



THE ST JOSEPH AND ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD IN THE SCHOOL
ON TUESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 6.00PM**

Present: Mr L Addison-Smyth, Mr M Blake, Mrs M Clark, Professor S Clark, Mrs P Conway, Mrs L E Donachie, Miss K Haggart, Reverend C Hayden, Mrs H Haywood, Ms C Lawlor, Mr D Murray (Chair), Mr P Norman (Acting Executive Headteacher), Mr C Savage, Mrs J Smith, Mr C Tate, Mrs S Walmsley

Also present:

Mrs J Nicholson, Clerk to the Governing Body

The meeting was opened with a prayer

		Action
82 Welcome	The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.	
83 Apologies for Absence	All Governors were present at the meeting.	
84 Declaration of Interest	The Clerk invited Governors to declare any personal interests in agenda items at this or any point during the meeting. There were no declarations of interest recorded at this meeting.	
85 Minutes	Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2019 would be circulated with the papers for the Governing Body meeting on 24 October 2019.	
86 Consider Options Going Forward	The Chair apologised that the paperwork had not been forwarded to Governors as early as had been intended, this was due to waiting for additional information to be received. An Options Appraisal, which outlined four options, had been circulated to aid discussion on the future of Catholic primary education in the current catchment areas of St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Gilesgate and St Thomas More Roman Catholic Primary School, Belmont. The options for discussion were as follows: 1. Do nothing. Continue to run as the two primary schools as a federated governing body.	

2. Close St Thomas More School and continue to operate St Joseph's School, with increased capacity for those pupils at St Thomas More who chose to attend St Joseph's.
3. Close St Joseph's and continue to operate St Thomas More with increased capacity for those pupils at St Joseph's who chose to attend St Thomas More.
4. Close both schools and open a new Catholic Primary School on the St Joseph's site with appropriate improvements / amalgamate the schools (pending legal advice).

The Chair talked Governors through each option and invited questions.

Option 1

This option was quickly ruled out by Governors who felt that to do nothing was not an option both morally and for the reputation of the schools.

Options 2 and 3

These were mirror options regarding one or the other school closing. Governors queried why the schools were under-subscribed and one of the reasons which had come up over the past few years was the lack of nursery provision. A further concern raised by Governors, should one or the other school close, was the capacity for one school to accommodate pupils from across both schools. It was confirmed that currently there were 216 pupils across both schools which could be accommodated in one school. The Diocese had also promised to provide LCVAP funding to extend floor space should the decision be made to choose one or other of the sites.

Catholic families requesting school places had fallen and the Headteacher agreed to share information with Governors relating to the number of Catholic and non-Catholic pupils across the federation.

A Governor queried if the schools could apply for sponsorship from businesses and the Chair explained this was not a possibility as the schools were maintained and only free schools and academies could seek corporate funding.

The Chair advised that he had spent a considerable amount of time with architects and planners at the Local Authority and shared the proposed option of improving the EYFS outdoor provision at St Joseph's.

Leading on from a question relating to Nursery provision, this was something that would be considered going forward.

The repairs required to ensure the chosen school was fit for purpose were discussed. These would be costed and planned as part of the consultation process.

**Acting
Executive
Headteacher**

	<p>The need to ensure that moving forward a balanced budget could be set and was sustainable was shared.</p> <p>A Governor asked what would happen should the Local Authority not pay the outstanding deficit on the budget should one school close. The Chair explained that they were required by law to take on the debt of any maintained school which was closed. Talks were currently ongoing between the Local Authority and their barrister regarding financial implications should both schools amalgamate.</p> <p>Governors queried staffing implications. Should either school close then posts for that school became redundant however should both schools amalgamate the opportunity to ring fence posts for staff would be considered.</p> <p>Having reviewed the financial implications and repairs needed, Governors agreed that a consultation would not be considered on a move to the St Thomas More School site.</p> <p><u>Option 4</u> Governors discussed the advantages of consulting on a new school which would accommodate all pupils from across both schools.</p> <p>The loss of the deficit budget for both schools and the equal opportunities for all staff across the federation were considered along with the marketing of a new school and the advantages it would bring.</p> <p>The Chair reiterated that, if necessary, consultation could take place on more than one option should the Governing Body decide that their first option was not viable.</p> <p>Following in-depth discussion, the Chair proposed that Governors vote on Option 4. A secret ballot took place and the Clerk confirmed that the decision was unanimous to consult on Option 4.</p> <p>The Chair would liaise with the Diocese and the Local Authority and would set out some proposed timescales to share with Governors.</p>	Chair
87 Dates of Future Meetings	<p>The following date for the meeting of the full Governing Body was agreed:</p> <p>Autumn Term 2019: Thursday 24 October at 6.00pm</p>	

There being no further business, Governors were reminded about confidentiality and the meeting was closed with a prayer at 7.40pm.

Signed
Chair

Date

