



## ST KATHERINE'S SCHOOL AND NURSERY

### PUBLIC MINUTES FOR THE TERM 3 2024/2025 MEETING OF THE LGB HELD ON MONDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2025

*Governors present at the LGB meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 approved these minutes as a true and accurate record, and signed on Governor Hub electronically*

#### PRESENT

Carina Cuddington(CC) – Governor (Chair)	Martin Carr (MC) – Co-Opted Governor
Laura Payne (LP) - Co-opted Governor	Holly Ashston (HA) - Parent Governor
Adrien Booth (AB) – Parent Governor	Ray Lang (RL) - Headteacher
Caroline Loveland (CL) – Staff Governor	Sarah Aikenhead (SA) - Associate Governor

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Ruth Kenney (phonics lead)
Claudia Sawyers (Temporary Governance Professional)

**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 welcomed all Governors to the meeting and explained CS is present to act as Governance Professional in AL's absence.
- 1.2 Apologies:** There were no apologies and no governors absent.
- 1.3 Quorum:** The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

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

- 2.1** Governors were given the opportunity to declare any interests against the agenda to which none were declared. There were no updates to declarations.

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

- 3.1 Approval of Minutes:** Governors approved the public and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 noting a few formatting changes to be made. RL will see if he has a Word document version to amend, as the version on Governor Hub is a PDF. CS to arrange for the public minutes to be published once amendments made.

**Action:** CS to publish the approved minutes.

- 3.2 Actions:** Governors received updates on the completed matters, which are recorded in the Action table, there were some additional updates to the actions as follows:

Action 3: *Provide summary information on provision maps to LGB* – There is a SEND review in March which governors are invited to attend. **Action:** RL to send date to governors

Action 5: *RL to raise cyber security concern with Trust* – This has now been completed.

Action 7: *Behaviour data and interventions – provide LGB with comparison to other schools* – RL felt it was difficult to provide like for like data due to the differences in the way schools report on behaviour. RL will speak to

MC to see if this is possible as he does not have access to this sort of data for the other schools, but may be able to obtain suspensions data and will try to go beyond that if possible.

Action 8: *SEND governor monitoring report* – LP has shared with CC and will forward to RL.

Action 9: *CL to consider alternative timings for SEND events to encourage parent attendance* – CL reported that she has tried different times of the day and there does not seem to be a favoured time that encourages attendance. CL's aim is to start a group that she can facilitate rather than lead, but it has been difficult to sustain engagement.

Action 10: *Agreement for FAW use of St Kath's*- This has now been completed.

#### **4. Any other urgent business not on the agenda**

##### **4.1 Admissions Policy**

The Admissions Policy was tabled. RL confirmed there has been no changes to the policy, however it needs to be agreed urgently to meet the deadline to submit to the Local Authority. Governors agreed for the policy to be submitted to the Trust Board for approval.

#### **5. SCHOOL STRATEGIC MATTERS**

##### **5.1 Subject Updates – Phonics**

It is a trust-wide action to improve attainment in phonics; last year the trust average was lower than national for the first time and has deteriorated at St Katherine's over the last three years. RL invited RK as phonics lead to talk through current plans and actions. LP asked whether the 3 year deteriorating picture correlates to the implementation of Sounds Write scheme? RL confirmed this is how long Sounds Write has been in place but it doesn't appear to be linked.

Last year, at St Katherine's 71% of the Year 1 cohort achieved the national standards in phonics and national was 81%, the target this year is to reach national. The cohort has been grouped for interventions by need, i.e. sounds, blending. They have conducted a screening and looked at those who scored over 32, those who scored between 20-32 and those who scored between 12-20. Interventions are being tailored to cater for the needs, PP and SEND are also being considered in the provision. Sounds Write have introduced progress checks which is useful to look specifically at what has been taught so far, which has allowed more accurate targeting. Training and support has been provided by Sounds Write to look at adapting the scheme to suit the children at St Kath's. A visit was made to Eastbury School, which was insightful, and following the visit, a phonics tracker has been implemented that identifies gaps. The DMAT Phonics conference was also attended by SA and RK who reported that it was a worthwhile visit and good to speak to other teachers across the country and listen to guest speakers, one of whom was from Sounds Write. SA discussed the planned 'Learning Together' sessions, which Coxheath currently implement, where parents are invited into the classroom to see how their children learn phonics, with the aim of supporting parents to help their children to learn. RL reported that the majority of teaching in phonics is at least good and the aim is to be consistently good or better. The forecast for end of year is 80% passing the phonics screening and the target set at the start of the year was 81%.

RK left the meeting 17:35.

##### **5.3 Headteacher's Report**

RL provided governors with a summary of the key matters contained in his HT report, which was provided prior to the meeting to read. Key updates and discussion items are noted below.

###### **Admissions**

There has been 20 new admissions this year which is positive for the roll, however can pose challenges as their learning journey will naturally have been different to children already at St Kath's and in some cases can impact on class dynamics. Some of the new admissions have significant barriers to learning including speech and language difficulties and some children needing part time timetables. AB asked whether there is consideration to the children on roll when accepting new admissions, if there are challenges. RL explained that when a school has space, they are required to accept an application and morally no application would be rejected – this also coincides with the school's inclusive ethos. Unless there are very significant needs and extenuating circumstances where a school would not be able to meet the needs of the child.

First choice applications for September 2025 look very encouraging with 58 first choice and 35 second choice. This is very positive and a significant improvement on last year's figures. This result is likely a result of the extra efforts that the school went to in promoting the open days to prospective parents.

### **Quality of Education**

RL drew attention to the data on pages 5-7. Some further work is being done around assessment in writing and having a clear expectation around what 'on track' looks like. In Year 6, maths is a concern and currently at approximately 30%, up from 8%. A significant amount of progress is still required to meet national benchmarks, however the cohort have gaps in foundational knowledge. RL and Assistant Headteacher are delivering daily maths and tutoring, although uptake of tutoring has been lower than ideal due to it being optional. AB asked if the issue with gaps in functional skills is evident in other year groups. RL explained that there are gaps in several areas of the curriculum, not just maths, in difference year groups. Year 5 are currently the lowest attaining year group, but progress data is encouraging. RL expects that all year groups in current years 3-6 will have some gaps and additional input and support will need to be sustained over the next few years.

'Big Picture' reports are newly implemented for some subject leaders to enable them to capture their subject intent, the monitoring they have performed, current data (quantitative/ qualitative), next steps/actions and training. It also provides an additional mechanism to capture their impact within the subject they are leading, which leaders will be update over the course of the year.

PE and RE are both areas with a particular focus currently; with work being done with a consultant to zone the playground. The RE lead is an ECT who has taken on the task of mapping out the experience of each child throughout their time at St Katherine's and their exposure to different faiths. Parental engagement can be a barrier in RE, with some parents not allowing their children to engage fully in the curriculum due to their own views and beliefs.

### **Behaviour and Attitudes**

Attendance is up from this time last year, although not quite at the target. There are a small group of children significantly contributing to the absence figures, the school is actively working on parental engagement and other strategies to help overcome the barriers. New attendance awards have been implemented with something for children at all levels, so as not to exclude children whose barriers to attendance are beyond their control. AB asked to see attendance figures excluding persistent absentees, to see how the majority of children are attending – **Action: RL will add this to the next Headteacher's report.**

With regards to behaviour, there has been 5 suspensions so far this year. As per the report, there have been some reported racial incidents which have been responded to promptly and appropriately. As a further measure to promote diversity, RL has sought funding from the PTA to put on a workshop on discrimination.

### **Personal Development**

RL gave verbal overview of the Personal Development section of the report.

### **Leadership and Management**

Coaching has been implemented this year, with all teachers in receipt of coaching. Initially, opinions were mixed when the idea was introduced but leadership are confident of the benefits. Coaching is separate to the appraisal process and focuses more on small steps to make a big impact on teaching and learning and professional development. Capacity within leadership has reduced slightly due to this, as leaders each have 3 teachers to coach. Feedback so far has been positive.

Staff attendance figures were shared on the report, governors were not concerned about absence rates. RL aims to meet with teachers to discuss their preferences for the next academic year as staffing needs will be reviewed, there may be opportunities across the trust that can be explored.

### **GDPR**

There has been one recorded breach in the Autumn term. This was logged with SchoolPro who confirmed it was not reportable to ICO.

## **Financial Position**

RL gave verbal overview of recent finance monitoring of December management accounts as detailed in the report.

## **Accessibility Plan**

The Accessibility Plan was provided to governors prior to the meeting to review. The plan has been reviewed by the Estates Manager and updated to ensure it is bespoke to St Katherine's current context and practices. There were no comments.

## **6. SAFEGUARDING AND ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS**

**6.1** RL reported that there has been no referral to the LADO. There has been one RIDDOR report where a child fractured their arm.

### **6.2 New Pick-Up Procedure**

There has been an incident at one of the schools within the Trust that has prompted a review and new measures to be implemented for collecting children. A password system will now be in place, all parents have responded very quickly with their chosen password and this will be implemented across the whole school. Governors were in support of the new procedure.

## **7. ANY OTHER SCHOOL MATTERS**

None

## **8. TRUST MATTERS**

**8.1** Governors were provided the draft minutes of the last Trust Board meeting held on 11th December 2024, there were no comments or questions.

### **8.2 ECG Feedback**

LP gave feedback from recent ECG meeting, the majority of the discussions at the ECG meeting have been discussed earlier in the meeting or are detailed further in the Headteacher Report. Teacher assessment of writing was a particular area of discussion relevant to St Katherine's and some further work as a trust is being done to look at ways to improve accuracy of assessment. The group were impressed by the initial numbers of first and second choice admissions.

### **8.3 CoG Catch Up**

CC attended the previous catch up however had not been able to attend the last LGB meeting so was not able to participate to the full extent at the catch up. There was no further feedback to bring to this meeting.

## **9. TRUST POLICIES**

**9.1** Governors noted the following updates to policies and statements approved at the last Trust Board meeting:

- Governors Code of Conduct
- Guide to Governance
- Charging and Remissions
- Strategic Risk Register

## 10. ANY OTHER GOVERNANCE MATTERS

**10.1** HA has been successfully appointed as the year 5 intervention teacher, this will mean she is no longer able to act as parent governor as she will be a member of staff. It was discussed that CL could step down as staff governor and HA could continue that role, as long as there are no objections from other staff members. There is another parent already on the governing body, MC, who is a co-opted governor. There was discussion as to whether MC is able to step in to the role of parent governor automatically. CS as temporary governance professional, will review the Trust's Articles of Association and relevant governance documents to see whether this is possible, or whether the role of parent governor must be advertised.

### 10.2 Training

Cyber Security - Governors confirmed they have all now completed the cyber security training.

Fire Safety- Governors were unclear on what this training was and where to access. **Action: CS is going to find out and post to GovernorHub.**

## 12. CONFIDENTIALITY

**12.1** There were no confidential items.

## 13. CLOSING REMARKS

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

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025

### 13.2 Other Dates

Immersion Day – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Autism Education Training – Governors welcome to attend – 13<sup>th</sup> March at 3:30-6pm.

**13.2 Meeting close:** The meeting concluded at 1930 and CC thanked all parties for their attendance and contribution.

Approved 17 -03-25