

**Minutes of the meeting of the governing body of St Scholastica's Catholic Primary School held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The meeting opened at 6.15pm.**

**Present:** Michael Blackwell (Chair), Nick Blackham, Jimmy Healy, Jonathan Lafferty, Althea Marshall, Ann McKenna-Slade (*Vice-Chair*), Naomi Mulholland (*Head teacher*), Royer Vidal. (Fr Hector Rouco arrived at 7.30pm)

**Part 1: Non-confidential – Main Business**

**1. Opening Prayer**

Naomi Mulholland opened the meeting with a prayer.

**2. Apologies and Consent for Absence**

Ursula Deufemia, Davina Attara, Esther Lehou Dan, Saphie Mandandu, Claire Langton send apologies.

**3. Governing Body Organisation**

**3.1 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**3.2 Membership of the Governing Body**

There are no vacancies on the GB. Jimmy Healy explained that his term of office is up and therefore Support Staff within the school have been informed of the need to elect a Governor. One member of support staff was absent at the time of notification, therefore nominations and elections have not taken place. The Chair advised that Jimmy Healy was a Co-Opted Member, and therefore his term of office expires in 2019. The Chair enquired if Mr. Healy was willing to continue, which Mr Healy said he was happy to do, on the proviso that no other member of support staff wished to undertake the same.

**3.3 Committee Membership**

No vacancies.

**3.4 Business interests – now on website**

Governors requested to inform of any corrections required.

**4. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**4.1 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

Agreed following the re-numbering of the repetition of number 4

**4.2 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 25th November 2015**

Agreed.

#### **4.3 Matters Arising**

None.

#### **4.4 Chair to Report on Any Urgent Action Taken**

None.

### **5. New KS 2 Grammar Test**

Sample Test paper sat by Governing Body for them to see what pupils are required to undertake.

### **6. New Statutory Guidance**

#### **6.1 New Governance handbook**

Royer Vidal offered to email a copy of the Governance Handbook to anyone who would like to read it.

#### **6.2 DfE new complaints guidance for schools**

On 6 January 2015, the Department for Education replaced its School Complaints Toolkit with new 'best practice' guidance for school complaints procedures.

The new guidance is non-statutory, but outlines legal requirements as well as good practice. It is designed for use by maintained schools only. The guidance also advises on aspects such as the stages of a complaints procedure and serial and persistent complainants.

Naomi Mulholland will undertake to update the Complaint Policy, prior to the next meeting, to provide clarification of the procedures for Complainants.

#### **6.3 Deregulation Act 2015.**

On 1 January 2016, the following provisions of the Deregulation Act 2015 came into force. This Order brings into force a provision of the Deregulation Act 2015 ("the Act") that relates to the reduction of burdens on schools.

- ✓ The removal of the requirement for schools to have a home-school agreement, we will keep ours think it is good practise and something to look back on.
- ✓ The removal of the requirement for maintained schools in England to have regard to the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on school staffing

#### **6.4 Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools**

This is a consultation document if anyone would like to comment please do so by 10<sup>th</sup> February.

#### **6.5 DfE Financial Efficiency Metric Tool**

On 12 January 2016, the Department for Education released a financial efficiency metric tool for schools in England. The tool allows schools to gauge their efficiency

and understand whether they could improve their efficiency relative to other schools.

Efficiency is calculated based on pupil attainment and the money used to achieve it, relative to statistically similar schools.

Can use this to help bench mark school as we do each year.

## **6.6 DfE - Benchmarking Report Card**

It captures highlights of your school's spending and compares them with similar schools. The report card should be used to stimulate discussion within the school leadership team to discover where efficiencies can be made, to encourage the use of financial benchmarking, and to prompt more sharing of best practice among schools.

The report card compares our school with a small number of statistical neighbours, based on the characteristics of your school. The first column shows our school. The school in the second column is the statistical neighbour geographically closest to your school. The remaining schools are those most statistically similar based on your school's Free School Meal and SEN rates.

You can use the prompt questions and come back to these at the next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March and have questions ready. Will use this at next Resources Meeting as well on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

## **6.7. Wraparound and Holiday Childcare.**

There are no concerns on Wraparound Care. Royer Vidal informed the Body this is a consultancy document only, as this became non-statutory on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016, which give parents the right to request care. Royer Vidal recommended we look and see if there is anything we can do.

## **7. Meet the Governors Report**

Jimmy Healy, Royer Vidal and Althea Marshall and Claire Langton represented the Governing Body.

The meeting was attended by two Parents, who did not present any questions, but were happy to answer and give their opinions on questions put forward by the Governors in attendance. The question of how to attract more parents and how to make the meetings more accessible for the parents was raised; suggestions of more advertising and longer periods of notice given, varying times to target different groups of parents were offered. Arranging meeting for 9.15am, shortly after children arrived for school was deemed to be a good time, although it was acknowledged that this would have less impact on the Parents of children in KS2 who may travel to school unaccompanied. It was agreed that morning sessions would be better for parents and would alleviate the requirements of providing crèche facilities and refreshment for children.

## **8. School Self-Evaluation – (SSE)**

This document has been reduced to less than three pages, which impressed Ofsted, who would like to use it as an example for other schools. Our levelling was deemed to be conservative. We assessed Early Year Provision as 2; with Nursery as outstanding, and Reception as very good – under the current provision in place to cover maternity leave. The Ofsted Inspector placed Reception as above 2 nearing to grade 1. Areas identified by

the Inspector was the data for Year 3 and Year 6 Maths being lower than national levels, which we have now matched and to ensure focus on higher ability pupils' extended learning. Overall the Inspector was pleased that we knew the school well and that the SSE was very accurate. He stated that he was impressed with the Governing Body and extremely impressed with the children in the school.

## **9. School Development Plan – (SDP)**

The Target numbers show that whilst the percentages are lower than previous, the gaps are closing and Ofsted said there are no weaknesses.

Ann McKenna Slade raised the question “are we still using the term “free school meals? FMS is used for pupils who are currently on free school meals and PPG (pupil premium grant) is for the number of pupils who have, in the past six years, been entitled to free school meals.

## **10. SEND School Offer**

Martina Sanderson gave a presentation to the Teaching and Learning Committee, which shows that SEN in the school is doing well. This information is to be put on the website and presented to a full governing body. Royer Vidal queried the number of pupils stated in the SIP (56) and the number in the presentation (46) – NM informed him that higher number was for last year's pupils, a number of whom had since left.

## **11. Safeguarding Report**

Safeguarding Report did not arrive in time for Ofsted inspection. There are five main areas to address i) Allegations Policy, ii) Altered Child Protection Policy, iii) Keeping Children Safe 2015, iv) Positive Handling Policy and v) Child Protection Pack update. The Ofsted Inspector has taken a copy of the Child Protection Pack which he said was succinct. He also said he was impressed with the Safety Walk he received at the beginning of his inspection. HT will report to Governing Body, at next scheduled meeting, the number of children reported to Social Services, per term.

## **12. Policies**

12.1 Admission Policy 2017-18 - Adopted.

The wording from the Diocese “Catholic child with a Certificate of Catholic Practice” does make it harder to recruit 30 pupils. Jimmy Healy suggested that we look at other parishes guidelines to see how they recruit children. HT informed him that our numbers were equal to Our Lady's and St. Joseph's and we were higher in numbers than St. Dominic's and St. Monica's. It was felt that the onus is on the Parish Priest and that some Parishes maybe less vigorous on their boundaries. Father Hector stated his preference for the old form, as the new form did not provide for information on regularity and frequency of practice. This form is more restrictive. The older form gave an opportunity to explain special circumstances. Father Hector will bring to the next Governing Body copies of the new form to facilitate further discussion, but advised that the Diocese can change forms quickly and this will require the Policy to be changed.

12.2 Anti-bullying Policy - Adopted

12.3 Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers Policy - Adopted

12.4 Child Protection Policy - Adopted

Original document agreed in September 2015, policy now to include articles highlighted in red. Final Policy to include amendment: - Mrs Mulholland to read "Naomi Mulholland".

12.5 Positive Handling Policy - Adopted.

Jimmy Healy referred to page 6 of the Policy "...and other authorised staff..." and it was concluded that all staff are authorised staff.

12.6 Use of Reasonable Force Policy - Adopted

On the proviso that photographs of children are removed. Royer Vidal enquired if the Policy was out of date. HT confirmed him this Policy is the most current under the guidelines of the Learning Trust. Jonathan Lafferty asked if this policy is linked to have both policies, HT replied it is but there is a need to have policies.

12.7 Attendance Policy- Adopted.

The Government has changed the guidelines for attendance from 85% to 90%. There have been incidences of parents paying their GP to provide a letter of absence for their children. In order to alleviate this problems the second point of Absence Procedures: (page 2) should include the wording "Parent/Carer to write a letter themselves with an explanation of the absence."

### 13. Committee Reports

14.1 Resources Committee

Noted & agreed.

14.2 Teaching & Learning Committee

Althea Marshall fed back that Martina Sanderson had provided useful information on the good progress of the children and that all the procedures in place were working. Monique Daci gave an informative talk on EYF and Emma Cousins showed how the three year programme of R.E. is enhancing the children's understanding and how the topic is marked and assessed. The next Governing Body meeting will include Music and Spanish.

### 15. Governor Visit Reports

Father Hector gave feedback on his visit to the Blessing of the Advent Wreath. He felt it was a well prepared and participated assembly, but would have liked to have seen more parents attend. HT informed him that these events were less attended by parents than Class Assemblies.

Father Hector also attend Year 3 and Reception Class to speak about Advent. He said that all the children were well behaved and it was an enjoyable experience. Year 3 pupils asked lots of good questions, which was reflective of their knowledge. Reception sang for him.

Royer Vidal attended KS2 Nativity Production and praised the children's performances and the production of the show.

## **16. Governor Training**

Ann McKenna Slade has attend three training sessions at the LT i) Budgets, ii) Governing Body Self Review, iii) SEN Inclusion – Governors Role. She would recommend that Governors take the opportunity of attending training sessions, which are very well focused. She reported that St. Scholastica's is held up as a good practitioner and that the school's website is displayed as a good example of Governors links, terms of references, interests, etc. Other schools include Minutes on their website. This had previously been decided against. Michael Blackwell asked if Parents can access Minutes, which they can. It is agreed that Non-Confidential Minutes may be put on the website. Father Hector informed the Body that the Dean of Hackney was impressed that two of our Governors have participated in the training held at Cardinal Pole regarding safeguarding up dates.

## **17. Any Urgent Business**

The Chair asked if the letter from the Department of Education was to be considered. HT informed him that the letter had arrived after the preparation of the agenda. The Chair asked what are the Diocese's view on academy status. HT said that currently we do not hear from Diocese on primary schools becoming academies. Academy status was aimed more for secondary schools. The Chair said he had heard of primary schools adopting academy status and receiving extra funding, but that this move places extra burdens on the Head teacher. Nick Blackham stated that we receive very good support from the Learning Trust which we would not receive under academy status. The possibility of academy status increasing the levels attained by pupils was improbable. Father Hector asked if the Diocese allows academy status and HT informed him it does, but that a school would need to be part of an academy federation and would not be permitted to function alone.

HT asked Governing Body if school funds could be used to fund staff celebration following Ofsted inspection. Permission was given. HT also requested consent for Inset Day – 11/4/2016 – to be given as a day of leave for staff and Inset training to be given in twilight sessions. Governing Body agreed these requests.

Dates for the performance management of HT can be arranged by emails.

## **18. Dates of Future Meetings**

9 March 2016  
11 May 2016  
06 July 2016  
19 October 2016  
23 November 2016  
01 February 17

## **Part 2: Confidential Business**

### **19. Confidential Minutes of the Last Meeting**

### **20. Confidential Report of the Headteacher**

### **21. Urgent Confidential Business**