

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ST MATTHEW'S GOVERNING BODY, HELD AT SCHOOL ON THURSDAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2015 AT 6.15 P.M.**

**Present:** Zoe Thorn (Chair), Carole Mills (Vice Chair) Kevin Blencowe, Jill Tuffnell, Sarah Ransome, Joanna Dean, Gavin Ayliffe, Lucy Walker, Emily Evans, Melissa Hatcher, Tony Davies (Headteacher), Liz Steel and Kate Spencer-Allen (Assistant Headteachers), Anne Maskell (Clerk to Governors) Alison West, LA Assigned Inspector (for item 5a )

**1. Apologies for absence**

**ACTION**

Apologies for absence from Sam Wilkes Read and Neil Perry were accepted.

**2. Declaration of pecuniary interests**

There was no additional declaration of direct or indirect pecuniary interests by any governor relating to items on today's agenda.

**3/4. Minutes of governing body meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2014 and 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 and matters arising**

**FGB, 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2014**

Minutes

- As agreed at the EFGB meeting, point 3a will be amended to reflect that Co-opted is a new category and those currently in post as Community governors will not automatically transfer. Item 7 – to be amended to: We won the whole competition by 136 points. Within this we won Team events for both boys and girls in Year 5, came fourth in the boys' team event in Year Six and eighth in the Year Six girls' event.
- Item 8 – to be amended to 'Governors said that it might be helpful to put together an audio version'
- Item 9 – typo in line 18 of the second paragraph, 'Jo' should of course be 'Joe'.
- last paragraph of item 9 – reference to 'whole school' to be amended to 'whole new building'

With these amendments the draft minutes were agreed and the minute book would be signed by the Chair.

Matters arising/actions agreed

- Anne has written to Carole and to Governor Support Services.
- It was agreed that letters relating to changing of teachers/teaching arrangements for classes would be sent out to parents of all children affected by the change.
- The architects have undertaken an initial assessment of the process for installing more opening windows in classrooms, and this work is planned for the Easter holidays. Installation of air conditioning units is likely to be quite disruptive so this will be done during the summer holidays.
- Zoe has spoken to Carol Peel, who has confirmed it is perfectly in order for Tony to check draft minutes for factual accuracy before they are distributed.

- Zoe aims to have spoken to all governors to check they wish to continue in post after reconstitution before the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

Zoe

## **EFGB 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2015**

The draft minutes of the EFGB were agreed as an accurate record and will be signed off by the Chair.

### **5. Raising Standards**

#### **(a) Report from Assigned Inspector**

Alison West is attending today's meeting to feed back on her recent 'Keeping in Touch' visit – the full report from which was distributed with the agenda. She expanded on her role as Assigned Inspector to St Matthew's, explaining that her remit is to act as a 'critical friend' and monitor and evaluate standards in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team. She was assigned to St Matthew's two years ago, and has undertaken two KIT visits and also comes into school termly. She also acts as the External Advisor for the Headteacher's performance management.

For her visit in October she was accompanied by Jane Crowden (Local Authority Maths Adviser) who undertook a 'Learning Walk' which she felt enabled her to gain a good 'feel' for children's experience. To sum up her report she felt that, if Ofsted were to judge the school now, the result would be 'good with outstanding features, and on an upward trajectory'. In particular she wished to note that a key outstanding feature was the behaviour and attitude to learning of the children. They were keen to learn and willing to listen to each other's viewpoint and she witnessed relaxed and positive interaction. Tony said that Chris Meddle, LA Education Adviser, had visited school today to undertake an observation of behaviour and supervision in the playground and his findings agreed with her judgement.

Alison then led governors through her report, focussing particularly on areas of strength and those where improvement should be targeted. She acknowledged that achievement of FSM children was a particular issue for South Cambridgeshire; there is a limited amount of pupil premium money available as there are less FSM children overall, but within this group there are widely differing needs. She said she would investigate schools where practice is particularly effective and would report back. It was noted that this is the last year for the current form of testing – standardized tests for 11 year-olds will replace the present system from 2016, and the expectation is that 85% of children will reach expected levels. The school has to choose a baseline assessment system for Reception children, which will then become the measure of progress. This may lead to issues of difficulty in achieving parity between schools if they are on different systems.

Alison

In summing up Alison said that she felt that the very focussed and targeted support from the Senior Leadership Team had seen results improve significantly. Gavin asked how it could be demonstrated that this was a causal link and not merely a correlation between the work of the Senior Leadership Team and the improvements in results. Alison said she felt it was easy to identify changes in practice and how this had impacted on results in her view. Sarah pointed out that two children had achieved level 6 in maths rather than one as mentioned in the report. Governors also asked that Tony consider an 'exit interview' with parents of children who are leaving the school before the end of Year 6. It was agreed this would take the form of a questionnaire rather than an interview.

**(b) Minutes of Curriculum Committee**

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February had been distributed with the agenda. Main items for discussion had been the deployment of volunteers, plans for the next Meet the Head, and updates on Art/Music and ICT.

**(c) Headteacher's report**

Tony led governors through his report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. In particular he notified governors that the Nest nurture group run by Julie Mark and Mandy Squires will be wound up in its current form at Easter. Children generally only attend the Nest for two terms so the current cohort would expect to be finishing their term at Easter. Future support would be targeted to academic or emotional support via individual or small group work and in providing a breakfast club targeted to those children who, for various reasons, arrive at school not ready to learn. Tony asked that this information be treated as confidential at present – letters are being sent to notify parents of children who currently attend the Nest for support.

Governors noted how well the school's strategy for raising standards and increasing opportunity for children in sport is working, and wished to record their appreciation to Sport and Physical Activity Co-ordinator Mick Collard for all the effort he has put into developing this curriculum area.

It was noted that link governors for various curriculum areas, in particular literacy, have still to be appointed, and it was agreed this would be undertaken at the next Curriculum Committee meeting. We will aim to have link governors for key areas of our new School Development Plan, and also a link governor for training. Jill said we should also seek to develop links with ARU/Parkside and other local institutions and to channel this in a more purposeful way.

Tony had concluded his report by repeating the school aims and values, which it would be good to revisit in due course, identifying how success for each aspiration can be evidenced.

**(d) Feedback forms for governor training and link governor visits**

Copies of the templates, recommended by Carol Peel, were circulated. These should be completed electronically and sent to the Clerk, who would circulate them with papers for the next meeting. Zoe said that she would send electronic copies to everyone. Carole felt that there were some areas from our current link governor visit form which could usefully be incorporated and would send this to Zoe.

**Carole/Zoe**

**(e) Safeguarding**

Copies of the initial checklist for governors were distributed and completed by all present and the results discussed. Anne would send copies to governors not present at today's meeting.

**Anne**

## **Confidential note for governors only**

Tony notified governors staff in school had contributed to one of two Serious Incident Learning Processes that Cambridgeshire will publish on 19<sup>th</sup> March. Such reviews take place to try to identify if there is any learning for agencies in cases that have resulted in serious abuse or harm to a child. The school contributed to the process because a sibling of a child who attended the school was subject to such a review. The report has only been issued in draft so far and it does not identify any child protection or safeguarding issues relating to practice at St Matthew's. The school will not be identified. It is unlikely that the school's contribution will become public knowledge. There are serious issues relating to confidentiality and ensuring that the family are not identified, so should any governor be approached the response should strictly be "no comment".

### **6. Resources to Support Learning**

#### **(a) Minutes of Resources Committee meeting**

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February had been distributed with the agenda for governors to note.

#### **(b) Cash loan application to the Local Authority**

The likely deficit is more than originally budgeted for but governors had previously agreed additional recruitment in anticipation of extra funding next financial year. The LA has agreed to loan us the money to cover the deficit so that our bank account is not overdrawn and governors' formal agreement needs to be noted. This was agreed by all present.

### **7. Any other business**

No items raised.

### **8. Dates for next meetings and agenda items agreed thus far**

#### **16<sup>th</sup> April**

Governance health check

Reconstitution (Tony reminded governors of the procedure which had been agreed – the governing body will be reconstituted with effect from the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May)

Parent questionnaire – Tony will circulate draft in advance of this meeting.

**Tony**

#### **5<sup>th</sup> May**

Ratification of the budget for 2015/16

Leadership and management evaluation report

Reconstitution

Tony said it was likely we would need to timetable another meeting in July for the newly reconstituted governing body to ensure that priorities for the next School Development Plan had been agreed ahead of the Autumn Term and that other items relating to the SDP as identified on the agenda for this meeting could be completed.

**9. School improvement actions and outcomes from this meeting**

- progressed the process for moving forward with the next School Development Plan
- considered ways of reporting back from link governor visits and training
- reviewed values and aims
- reviewed KIT visit of School Improvement Partner and followed up on investigating good practice in other schools
- audited and updated governors' safeguarding knowledge