

ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Love one another as I have loved you

MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2021 at 1700 hours

PARTICIPANTS: John McDonald, Headteacher and meeting host
Nicola Boyd
Colette Haig
Claire Higgins
Teresa Marnell

Non-participants: Claire Connor, Lucy Lowe, Clare Suffield, Marie Wolfe.

In attendance: Ann Evans, Deputy Headteacher
Fleur McAlavey, Assistant Headteacher
Eileen Coyle, [Clerk to Governors]

First rough draft for amendment: 05/02/21.

The Headteacher and host opened the meeting with a prayer.

1 PRELIMINARIES

WELCOME. APOLOGIES FOR NON-PARTICIPATION: The Headteacher welcomed and thanked the Governors for joining the virtual meeting of the Standards Committee.

Apologies were received, for valid reasons, from Claire Connor, Lucy Lowe, Claire Suffield, and Marie Wolfe.

RESOLVED: To change the start time for future meetings of the Standards Committee to 1800 hours in order to facilitate attendance.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS: The Governors confirmed individually that there were no changes to their Declarations of Interest completed and signed on 30 September 2020.

Having reviewed the agenda, the Governors confirmed that they had no personal, pecuniary, contractual or prejudicial interest in any item on the agenda for this evening's meeting.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The Committee agreed to adhere to the protocol and observe confidentiality in relation to all business discussed this evening.

2 MINUTES OF MEETING ON 3 NOVEMBER 2020/MATTERS ARISING PROPOSED by Colette Haig, SECONDED by Nicola Boyd and unanimously –

RESOLVED: To confirm that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee on 3 November 2020 are a true account of the meeting.

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

3 IMPACT OF COVID-19

CURRICULUM: Catch up support, [including progress made by pupils in vulnerable groups]: The Headteacher reported: 36 families with children aged 4 to 18, had responded to the survey on home learning, of whom about 27 families had children who are learning full time at home. The school encourages children to learn independently, but the degree of independence depends on their ages.

A survey undertaken in October 2020, identified the children who could only access on-learning via a mobile phone. Five children remain in that category – this situation will be addressed this week.

Via a screen shot, the Headteacher guided the Committee through the questions in the survey, eg *What works best for your circumstances? What are the best things the school has done to support you? What more do you think the school can do to support your children learning at home? Do you need a device for your child to use?* and highlighted the responses received from the parents.

The majority of children have access to a device, mainly a laptop or a tablet, although the oldest child in the family seems to be prioritised for its use. Part of the school's offer is for the younger children to access videos. The parents say that they can re-organise their day better, if they can see the work the evening before.

Many children are struggling. Parents are being encouraged to try and lower the expectations for their children. The SENCO's contact with families, who offers bespoke work and curriculum, works really well. The school's pastoral team also sends messages to families.

The staff governor explained the system of registration for children who are in school and those who are learning at home.

The Deputy Headteacher explained the process that is followed when a parent is not engaging. A phone call is made to check if everything is all right and to enquire what device is being used. The family is given a Chrome book, where appropriate, and a check is made to make sure the children are accessing the learning. Families have been asked time and time again, *'If you don't have a device, please contact us and let us know'*.

The Headteacher advised that catch up funding has been used to buy more Chrome books. Five laptops have been donated and each one has been checked to make sure it is clean and is working properly.

He continued that the majority of the responses received from the survey were positive and all the feedback received was supportive and useful, for example, '*Try this*' and '*This would work for us*'. The school would respond to the survey.

The main lesson learned from the survey is that the situation is very difficult for parents and for children; the school continue to respond those difficulties.

The Headteacher intended to go through the responses with the staff.

When a Governor asked how many are not engaging at all, the Headteacher replied that, according to the register, 95% are engaging at some level, and 5% are proving difficult to track down. If the pastoral team do not get a response to phone calls etc on the first day, they persist until they do.

Some children are constantly uploading materials, and those who are having difficulty are followed up. Parents who are working all day find it particularly difficult to juggle all their commitments.

The Deputy Headteacher has organised the rota so the staff have an afternoon when they can '*switch off*'. This is to recognise what they are doing, and as a thank you for all their hard work.

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week, which includes a Wellbeing Wednesday.

Wellbeing Surveys are to be carried out with the staff, the pupils and the parents.

A governor commented that she was unsure how well that would go down with the parents. The survey needed to be worded very carefully when asking people how they are - there was a danger of delving too far and upsetting them. The school is doing a lot for the parents and the message to them from the school should be, '*Don't put yourself under too much pressure.*' Conversely, they should be told, '*If you need or want help, we are here for you*'. The Headteacher took on board the advice offered.

One of the things that has restricted the pace at which progress can be made is the need to make sure that the staff are not '*pushed over the edge*'.

The Headteacher thanked the Committee for the very positive feedback about the quality of learning the school is sending out, which he would convey back to the staff.

4 THE STANDARD COMMITTEE'S THREE PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

The Committee's three priorities for 2020/21 are –

1. Children's Wellbeing

2. **The impact of Covid-19, ie catch-up/remote learning, especially for the younger children**
3. **Curriculum Leadership and developing the staff in their particular responsibilities**

The Headteacher drew the attention of the Committee to the report on the Catch Up Premium, which was posted on the school's website using a template issued by the DfE, under the three main areas: **Teaching, Targeted Academic Support, and Wider Strategies.**

The website offers information to parents on Providing Remote Education. The expectation of the Government is that schools would invest two/three hours a day on home learning. Examples of different scenarios were given on the website, eg a child who has to self-isolate at home can access a learning hub; and children from EYFS/Year 1 to Year 5/6 can access remote education.

The Year 2 teachers have taken the lead and the staff have made recordings. A good deal of feedback has been received, especially from year 2 parents. The parents like the section on Home Learning because it is really well-structured and the links are embedded in it. The advice from day one is, *'Even if you miss it, you can come back and do it at another time,'* and it works with the parents. 31 Chrome books are on loan to families, along with BT Wi-Fi wireless routers.

The catch-up grant had been allocated to schools based on £80 per pupil from Reception to year 6. With 385 children on roll, this school is entitled to a total of £30,800, to be paid in three tranches – Autumn, 2020, Spring and Summer 2021.

The school used some of the funding recently to purchase Accelerated Reader. The set-up cost for My Own Star Reading, Books on line, is £2,000. There are 6,000 books, and it works like a library. It was rolled out last week, and it will be possible to start quizzing soon, which means that the children will be able to access books at their own level. The children can read a book, take the quiz, and if they achieve a certain percentage, they can move up to the next book. The reading is progressive and is a little harder each time. It is a big advantage for children who do not have anyone to read to them. Additional support is available for children with particular needs.

Schools can use the catch-up premium for the Tuition programme. If the school spends £10,000, it would receive £30,000. The school has organised its own staff to provide the tuition which will begin when the children return to school, hopefully on 8 March. A child would have an entitlement of 15 sessions only.

A Governor enquired if special arrangements had been made for SEND and Disadvantaged children.

The Headteacher replied that the children who are disadvantaged are those who are suffering the most. The school has continued to access support from Orrets Meadow via Zoom, thus ensuring that normal activities are still going ahead. Two children with SEND and two children who receive one-to-one tuition have been

identified in terms of catch-up funding. Some TAs are doing bespoke work with children who are not accessing the curriculum.

A Governor asked: 'How can we use the catch-up?' The Headteacher stated, 'It's a good question'. He explained that children are entitled to three sessions a week, ie 60 children in the £10,000, 15-hours catch up in groups of three.

5 THE ADMISSIONS POLICY 2022/23

The Headteacher proposed that no changes are made to the Admissions Policy for 2022/23.

A Governor commented that consideration had been given in the past to reducing the Pupil Admission Number to 30.

In response, the Headteacher invited the Committee to look at the student list for each year group, which indicated that class numbers varied between 55 and 59. On that basis, there would be no justification to reduce the PAN at this stage. The situation re pupil numbers would be kept under close review.

RESOLVED: To confirm that no changes are required and to approve the Admissions Policy 2022/23 for St Alban's Catholic Primary School.

6 REPORTS

PUPILS

NUMBER ON ROLL: The number on roll at February 2021 stands at 385.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance, including children self-isolating, stood at 95.98, at December 2020 and increased slightly to 96.08 on 29 January, 2021, with 1,565 authorised absences for self-isolating children and 576 unauthorised absences.

BEHAVIOUR: No incidents of bullying have been reported. Two low-level friendship issues had been resolved within school. A child who breached the behaviour policy is attending Nurture provision.

SAFEGUARDING - REFERRALS AND OUTCOMES: Social Care had taken no action on a Safeguarding referral. Barnardo's has taken on the case. There have been two self-harming referrals - one escalated by Barnardo's.

PHONICS BENCH MARK/PHONICS TEST IN YEAR 1. The total for this school has reached 82.5%. Only 25% of pupils were on track in September, probably because of their long absence from school during the Summer. The rapid improvement is testament to the hard work of the staff with those children, who deserve to be thanked.

DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN: The focus has not been lost – it is the impact of Covid-19.

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES: The staff have looked at what they do, and decided to make no changes.

CURRICULUM TARGETS: The staff have looked at the curriculum, and some things have taken priority because of the situation the school is in.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION: Behaviour and attitudes will be taken to the Governing Board.

SEND REPORT: A company carried out a audit. The SEND report was already on the website, but a decision had been made to change it. The SEND report and policy and the provision map have been updated since November, and a few other policies have been worked through.

PROVISION MAP: In terms of what the school does, as mentioned previously, no intervention is currently taking place. Some bespoke work has been done with families, and work with CAMHS and with the Outreach Service.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER: Five Children Looked After attend the school – four with special guardianships and one adopted.

All the staff have had Safeguarding training. Training for four senior staff will take place in the next few weeks.

CPD: This is around the work the school has been doing on line, and work to do with middle leadership - Curriculum Priorities and Assessment, and '*What Catch up will look like*'.

7 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

Progress on achieving the objectives has been hampered by the restrictions placed on the school by Covid-19. The SDP will be on the agenda for the next INSET day.

The Feedback Policy has been completed.

8 SAFEGUARDING – ‘HEALTH’ CHECK

An officer from Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership had audited the school's Safeguarding provision. The Single Central Record had been reviewed and updated prior to the audit. A couple of DBS forms have been returned – one was a paper version rather than an electronic version

Actions identified for attention from the audit included –

- The Safeguarding statement is outstanding – ie the names and contact details of school's Safeguarding leads
- The Prevent Policy and Prevent training for staff needs to be updated.
- The Safer Recruitment Policy is in place, but there is a requirement to ensure that training is in place in 2020/21, and to establish a training log.

- The SCR records need to show what training takes place is all kept in one place.
- Some Safeguarding training is needed.
- The Prevent Policy is out of date.
- The need to change the terminology from DSL to DSC.

Templates are available which will be shared at the next Governors' meeting.

9 SECTION 48 INSPECTION.

Preparation work will continue for the inspection and on RE assessments.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING. TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2021 at the revised time, 1800 hours.

11 OTHER BUSINESS: A person who had tested positive for the Coronavirus has been re-tested and found to be negative.

In his final comments, the Headteacher stated: Everyone is working really hard, particularly the parents, some parents want more on line; others want pre-recorded, and some want a mixture of both, but on the whole the parents have been very understanding and supportive.

The Headteacher thanked the Governors for their attendance and input, and closed the virtual meeting at 1820 hours.