Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body - Thursday 4 February 2021 6.30pm held remotely

Outstanding Governance reminder:
Governing bodies should have a strong focus on the core strategic functions:
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and the effective and efficient performance management of staff, and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- To maintain and develop the Catholic nature of the school

In this meeting governors will be mindful of equalities issues in all agenda items

Present: Pier Anscombe, Paul Barber (Headteacher), Emma Briggs (from 7.27pm onwards), Mel Fane (Chair), Sandra Hogan, Giulia de Rosa (Vice Chair), Dee Simson, Helen Snow

Apologies: None

In attendance: Dorothy Jarman, Charlotte Nicholson (English Leaders, agenda items 1 and 2 only)

Quorum: Four governors. Seen/eight governors were present. The meeting was quorate throughout.

Clerk: Ruth Ali

Minutes signed by: _____ Agreed on: _____

Action points: **bold** Questions/challenges: <mark>highlighted</mark> Decisions: ***bold italics***

		Actions

1.	**Welcome**
	    1.1 Prayers
	The Headteacher opened the meeting with prayer.
	    1.2 To consider Apologies for Absence
	None.
	Governors were advised of two resignations – Jess Winter, Parent Governor, and Blanaid McCauley, Foundation Governor.
	    1.3 Declaration that remote participants are maintaining confidentiality
	All confirmed that they are not in a situation where conversations can be overheard.
	    1.4 Declaration of business interests or interests of loyalty in agenda items
	None.	

2.	**Curriculum Update** The Chair thanked Charlotte and Dorothy for attending *2.1 Introduction* Prior to the meeting, a report on The Reading Led Curriculum had been shared, and the Headteacher introduced this item by expanding on this further. He explained that his first few months in post had led to him	

deciding on the proposed approach to base the wider curriculum on reading, as reading is fundamental for children and their life chances so that children not only leave school secondary ready but also highly literate. This then led to the appointment of Charlotte as Y5 teacher, who brought relevant experience in this area to the post, who would share the role of English Leader with the Y6 teacher, starting the project in Y6 and working down through the school.

2.2 Reading Curriculum for Y5 and Y6

Dorothy and Charlotte talked about what they have already done in the school and the approach taken:

- Deciding on the key texts, which should be challenging for the children, exposing them to different cultures and environments
- A variety of lead characters, for example strong female characters
- Moving away from topic based approach, instead putting high quality texts at the centre and building everything else around it
- Getting children to enjoy books independently
- The proposed approach goes hand in hand with writing, ie promoting reading and books will expose children to higher quality language which will improve writing
- Generally speaking, there must be a reason and rationale for the curriculum, and a thread of ethos running through it – the proposed approach is now backed up by research into the impact reading has on children, and the wider curriculum coming off this, which will result in a review of topics.

Questions were invited:

- What particular books have you started with? – We are still planning, but are thinking of three novels, ie one per term, and a shorter book to go alongside for flexibility. Y5 is doing Kensuke's Kingdom, and Y6 Beowolf. We are also trying to find a range of genre as well. There is a lot of choice, and it is difficult to narrow down.
- From a Resources point of view, do we have the necessary finances for providing the books you need? – We do not have the texts in school, so need to procure them. This is why we are taking a slow approach over three years, starting with texts for Y5 and Y6, for which some of the money is already available now, and more can be covered in the next financial year. The plan would be covered in the three year financial projection. The English leaders would guide the teachers in their choices for the younger year groups.
- What are your views about children reading online rather than books? – We are currently trying to teach a book remotely; we are doing our best but each child having their own personal copy of the text is better. Lots of resources are available online, but there are also other distractions on screen. It can be better for some reluctant boy readers to have e-books.
- As you have a three year plan, do you envisage this approach to be embedded in the school in three years' time? – Embedding it will take longer. It will take three years to get the texts into place for each year group. This will be driven by the class teachers with the guidance of the English leaders. It will be four or five years until the approach is embedded and both staff and children are happy with it.

	==So far we have only spoken about fiction, but will there be different genres?== - Yes, we are looking at high quality non-fiction texts as well, for example classic poetry higher up in the school. There will be different genres of core texts, and other texts to go alongside them. Governors thanked Charlotte and Dorothy for their time and their enthusiasm. They appreciated that this approach also feeds into the diversity of the school which is a particular focus for governors at the moment. Governors also valued the presentation from a developmental point of view.	

3.	**Minutes of last meeting**
	    3.1 *To agree accuracy*
	The minutes were ***agreed as a true record.***
	Minutes of the informal lockdown update were also shared.
	    3.2 To discuss action points and matters arising, if not on this agenda
	Min 3.2: This action (familiarising staff with the Lockdown Policy) was deferred as it is not relevant to put into practice at the moment. Governors agreed that the school is not in an area of alarm, and there are no immediate concerns.
	Min 3.2: One visit report from taking part in a Zoom assembly has been received.
	Min 3.2: Collective Worship monitoring is an agenda item at this meeting.
	Min 3.2: Contact with Ian and Emma about GDPR monitoring has been made. **Following this up is now their action.**
	Min 4.2: Governor vacancies advert is now up on BEEM.
	Min 4.2: Dee's conversation with her contact was unsuccessful.
	Min 4.2: A governor recruitment advert was placed in the Woodingdean Newsletter, but against expectation, the school was invoiced for this. **Dee will follow this up.**
	All other actions have been completed and did not require further discussion.
	    3.3 Other outstanding matters if relevant
	None.
		IW, EB
		
		DS

4.	**Safeguarding** *Annual Safeguarding Report* It was clarified that the Annual Safeguarding report will be a regular agenda item for Summer 2. ==Governors asked in connection with the circulated CPOMS report for clarification around the difference between "monitored" and "incidents".== The Headteacher explained that, when there is a safeguarding "incident", a number of different children are affected, and siblings or friendship groups are "monitored". It was clarified that nine cases of bullying were "monitored", but there was no "incident" because it was identified that the cases were not actually bullying.	

5.	**Reports from Committees/Working groups**
	    5.1 Strategic Group
	    5.2 Q&S
	    5.3 Resources
	Minutes were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. There were no further questions.	

6.	**Remote Learning**
	
	• _HT Verbal Update_
	
	Some questions around remote learning had been submitted prior to the meeting:
	
	    • <mark>Is it difficult aligning the curriculum with remote learning?</mark> – Yes. The curriculum is broad and large, and online learning time is not. It is also limited by logistical issues. We are doing our best, but there are implications on teaching time. But we have now moved away from a focus on English, Maths and RE to a wider curriculum.
	
	    • <mark>How confident are teachers in remote learning now?</mark> – Teachers have grown in confidence and have been allowed to find their own preferred approach. They also now know what technical hitches to expect.
	
	    • <mark>How are SEND children engaging with remote learning, are there any concerns at this stage that these pupils will have bigger learning gaps than their peers?</mark> – There is particular concern over one child who is severely vulnerable and can't come into school due to family shielding, and neither are they able to access online learning. School is supporting this family on a practical level. For SEND and online teaching, staff are doing their utmost to ensure work is differentiated. If a child with SEND cannot access online learning, they access education in school, as are any other children we are concerned about. Previous data showed that there will be bigger gaps, but previously, irrespective of vulnerable group, progress data of children in school was less impacted than that of children who were at home. We are confident that we can narrow these gaps.
	
	Emma joined at 7.27pm
	
	    • <mark>Has remote learning caused a barrier to feedback?</mark> – Not on Zoom or Google Classroom, as teachers are getting a sense of what children are doing. Our biggest concern is for children working at home on printed materials, and we are investigating how to get feedback without adding pressure. Having spoken with colleagues and the Schools Partnership Advisor (SPA), we will write to families asking them to collate work and bring to school on the children's return. This will still enable staff to attribute different learning objectives to ascertain the child's level on a particular piece of work.
	
	The Headteacher informed governors that school is receiving an increased number of requests for children to come into school. Advice from the LA is that, because of the government list of Key Workers, the LA is not in a situation where they can support Headteachers who refuse families because there are no spaces. This level of expectation now needs to be managed; currently over 50 children attend on the busiest day. These are supervised solely by TAs and INAs. Currently parents are offered not more than one day, as staff are becoming increasingly anxious about the number of children in the building and associated risk.
	
	One member of SLT is always on site, and a staff meeting is held online once a week, giving teachers the opportunity to share their experiences.
	
	Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) is going well and has helped to alleviate concerns.	

	==Governors asked whether the Risk Assessment (RA) will have to be reviewed if the number of children is increased.== The Headteacher explained that his main concern is the mental health of the team rather than the manageability of the RA, and staff are anxious due to increased social contact. **Wellbeing** - *Three training reports* Noted. - *Staff Wellbeing Assessment Tool and GB approach* - *GB Wellbeing Assessment Tool* It was proposed that staff wellbeing should be considered in a holistic way, from a Full Governing Board perspective. Governors are confident that wellbeing is monitored well. **It was agreed that the Chair, Headteacher and Wellbeing Link Governor would meet after half term to go through both tools and bring their evaluation back to FGB at the next meeting.** **Monitoring** • *Governor monitoring undertaken* Emma submitted a visit report on an online assembly prior to the meeting. This was very enjoyable, and children were engaged. She also watched other recorded assemblies. The report was noted, and no further issues were discussed. • *To discuss Collective Worship Monitoring* Governors were reminded that they can either watch assembly recordings on the website or attend live online assemblies.	MF, PB, HS	
7.	**Governor Body Business** *7.1 Appoint Giulia to Resources Committee* ***Agreed:*** ***Giulia de Rosa was unanimously appointed to the Resources Committee.*** *7.2 Update on/discuss Governor Recruitment* A parent governor election is currently under way. Two applications have already been received. *7.3 Observation on progress since Reflection Day* Governing Board self-evaluation is usually undertaken at this time of year, but as a Reflection Day had taken place in September, a brief check five months on was considered more appropriate. Governors were reminded that the Reflection Day included considerations around creativity in terms of monitoring activities, and now was the time to think about how this has gone. The Headteacher thanked governors for being supportive during the challenges of Covid, but encouraged them to challenge him appropriately when times return to some normality. By doing so, governors not only fulfil their responsibilities, but also help the Headteacher to give his best. Governors were reminded that the school is preparing for two inspections. The Catholic Schools Inspection (CSI) is due in September or October, and the Self Evaluation (SEF) has already been sent to the advisors. The next Section 5 inspection (Ofsted) is due in just over one year, and governors were reminded that the Leadership and Management judgment		

		involves not only SLT, but also governors. Governors are therefore important to that process. *7.4 To agree actions around Governor monitoring* **Governors were asked to check through the monitoring plan and to email the Headteacher with proposed dates, prior to governors making contact with staff.**	All
	8.	**To receive an update from the RSE/CSI Working Group** The notes from the RSE/CSI Working Group meeting were circulated prior to the meeting and noted. The Headteacher gave an update: The draft policy has been updated in line with discussions at the working group meeting and sent to the RSE Leader who is in the process of working through the revised draft with the Headteacher. The amendments were based on comments received from parents responding to the consultation, and governors wanting to make the policy inclusive because of the make-up of the community and the school's proximity to Brighton. The next steps are: • Add additional wording from RSE Leader • Take redrafted policy back to respondents • Send redrafted policy to RSE/CSI Working Group • Hold another meeting with the working group • Bring policy to FGB in Spring 2 • Move to teaching the new RSE curriculum after Easter Governors asked: • Is this level of response normal for a school, being mindful that there are 90% of the school who may comment after the policy is finalised? – This was discussed at the working group, and it was agreed that all parents had the opportunity to engage. • Does the redrafted policy have to be run past the Diocese? – We are following the Diocesan framework for the policy. The guidelines say that schools are able to alter the policy to reflect their community. However, we will run it past the Diocese before the policy goes back to the working group. • How will it be in line with other Catholic Primary schools? – From conversations held within the Deanery, schools have gone through consultations in different ways, but Headteachers are united in their approach, and all want our schools to be welcoming. There will be no stark differences.	
	9.	**To evaluate the Parent Survey** The survey summary, comments and spreadsheet with all responses were shared prior to the meeting. Governors discussed the responses for question 22 – *I receive enough information about the work of the governors*. 65 out of 82 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, which governors felt was positive. However, the fact that governors were unable to be present in person in and around school may have contributed to this not being higher. It was suggested that a strategy should be devised on how to be more visible; this could include • reviving the governor blurb in the school newsletter,	

	• and/or asking parents what they would have expected to know, as relevant information about the governors is already available on the website • hold meetings with potential governor candidates, introducing them to the role and at that point asking them how they think governors should communicate with parents and the wider community, ie providing an outside view Governors recognised that the fact that learning is currently taking place remotely has impacted on answers to other questions and agreed that data from this survey is not comparative to previous years. However, considering that the survey went out at a time where parents' perceptions are impacted by difficulties, governors felt that responses were overall very positive. Governors were pleased to note that nearly all teachers had their name mentioned positively in the survey. A high percentage of parents are appreciating what teachers are doing with remote learning and are very supportive. Governors felt that they need to spend more time at this survey and to consider what communications should be had with parents going forward. **The Headteacher and the chair will talk about actions from a governor perspective as well as implications for the wider school.** A governor noted that some negative comments were written in broken English and enquired whether there could be a language barrier, ie that parents do not understand what is available to them, or that these parents have different expectations due to their culture, especially in terms of feedback and how often progress should be reported. The Headteacher explained that there are ways of exploring how feedback can be provided. Some comments were not factually accurate, and governors explored whether this could be due to lack of clarity of communications. They will focus further on aspects of the negative comments. Governors asked how these comments can be addressed with the parents who made them, as the survey was anonymous, and how to give school the opportunity to pick up problems before they become bigger issues. The Headteacher explained that he would like to continue to be available at parents evenings, and parents will also be referred to the parent council. **The chair and the Headteacher will discuss how the survey outcomes should be reported to parents, and the proposal will be sent to all governors for their input and feedback.**	PB, MF PB, MF
10.	**Updates on Partnerships** *10.1 Deanery* *10.2 Deans* *10.3 Deans Sports Partnership* Minutes of the Deanery Headteachers' meeting were shared prior to the meeting and taken as read. Due to time pressures, further updates on the other two items and the chairs' meetings were not deemed to be necessary, as also this is a standing agenda item.	
11.	**Policies and other statutory documents to review/approve/discuss** *11.1 New Governor Induction Policy **(approve)*** Governors thanked Emma for her contributions. *11.2 Pupil Premium Policy (approved by Q&S - note)*	

	10.3 Covid Addendum to Safeguarding Policy (note) *10.4 Whistleblowing policy **(approve)*** *10.5 Capability Procedure (approved by Resources - note)* *10.6 Special Leave of Absence Policy (recommended by Resources -* ***approve)*** *10.7 Debt Policy (approved by Resources - note)* *10.8 NQT Policy (recommended by Resources - **approve)*** ***Approved:*** ***All above policies were noted or unanimously approved as required.***	
12	**Meeting Close** • *Any other business* None. The meeting closed at 8.45pm.	

Documents circulated prior to the meeting:

Reading Led Curriculum
Minutes of the last meeting
Notes from Lockdown Update Meeting
Safeguarding update
Strategic Group Meeting minutes
Q&S Committee minutes
Resources Committee minutes
Three training reports on wellbeing
Wellbeing Evaluation tool
Wellbeing Self-Review
Visit Report Y5/6 Assembly
Extract from Ofsted Inspection Framework
Monitoring Plan
Notes from RSE Working Group meeting

Parent Survey Summary
Parent Survey detailed spreadsheet
Parent Survey Comments
Deanery Headteacher Minutes
New Governor Induction Policy
Pupil Premium Policy
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Covid 19 Addendum
Whistleblowing Policy
Capability Procedure
Special Leave of Absence Policy
Debt Policy
NQT Policy