



**OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
OF ST SCHOLASTICA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2024 at 6.15pm**

Members:

| Name | Initials | Role / category of governor / link | Term of Office | Attendance / Apologies |
|-----------------------|-----------|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Royer Vidal | The Chair | Foundation / Chair of Governors / Assessment and Data Link | 01/09/2023 – 31/08/2027 | Present |
| Sandra Brierley | SB | Headteacher | Ex officio | Present |
| Nick Blackham | NB | Staff | 28/03/2020 - 27/03/2024 | Apologies |
| Christina Boey | CB | Foundation / SEND Link | 01/06/2021 – 31/08/2024 | Apologies |
| Audrey Ngouadje | AN | Foundation / Health & Safety Link | 01/02/2022 – 31/08/2025 | Present |
| Davina Attara | DA | Local Authority / Attendance Link | 09/03/2022 – 08/03/2026 | Present |
| Elaine Radburn | ER | Foundation / Safeguarding Link | 01/09/2023 – 31/08/2027 | Present |
| Marsha Mollineau | MM | Parent | | Absent |
| Roseline Fadini | RF | Foundation | | Apologies |
| Fr Stewart Hasker | SH | Foundation | | Apologies |
| Natasha Vock-Betton | NVB | Associate Governor / Potential Foundation Governor / Potential Curriculum Link | | Present |
| Nicola Charles | NC | Parent / Parental Engagement Link | | Apologies |
| Chandrika Sashidharan | CS | Associate Governor and School Business Manager (SBM) | | Apologies |

Also in Attendance:

Jane Ware - Clerk

ACTION LOG

| Item | Action | Responsible | Status and/ or Date by |
|-----------------|--|----------------|------------------------|
| 3.3 | SBM to arrange a link governor visit with ER to review the single central record. | SBM | Pending |
| 5.3 | All Governors to activate their accounts on GovernorHub; all details to be updated. <i>Update: RV to remind governors of this by email.</i> | All | Completed |
| 5.3 | All Governors to complete safeguarding training. <i>Update: SB shared information on 29 November 2024 regarding safeguarding training and this needs to be completed. If it has been completed elsewhere it needs to be reflected by governors updating their profiles on Governorhub.</i> | All | Pending |
| 5.3 | Code of conduct and skills audit to be updated in September. <i>Update: Clerk to share skills audit with governors to complete and return for collation on the dashboard.</i> <i>Update: RV to review the skills audit dashboard and report back.</i> | All | Partly completed |
| 8 | Head to discuss church nursery with Father Stewart. <i>Update: SB to meet with the nursery.</i> | SB | Pending |
| 14 | Progress scores to be reviewed at the next FGB meeting. | SB / Clerk | Completed |
| 18/10/23, 3.1.2 | Governors were directed to update Governorhub under their profile with any outstanding declarations of interest. | Governors | Completed |
| 18/10/23, 3.2 | SB to share safeguarding and safer recruitment training links for governors to complete by the end of autumn term. | SB | Completed |
| 18/10/23, 3.3.1 | SB to chase Diocese regarding status of new governor terms starting 1 September 2023. | SB | Completed |
| 18/10/23, 3.5.2 | SB and CS to send the governors' code of conduct of the school's and of the Diocese to be read and signed by governors and uploaded to governorhub. | SB and CS | Pending |
| 18/10/23, 3.6.1 | SB to introduce link governors to a contact at the school to arrange a link visit and share the link visit report template. | SB | Completed |
| 18/10/23, 8.2 | RV to circulate Paul Senior's letter to governors. | RV | Completed |
| 18/10/23, 13.3 | Extraordinary FGB to be scheduled to address academisation, once the timeline is confirmed. | SB, RV & Clerk | Completed |
| 24/04/24, 8.9 | DA will attempt to make contact with potential sponsors for the school. | DA | Pending |
| 24/04/24, 8.10 | CS to be asked why does expenditure for staff fluctuate - specifically E01, E03 and E05? | SB & CS | Pending |
| 24/04/24, 15.3 | The 26-27 admissions information will be scheduled for the September 2024 Full Governing Body meeting. | SB & Clerk | Pending |

The meeting started at 18:15

Part 1: Non-confidential

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| 1. | Welcome, Opening Prayer and Apologies |
| 1.1 | All governors were welcomed to the meeting. |
| 1.2 | The meeting was opened with a prayer. |
| 2. | Receive and consider apologies from Governors not in attendance |
| 2.1 | Apologies were received and accepted and those not received were marked as absent. |
| 3. | Governing Body organisation |
| 3.1 | <u>Declaration of interests</u> |
| 3.1.1 | No declarations were raised. |
| 3.2 | <u>Governing Body composition – Committee organisation, terms of office, vacancies</u> |
| 3.2.1 | There are no vacancies on the Committees. |
| 3.2.2 | Governors reviewed the skills audit. |
| 3.2.3 | <i>RV to speak to CB regarding re-appointment.</i> |
| 3.3 | <u>Link Governor visits</u> |
| 3.3.1 | There have not been any link governor visits since the last Full Governing Body meeting. |
| 3.4 | <u>Link governor for diversity, equity and inclusion</u> |
| 3.4.1 | The link governor diversity, equity and inclusion is Althea |
| 3.5 | <u>Sign up for Hackney's Charter for Race and sSpecial Educational Needs (SEND)</u> |
| 3.5.1 | SB confirmed that the school has signed up for Hackney's Charter for Race and SEND. |
| 3.6 | Governors noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governors Training Programme for 2023/24• Governors are also invited to subscribe to bi monthly Governors Forum by contacting maggie.kalnins@hackney.gov.uk, (see slide deck and video from 22/03/24, previous updates and videos) |
| 4. | Declarations of interest in items on the agenda |
| 4.1 | No declarations of interest were made. |
| 5. | Minutes of the Last Meeting |
| 5.1 | <u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 18 October 2023</u> |
| 5.1.1 | Governors considered the open and confidential minutes within the agenda pack and APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023 as a correct record. |
| 5.2 | <u>Matters Arising</u> |
| 5.2.1 | No matters arising were raised. |
| 5.3 | <u>Action log</u> |
| 5.3.1 | See the action log for updates. |
| 6. | Review agenda and agree any confidential items |
| 6.1 | There were no confidential items raised for later discussion. |
| 7. | Urgent action taken since the last meeting |
| 7.1 | The Chair reported that there was no urgent action undertaken. |
| 8. | School Business Manager's report - SB <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SBM report• School Year End 2023/2024• Approve Controls Assurance Statement• Surplus Spend Plan 2024/2027• Approve 5 Year Budget 2024/2029 |
| 8.1 | Headlines noted were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There was a £43,290.12 in year surplus at year end leaving a total surplus of £241,691.60 and the in year surplus was due to high needs funding being supplied, including two children who were given the higher rate which was then backdated. |

- The annual income statement complies with the DfE, the system of internal controls has been coordinated, assets are safeguarded, transactions are conducted properly and overall effectiveness of the system is scrutinised regularly by the FRC and FGB.
- The school has not been audited since 2019 so this is probably due.
- The most recent evaluation of the internal control centre in February 2024 was positive.
- The business analyst has reviewed the figures produced by the School Business Manager and the school is confident that the figures are accurate.
- There will be challenges for the upcoming financial year.
- The budget for 24-25 is set up on the understanding from October census that there will be 178 pupils.
- There is variation on how monies are paid in relation to changes to the grant and lump sum will increase in coming years by approximately £5k.
- Teacher's pay and pension contribution is a significant cost.
- The Mayor will continue to fund free school meals (FSM) next year and this will be slightly more than this year.
- The pandemic support recovery premium will stop this year and the forecast is down because of some of these changes, linked to pupil roll which is projected to continue to fall.
- A budget has been submitted for the new financial year but it will be revised in September, as there are currently supply teaching assistants who it was thought would not continue but due to the allocation of SEND children for September this might not be possible.
- The budget shows an in year surplus for 24-25 and with the carry forward the school will be able to manage with five less pupils every year until 2027.
- Advice from Hackney is to fill vacancies in the school and nursery and look for funding for grants for forest school and external trips, and to seek funding for SEND pupils.
- An alternative resource provision (ARP) was also suggested but at present Hackney are not taking new ARPs, however we may not be able to wait for the local authority to do this but there is surplus money that could be used to fund this.
- SB has had meetings about nursery and met with staff, and will be consulting with parents, even though nursery is not full this will need to be addressed.
- The five year projection declines due to pupils falling, SEN funding is a guess, one child will leave in year 5 and one will leave in year 6, but the likelihood is that more SEN funding will come in as two education health care plans (EHCPs) have been granted and two more will likely be funded due to the level of their needs.
- The pupil premium grant could go up or down, depending on the number of children, so this is an estimate.
- Rent in the school premises is represented by a target.
- Additional grants for schools relate to this year, but it is assumed to be at least the same in following years.
- £2,058,040 is anticipated income for 24-25 and already the majority of it is allocated to staff.
- We are not at the point of restructuring and it would be a costly process at any rate.
- It is the SEND children who are most costly in terms of staff.
- Energy has risen quite a lot.
- There is no control over business rates.
- The learning resources budget is anticipated to be a challenge, whilst there are three year contracts so projections are known for this.
- This year there will be an in year surplus of approximately £8k but after that the school will start going into deficit.
- The school offers breakfast through the National Breakfast Programme.
- The surplus spend plan for spending of the full surplus over the next three years will be in 24-25 on interactive whiteboards, remodelling the outdoor area for early years, and refurbishing the prayer garden, forest school, art specialist temporary teaching assistant (TA), two year old provision and diversity curriculum, and conversion of existing building for ARP. In 25-26 the surplus will be spent on forest school, diversity curriculum and in 26-27 diversity curriculum workshops.

8.2

Governor Question: Are benefits linked to FSM?

Answer: Details can be taken from the parents and they can be encouraged to apply if eligible, and the school has been quite good at helping parents with this. Being eligible also includes holiday activity funds such as holiday clubs and vouchers.

8.3

Governor Question: Is SEN funding stable?

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| | <p>Answer: Yes, because some are leaving and some are coming in, although the level of funding is not known. It should take 20 weeks for funding, whilst the local authority has 60% of achieving the target and they may not agree to funding, or to the correct level of funding. because it could go up and down we have been very cautious.</p> |
| 8.4 | <p>Governor Question: Has income from lettings changed?</p> <p>Answer: No, but we have advised that we need the school house because we need the money. The indication is that if it is needed, we should be able to keep it.</p> |
| 8.5 | <p>Governor Question: I think we need clarification about the school house, because it is factored into the projection. If we don't ask, we should not factor it in, and then it would be a bonus.</p> <p>Answer: I will review this with CS. The rent is likely to go up. It has been almost a year since we spoke about this so it appears they are happy to let us have this.</p> |
| 8.6 | <p>Governor Question: How does the school find supply staff?</p> <p>Answer: We used SOS to outsource staff for us.</p> |
| 8.7 | <p>Governor Question: Do you have a parent association to raise money?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, but they raise very small amounts such as raffles and selling refreshments in the playground.</p> |
| 8.8 | <p>Governor Question: Can we be challenged on the surplus spend plan?</p> <p>Answer: No, and plans can change year on year but it is about showing that the school has an idea on how the surplus funds will be spent.</p> |
| 8.9 | <p>Action: <i>DA will attempt to make contact with potential sponsors for the school.</i></p> |
| 8.10 | <p>Action: <i>CS to be asked why does expenditure for staff fluctuate - specifically E01, E03 and E05?</i></p> |
| 8.11 | <p>Governors AGREED the five year spend plan.</p> |
| 9. | <p>Priorities - SB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing • Skills Audit • Setting the strategy/School Development Plan • Scrutinising assessment arrangements |
| 9.1 | <p>Governors noted the reports provided.</p> |
| 10. | <p>Attendance - SB</p> |
| 10.1 | <p>Highlights noted were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22-23 attendance was poor which was impacted by White Irish Travellers (WITR) whose average was 74.6% compared with non WITR at 96.3%. • At this point of the year in 23-24, whole school attendance is 94.6% which is an improvement and statutory is 94.3% for aged five and above children. • WITR has improved at 82.6% and non WITR is 96.9%, and the school is above national figures and shows overall improvement. • Attendance is celebrated every week in assembly and 100% attendance children are celebrated every term, and the attendance officer is doing everything, and the improvement is really positive especially in light of childhood diseases being rife. • Unauthorised absence is due to the school not authorising absence unless there is a solid reason for absence. • Persistent absence remains high which links to the demographic, whilst it has fallen slightly but the school will continue to focus on this. |
| 10.2 | <p>Governor Question: How much is 3%</p> <p>Answer: This may be 5-6 children. There are three children in particular with persistent absence and this is the projection at the present time, and this provides clarity in terms of attendance. Unauthorised absence is above national figures which is due to how tight controls are on authorising absence, and authorised absence is below national figures.</p> |

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| 11. | Committee Chairs Update |
| 11.1 | <u>Teaching and Learning</u> Governors were referred to the minutes of 20 March 2024 on Governorhub and highlighted: |
| 11.2 | <u>Resources Committee</u> Governors acknowledged the minutes of 20 March 2024. |
| 12. | 2 Year Old Provision Business Case Highlights were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SB is working on expanding to include two year olds in the nursery provision, as the government has made funding available for vulnerable children to attend nursery for fifteen hours. • SB has followed this up with the local authority and an assessment has been made of the school which has been declared as ample space for two year olds and three years old together. • The number of three year olds would be reduced by about five to include two year olds, leaving 26 in total. • Next steps are to see other schools with two year old provisions and to consult parents, and if there is a need then it will be seriously considered. • This would require one additional member of staff for fifteen hours and funding would cover this, although costs would be reviewed prior to formal suggestion of this provision. • The intake has not been full for some time, with the nursery not being at capacity in recent years. • The likelihood would be that the nursery children would go on into reception which would positively impact pupil roll and reception for September will be around 20-22 pupils, so there is a very real pupil roll issue. • There will be a further update in July. |
| 13. | Policies |
| 12.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Whistleblowing</u> There have been no changes. Governors APPROVED the Whistleblowing policy. |
| 15. | Any other business |
| 15.1 | <u>Self Evaluation Form (SEF)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEF will be completed shortly and shared with governors. |
| 15.2 | <u>Admissions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 26-27 admissions information will be agreed and completed in February 2025. |
| 15.3 | Action: The 26-27 admissions information will be scheduled for the September 2024 Full Governing Body meeting. |
| 15.4 | <u>ARP</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ARP is for children with Autism to be taught for some periods of time separately from their class. • A number of Autistic children have been housed with the early years setting however it is hoped that one of those children will be going to a special school. • There is a plan with the local authority to build more places and in the meantime, it is really hard to get them into specialist provision. • One child's case is being taken to a Tribunal with the local authority. • It is anticipated that the pod will be a good area with positioning of direct access on to the playground and easily accessible toilets, and a proper dedicated space, for three to four children, managed by the Assistant Head and SENCO and led by two highly skilled teachers. • The local authority will be consulted about funding but it is likely that this project will be started sooner than funding arrives. • The school is consulting with a company about this for advice. |
| 15.5 | Governor Question: What are the parents' take on it? Would they like their child to remain at the school? Answer: Yes, most of them, although some children will need a specialist provision. |

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| 16. | Decide whether any of the above should be confidential and if there are any new confidential items |
| 16.1 | See Part 2. |
| 17. | Future meetings 2023-24 |
| 17.1 | Resources Committee - 12 June, 5.15pm Full Governing Body - 3 July, 6.15pm |

Prayers.

The meeting closed at 20:15.

Signed by **Royer Vidal**, Chair of Full Governing Body

Date