



ST KATHERINE'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY

DRAFT PUBLIC MINUTES FOR THE TERM 1 2024/2025 MEETING OF THE LGB HELD ON MONDAY 14th OCTOBER 2024

Governors present at the LGB meeting held on 2nd December 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 Governor

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.
- 1.2 Apologies:** All Governors were present.
- 1.3 Quorum:** The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

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

- 2.1** CC asked if all governors had completed their business interest declaration forms, and 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:** Subject to one amendment on page 5 of the Public minutes, Governors approved the public minutes, and confidential annexe. AL to amend as agreed and arrange for the public minutes to be published.

ACTION: AL to publish the approved minutes.

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

- Staff Use of Mobile Phones in School:** RL informed governors that he has had informal discussions with staff regarding what is considered to be reasonable use of mobile phones in school. In particular, SLT are expected to be available and therefore, have their phones to hand when around the school. There is a need to tweak the Mobile Phone policy to reflect such, which will be reported to the LGB in T2.

ACTION: RL to provide updated Mobile Phone policy in T2 for approval

4. Any other urgent business not on the agenda

- 4.1** There were no other urgent items

5. SCHOOL STRATEGIC MATTERS

5.1 Writing update

RL provided a brief update to governors on the Writing Implementation Plan advising that he was aware of challenges attending afterschool meetings can place on teaching staff, and needed to consider their well-being. He therefore presented the school's writing intent and current actions to the committee. The writing lead will be invited to report on the progress that has been made in term 2.

RL informed governors that the new writing curriculum was to address a trust-wide priority, as writing had been identified as an area for improvement due to the inconsistency of the current approach, and data outcomes were broadly in line, or just below national. How the new writing curriculum is implemented will be down to each school to ensure that it is accessible to all pupils.

RL outlined the current context at St Kath's, where he felt pupils needed teaching and learning to build their knowledge and use of vocabulary, and to expand their confidence in the use of such. He added that many pupils did not have the skills set to write independently, with accuracy, saying that 'story mapping' will be used to remove some of the cognitive load that children experience when having to apply pen to paper. This should be available for governors to see in outline on the T2 immersion day but is timetabled for specific review in T4.

HA asked if the roll out of the new writing curriculum has started? RL advised that it had not, as staff were undergoing training, but was planned to commence in T2.

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 School Role and admission numbers: RL advised that the number on roll is lower at 486 compared to 507 the previous year, which is mainly due to the previous Yr6 being 3 FE, whereas the intake is now 2 FE. The number of PP children is 139 compared to 152 previously, however the number in receipt of SEND support has increased. There remain vacancies in most year group, which brings its own complexities of in-year admissions - a high proportion of which appear to be children with additional needs. This migration to St Kath's appears to be driven by the school having a reputation for providing support to those with additional needs and the result of an excellent OFSTED outcome.

CC noted there had been 4 pupils leaving during T1 and ask the reason for such? RL advised that 1 was a traveller child now being home educated and the other 3 had moved out of the area.

MC asked if any of those joining as in-year admission were on the SEND register? CL advised that they were not.

RL advised governors that the new Year R's presented new challenges requiring different support, which was being provided by the additional TA that had been recruited. The view is that a contributing factor for the additional needs of the cohort may be direct impact of covid, which has limited children's development in speech, language and communication skills. Additionally, some children may not have had the same health screening during their early years and also, had not developed similar levels of social and behavioural skills expected of 4-year olds.

5.2.2 Pupil Attendance. RL informed governors that there had been some improvement in attendance figures but at 94.6%, St Kath's was currently below national 95.4%. There had been a meeting with the new LA KPAS Attendance Officer, who reviewed the school approach to managing attendance including policies and procedures, which they consider to be effective. The new FLO had settled in well and was actively engaging families, sending out letters and establishing attendance contracts were necessary.

LP asked if poor attendance was limited to a few families? RL advised that 73 out of 485 pupils were persistently absence, although 4 pupils were classed as 'severe absentees' adding that there are a number of pupils on part-time timetables that also affected the attendance figures.

5.2.3 Staff Attendance: RL advised that staff attendance figures were slightly better and that absence is being monitored in accordance with the Trust Policy, with staff review being conducted when their absence exceeds 10 days.

CC asked how long-term absence, particularly teacher's, is being covered? SA advised that some cover was provided via supply otherwise it was via a creative use of in-house resources (HLTA/ SLT).

CC asked if there were any teachers employed on zero hours contracts who could provide cover? SA confirmed there were some part-time teachers on such contracts who, if available, would work on their non-contracted days. This however, was only a recent development.

CC asked if any cover was still being provided by SLT? RL confirmed that currently, only DT (AHT) covered teacher absence.

5.2.4 Suspensions and Behaviour: RL said that 2023/24 had seen a cultural shift in the way behaviour is managed at St Kath's, which was now evaluated as at least good or better. There is an ongoing focus to actively encourage and improve behaviour. Visitors to the schools always compliment on the good behaviour demonstrated by pupils. There was one suspension to report.

CC asked about the bullying incident included in the table (page 5 of HT report)? RL said that this was an error and would be corrected.

5.2.5 Enrichment: RL informed governors that of the two enrichment events in Term 1, both of which had been funded by the PTA. RL explained to Governors that the PTA was very supportive of the enrichment plans including raising funds for such. This was aided as there are clear plans for enrichment that link to teaching and learning, and provide the children with cultural experiences. The PTA are also invited to attend enrichment events so they can see the benefit and outcome of their support.

5.2.6 Clubs: Governors noted the number and variety of clubs available for pupils. RL informed governors that there was an aim for 35% of PP pupils to attend clubs.

LP asked what is the current percentage of PP children attending a club? RL clarified the target in that it is the percentage in each year group. CC asked what was the criteria for supporting children to attend a club? RL said that they had identified the level of pupil participation in clubs outside school and targeted those with the least opportunity.

RL informed governors that they were going to run a HPS for 3 days over the October school holiday and possibly do the same at Easter. CC commented that this has been trialled before and was not very successful. RL had high hopes for the club as it was being run by the school's Sports Coach, who the children were very familiar with.

5.2.6 Growth: RL provided governors with an update on growth, including staff development, advising that the Challenge Partner programme was moving forward with St Kath's opting for two initiatives – a SEND review to gain further insights into how schools provide effective SEND provision, and QAR Reviews, where senior leaders have opportunities to review the quality of education in different settings.

The school's own QAR review is planned for next year, as they have only recently been through an Ofsted review. There would also be collaboration across the hub to share good practice and the Local Schools Network (LSN). However, RL expressed a view that he might review participation in LSN as with the additional monitoring of T&L, he did not want to overburden staff.

LP asked if the Challenge Partners initiative was simply receiving visits from other schools? RL said that it was not and St Kath's staff would receive training in QAR and visit other schools. He also welcomed the opportunity to have external eyes evaluating the strengths and next steps for the school.

LP asked if there had been any thought to facilitate linking of subject leads within the Trust? RL advised that this does happen such as the recent development of the new writing curriculum. The Trust Curriculum Lead coordinates this.

5.2.7 Staffing: Governors were informed that the new FLO and ECT have both settled in very well. A Year 1 teacher will be going on maternity leave at the end of T2 and RL is hoping to appoint cover – parents are being kept informed regarding the appointment of maternity cover.

5.2.8 H&S: RL informed governors that there had been a recent fire drill that had gone well but also identified some improvements needed such as communications on the field, staff not signed into the electronic register and some kitchen staff had not signed out. A lockdown practice is planned to take place in term 2.

5.2.9 Staff Wellbeing: RL informed governors of the initiatives that has been introduced to improve staff wellbeing such as changing the format of parents evenings, allowing staff to attend important outside events such as their children's sports days and a planned half day off during the year. **LP asked how would this work in practice?** RL said that it would be carefully managed and monitored both in terms of frequency and number, and timing i.e. Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. CL added that staff who run clubs are allowed a day off in lieu.

5.3 SIP / SEF: RL provided governors with an overview of the SEF that compared what the school considered to be the current position compared to the 2024 Ofsted judgements. The key areas for improvement is T&L for which the plan is to:

- Focus on improving lesson planning and assessment
- Develop a stronger coaching ethos, which will commence with mentoring due to the limited capacity of SLT.

Additional SLT / coaching resource is needed to progress delivery which has been facilitated following Trust approval to recruit a temporary Teaching & Learning Coach until August 2026. CC said that the Trust recognised the need to support StKaths and increase capacity to deliver SIP.

HA asked what was the teachers' reaction to the increase in observations? RL said that it had been explained as being part of an investment to improve the current CPD offer, as well as the benefits of such.

The SIP provided an overview of the plan, including the creation of 'Excellence at St Katherine's' frameworks, which identified the key expectations for high standards at the school. A significant amount of work had been carried out over the summer holiday developing these.

In addition, personal development would continue to support delivery of the SIP and 'excellence' at St Kath's. CL provided an example that the development of the TAs, which was directly related to the school's principles.

5.4 Data & Quality of Education: RL informed governors that despite the T6 data outcomes being below national, there had been some success stories e.g. Yr6 maths was assessed at 12% in December 2023 but due to targeted intervention by teachers and SLT, the T6 data was 63% (national was 73%). A considerable amount of time and effort had gone into supporting the children through intervention and additional tuition.

CC asked if the additional interventions would continue? RL advised that it would not be to the same level due to there being no tutoring funding for 2024/25. However, some teachers are running clubs to support this and SLT would continue to run groups and support within their capacity to do so. However, there needed to be some consideration given to ensuring that this did not stall any work towards the wider SIP priorities-

RL said that he was disappointed with the reading outcome, as all mock testing and assessment had identified that children's outcomes were on track to meet the national benchmark. Whilst phonics was below national, he was confident they will achieve their 80% target this year, with targeted intervention.

LP asked how were the 2024/25 targets set? RL advised that both he and the Trust drafted targets which were discussed and agreed, adding that the Trust will be monitoring outcomes termly.

5.5 School Specific Policies:

- Behaviour Policy - **LP asked if all staff had been trained in positive handling?** RL advised that they had not for those that had were required to physically handle pupils in a prescribed manner. There are a select number of staff who have been trained. LP suggested that trained staff are listed for others to be aware.

Governors approved the policies

- RL tabled an updated Attendance Policy, which had been based on new guidance. Governors agreed to review outside of the meeting and email their questions and approval to RL. AL to note for T2 LGB to ratify the decision.

ACTION: Governors to email RL with their response and AL to note for T2 LGB

6. SAFEGUARDING AND ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

- 6.1** 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.

7. ANY OTHER SCHOOL MATTERS

- 7.1 CIF Drainage Scheme:** RL provided an update to governors advising that there had been a slight delay but work was planned to commence the last week of T1 and expected to complete 2 weeks into T2. RL advised that the work will be disruptive as involved the installation of three large underground tanks behind Yr 5 and the 'trim trail'. The aims of the tanks are to hold the run off water and allow it to slowly filter down to the overflow lake.

- 7.2 FAW Use of St Katherine's:** CC made the following comments on the draft document, which RL agreed to do make before it was signed by both parties:

- Lunch Arrangements – the paragraph needs to include how the charges are calculated, what is included within the agreed sum of £31,600 and the basis for any adjustment.
- Costs and Payments – delete 'k' after the figure £31,600
- Review meeting – amend 'no' to 'not'
- Signatures - Amend 'Chair of Trustees of St Katherines' to read 'Chair of Governors of St Katherines'

ACTION: RL to update the draft agreement and circulate for signing.

8. TRUST MATTERS

- 8.1 Trust Board minutes:** Governors noted the minutes from the T6 meeting. RL asked that his thanks be recorded for the additional funding Trustees had approved for St Kath's.

ACTION: AL / CC to feedback to Trustees

- 8.2 Risk Policy and Risk Management:** Governors noted the Trust Risk Policy and Strategic Risk Register attached to the papers. AL informed governors that the implementation and roll out of a Trust-wide approach including establishing School specific risk registers would be discussed as part of the Trust Governance Event.

- 8.3 Feedback from T1 ECG meeting:** LP provided governors with feedback from the meeting, which focused heavily on the summer data outcomes, which were below national. LP said that a particular element of the discussion was around SEND including the accuracy of the register, which if inaccurate, would impact on data outcomes. RL confirmed that in his view there are pupils who have not been identified as SEND and therefore not on the register. As a result, the current SEND percentage is probably not a true reflection as other children exhibit barriers to learning, for whom support has yet to be put in place.

CC asked if it was also possible to overstate SEND? CL said it was.

LP said that all schools have a target to linked achievements and learning and it was for teachers to help identify SEND and make these links but some lack the skills to recognise SEND.

LP said that ST Kath's maths approach to maths interventions were also a topic for discussion as ECG noted how they had turned around maths from 12% to an outcome of 63%, which although below national was a significant improvement.

CL asked if governors would like to receive more information at the LGB meetings such as provision maps. This would help demonstrate the approach to SEND, the support and interventions put in place.

ACTION: CL to provide future LGB meetings with summary information on provision maps

- 8.4 Trust Governance Events:** Governors were reminded of the event organised for 6th November and asked to confirm their attendance to CH (Chair of Trustees)

ACTION: All governors to inform CH as to whether or not they can attend the event.

19. TRUST POLICIES

- 9.1 Governors noted the Trust policies that had been approved in T6.
- 9.2 **Risk Register:** Governors noted the updated Trust Risk Register, and that it was an item for discussion at the Trust event.

10. GOVERNOR MONITORING

- 10.1 Immersion dates:** Governors were reminded of the agreed 'Immersion' dates for carrying out governor monitoring during academic year.
- T2 - SEND: Monday 11th November 2024
 - T4 – English including writing: Monday 3rd March 2025
 - T6 – Maths: Friday 20th June 2025

11. ANY OTHER GOVERNANCE MATTERS

11.1 School Open Days: RL advised of the forthcoming school open days for September 2024 admissions and asked if any governors were able to attend to meet and greet prospective pupils and parents?

- Tuesday 22nd October, Friday 15th November, Tuesday 26th November – 0900 to 1030
- Thursday 5th December 1330 – 1500
- HA will attend 22/11, AB on Fri 15/11 and CC on 5/12.

11.2 Governors Roles and Responsibilities:

11.3 Cyber Security: AL reminded governors of the need to complete the cyber security training as this was an annual requirement to comply with the RPA insurance cover. CC asked if the link could be resent to facilitate governors accessing the training.

ACTION: AL to forward link to SchoolPRO training.

ACTION: Governors to complete the cyber security training.

MC expressed a concern relating to the security of the school IT advising that the systems were relatively easy to access and open to a cyber-attack. MC suggested that a cyber security audit was carried out as the IT network was open. RL agreed to raise the matter with the Trust.

ACTION: RL to raise the cyber security concern with the Trust.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

12.1 Governors confirmed that there were no items to be recorded as confidential.

13. CLOSING REMARKS

13.1 Dates of next meeting: All to be held at St Katherine's School commencing at 1700 on:

- Monday 2nd December 2024
- Monday 3rd February 2025
- Monday 17th March 2025
- Monday 12th May 2025
- Monday 7th July 2025

13.2 Meeting close: The meeting concluded at 1900 and CC thanked all parties for their attendance and contribution.