

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body – 3 April at 11am, held remotely

Present: Paul Barber, Mel Fane (Co-Chair), Blanaid McCauley, Giulia de Rosa (Co-Chair), Helen Snow, Ian Watson, Jessica Winter

Apologies: Pier Anscombe, Emma Briggs, Sandra Hogan, Dee Simson

Quorum: Six governors. Seven governors were present. The meeting was quorate.

Clerk: Ruth Ali

The meeting was chaired by Mel Fane

1.	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received and accepted from Pier Anscombe, Emma Briggs, Sandra Hogan and Dee Simson. The Headteacher opened the meeting with prayer.
2.	Update on GB membership Governors were informed of the resignation of Noreen Buckley and Peter Tierney. There are now three vacancies on the Governing Board (two Foundation and one co-opted). Vacancies are listed on Governors for Schools, Inspiring Governance and on the National Black Governors Network. Blanaid was asked for her assistance in promoting the vacancies at the University Chaplaincy with a view to recruiting a younger Foundation Governor. Due to the current circumstances, there are not as many face to face opportunities for recruitment, but should contact be made by email, it would still be possible to interview remotely.
3.	Notes from informal Headteacher/Chairs of Governors meeting These notes were circulated prior to the meeting, and questions were invited. A governor asked for evidence to support the statement that recent communications from the school had been well received by parents, and that they were satisfied with the home learning tasks. It was clarified that this impression was gathered from comments on social media which parents have posted in response to communications that have gone out. However, a parent has given verbal feedback to a governor which was not so positive. It was agreed that the Headteacher should conduct a parent survey on home learning, to be completed by the end of the Easter holidays, which would then inform provision for the Summer term. SLT would discuss this parental feedback and also feedback from staff at their meeting scheduled for 20 April. The Headteacher explained that parents had been advised through the usual communication channels that they can communicate directly with him, and no feedback indicating that there were any issues has been received. Due to the speed with which home learning had to be initiated, what is currently supplied does not serve teaching and learning for more than a couple of weeks, and further plans need to be put in place for after Easter. The Headteacher would like to explore working with other Catholic Headteachers in a collaborative way to supply this. The need for a pastoral approach, rather than focusing purely on academic learning, was highlighted. So far school has supplied work packs for pupils with no access to the internet, as well as online work. Virtual teaching

	<p>and learning are not really in place. Consideration must be given to what is sustainable over a longer period.</p> <p>Governors who are parents gave their views on the work supplied through the website and were overall pleased with what was provided. It was suggested that there may be discrepancies between year groups due to individual approaches taken by teachers. A revised approach to teaching and learning next term needs to consider teacher work load, as well as their safeguarding. Union advice is for teachers not to do online teaching. Parental requests for Zoom conferences to teach the class were therefore not met. Union guidance is followed by the school; this was confirmed in a briefing from the NEU rep in school, who is happy with what the school is doing.</p> <p>Staff appraisal and performance management will need to be reconsidered as the targets originally set are no longer valid.</p> <p>Governors asked how SLT are supporting each other. The Headteacher confirmed that they are doing well and getting enough support. Conversations are honest, and include discussions about each other's welfare. Whilst looking forward to the Easter holidays, all are also looking forward to coming back with hopefully a better understanding about the next term. The longer term impact on SLT mental health is a concern, as the situation is constantly changing and SLT reacting to it, which is not how school leaders are normally working.</p>
4.	<p>Update on Support for Vulnerable Families</p> <p>The Headteacher explained that the Inclusion Leader contacts vulnerable families by phone twice a week and also utilises the play therapist. The school's considers "vulnerable families" to be wider than what is listed in government guidance. In Brighton and Hove, and also in this school, the number of vulnerable children attending school is very low, and school will begin to stipulate that they are expected to come into school, thus supporting these families.</p> <p>Governors asked if there are any vulnerable families the school has been unable to contact. The Headteacher confirmed that the Inclusion Leader updates him twice a week, and contact with all families has been made.</p>
5.	<p>Update on FSM Provision</p> <p>Families of children on free school meals have been offered packed lunches to collect from school, but this offer was not taken up. The Inclusion Leader therefore purchased Supermarket vouchers for each family for two weeks (up to 11 April). The government scheme of vouchers has now been introduced, to start from 20 April. School is looking into ways to support families over the rest of the holidays.</p> <p>Governors explored why families did not come into school to collect packed lunches and hoped that the voucher scheme will assist families better, in a more inconspicuous way.</p> <p>As school is looking to support families over Easter from the school budget, a governor advised that she may be able to source outside funding. The offer was appreciated, but the LA has also asked school to keep a record of unbudgeted costs due to Covid-19, and school has therefore access to having this cost reimbursed.</p> <p>Governors asked the Headteacher to convey their thanks to the Inclusion Leader for her proactive approach.</p>
6.	<p>Easter Provision for Key Workers</p>

	<p>The Headteacher had previously conducted a survey among staff to determine whether any would be willing to come into school over Easter. The response was unanimously positive, but with staff wellbeing in mind, other avenues were explored. The After School Club (ASC) provider is opening up her provision solely for children of key worker families at a reduced rate. Places for families who are unable to pay are subsidised by the school. There are also two families from St Margarets who will take up this offer.</p> <p>Governors expressed their appreciation for ASC to provide this service and were pleased to know that staff are getting an Easter break.</p>
7.	<p>To discuss any questions on the Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>The Headteacher’s Report had been circulated for the meeting originally scheduled for 19 March, which was cancelled due to Covid-19. It was therefore put together under different circumstances. Governors were pleased with the strong position the school is in and appreciated the details provided for the academic side of things. The strong provision for the children is the reason why the school has risen so well to the current challenge.</p> <p>Under normal circumstances, governors would have focused their discussions on Year 1 Phonics.</p> <p>Governors asked whether SafetyNet is still continuing their provision for children who were having counselling. This is no longer being provided, but all mental health support is now up to the school, which is a reason why vulnerable children must be encouraged to attend school.</p> <p>The school’s crisis management has been excellent. The current situation shows the importance of teaching children to “learn how to learn”.</p> <p>Governors recognised that the emphasis on middle leadership has been visible. Attendance is now recorded differently, and it remains to be seen what impact the school closure will have on attendance once school opens again.</p>
8.	<p>To approve Collective Worship Policy</p> <p>The Collective Worship Policy was recommended for approval by the Q&S committee, without any changes.</p> <p>Approved: <i>The Collective Worship Policy was unanimously approved.</i></p> <p>A future review may incorporate aspects of online support, learnt during the period of school closure.</p> <p>Governors were advised that arrangements are being made for Mass to be live streamed. It was suggested that the link to it could also be included on the school website.</p> <p>Material to support families with prayer life at home and further resources from the Diocese for Holy Week have been made available on the school website.</p> <p>It was suggested that Fr Benny could also be asked to hold a Mass remotely for staff and children.</p>
9.	<p>To discuss how we want to work as a Governing Body during the period of school closure</p> <p>Mel had submitted a briefing paper outlining a proposal on how to work during the next term, which was based on information and advice from the NGA and The Key for School Governors. The proposal to hold bi-weekly FGB meetings was unanimously supported, and it was emphasised that key link governors</p>

	<p>(Safeguarding, SEND, H&S) must take ownership of being in touch with their links in school. This will curtail work load and the same questions being asked. The approach will continue to be kept under review.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Prior to the current situation, AOB had not been an item as all governors are free to contribute to the agenda, thus eliminating the need for any AOB to be brought up at the meeting. However, due to the fluency of the current situation, it was felt that AOB should be an item on forthcoming agendas. Blanaid as new governor highlighted that she is not yet linked to any particular area and is happy to fill in any gap. This will be considered when the situation returns to normal.</p> <p>Governors asked the Headteacher what would happen if all four SLT members had to self-isolate at the same time. There are no arrangements in place at the moment, but communications have been started between the Catholic Headteachers in B&H. There has so far been no guidance from the Diocese as to how to protect and maintain the Catholic nature of the school if children are moved between school sites. The Headteacher would ideally seek to ensure that children continue to attend at this site. In the absence of all SLT members, school would look to setting up a network with Deanery heads, sharing expertise across schools. Children would attend this school, but leadership would be disseminated. Governors were pleased that the focus is on keeping the school open and children attending as this ensures that upheaval is kept to a complete minimum.</p> <p>Governors asked for an update on the current staffing situation and were reminded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Y4 teacher covering maternity leave is leaving • The teacher on maternity leave is returning to job share in Y4 • The Y5 teacher has submitted his resignation for the end of the academic year • The temporary contract of the Y6 teacher is coming to an end at the end of the academic year • Recruitment for the Y5 and Y6 vacancies will be done online on 22 April • There will be 10 days when the Y4 cover teacher and the teacher returning from maternity leave will be on the books at the same time <p>It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Friday 24 April to receive another update and discuss feedback from the parent survey.</p>