



ST JAMES' R.C. ACADEMY TRUST

Maybury Close, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1BL

Faith in Action, Working Together, Walking in the Footsteps of Christ

Minutes of the 134th meeting of the Governing Body which took place on Thursday 25th November 2021 starting at 1700 on Zoom.

Present:

Mary Hutchinson (Chair of Governors)

Lisa Weeks (Head Teacher)

Michelle Wilson

Mark Edwards

Kenneth Chan

Fr David Camilleri

Margaret Connell

Mark Hutchins

Cat Hardiman

Martin D'Souza

Elizabeth Williamson

In Attendance: Dominique Wells (Clerk)

Papers relating to the meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

1. Opening Prayers

Fr David opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence

Amanda Garlick, Paul Gribben

3. Declarations of Interest in items in this Agenda.

None.

4. Committee Matters

Governors were requested to read and sign the Governors Code of Practice which is an annual requirement.

5. Review of Minutes of the last meeting, held on 17th June 2021:

5.1. Confirmation of Accuracy

Item 8: Holding the School to Account – Quality of Education

Amend 'With SEND students, the support staff are [~~the biggest~~] a significant outlay ...'

Item 17: Update on Umbrella Trust

Amend '[~~There is a~~] The DfE vision is for all schools ...'

Subject to the above amendments, **the minutes were agreed by all to be a true record.**

5.2. Matters Arising

None.

6. Head Teacher's Report

COVID update

The Head Teacher reported that there have been 5 positive cases of COVID in Y5 which raised the School's level to amber. This triggers contact with the LA and London COVID action group. She was confident that the source of infection had not been from within the School, which has been the case throughout the pandemic so far. The LA has been in agreement.

It was noted that other schools in the Umbrella Trust as well as secondary schools are in the amber level.

The advice from the LA had been to isolate the cohort and DfE guidance says that bubbles should not be formed unless instructed, nor can the whole cohort move to home learning. It has been challenging for the Head Teacher to manage staff and parents' fears.

It was advised that the School Fair could go ahead without Y5 and their families attending, but it was decided that it would be moved to the following Saturday so that, all being well, Y5 could participate.

A couple of members of staff are unwell or isolating. Children who have tested positive have been largely asymptomatic and well enough to do the home learning which is set daily. Children and staff in school have been very good at carrying on as normal.

Head Teacher's Report

This had been circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

Points were highlighted as follows:

- The EEDI meeting took place with Martin D'Souza in attendance. He reported that it had been a powerful meeting which focussed on scope-setting and what people were looking for from the Group. The main aim is to put a plan together of how to action and enable these issues to flow naturally through the curriculum.
- The School is looking forward to welcoming Fr David into the School again.
- School nurses were to administer the flu vaccine to children.
- The CIF bid appeal was successful and work starts in January.
- New teachers, Miss Spencer-Boyce and Ms Batten, have settled into their roles. Mrs Le Cuirot will be covering Mrs Martin's maternity leave.
- External reviews have taken place with Pam Fearnley and OFSTED.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: How does the School respond to parents' comments regarding 11+ support?

A: The School's remit is to prepare for all the challenges children are likely to face in life.

Q: Is there a support group within the community for parents who have lost loved ones?

A: The Head Teacher will follow up needs with Fr David.

Governors noted that there is an obvious multiplicity of roles that teachers take within a small school. They expressed their appreciation and gratitude for all that both teaching and non-teaching staff do.

7. OFSTED update

Confidential item.

8. Breakfast / After School Clubs

There had been concern during lockdown about the viability of supporting these clubs and whether sufficient numbers would come back. Numbers are now much healthier and no staff have been made redundant. The After School Club is back to pre-lockdown numbers and the Breakfast Club numbers make it viable. Both have improved in the last two weeks.

9. Pam Fearnley's Visit (update)

It is considered that Pam Fearnley adds vigour to the School's work. She is ready to challenge, gives the School aspects to work on and has prepared the School well for OFSTED. The relationship with Pam works well and she was a real asset and support during the OFSTED visit.

10. Safeguarding

There are no live cases. The Chair reported that she had attended further training which had been thought-provoking.

OFSTED had been very happy with the policy. A Safeguarding audit will take place in January.

11. Pupil Premium Report

This is required to be published by 31st December. The form has a new format which differs from previous years for detailing how the School is spending the money. The School is looking at whether families who need support can access it. This will be reviewed at the Children & Learning Committee meeting in the New Year.

12. R.E. Report

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting, with points highlighted as follows:

- Masses in church have resumed and thanks given to Fr David.
- Links with the Church are good.
- Assemblies are taking place together again, with themes including Black History Month and COP26.
- Active Listening workshops are planned and it is hoped that they will be beneficial.

13. GDPR Audit

Most 'amber' points from these have been actioned, with a couple still in process.

14. Chair's Report

The Chair offered thanks to Governors for the support they have given to the School during the OFSTED visit, especially at such short notice.

Parents from the School are involved in the Children's Liturgy, which is a good connection.

More Governor training is encouraged.

Questions asked by Governors:

Q: There is concern about the cost implications for the School for undertaking training.

A: The School would think of a suitable budget for training – this will be taken to the Resources & Audit Committee.

It was noted that there are some very good courses available, especially on Zoom.

15. Budget Monitoring Report

Questions to the Finance Officer were invited via email.

16. Sustainability / Climate Change

Mark Hutchins had written a report on this and took Governors through the key points.

17. Committee Reports

The Children and Learning and Resources and Audit Committees have met this term and the minutes from these meetings will be approved at the next meetings of these committees.

18. Policies

The Educational Visits Policy was agreed and will be signed by the Chair.

19. Umbrella Trust

The Umbrella Trust has proved to be a powerful force. Another school had an OFSTED visit in the same week and colleagues have been very supportive to each other during the OFSTED visits. All the schools happy to stay as an UT as long as possible.

Governor training on MATs was led by Diane Moss, who gave a broad and balanced perspective.

Pam Fearnley will give a report via Zoom next Wednesday to Chairs and Head Teachers.

20. Any other business

Gardening Report

Thanks were given to Mrs Deasy for a brilliant report. Despite lockdowns, the gardens have flourished and children have been making chutney from the marrows and tomatoes. With her work on Forest School also, the School considers that it is very lucky to have Mrs Deasy.

Open Morning

There were many attendees, including both new and familiar faces and ex-pupils.

School Fair

This is now taking place on 4th December. It was noted that the Church fair will be taking place on the 5th.

The Finance Officer was sent good wishes for recovery from illness and the Y5 staff were thanked for their continuing work.

21. Dates of next meetings

Resources & Audit Committee	Tuesday 18th January at 4.30pm
Governor Morning	Tuesday 1st February at 9.15am
Admissions Committee (to endorse process used for admissions)	Tuesday 2nd March at 4.00pm
Children & Learning Committee	Tuesday 2nd March at 4.30pm
Full Governing Body	Thursday 17th March at 5.00pm

22. The Closing Prayer was led by Fr David.

The meeting closed at 18:09