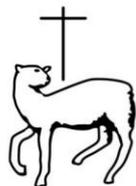
Key: **Decisions** **Challenge** **Actions**

Agenda Item	Discussion, decisions and actions	
	The meeting was conducted remotely due to the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.	
2	Standing items Opening prayer Mr Daniels opened the meeting with a prayer. Declarations of interest New Governor Mr Haines declared no interests. There were no new declarations of interests from existing Governors. Apologies Apologies were received as detailed above. Governor Business The Clerk informed Governors that Mr Haines' application to become Foundation Governor had been approved. Governors welcomed Mr Haines to the Governing Body.	



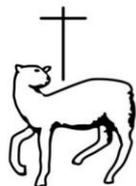
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	<p>Mr Daniels reported that he had contacted the potential new Governor identified by a Governor recruitment website. He was due to meet the candidate the following week.</p> <p>Agree the minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2020 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, and duly approved.</p>	
	<p>Finance</p> <p>Month 6 report The Business Manager presented the month 6 financial report, highlighting the following points;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governors should look at the projected year end balances. The anticipated year end committed balance was £65,936 and the uncommitted balance - £2,188.• The committed balanced included around £35,000 in Pupil Premium grant funding. If work could be done to reallocate some of this committed expenditure in year, it would be possible to balance the budget by year end.• A saving of approximately £18,000 had been achieved in the catering cost centres as the school's catering provider had only charged the school for meals actually provided during lockdown. There was a chance that some of the Universal Infant Free School Meal funding may be clawed back but this would not be known until January 2021 at the earliest.• The report assumed that the COVID-19 catch up grant would be used to cover anticipated new staffing such as new apprentice roles.• It was important to be careful with any income coming in.• A significant amount had been spent on COVID-19 related measures. The Business Managers had submitted a claim to the Department for Education and were hoping that a second claim window would be made available. A Governor asked if any claim money was included in the report. The Business Manager responded that it was not but some was anticipated.• The cleaning and caretaking cost centre had a significant overspend as the school was using an extra 4 hours per day cleaning, had purchased PPE and high stocks of cleaning materials.• Overall the financial position was better than the Business Managers were anticipating and they felt that if they were careful, it would be possible to balance the budget.• Governors needed to be mindful that the number on roll was 276, down from 290 the previous year. It would therefore be challenging balancing the budget for 2021-22.• The report reflected a financially worst case scenario.• There had been a number of longer term sickness absences amongst the	



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	<p>teaching staff during lockdown but the school's absence insurance policy had declined claims on the basis that the school was closed. Governors expressed disappointment at this, as the school had not been closed and one absence was in a role that had an increased workload during lockdown.</p> <p>The Business Manager invited questions from Governors;</p> <p>A Governor asked whether the insurance had now changed? The Business Manager said that they had not but a lot of insurance policies in general were starting to change, to not include pandemic situations. The school made a successful insurance claim for the cancelled year 4 residential trip, but would probably not do so in subsequent years in a similar situation. A Governor stated that they felt staffing should have been covered and asked the Business Manager to investigate alternative policies.</p> <p>Action : investigate alternative absence insurance policies.</p> <p>A Governor asked why the Wraparound care cost centre was anticipating a loss. The Business Manager responded that the school had continued to incur staffing expenditure throughout lockdown but had received no income. The school had sought advice from Somerset around redundancy but were told this was not possible and that staff should be paid as normal. There was some income coming in since September but not normal levels.</p> <p>A Governor asked if the overspend in the admin cost centre was due to the Business Manager overtime on COVID related work. The Business Manager responded that it was. The report assumed that further overtime would be undertaken, but this was unlikely to be required as COVID work was mostly now in place.</p> <p>Unofficial fund Governors discussed the previously circulated Unofficial Fund audit report. The Business Manager highlighted the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Fund had been audited by Somerset County Council• The audit found everything to be in order.• The year end balance in the fund was £11,284, of which around £1,000 may be related to the India link school project.• There had been a small level of expenditure in September 2020.• There were 3 invoices to pay for Governor contributions to capital projects undertaken in summer 2020. There were insufficient funds in the Governor Fund to cover them;<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ £54 – DDA works○ £502 – purchase of iPads○ £4,192 – Guttering work	<p>Business Manager</p>
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- The balance after these invoices were paid was anticipated to be £6,461. The Business Manager advised that at least £5,000 should be left in the fund so any further capital spending would require the Governor 10% to be covered through fundraising or to be included in the school budget. It was likely that some electrical work and toilet refurbishment would be required. The school had also been notified that money had been allocated by the Diocese for upgrading of lights to LEDs

A Governor asked if there were documents they could see about ongoing maintenance and scheduled work as it would be helpful to target fund raising. The Business Manager responded that there was a condition survey, but it needed renewing. The Business Manager commented that a lot of work had been done in the last couple of years and that a working party might be useful to discuss fund raising.

Action: Chase new condition survey

A Governor asked why the surplus would be a minus figure and if that figure was the amount spent. The Business Manager responded that it was the amount spent.

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The Business Manager reminded Governors that they should be mindful of the SFVS throughout the year and should review the action plan.

Benchmarking

The Business Manager asked Governors if they wished for benchmarking to be undertaken in preparation for budget work in January 2021. Governors commented that the benchmarking data was not very helpful and did not want the Business Manager to commit much time to this activity. The Business Manager reminded Governors that they would need to justify not undertaking benchmarking in the SFVS. It was agreed that a small amount should be done but without spending any significant time on it.

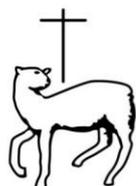
PlayPod

Governors approved the purchase of a subscription to the Wiltshire scrapstore and the PlayPod training package. The quotes were reviewed and agreed by email during August 2020.

Pupil Premium

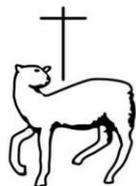
The Business Manager informed Governors that there had been some savings within Pupil premium, for example, not subsidising school trip, as none had taken place over lockdown. Impact would need to be justified at the end of the year. Pupil Premium was currently sitting with the Headteacher, who had a lot of other responsibilities as well. It was intended that the Business Manager and Headteacher

Business Mgr



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	<p>would meet to discuss use and impact of the Pupil Premium grant.</p> <p>A Governor asked if there had been any increase to the Pupil Premium grant given the pandemic situation. The Business Manager responded that the per pupil amount had not increased but more children had become eligible for the funding. The school would also receive the one off catch up funding. A Governor suggested that a reminder be sent out to families about Pupil Premium in case there were families in difficult financial circumstances who didn't realise they could apply and that the funding covered more than just a free meal for their child. The Business Manager stated that reminders had been sent out over lockdown, but none in the current term.</p> <p>Action: Send out reminder about Pupil Premium eligibility</p>	<p>Business Mgr</p>
	<p>Premises and H&S</p> <p>The Business Manager gave a verbal update;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been a significant flood in the upstairs boys toilet due to a limescale blockage in the urinal. A temporary fix had been put in place and the school awaiting quotes for repair. If the repair was costly, the urinal may be removed as there were sufficient toilets without the urinal. The toilet area was in need of refurbishment, making a costly repair poor value for money. • Two toilet areas were badly in need of refurbishment. • There was an ongoing risk presented by a mature hazel tree in the back playground, meaning a child with a severe nut allergy could not use that playground. The school had contacted Somerset Property Services to request that the tree be removed. A tree surgeon had visited and contact made with the Mendip tree officer. It was recommended that the tree be coppiced. Unfortunately, the tree surgeon had not been in contact with the school since and both the tree surgeon and Somerset Property Services were failing to respond to a number of attempts by the Business Manager to follow things up. Governors asked for a copy of the emails sent. • Each class had carried out an individual evacuation drill and a full evacuation drill was planned for after half term. • The COVID-19 risk assessment was in place and staff and children settling in to routines. • Various measures were in place to make the school COVID secure such as one way system, <p>A Governor suggested that the Governing Body write a thank you message to all staff and families for working with the arrangements for the first half of term. All agreed this would be a good idea. Governors agreed that Mr Haines would write the</p>	



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	<p>message.</p> <p>Action: Write a thank you message to the St John's community</p>	<p>Mr Haines</p>
	<p>Admissions</p> <p>Governors considered the admissions form sent by the Somerset schools admissions team and agreed to all points on the form.</p>	
	<p>Policies</p> <p>Pay Policy</p> <p>Mrs Puleston presented the draft pay policy and highlighted the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision points had duplicated former versions of the policy. • Point 17.1 referred to the SEN pay points and indicated that holding the SENCO qualification doesn't meet the criteria for being paid on those points. Rather, being awarded a TLR payment is appropriate. The Business Manager advised that current TLRs in the school were under a period of pay protection and that Governors would need to consider what TLRs should be available at the end of that period. <p>The Business Manager prompted Governors that they needed to consider and agree their intentions for applying the teachers' pay award between the options provided on the previously circulated form. The Chair of Governors or Headteacher would need to email the completed form to Somerset HR and Payroll.</p> <p>Governors discussed the teachers' pay award and agreed that they wanted to go with option 2, as appropriate consultation had already taken place.</p> <p><i>Option 2 – Reference points and Increase all other Teachers salary points</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Application of advisory reference points for TMS (Main Scale) and UPS (Upper Scale).</i> • <i>2.75% Increase to all salary points of the UQ (Unqualified Scale) & Leadership Pay Scales.</i> • <i>2.75% Increase to all set value allowances (eg. TLR/SEN etc)</i> <p>Governors agreed to apply the teachers' pay award according to option 2</p> <p>Action: Return the Teachers' pay award instruction form to Somerset HR</p>	<p>Mrs Puleston</p>



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Appraisal policy – non-teaching staff

Mrs Puleston presented the draft appraisal policy for non-teaching staff and stated that it seemed straight forward. The draft policy followed the Somerset model policy aside from personalising the policy to St John's.

Appraisal policy – teaching staff

Mrs Puleston presented the draft appraisal policy for teaching staff. The policy followed the Somerset model policy but the Headteacher had raised some concerns around the formal observations protocol prior to the meeting. Governors discussed the protocol and stated that they required the input of the Headteacher. The Clerk reminded Governors that teacher performance management meetings were due to take place the following day and so the policy needed to be approved at the meeting. Governors asked the Business Manager to contact the Headteacher to find out if she had been held up.

The Headteacher joined the meeting at 4.50pm and gave her apologies, which were accepted.

Mrs Puleston left the meeting and returned a couple of minutes later.

Governors discussed the formal observation protocol. The Headteacher asked Mrs Puleston to clarify what constituted a term in the policy. Mrs Puleston responded that there were 6 terms in the academic year. The Headteacher stated that in Somerset, usually there are 3 terms, autumn, spring and summer.

The Headteacher stated that her interpretation of the union guidance was that there should be no more than one monitoring visit per term unless local consultation took place. A Governor stated that the policy had a separate section on classroom visits for leadership. The Headteacher stated that she would prefer for the policy to state that monitoring would be no more than 3 hours across the year and no more than 1 hour within a term. However, that time could be one longer observation or a number of shorter learning walks. She went on to state that one long observation where the teacher had been given prior notice was not that helpful to leaders as it was not a 'real' situation. Learning walks where teachers were told they would happen during a particular week were much more helpful. It also meant that learning walks could be carried out by other staff, for example the English subject lead could do one to monitor English.

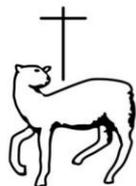
A Governor asked if that could be put in to the policy without consulting unions. The Headteacher stated that she believed that local consultation was just the teachers. She felt that local consultation had taken place as she had spoken with teachers about this protocol at staff meetings and they were happy with it.

The Headteacher informed Governors that she had adjusted the appendix 2 form.



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	<p>She had taken out the references to observation and added in monitoring. She had instructed reviewers to put n/a for any unchanged headings. She had also instructed reviewers and reviewees to just put their feelings about the previous year as she did not want people to spend a lot of time reflecting at length due to the pandemic.</p> <p>This year, all teachers would have the same targets linked to the School Development Plan. One target would be around implementing (or leading implementation for leaders) of the new PSHE scheme. Another would be around developing the curriculum. Another would be around promoting wellbeing for staff, children and colleagues.</p> <p>The Headteacher asked that the policy front pages be checked as she thought one might be the wrong version.</p> <p>Governors approved the following policies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay Policy• Appraisal policy – non-teaching staff• Appraisal policy – teaching staff – subject to the adjustments detailed above	
	<p>Staffing</p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors that she and Mrs Puleston had met to discuss staffing options from January 2021. The school's Education Finance Officer had provided costings for options but the Headteacher and Business Managers had not yet met to go through the options.</p> <p>The Headteacher set out the current staffing structures and changes due at the end of December;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A 1.0 FTE main scale teacher in Key Stage 2 was on a fulltime fixed term contract to the end of December. This teacher had been informed at interview that a parttime contract may be available from January 2021. The teacher had indicated they required a fulltime post so was actively seeking alternative employment. A job share was therefore required for the new Deputy Head's non-teaching days. <p>The Headteacher proposed to cover the Deputy Head job share through good quality supply until 31st August 2021. This would provide flexibility for the Deputy Head to take more time out of the classroom when required. If the school tried to advertise to this vacancy, they could only recruit from individuals not currently in work as the deadline to hand in notice for a January start was due on 31st October 2021. The quality of candidates may therefore not be high.</p>	



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- A 0.4 FTE upper pay scale teacher would retire at the end of December. To date they had provided a job share for a Key Stage 1 parttime teacher and also provided leadership cover for that teacher. Due to the Deputy Head starting, leadership time for other members of the SLT could be reduced and be covered by a HLTA. Therefore a 0.2 FTE teacher was required in Key Stage 1.

The Headteacher proposed to cover the 0.2 job share through good quality supply until 31st August 2021. One of the school's regular supply teachers had expressed an interest. They were on the upper pay scale but very good quality, and knew the school well. If the school tried to advertise to this vacancy, they could only recruit from individuals not currently in work as the deadline to hand in notice for a January start was due on 31st October 2021. The quality of candidates may therefore not be high.

- A 0.6 FTE upper pay scale teacher was currently working at 1.0 FTE in Key Stage 1 until the end of December to cover a flexible working request from another member of staff. A decision was required on whether to offer to extend the increase in hours until 31st August 2021 or to advertise for a parttime teacher.

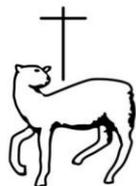
The Headteacher proposed to offer to extend the increase in hours to 31st August 2021 as the teacher was known to the school and had taken on ownership of the class. If the school tried to advertise to this vacancy, they could only recruit from individuals not currently in work as the deadline to hand in notice for a January start was due on 31st October 2021. The quality of candidates may therefore not be high.

A Governor asked about the flexible working request and whether that could change at the end of December. The Headteacher responded that it was in place for a year but would be reviewed at the end of December. She felt the adjusted working pattern was currently working.

A Governor asked if the Deputy Head would have a 0.4 or 0.6 FTE teaching commitment. The Headteacher responded that the budget was for a 0.6 FTE teaching commitment but that using a main scale good quality supply teacher would give flexibility to allow more time out of the classroom on occasion. She proposed that the supply teacher be guaranteed at least two days per week.

The Headteacher informed Governors of the pros and cons of the proposed structure;

- A benefit of using supply would give maximum flexibility for staffing from September 2021.



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- A downside was that having upper pay scale and higher main scale supply teachers was not cheap and would reduce those teachers' availability for short notice supply. The school would need to use more agency supply in these instances.
- If there was a lockdown, there would be a moral commitment to carry on paying the supply teachers as if they were in school.

Governors discussed the proposals with the following comments noted;

- Governors were in general supportive of the Headteacher's proposal.
- A Governor stated they were supportive as long as it wasn't too expensive.
- A Governor asked if a supply teacher was more expensive on a day rate. The Headteacher responded that it depended on the level the teacher was being paid at.
- A Governor stated that the proposal seemed sensible as everything was so up in the air and things could shift again by September 2021.

Governors asked the Business Manager's opinion. The Business Manager responded that she was supportive and that good quality teaching was important following the pandemic and lockdown. It was better to spend money wisely.

The Headteacher reminded Governors that recruiting a fixed term teacher would also have additional costs for advertising, safer recruitment checks and Headteacher and Business Manager time.

A Governor asked if the part-time teacher covering the flexible working request would be likely to turn down the offer of extending the increase in hours. The Headteacher responded that she thought they wouldn't, as long as they could make appropriate arrangements for their family circumstances.

Governors approved the Headteacher's staffing proposal.

The Headteacher informed Governors that a year 3 teacher had been out of school that day and the new Deputy Head came in to do a morning's supply. It was very successful.

Teacher Performance Management

The Headteacher informed Governors that performance management meetings had taken place for teaching Senior Leaders and they would in turn undertake the other teachers' performance management meetings during the INSET day on 23rd October. Half an hour had been allocated to each meeting as review of the previous year would be much shorter than usual due to the pandemic. All would be set the same targets.

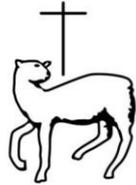


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<p>The Headteacher informed Governors that Somerset had advised that anybody entitled to progress on their payscale should do so unless there were significant concerns around their performance, as the performance management process could not operate in the normal way due to the pandemic. Unless the school could prove that an individual wouldn't have met their targets it should be assumed that they would have done. All progressions had been budgeted for.</p> <p>Governors asked for clarity around teachers at main scale 6 or on the upper pay scale and whether they could automatically progress or whether they needed to request a progression. A Governor checked the pay policy and stated that teachers must request to progress from the main to upper pay scale but that those on the upper pay scale did not have to request to move between points.</p> <p>The Headteacher informed Governors which teachers were entitled to progress. Details are minuted confidentially.</p> <p>Headteacher Performance Management Governors discussed the Headteacher's performance management, which is minuted confidentially.</p> <p>-</p>	
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Meeting finished at: 5.30pm

Date of next meeting: 19th November 2020



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

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Summary of actions agreed

Action : investigate alternative absence insurance policies.	Business Manager
Action: Chase new condition survey	Business Manager
Action: Send out reminder about Pupil Premium eligibility	Business Manager
Action: Write a thank you message to the St John's community	Mr Haines
Action: Return the Teachers' pay award instruction form to Somerset HR	Mrs Puleston

Summary of decisions taken

<p>Governors agreed to apply the teachers' pay award according to option 2</p> <p>Governors approved the following policies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay Policy• Appraisal policy – non-teaching staff• Appraisal policy – teaching staff – subject to the adjustments detailed above <p>Governors approved the Headteacher's staffing proposal.</p>
