

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ST MATTHEW'S GOVERNING BODY, HELD AT SCHOOL
ON THURSDAY, 19th SEPTEMBER, 2013 AT 6.15 P.M.**

Present: Martin Smart (Chair), Carole Mills (Vice Chair), Joanna Dean, Rifat Siddiqui, Sarah Barratt, Lucy Walker, Kevin Blencowe, Neil Perry, Ruth Platt, Zoe Thorn, Jill Tuffnell, Sarah Ransome, Tony Davies (Headteacher), Annabelle Lewis, Liz Steel and Kate Spencer-Allen (Assistant Headteachers), Anne Maskell (Clerk to Governors)

Martin welcomed new parent governor Sarah Ransome to the meeting and other governors introduced themselves.

1. Apologies for absence

ACTION

Apologies for absence were received from Keith Barrett. As mentioned at the last meeting in May this would be Sarah Barratt's last meeting as teacher governor. Carole announced that she would need to leave the meeting at 8.00 p.m.

2. Declaration of pecuniary interests

Annual update forms requesting details of any pecuniary interests held by governors were completed and returned to Anne to be held on the register.

3. Election of Chair

Martin was proposed by Kevin, seconded by Rifat. He agreed to accept the nomination.

4. St Matthew's Governing Body Standing Orders

Copies of the model Standing Orders with areas of discretion highlighted had been distributed with the agenda. Amendments were agreed and a revised copy will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting. It was noted that the Governing Body does not currently have an Allowances Policy, which, if it does exist, should be appended to the Standing Orders. Anne will investigate whether the National Association of Governors and Managers has a model policy we could look at.

Anne

5. Minutes of previous meetings, and matters arising

Full Governing Body

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 9th May, were agreed as an accurate record, and the minute book was signed by the Chair.

- Tony said that he is planning an Open Classrooms morning for parents once all the furniture is in place and Mr Collard is back from paternity leave. (This has subsequently been confirmed as Thursday, 3rd October from 8.30 – 9.15 a.m.)
- Plans for the next Meet the Head session were discussed and a date of Friday, 18th October proposed. Zoe and Joanna are both free to help with this at present. We will plan to do this from 9.00 a.m. in the new Community Room.
- Governors are now using the secure LA site to access papers and emails. The possibility of also posting papers in a secure area of the school website for governors was also mentioned.

Curriculum Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July had been distributed with the agenda. Carole said the main focus of this meeting had been the action plans for curriculum development and outstanding teaching within the new SDP. The volunteer scheme mentioned under matters arising from the last minutes is actually run by St Phillips and not St Paul's – Sarah has not spoken to them yet but still plans to do so. Tony said that some curriculum roles will change due to restructuring in the next month or so.

Resources Committee

Copies of the minutes of the meeting held on 12th September were circulated. Acting Chair Kevin led governors through the minutes – the main items for discussion had been to agree a new Staff Pay Policy and to receive a premises update following completion of Phase 2 of the premises redevelopment. Tony gave a brief précis of the changes which have necessitated agreement of a revised pay policy. The new School Business and Administration Manager Adrian Strowger had been introduced to governors at this meeting.

An outstanding matter referred to today's meeting was to agree governor representation on Tony's PM appraisal panel. Previously this had been the chairs of Curriculum, Personnel and Finance Committees before the latter two were amalgamated. It was agreed that the governor representatives would be the Chair of Governors (Martin) and the Chairs of Curriculum and Resources Committees (the latter has yet to be appointed).

6. Headteacher's report

Tony led governors through his report, which had been distributed with the agenda. If the proposed teacher's strike goes ahead on 1st October we shall not be able to open and a letter will be sent home to parents shortly. Sarah Barratt and Lindsey Lord are sharing the role of SENCO, each with specific areas of responsibility – details of these, and of the specific roles of the three Assistant Headteachers were attached to Tony's report. The increased level of SENCO support reflects the growing number of children either already with a statement or working towards one. We have also had an increasing number of EAL children joining the school in recent months.

Tony had attached a note of current pupil numbers with his report. Almost all vacant places have been offered by the Admissions Office so are likely to be filled very soon. We were heavily oversubscribed for Reception places this year and there were 13 appeals, none of which was successful. There had, however, been a successful appeal for a Year 5 place, which means that we are now one over PAN in that year group. Joanna asked whether it would be helpful to have a policy in place which detailed the circumstances under which the school would consider going over PAN. Tony said that he is normally only approached by Admissions to admit over PAN due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. child protection or SEN issues). Martin is now a member of the Cambridgeshire Admissions Forum which considers such cases.

Nursery numbers are slightly lower than originally anticipated, but this will give an opportunity for January (and possibly April) admissions – some of these likely to be more vulnerable children whose parents are unable to afford private childcare.

7. School Development Plan

Tony's paper, outlining the seven key 'headline' targets agreed by governors, had been circulated with the agenda. He ran through these, together with the success criteria and key actions that had been identified for each. Curriculum mapping will be undertaken by curriculum leaders and TLR 1 post holders (previously this area had been under the leadership of Alexandra Surtees). Governors asked whether there were plans for an orchestra in school (there had not been one for some years since our former violin teacher Penny Veryard had organized it). Tony said that he hoped this might again be an option – there had been changes within Cambridgeshire Music which were now bedding down. Other possibilities are also being investigated.

8. Dates for future meetings

Resources Committee – Thursday, 14th November at 5.00 p.m.
Curriculum Committee – Tuesday, 3rd December at 5.30 p.m.
Full Governing Body – Thursday, 12th December at 6.15 p.m.

Sarah agreed to join Resources Committee.

9. Review of status of school policies

Tony had circulated an updated version of last year's list. We are broadly on track – a revised Health and Safety Policy needs to come to the next Resources Committee meeting. Behaviour Management Policy – there will be staff training in January and the policy will be reviewed in Spring/Summer 2014. Almost all the personnel policies will need review in the light of recent updates – it was agreed to look at all of these at the Autumn Resources Committee meeting.

Anne/Tony

The E Safety Policy was discussed, as this is a fast moving area with technology changing very frequently. The current policy is felt to be very comprehensive but a quick review of it would probably be helpful. There is not currently a curriculum ICT leader but this is likely to be addressed under the restructuring already mentioned.

10. Governor vacancies

We currently have one parent governor vacancy (which will be advertised shortly), two Community Governor vacancies and one staff and one teacher governor vacancy. Additionally Keith Barrett's current term of office ends in November – he has however indicated that he would be interested in being co-opted for a further term (at least for a year) so that he can continue his involvement with the School Library. This was agreed, and Martin will write to him. It was agreed that, in the longer term, it would be useful to investigate whether a representative from the Parkside Federation would be interested in joining the Governing Body, as this has been felt to be a helpful link in the past.

Martin

Tony said that he has had interest from staff re the two internal vacancies and hopes to be able to confirm these appointments in due course. Two candidates for Community Governor had been identified – Ashley Walsh, the new County Councillor for Petersfield, who has a particular interest in education, and Mark Tinkler, a parent who has a background

Tony

in music education and experience of working in a large number of London schools. As requested by Governors in the previous meeting, Tony had asked Mark Tinkler if he would consider becoming a community governor of the school. Mark has a great deal of experience in music education and has been active in coming into school to lead singing assemblies in the recent past. As music is a particular focus of our SDP it would be good for us to have governor support in this area. He is also a very experienced governor in schools outside Cambridgeshire, which gives a useful perspective. These appointments were agreed and Anne would write to both candidates.

Anne

11. Governor training

Joanna and Sarah are going to the termly briefing for governors next week. Joanna said that there had been discussion of the School Data Dashboard at the last meeting, with the fact that governors need to be conversant with this for OFSTED highlighted. Tony said that the data dashboard is already planned into the next agenda for the Curriculum Committee as part of the school development plan. Sarah is also booked on the induction course for new governors and Joanna will be undertaking a disability and equality training course (not run by Cambridge Governor Services). Lucy plans to undertake an LA child protection course next year.

12. PTA news

The PTA committee has been busy planning their AGM and also organizing the always popular Spooky Disco and a visit by Mr Rainbow the magician.

13. Any other business

- Governors asked how the plans to offer free school meals to all KS1 children would impact on St Matthew's. Tony said that we are currently looking at furniture for the dinner hall. We are probably better placed than many other schools to cope with this proposal if it goes ahead.
- Joanna said that she is meeting with Adrian Strowger next week to discuss the newsletter. Any ideas from other governors would be welcome, and it could also be raised at Meet the Head. She said that she has also sought views from parents informally.
- Tony said that Midday Supervisor interviews are planned for next Monday or Tuesday. Would any governors be free to join the interview panel? Zoe, Lucy and Martin all said that they might be able to assist.