



ST KATHERINE'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY

PUBLIC MINUTES FOR THE TERM 5 2023/2024 MEETING OF THE LGB HELD ON MONDAY 13th MAY 2024

Governors present at the LGB meeting held on 1st July 2024 approved these minutes as a true and accurate record, and signed on Governor Hub electronically

PRESENT

Carina Cuddington (CC), Trustee (Chair)	Holly Ashston (HA) - Parent Governor
Laura Payne (LP) - Co-opted Governor	Adrien Booth (AB) – Parent Governor
Caroline Loveland (CL) – Staff Governor	Ray Lang (RL) - Headteacher
Martin Carr (MC) – Associate Governor	Sarah Aikenhead (SA) - Associate Member
Dominic Tweddle (DT) – Maths Lead/AHT (part of meeting)	

IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Lacey (AL) Governance Professional	
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Highlighted text demonstrates challenge and questions to the Headteacher

PART A – PUBLIC MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE *(led by Chair)*

- 1.1 Welcome:** CC (Carina Cuddington) welcomed all Governors to the meeting of the LGB, and also Dominic Tweddle (DT) AHT at St Katherine's.
- 1.2 Apologies:** All governors were in attendance.
- 1.3 Quorum:** The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST *(led by Chair)*

- 2.1** CC gave all parties the opportunity to declare any additional declarations of interest against the agenda to which none were declared.

3. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES *(Led by Chair)*

- 3.1 Approval of Minutes:** Governors approved the public minutes, and confidential annexe subject to one amendment – Adrien Booth was recorded twice as being present at the meeting. Clerk to amend as agreed and arrange for the public minutes to be published.

Clerk Action: Publish as approved.

- 3.2 Actions:** Governors received updates on the outstanding matters, which are recorded in the Action table. Matters discussed in more detail were:

- Swimming Pool refurbishment has been scaled back due to lack of funding. The proposal is to focus on the H&S issues such as the pool side flooring. New quotes are being sought for the smaller project.
- Fob Access control project has been cancelled due to lack of funding although RL was working with the new Trust Estates Manager to investigate the options for installing such in one or two priority areas although this was proving challenging. MC advised that if the staff ID badges used for signing in / out and using the printers were 'myfare' then these are compatible with PAXTON access control and would provide a localised solution e.g. SLT offices but can be scaled up to other areas as funds permitted.

ACTION: RL / MC to discuss options for an affordable solution.

4. Any other urgent business not on the agenda

4.1 No items were raised.

5. STRATEGIC SCHOOL MATTERS

5.1 Digital Monitoring - SMOOTHWALL

DT provided Governors with an overview of SMOOTHWALL explaining that whereas LGfL provide the school's broadband service which includes filtering, Smoothwall provides digital monitoring. Key points to note:

- The digital monitoring looks for key words and phrases that are used in searches, emails etc and where an individual's online behaviour is deemed a safeguarding risk, an alert, including a screenshot, is sent to the responsible person in school, who decides whether the matter requires further investigation.
- There are 5 levels of alert: levels 1-3 are considered low risk which result in an email being sent, and levels 4 and 5 lead to an immediate phone call to the school office to raise an alert. The office staff know to call a DSL in the event the school receives a level 4 or 5 phone call alert.
- Smoothwall uses AI to access the risk which is then triaged by a person before concluding the level of risk and action to be taken.
- Smoothwall is installed on all school laptops, computers and ipads. Where staff and pupils have their own logins for laptops and computers, and staff have their own i-pads, it is possible to link users to a specific reported risk.
- The challenge was where i-pads are shared and there are generic logins, which has been addressed through deleting browsers such as safari and google, replacing such with the smoothwall browser. In addition, 'identifiers' have been installed on i-pads so it is possible to see which class was using the i-pad and when.
- Staff have been informed not to share i-pads as their devices are registered to them and which have access to all browsers. In the past, staff might pass their i-pads to another person to take pictures or record a teaching and learning event.

Governors were asked if they had any questions about digital safeguarding and Smoothwall:

- LP asked if staff / pupils had their own logins? DT said that they had for PCs but shared i-pads were more challenging hence the action to minimise the browsers available to users. LP followed up asking if there was a risk of users not logging off devices properly? DT said there was but teachers were aware and reminded pupils of such and that Years 5 / 6 were also reminded of the need to take responsibility for their own accounts and information.
- MC asked if devices were set up for screens to auto-lock if not used? RL said that they were.
- HA asked if the filtering and monitoring in place restricted access or picked up on risks associated with the subject matter being taught such as some historic events? DT said that it could but hopefully these would be classified as low level risks and only when there was a pattern of events would the matter be highlighted. It is also possible to differentiate between a staff and pupil device which would be considered when subject to the triage assessment.
- DT added that the i-pads are now kept in a locked trolley in the staffroom to prevent unauthorised use. LP asked how many i-pads were in the school? DT said 60 in trolleys and 2/3 in each classroom for shared use.
- MC asked why was Smoothwall chosen for the monitoring software as LGfL also offer a similar package (SECURUS) which from experience would have been cheaper. DT said he was not involved in the selection process so could not advise. RL added that HTs were consulted and after exploring three different options, the consensus was to install Smoothwall due to its superior monitoring capacity.
- CC asked if Smoothwall provided the necessary solution? MC said it would but LGfL could have been provided as part of a bundle given they provide broadband and other services to the trust. RL will discuss with MC (CEO) to explore ask if LGfL provide a value for money alternative for the future.

ACTION: RL to make enquiries with the Trust office as to whether LGfL offer an alternative to Smoothwall.

5.2 Headteacher's Report

RL provided governors with a summary of the key matters contained in his HT report. Key updates and discussion items are noted below.

5.2.1 Self Evaluation and Quality of Education

- RL said that whilst the Ofsted outcome was brilliant and quality of education was evaluated as 'good', the school's data remained below national averages at the end of KS2. He advised that the next Ofsted visit will not focus so heavily on 'deep dives', so it is more than likely that the inspectors will be more data focussed during their visit.

LP asked if the pupil outcomes were due to gaps in previous year's learning? RL said he would cover data in more detail later in the report.

5.2.2 Pupils Numbers including admissions

- RL informed governors that since the Ofsted outcome there have been some movement in pupils with some leaving and joining. Currently there were 50 confirmed Year R admissions for September 2024, which is 10 fewer than PAN (60). It is hoped that the Ofsted outcome will attract additional pupils to the school but in the meantime, RL advised that there has been active marketing of the school via local newspapers and radio, promotional posters and visits to local nurseries. RL said that there had been a recent marketing meeting but the proposal to provide case studies on parent / pupil experiences was something he felt that could be done internally without paying an external company to carry out such.

CC suggested the school widening the area which they marketing e.g. local Tesco's? an MC suggested they look to market new house building in the area.

HA asked if other local schools were full? RL said that Snodland CEP is, but that governors should be encouraged as St Kath's are full in two-year groups and have a waiting list in one.

5.2.3 Suspensions and Behaviour

- *SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES.* MC said that WhatsApp is open to abuse and although not suitable for children, if they are not allowed to use then there is a risk they become isolated as do not belong to groups. RL agreed adding that he uses 'familylink' to control his children's access to WhatsApp, which he had shared with a family recently in light of a WhatsApp incident. CC asked for further information on 'familylink' and suggested that this was shared with all parents.

ACTION: RL to share 'familylink' with parents.

- RL highlighted the work carried out by CL in reviewing the reflection forms included with his report. HA commented that she liked the design of the forms which being pictorial appeared to be more accessible, and made it easier for pupils to reflect on their behaviour.

5.2.4 School Trips and Visits

- RL referred governors to the schedule of trips and visits in his HT's report asking if they had any questions on the proposals?
- AB asked how many trips did the school aim to organise each year? RL said that the expectation is for each year group to go on one external visit or trip, adding that cost is often a limiting factor and for the local train line was not one the main route to many key areas of interests e.g. The National Gallery. RL added that the Year 5 residential excluded coach transport due to the cost but some parents have asked about this so consideration is being given to providing such.
- RL added that trips and visits are an important part of the 'enrichment' offering and for pupils to gain experiences such as visiting a mosque or gallery but the cost of such was proving to be a challenge hence why leaders were exploring visitors and groups that could come into school, which was a more viable alternative.

5.2.5 Leadership and Management

- HA asked for further information on staff wellbeing initiative DTC. RL provided a quick demonstration of DTC explaining that it provided teaching staff with additional time out of the classroom for lesson planning and personal development. He also provided a link on his HT report to the most recent survey, which asked staff for staff input on a few matters arising from the last wellbeing meeting.

5.2.6 Safeguarding

- Ofsted Complaint: RL referred governors to the Ofsted complaint in his HT report saying that the inspectors reviewed safeguarding as part of their visit and saw nothing to raise concern or report. LP said that

complaints raised through Ofsted were becoming more common, and asked whether the parent had followed the school / trust complaints policy? RL confirmed they had not as if they had, then it would have come to the LGB.

- Reportable Safeguarding Incident: RL informed governors of a recent safeguarding incident that occurred during a visit to the school nursery, and following advice will attempt to log the matter with the DfE. CC / LP both raised a concern about the height of the fence the child scaled asking what action is being taken? RL said the height of the fence is being increased. LP made the comment that the visiting parents had a responsibility to look after their child, as the incident occurred during a school visit, prior to the child being on the school role.

5.2.7 Data

- RL informed governors that the latest summative test data was below age related expectations for almost all year groups and highlighted significant gaps in pupil's knowledge and understanding. However, due to children's historical gaps in learning, year groups were having to move at a slower pace through the curriculum (particularly maths) and were therefore not covering all of the topics they were being assessed on. Recent discussions between the schools in the trust had currently focused on the assessments were fit for purpose. Yr 6 outcomes are low and below national, and RL / CL / DT were providing additional tutoring to help fill the knowledge gaps before the end of the academic year. CC asked what was being done to fill the gaps in other year groups? RL said the next priority is to focus on Year 5 as they have the least amount of time to 'fill the gaps' before moving onto secondary school, adding that Year 4 will be subject to progress reviews to help understand what are the key gaps in learning and in order to customise their curriculum coverage. RL said it will be long journey to improve data outcomes and will require improvements in teaching and learning overtime.
- RL said that improvements were needing in reading to increase vocabulary and improve fluency, adding that a lack of fluency contributed significantly to pupils not finishing the paper. CC asked if parents were being engaged? RL said that reading is promoted but the priority is to build on vocabulary. LP agreed saying it was necessary to address word gap knowledge. HA asked if literacy and vocabulary was better lower down the school? CL said it was as less disrupted education and Sounds Write (the school's phonics programme) has now been taught for two years. RL added that the challenge for the school was the reluctance for some parents for various reasons to engage and encourage their children to read at home and regularly engage in activities such as like bedtime reading.

5.2.8 Attendance

- RL reported that attendance for the Spring term had improved despite the newly appointed FLO not yet starting in post as awaiting DBS clearance. SA was overseeing attendance currently supported by the Speech and Language speciality who is flagging issues that require action.

5.3 School Specific Policies:

Governors noted that the Swimming Pool policy had been deferred pending a more detailed review. The Trust's estate manager will be working with Mrs Sewell (Swimming instructor) to develop this.

- **Uniform Policy:** RL said he was seeking support from governors in regards to some of the suggested requirements and expectations detailed in the revised Uniform Policy. RL considered the level of detail was necessary to the formalise action taken in response to actual issues and events citing several examples of inappropriate dress for school e.g. short skirts, trainers etc. The Uniform Policy was important not only for school identity but to ensure standards and equality.

CC asked if pupils were allowed to wear their PE kit into school on days they had PE? RL said they were as it reduced the amount of time lost due to changing and also the challenge of where pupils changed. RL would include in the Uniform Policy.

HA commented that she thought pupils having to get changed / dressed in the lower year groups was part of their learning but has since appreciated the logistics of such as explained by RL.

CC asked why the 'level 5' sanction was considered to be needed when addressing non-compliance with the Uniform Policy? RL said that it was to ensure the matter was addressed as there had been instances

where parents had not supported the school, to ensure equity so all children are treated the same, adding that if cost / affordability was the issue then the school would help.

HA asked if consideration had been given to raising awareness of the need to wear school uniform via PHSE teaching?

- **Mobile Phone Policy:** LP queried staff use of personal mobile phones particularly when on school trips and residential. RL said that he had a school mobile phone for such occasions but that staff did not so would use their personal mobile such as when staff needed to keep in contact with each other. In addition, SLT would use their personal phones in school for keeping in touch and when dealing with issues. RL said that he would seek Trust guidance on staff use of personal mobile phones.

ACTION: RL to speak with MC re trust guidance for the use of personal mobile phones.

LP said that the dates needed checking and amending in several of the draft policies.

With the exception of the Mobile Phone Policy and Governors and subject to amending dates where necessary, Governors approved the school policies.

6. FINANCE

6.1 Monitoring: Governors noted the March 2024 budget monitoring report, which RL summarised in his HT's report.

6.2 Budget: SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

7. SAFEGUARDING AND ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

7.1 RL advised that there had been no matters referred to LADO since the last meeting, and there were no other concerns to report to governors.

8. ANY OTHER SCHOOL MATTERS

8.1 2023 CIF bid outcomes: RL informed governors that the funding bid to carry out flood prevention works had been approved, and exploratory excavations were to take place during the May school holiday.

8.2 CIF Heating Project update: RL informed governors noted that Phase 2 of the heating improvements to replace pipework and install new radiators would be included in the next round of CIF bids to be submitted December 2024.

9. TRUST MATTERS

9.1 Trust Board: Governors noted the minutes from the T4 meeting and had no comments or questions.

AL informed governors that in addition to draft ECC minutes, future LGB meetings would receive draft minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee meetings.

10. TRUST POLICIES

10.1 Governors noted the Trust policies that had been approved in T4. AL informed governors that staff policies such as Staff Discipline and Conduct were no longer published on the trust / school websites and that they would need to ask for such should they wish to review. Staff had access to such via internal document sharing.

10.2 Risk Register: Governors noted the updated Trust Risk Register.

11. GOVERNOR MONITORING

11.1 Aspiration Day: HA provided governors with feedback from her visit to the school during 'Aspiration Day' on 25th March, and her experience of attending some of the workshops and displays. HA commented how excited the children were with the Owl Display, and how they interacted with those providing the workshops (musician, pilot, author).

HA referred to comments the pupils made about previous events such as science week and book days illustrating how these experiences had a positive effect on their learning.

11.2 Tour of the School: Governors received a verbal report from AB in T4 following his tour of the school. CC asked that a written report of the visit should be provided.

ACTION: RL / AB to write a summary of the visit.

11.3 Immersion Day plan:

CC referred to the discussion with JE in T4 and the Governor School visits policy paper provided by RL, saying that governors should consider what an 'immersion day' might look like, and what would be the focus?

CC suggested that a Governor visits policy / guidance is important as their monitoring visits are to observe and report on what they see and not, to assess. It was agreed that RL and CC would meet before the end of T5 to agree an outline to trial in T6, which could then be reviewed and amended for the start of the next academic year.

ACTION: RL / CC to draft guidance for governing monitoring visits at St Kath's to trial in T6.

12. ANY OTHER GOVERNANCE MATTERS

12.1 Exclusion Panel Meeting: Governors were informed:

- that the Exclusion Panel had agreed to exclude the pupil from St Kath's,
- That there had been no appeal against the decision, and
- That staff had supported the pupil's transition to another school.

13. TRUST BOARD UPDATES

13.1 Nothing to feedback to Trustees in response to either Board.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY

13.1 Governors confirmed that paragraphs 5.2.3 (part) and 6.2 would be recorded as confidential.

14. CLOSING REMARKS

14.1 Date of next meetings: All to be held at St Katherine's School commencing at 1700 on:

Monday 1st July 2024

14.2 Meeting close: The meeting concluded at 1920 and CC thanked all parties for their attendance and contribution.