

# ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Love one another as I have loved you*

The meeting opened with the staffroom prayer.

## **MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD** **TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2020**

**PARTICIPANTS:** Pat Duprey [Chair of Governors ]  
John McDonald [Headteacher and Host of meeting]  
Nicola Boyd  
Claire Connor  
Kevin Doogan  
Colette Haig  
Pat Higgins  
Lucy Lowe  
Teresa Marnell  
Peter Matthews  
Bernie Mooney  
Louise Mulhern  
Bridget Pullen  
Marie Wolfe

**Non Participants:** There was full participation.

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

**PAT DUPREY in the CHAIR**

### **1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair welcomed and thanked everyone for their participation in the virtual meeting of the Governing Board.

There was full participation therefore there were no non-participants.

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Governors confirmed that there were no changes to their Declarations of Interest completed and signed previously

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

## **3 MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

A schedule of membership of the Governing Board, showing category and date of expiry of term of office, had been sent electronically in advance to the Governors for information.

**RESOLVED:** To note that -

- i. John McDonald, is a automatically an ex-officio member of the Governing Board by reason of his position as Headteacher of the school;
- ii. the terms of office of three Foundation Governors, Pat Duprey, Louise Mulhern and Lucy Lowe, expire on 31 August 2020;
- iii. Pat Duprey and Louise Mulhern do not wish to continue for a further term, in consultation with the Diocese, they would step down on a date that was convenient to the Governing Board;
- iv. Colette Haig's term ends on 31 August 2020, thank for her term as staff Governor and her contribution to the work of the Governing Board;
- v. the Headteacher intends to seek nominations for staff Governor from amongst the whole school staff.

## **4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD ON 10 MARCH 2020, AND MATTERS ARISING.**

**RESOLVED:** To confirm that the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Board on 10 March 2020, are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

## **5 MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD ON 28 MAY 2020, AND MATTERS ARISING**

**RESOLVED:** To confirm that the minutes of the virtual meeting of the Governing Board on 28 May 2020, are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

## **6 MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF GOVERNORS' COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED:** To note –

- i. the minutes of the virtual meeting of the Curriculum [Standards] Committee on 11 June 2020;
- ii. the minutes of the virtual meeting of the joint Personnel & Pay and the Finance Committees on 16 June 2020.

## **7 HEADTEACHER'S COVID-19 REPORT TO GOVERNORS**

The Headteacher's Covid-19 Report to Governors had been circulated electronically to the Governors in advance of the meeting.

The report, which captured all the statutory information required in a precise, logical, format, covered the period 20 April 2020, when the Headteacher had taken up the post, to 23 June 2020, contained information on the following key points -

- Overall daily attendance, broken down between vulnerable and key workers' children; children with an education, health care plan [EHCP], children with a social worker, and other children. Total number of children: 99
- Vulnerable children when the school is open, children with a social worker, with an EHCP and are otherwise vulnerable;
- The provision of free school meals to vulnerable families.
- The provision and delivery of hampers by the staff to vulnerable families
- Policies, procedures and guidance affected by Covid-19.
- Investment in an on-line reporting system, CPOMS, and staff training arranged for 26 June.
- Staffing update and welfare points.

Other welfare points brought to the attention included reference to two MARAC meetings; and fortnightly meetings with a link social worker to share information and support families who are finding lockdown especially difficult when school has been a protective factor.

Key actions for decision included –

- Arranging a meeting to conclude the consultation and to seek final approval of the new policy on Relationships, Sex and Health Education [RSE] by July 2020;
- Creating a steering group to look at restructuring Governors' committees, with terms of reference, for implementation from September 2020;
- Reviewing the financial implications of the lower number of pupils joining the school in September, and consider the need to restructure the school staffing in the Autumn;
- Setting a timeline and process for the recruitment of a Deputy Headteacher.

Preparations for phased return to school:

- Staffing levels – the expected numbers of staff from 1 June

Other activities the governors should be aware of:

- Consideration of the DfE's recommendation to try and get all the children it can back to school by the end of the academic year;
- The need to offer year 1 pupils a limited offer, or a part-time/rota timetable, due to having insufficient staff to accommodate all the groups.
- Discussions with the SLT to prioritise year 1 children, ie limit the offer for year 6 children.
- The fitting of sonic door closers on stairwells to a higher specification than the DfE's requirements and advice.

The Headteacher invited comments and questions.

A governor commented: **It sounds reasonable to me and I agree with it.** He asked, **'Is there any possibility that the secondary schools take year 6 early?'**

The Headteacher replied that year 6 children going to their secondary schools for the last two weeks of term would be an ideal solution, but the secondary schools are in a similar situation to the primaries in that they, too, have capacity issues. Whilst he was aware that the secondary headteachers were not able to support the approach, they were trying to put some arrangements in place, the detail of which had not yet been shared.

The Chair commented that as long as the parents are aware of the rationale, they would be quite understanding about the situation.

The Headteacher stated that he would share the letter he proposed to send to the parents with Governors, and would appreciate any feedback.

In response to a comment that parents are asking for information on events planned for the end of the year, the Deputy Headteacher advised that ideas considered include organising an on-line leavers' assembly and having a virtual 'get together' with a quiz. All Year 6 will be given a hoodie – the home/school association has

agreed to fund those that cannot afford to pay – and they will each be given an autograph books for the staff to sign.

Suggestions made at the meeting included a reunion, say in October; or having a day in the Autumn term when this year's 6 pupils can met at the Parish centre, for example, have a celebration and see friends they may no longer be seeing. Catholic secondary schools may be interested in taking year 5's for the day in exchange.

During discussion on the increased take-up of free school meals, the Deputy Headteacher acknowledged the generosity of the staff who had provided and delivered hampers to vulnerable families.

Ollie had been particularly pro-active and during a debate on the Government's decision to continue the voucher scheme during the summer break, the Wallasey MP, Angela Eagle, had written down the feedback received from Ollie, after schools had been asked to send a response to the Local Authority.

The Headteacher expanded further on his report as follows:

- There are some concerns around shielding, especially as it impacts on year 6 and year 1, but some staff members who have been shielding will return to school shortly.
- Some updates on the risk assessments have been received.
- The DfE had advised schools not to use wedges on fire doors. Censors have been purchased and fitted, at a cost of about £50 each, which ensure that the fire doors close automatically if the fire alarm sounds.
- A work stream has been set up with the staff.
- Headteacher colleagues are working together on developing a recovery curriculum.
- The Headteacher is part of a working group looking at different scenarios, including health and well being.

Finally, referring to the action point about restructuring Governors' committees, the Headteacher explained that, working with the Clerk, a Committee structure had been devised that was fit for purpose, based on best practice, with good terms of reference, and a proposed implementation date of September 2020.

The Headteacher would appreciate Governors' opinions and contribution to the discussion. An on-line meeting would be organised to enable this, to which all the Governors would be invited.

**AGREED: To hold an on-line meeting to consider a new Governors' Committee structure on Monday, 6 July at 6 pm.**

No further comments or feedback on the Headteacher's report were received from the Governing Board.

**RESOLVED: To thank the Headteacher for the Covid-19 report which was succinct, relevant and informative.**

## 8 DELEGATED BUDGET: BUDGET SETTING

At its meeting on 11 June 2020, the joint Personnel & Pay and the Finance Committees had set a budget for 2020/21, with a predicted a **credit** balance of £137,763 by the end of the financial year in March 2021.

Whilst the lower intake of pupils in September would have a negative impact on the budget allocation going forward, a cautious approach had been taken to constructing the budget due to uncertainty about the continuation of certain income streams. It was expected that more reliable information would be available at the period 6 review in the Autumn. Meanwhile, based on the information available to date, substantial **deficits** had been predicted for each of the three financial years to 2023/24.

**RESOLVED:**           **To approve the budget for 2020/21, for signature by the Chair of Governors and submission to the Local Authority by 30 June 2020.**

## 9 CHAIR'S ACTION

On taking up his post, straight away the Headteacher had highlighted a breach of security which, potentially, could create a serious safeguarding issue. He had realised out that once a person gained entry, there was no barrier therefore a person had immediate access to the whole school building, including the classrooms and other areas used by the pupils.

The Headteacher had taken prompt action and arranged for a hatch to be installed. The Chair of Governors had approved the action.

**RESOLVED:**           **To commend the Headteacher on taking prompt action to prevent a potential breach of security and safeguarding issue.**

## 10 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR

The Director of Children's Services, Paul Boyce, had written to Chairs of Governors to acknowledge the hard work of school staff and the Governors during this difficult time. He had written that he recognised the support received from everyone in the school and expressed his thanks.

## 11 HEADTEACHER'S WORKLOAD AND WELLBEING

The Headteacher stated that he had no concerns about his workload and wellbeing, adding that he was fortunate to have a high level of support from a great team,

including the ancillary staff, and that he appreciated having a Governing Board that is pro-active and interested in what the school is doing.

In closing, the Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the virtual meeting.

**SIGNED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING  
OF THE GOVERNING BOARD ON 23 JUNE 2020.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CHAIR**