



St Matthew's Primary School

FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Wednesday 4th October 2023 at 6.00pm held in school

Governors Present:	Ananay Aquilar AA Christina Bates CB Tony Davies (Headteacher) AD Andrew Grieve AG Katie Hehir KH Ricardo Herbane RH Chris Jagger CJ Linda Jones LJ Deborah Lucarelli (Co-Chair) DL Rosa Mottershead (Co-Chair) RM John Parkin JP Neil Perry NP Simon Richardson SR Aditi Vedi AV	Other Attendees:	Maggie Langford ML (Camclerk) (arrived 6:20pm)
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	Item	Action
1.	Apologies for absence The FGB was quorate based on the number of governors in post.	
2.	Declaration of direct or indirect pecuniary interests in any of the following items Declarations of Pecuniary interest: None received. Declarations of Personal interest: None received.	
3.	Governance (Part One) 3.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deborah Lucarelli and Rosa Mottershead were re-elected as Co-Chairs. • Ricardo Herbane was re-elected as Vice Chair. 3.2 Raise Awareness of Governor Code of Conduct, Instrument of Government and Standing Orders This was a general discussion to consider the Code of Conduct, Instrument of Government and Standing Orders . These were approved unanimously.	
	3.3 Governor vacancies The Headteacher and governors discussed the current LA governor vacancy – the nomination for Linda Jones had been approved by the LA. The governing body approved the nomination.	
	3.5 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests	

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	<p>Governors completed pecuniary interest forms and handed to the head teacher. No additional pecuniary interests were declared relating to items on the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p>3.6 To agree Terms of Reference for the Resources Committee, Salary Committee and the Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee The Terms of Reference for the Resources and Teaching, Learning and Outcomes Committee were shared with governors in advance of the meeting. Terms of reference were all agreed.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 12th July 2023 The minutes from 12th July 2023 meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Matters arising and agreed actions update The Headteacher requested that the minutes refer to attendees as governor, except for the Headteacher and each Co-Chair.</p> <p>All actions had been completed.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Headteacher's Report</u> The Headteacher's Report and School Development Plan were shared with governors in advance of the meeting. The Headteacher opened a discussion about the report and advised that he would focus on the School Development Plan at this meeting.</p> <p>One of the main issues highlighted in the Plan is SEN and the impact this was having on the school. It had been very challenging at the start of term and continued to be so, with a substantial increase in Reception years and over the last few months there has been a marked increase in other Year groups. These are children who do not have EHCP's or funding who need additional support. He advised the governors that this had put significant strain on the school workforce. He praised the staff for their resilience and how incredibly hard they continue to work. However, the Headteacher stressed that this level of SEN would be difficult to sustain over a long period of time without additional teaching assistant support that budget constraints made difficult to put in place. He also stressed that St Matthew's Primary was not unique in this situation and that other schools were finding similar challenges.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked what the driving forces were behind the increase in SEN. (A) The Headteacher in his response considered several factors including the impact of the pandemic and the isolation of this age group. This had particularly affected language and social development of Reception aged pupils. By comparison, this year's Nursery cohort had not been so challenged by the above factors.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked why many of the children did not have EHCP's and was it because they just had not met the threshold? (A) A staff governor responded to this query by suggesting that there were multiple reasons. She noted that the nurseries do not always have the right support and are not able to provide the paperwork necessary to get necessary processes underway or completed Gateway. The governor also noted that some families did not understand the process and the need for evidence. Each child was different, and the Headteacher highlighted the need for time to gather evidence to support applications for EHCPs. There were also factors surrounding those children newly arrived in the school.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if the children had EHCPs. (A) It was explained that many of the children did not have EHCPs. Applying was a very lengthy process. She explained that many applications were still at the initial application stage.</p>	

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	<p>(Q) A governor asked if there was a funding issue. (A) The Headteacher advised that feeder Nurseries were suffering from a funding crisis. Parents were also trying to cope with challenging situations and were often in crisis too.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if the Headteacher was able to share actual numbers or statistics. (A) The Headteacher noted that there were approximately 16-18 EHCP pupils with a further 8 that would still need applications.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked how many of those he thought would get support? (A) The Head advised that the school would be allocated funding during the Gateway process as the application can take up to a year. He also said that the whole of Cambridgeshire was struggling at the present time.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if there had been a noticeable shift in other Year groups? (A) The Headteacher acknowledged that there had been. He noted that 3 pupils should be in Special Education, but there were currently no spaces available for them.</p> <p>Pupil Numbers The Headteacher advised that there were currently 14 spaces in school although this could reduce to 12 next week and this might be too late for funding purposes due to the LA procedure of accepting or refusing entry into St Matthew's.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if this delay had an impact on funding. (A) The Headteacher confirmed it would impact on funding for the 2024-2025 financial year.</p> <p>(Q) A governor wanted to know if this was an issue that affected other schools too. (A) The Headteacher acknowledged that it did.</p> <p>Co-Chair (DL) asked if there were any further questions on the report. There were none.</p>	
6.	<p>Resources for Learning 6.1 Finance Update The Headteacher advised that the budget was in a better position at this point than had originally been anticipated which may allow for the recruitment of two additional teaching assistants to address some of the SEND issues discussed. Unfortunately, there are currently problems with the new finance system provided by the local authority causing concerns about the accuracy of financial reports. This uncertainty had been delaying the making of recruitment decisions.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if the Local Authority had given any explanation for the current problems of the finance system. (A) The Headteacher advised that there had been issues with the software itself, with training provided to schools on the use of the new systems. It had been hard to get definitive explanations from three parties involved in the dissemination of the new system - County Council, the County Corporate Team and School Business Systems who provide the software. All schools were having similar issues and this had been acknowledged by the Cambridgeshire Director of Education.</p> <p>The Headteacher said that he hoped to be able to give feedback to the governors at the next Resources Committee meeting in two week's time regarding status of the budget. If the school recruits to positions it will be on temporary contracts through agencies.</p>	

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	<p>6.2 2023-2024 Pay Policy (To Ratify) The draft Pay Policy was shared with governors in advance of the meeting. A member of SLT noted that the school followed the guidance surrounding the EPM policy regarding pay reviews.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if there was sufficient in the budget to cover the pay award for teachers</p> <p>(A) The Headteacher advised on the grant that the school would receive from the LA which would go towards staff funding. While this may cover the teachers' pay award, it would not cover the pay award for support staff and wider inflationary pressures.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked how long the school would need to keep temporary staff.</p> <p>(A) The Headteacher advised that this would be necessary until the end of the year.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked why the TLR pay scales were not shown on the Pay Policy.</p> <p>(A) The Headteacher acknowledged that he would ensure they were added at the back of the policy for future reference as there were specific amounts for TLR.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher to add pay scales to the Pay Policy.</p> <p>The Pay Policy was ratified by the governing body subject to the inclusion of the pay scales by the Headteacher.</p> <p>6.3 Raise Awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School Contract and Procurement Regulations Summary, Financial Regulations for Schools, Cambridgeshire Scheme for Financing Schools, Cambridgeshire County Council Procurement Guide 	Head
7.	<p>Raising Standards</p> <p>7.1 School Development Plan – update on progress so far: The Headteacher updated governors on the School Development Plan and how he was actioning new approaches to raising standards. He noted that the actions that he had put in place have been positive and proved vital in keeping focus. A draft report was circulated at the last meeting, and he has done work with teachers following on from this to establish some of their issues and a parent survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcomes from Parent Survey The Headteacher advised governors of the impact of the parent survey and summarized the main points and data with a PowerPoint presentation. He stated that the outcomes were the most positive that the school had ever had to a parent survey and also there had been the highest ever number of respondents. - (Q) A governor asked which parent group had been the least responsive to the parent survey? (A) The Headteacher advised that the Nursery year group had been the least responsive, but that the number of responses were fairly equally divided between year groups. He did clarify that parents of SEND pupils had responded positively. - Priorities identified by teachers Teachers had identified tackling workload, reducing duplication in paperwork and investigating the use of technology to support efficiency as additional priorities to those previously discussed. This had been added to the strategic issues “live list”. - Current Proposed “Big Moves” Co-Chair (DL) brought the conversation back to the School Development Plan to raise a point that had been made by the LA representative, in that the school was were not adhering to the traditional curriculum and were parents aware of this. 	

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	<p>(Q) Co-Chair (initials) asked the Headteacher if other schools were also being more experimental with the curriculum. (A) The Headteacher advised the LA representative had not been talking specifically about St Matthew's Primary, but in a more broad and generalized way. He noted that there are other schools experimenting.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the three "Big Moves" that the school is currently working on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monster Phonics – resources and training are proceeding forward with this. Leadership and Development – working through the plan and recruitment of the English TLR and Unit Leader posts, with interviews starting next week. The Headteacher asked for governor support with the interviews and candidates offered their services. SEND re-structuring – a review of the Leadership structure for this post due to a member of this team leaving the school. <p>(Q) Co-Chair (RM) asked if the presentation of the School Development Plan could be redesigned for the school website, as the list of strategic challenges could present the school as struggling rather than the SDP reflecting its aspirations. (A) The Headteacher agreed he would investigate this.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher to review the presentation of the SDP for school website.</p> <p>(Q) A governor noted that they were not sure what the score card was for. (A) The Headteacher advised that it was a way of tracking progress on an area of the SDP. It was a visual check to ensure that actions or objectives have been met and/or achieved.</p> <p>7.2 St Matthew's Behaviour Management Policy The Headteacher asked if there were any questions.</p> <p>(Q) The first question revolved around the 'thoughts and feeling chart and if it was completed by the child or the teacher. (A) Governors were advised that this would depend on the ability of the child, some children would get help scribing from a TA or a parent for instance.</p> <p>(Q) A governor asked if the teachers followed the set policy or were there ways of bypassing the set procedures. (A) All staff needed to follow the policy. If a member of staff was not following the Policy this could be flagged up as a low-level concern. The policy had been shared with staff and staff meetings held to raise questions and make suggestions. Plans for individual children may be made to meet individual needs.</p> <p>Action: The policy was approved by the governing body.</p>	Head
8.	<p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>8.1 Draft Safeguarding and Child Protection (to ratify) The draft Safeguarding and Child Protection was presented to governors by Liz Steel (Designated Safeguarding Lead). The draft had been shared with governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was ratified by the governing body.</p> <p>8.2 Draft St Matthews's Whistleblowing Policy (to ratify)</p>	Head/Staff and Governors

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	<p>The draft Whistleblowing Policy/Procedure was shared with governors in advance of the meeting. The Whistleblowing Policy was ratified by the governing body.</p> <p>8.3 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2023 (to raise awareness of) The KCSiE 2023 document was shared with governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>There was a discussion about governors understanding the safeguarding training, they were advised that staff training is every two years, and this could be shared with the governors via a PowerPoint.</p> <p>One of the questions concerned the filtering and monitoring of online activity in school. Liz Steel highlighted the new requirements relating to filtering and monitoring of online activity in school and on school devices out of school and how this was being accomplished in St Matthew's using Smoothwall.</p> <p>8.4 eSafety Policy (raise awareness of) As part of the agenda item, governors were also reminded of the content of the eSafety policy.</p>	
9.	<p>Governance Part Two Governors discussed the Link Governor posts that would be needed for the coming academic year. It was noted that some roles were statutory, whilst others were linked to current big moves in the School Development Plan.</p> <p>The governor allocation for each role was discussed and appointed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safeguarding and Child Protection (include SEND updates) - AV b. Pupil Premium and SEND – NP & LJ c. Looked after Children/LAC – NP & LJ d. Finance - AG e. Early Years – JP f. Maths – CJ g. English/Oracy/Phonic – SR h. Science – RM i. Leadership – AA j. Health and Safety (including online) RH & DL 	
10.	<p>Any Other Business Co-Chair (DL) advised that a committee needs to be set up for the Headteacher's Appraisal. The first meeting would need to take place before 1st December 2023 – there would be 3 governor on the committee during a three-year period.</p> <p>AV, RH and CJ volunteered for this committee with a vacancy to fill.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher to agree date for the HT Appraisal meeting with committee governors.</p>	Governors
11	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <p>The next meeting confirmed as Wednesday 13th December at 6pm.</p> <p>Other meeting dates: Resources Committee: 11th October 2023 TLOC: 16th November 2023 TLOC: 8th February 2024 Resources Committee: 15th February 2024</p>	

	Item	Action
	Full Governing Body Meeting: 21st March Resources Committee: 1st May 2024 Full Governing Body Meeting: 8th May 2024 TLOC: 20th June 2024 Full Governing Body Meeting: 11th July 2024 Co-Chair (DL) thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:47pm.	

Action Log

Agenda Item	Action	Owner	Timeframe
6.3	Headteacher to add TLR pay scales to the Pay Policy.	Head	10/10/2023
7.1	Headteacher to review the presentation of the SDP for school website	Head	ASAP
10.	Headteacher to agree date for the HT Appraisal meeting with committee governors.	Head	10/10/2023