



THE ST JOSEPH AND ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD IN JOSEPH'S CHURCH HALL
ON THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER 2019 AT 6.00PM**

Present:

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

Also present:

Mrs J Nicholson, Clerk to the Governing Body
Mrs J Lewin, School Performance Officer (part)

The meeting was opened with a prayer

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| 1 | <p><u>Introduction and Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.</p> | |
| 2 | <p><u>Declaration of Interest</u></p> <p>Governors were reminded of the need to complete the 'Governors Pecuniary and Other Interests' form and hand to the Acting Executive Headteacher at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk invited Governors to declare any interests in agenda items at this or any point during the meeting.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest recorded at this point.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>'Governors Pecuniary and Other Interests' forms to be completed by those Governors not present at this meeting and forwarded to the school.</p> | Chair of Governors |
| 3 | <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received and accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor S Clark – work commitments • Mrs J Smith - maternity | |
| 4 | <p><u>Membership of the Governing Body</u></p> <p>The Clerk reported that since the last termly meeting the following appointments had been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miss K Haggart, Co-opted Governor, 1 September 2019 | |

- Mr D Murray, Foundation Governor, 3 September 2019

5 **Headteacher's Report**

The Acting Executive Headteacher presented his previously circulated report to Governors.

The following areas were highlighted:

School Roll

There had been some movement at St Joseph's with 132 pupils now on roll, 17 having joined Reception in September. St Thomas More currently had 86 pupils on roll with 9 pupils in Reception.

The increase in persistent absence at St Joseph's was being closely monitored. The SIMS system was able to identify any pupils with persistent absence and these would be targeted.

An update on child protection and safeguarding was provided and Mr Smith, Link Governor for Safeguarding, confirmed that he had enrolled on an eLearning course for Safeguarding and Mrs Walmsley confirmed that she had completed Level 2 Safeguarding training.

Stakeholder Voice

Positive views had been received from both schools. At St Joseph's, parents had been invited to complete questionnaires about the quality of collective worship in school with 100% positive feedback. St Thomas More feedback from the Section 8 inspection, where 41 parents completed Ofsted's parent view questionnaires, were also extremely positive.

Personal Development and Wellbeing

Behaviour was very good across the federation. There had been a couple of minor incidents which had since been resolved.

Following consultation with the Local Authority, a draft contract had finally been received to allow the Tea Time Club to commence at St Joseph's. Copies of the contract would be shared with Governors at the next Finance and Premises Committee meeting and once approved a start date could be agreed. The Chair stressed the importance of ensuring there would be no hidden costs for this provision.

A Morning Club was currently being trialled at St Thomas More and the loss of £187 was challenged. Ways to encourage more pupils to access the provision were being explored. The start time had been changed to 7.45am, with no additional cost incurred from the sports coach to do this. A simple breakfast would also be provided. The club would be reviewed at Christmas to ascertain its viability. A Governor asked if it would be possible to source grants for the Morning Club and the Chair advised that these were aimed at areas of low deprivation and not Catholic schools.

Pupil Outcomes

The low number of pupils reaching a good level of development in Early Years at St Joseph's was queried. It was explained that there were several factors why pupils had not reached this target. There were a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language and some with challenging

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| | <p>behaviour. Targeted intervention had been sourced and, where necessary, there had been an application for top up funding for additional support. Governors would be monitoring performance of this cohort with the expectation that by the time they reached Y6, barriers to learning had been reduced and each pupil had been able to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Mrs Lewis highlighted that the progress pupils made was much more important than attainment and advised that a Link Governor with responsibility for SEND carefully monitor that cohort's progress.</p> <p>The Acting Executive Headteacher explained the baseline data for both schools and reiterated the problems faced with mobility at St Joseph's. The key focuses were outlined which included ensuring pupils not only reaching age related expectation but also to maximise the potential of pupils to reach greater depth.</p> <p>The Phonics Test data was presented, and it was highlighted that St Joseph's were currently working with the English Hub to improve the teaching of phonics. All staff at St Joseph's would also receive training on Read, Write Inc.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>Copies of the draft contract for the Tea Time Club at St Joseph's would be shared at the next Finance and Premises Committee meeting.</p> | <p>Acting Executive Headteacher</p> |
| <p>6</p> | <p><u>Ofsted Section 8 Inspection Feedback and Action Plan</u></p> <p>An action plan to improve the areas which had been highlighted following the Ofsted inspection at St Thomas More was tabled at the meeting and updates were provided by the Acting Executive Headteacher and Mrs Lewin.</p> <p>The following areas were to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonics and KS1 Reading • Early Years Mathematics • Foundation Subjects Curriculum Planning <p>The Chair was of the opinion that the areas for improvement within Early Years and Y1 were not something new to Governors and Mrs Lewin confirmed that when she had observed Early Years there had been some concern regarding adult interaction with pupils.</p> <p>Both the Acting Executive Headteacher and Acting Deputy Headteacher had already identified these areas as a priority within the School Improvement Plan and it was unfortunate that the inspection had taken place so early in the term. CPD had been arranged for staff on the foundation subjects but it was to take place later in the term.</p> <p>The actions which would be taken to address these areas were outlined along with timescales and progress to date.</p> <p>The importance of ensuring the books were phonically matched was highlighted along with the recommendation from Mrs Lewin that a new</p> | |

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| | <p>contract be arranged for support from the experts at the Local Authority both in Early Years curriculum and Reception and Y1 early reading.</p> <p>Mrs Lewin explained the process of the Section 5 Inspection, including timelines, to ensure the school was prepared and all remedial action had been taken.</p> <p>An update on the Post-Ofsted Action Plan would be provided at the next Governing Body meeting.</p> | |
| | <p>Mrs Lewin was thanked for her contribution and she left the meeting.</p> | |
| 7 | <p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>Governors received and agreed the minutes of the full Governing Body meetings held on 14 and 27 June, 17 July and 10 September 2019, which were signed by the Chair as a true record.</p> <p>Minutes of the following Committee meetings were received for information:</p> <p>Finance and Premises Committee held on 27 June 2019 Curriculum and Standards Committee held on 11 July 2019 First/Pay Review Committee held on 29 November and 18 December 2018 First/Pay Review Committee held on 18 and 25 January 2019</p> | |
| 8 | <p><u>Matters Arising including Action Points</u></p> <p>The Action Points relating to the Summer Term 2019 full Governing Body meeting were received. All actions had been completed.</p> | |
| 9 | <p><u>Chair's Emergency Powers</u></p> <p>No action had been taken under the Chair's emergency powers since the last meeting.</p> | |
| 10 | <p><u>Note of Visit Reports</u></p> <p>Governors received the Note of Visit Reports following the Senior Leadership Adviser's visit to St Joseph's on 19 November 2018, 5 March and 15 July 2019 and St Thomas More on 16 November 2018, 5 March and 15 July 2019.</p> | |
| 11 | <p><u>LA Monitoring and Intervention for Improvement</u></p> <p>Both schools had moved from Level 2 to Level T3 within the Local Authority's Scheme for Monitoring and Intervention for Improvement to provide additional support following the change in the Senior Leadership Team.</p> | |
| 12 | <p><u>Consultation Actions and Timescales</u></p> <p>The Chair provided an update advising that the Local Authority had requested a meeting which was scheduled to take place on 11 November. Governors would be provided with feedback after the meeting.</p> | |

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| | <p>The Chair had continued to have regular discussions with the Local Authority Finance Department however, an answer on how the deficit budgets would be addressed was still awaited.</p> <p>Following requests by Governors to have sight of the structural surveys, the Chair had asked the Diocese to have new surveys carried out to enable Governors to have an up to date full assessment of the properties.</p> | |
| 13 | <p><u>School Funding Update</u></p> <p>Governors received an update from the School Funding Team on a range of financial issues.</p> <p>The Governing Body agreed to delegate responsibility for all matters relating to the preparation and implementation of a budget plan for the 2020/2021 financial year to the First/Pay Review Committee if necessary. It was further agreed that the delegation remain valid to the date of the first meeting of the Governing Body during the Autumn Term 2020.</p> | |
| 14 | <p><u>Final End of Year Statements 2018/2019</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper from the School Funding Team, which included the final end of year revenue for the financial year 2018/2019.</p> | |
| 15 | <p><u>School Budget 2019/2020 Update – Forecast of Outturn</u></p> <p>The position had not changed in so much as both schools were unable to set a balanced budget and the Chair urged Governors to scrutinise the SLAs at the Finance and Premises Committee meeting and look to make savings wherever possible.</p> | |
| 16 | <p><u>Monitoring of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Other Contracts</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper, together with a list of the school's current Service Level Agreements (SLAs) which would be reviewed, and recommendations mad at the Finance and Premises Committee meeting.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>(a) Current buy-back arrangements to be reviewed and confirm any changes as necessary;</p> <p>(b) Service providers to be informed in writing where buyback of the SLA was not to be continued with effect from 1 April 2020.</p> | <p>Finance and Premises Committee</p> <p>Acting Executive Headteacher</p> |
| 17 | <p><u>Monitoring Link Governor Reports</u></p> <p>A report on the Open Morning for prospective new parents at St Thomas More had been provided by Mrs Donachie. The excellent work of the Friends of St Thomas More School was highlighted and a letter was to be sent thanking the Friends of St Thomas More School for their involvement in the promotion of St Thomas More School amongst prospective parents.</p> <p>Monitoring links were discussed and the following were agreed:</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Savage would be the link for SEND • Ms Lawlor and Mrs Walmsley would be links for Early Years and maths and reading <p>A review of Governor links was to be carried out prior to a monitoring plan being compiled.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>(a) Written reports be forwarded to the Acting Executive Headteacher for circulation in the Governing Body pack and retention in the Governor Monitoring File.</p> <p>(b) Monitoring links to be an agenda item at the next meeting.</p> | <p>Monitoring Link Governors</p> <p>Clerk</p> |
| 18 | <p><u>Governor Training Feedback and Impact</u></p> <p>Governors had attended a post-Ofsted training session. The Chair stressed the importance of attending training which focussed on the priorities of The Federation.</p> | |
| 19 | <p><u>Safeguarding Policy Updates and Approval</u></p> <p>Governors signed to confirm they had read the updated policies along with the Keeping Children Safe in Education Document</p> | |
| 20 | <p><u>Governance Update</u></p> <p>Governors received the Governance Update briefing paper which included information on a range of national and local issues.</p> <p>The Governing Body agreed the following process in relation to reporting of formal monitoring visits.</p> <p>The Governing Body agreed to adopt the Governor Training Policy copies of which would be emailed by the clerk along with model role descriptors for Link Governors.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>(a) Model role descriptors for Monitoring Link Governors to be emailed to the Chair of Governors;</p> <p>(b) Attend termly Chairs briefings.</p> | <p>Clerk</p> <p>Chair / Vice Chair</p> |
| 21 | <p><u>General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper which provided an update on the requirements of the GDPR and the availability of training for staff and Governors.</p> <p>Governors noted that an updated Data Protection Policy and Photographic Images Policy was available from the Local Authority which incorporated advice regarding dealing with a Subject Access Request (SAR).</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> | |

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| | <p>(a) To review the school's data protection systems;</p> <p>(b) Regular briefings to be provided on data protection to the Governing Body at termly meetings.</p> | <p>Data Protection Governor/Acting Executive Headteacher</p> |
| 22 | <p><u>Report of the Schools Advice and Support Team</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper from the Schools' HR Advice and Support Team which provided information on new and updated policies and guidance. In addition, the paper provided details of available training for Governors and staff.</p> <p>The Governing Body noted all policies which had been updated and agreed to adopt all new policies as stated on the briefing paper.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>All staff to be made aware of the new and updated policies and guidance.</p> | <p>Acting Executive Headteacher</p> |
| 23 | <p><u>Keeping Children Safe in Education</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper in relation to the revised Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) statutory guidance, which was effective from 2 September 2019. The paper outlined the main changes within the revised guidance. In addition, the paper confirmed details of Child Protection training available for Governors during the Autumn Term 2019.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>(a) To receive assurance that all school policies and procedures had been updated to reflect the revised guidance;</p> <p>(b) To ensure the Governing Body continued to comply with their statutory duty under the legislation.</p> | <p>Governing Body</p> <p>All Governors</p> |
| 24 | <p><u>Ofsted Inspection Framework</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper which outlined the significant change in focus, conduct and reporting of school inspections from September 2019. It was noted that the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) would be used to inspect all maintained schools (including nurseries), academies and Further Education Colleges.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>(a) To become familiar and confident with the new framework and the new focus of inspection;</p> <p>(b) To consider the work done so far by leaders in review of the curriculum and development of precise curriculum intent. To be clear about not just the overarching aims of the curriculum, but also the clarity of definition in specific knowledge to be gained in each subject area;</p> | <p>All Governors</p> <p>All Governors</p> |

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| | <p>(c) To consider the degree to which the quality assurance they receive from school leaders had evolved to reflect the focus of the Quality of Education judgement;</p> <p>(d) To be satisfied that school leaders ensure and assure the quality of education for all pupils in the school;</p> <p>(e) To be aware of the raised profile of special educational needs in the new framework.</p> | <p>All Governors</p> <p>All Governors</p> <p>All Governors</p> |
| 25 | <p><u>Safeguarding Arrangements</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper which outlined the new arrangements for safeguarding children in County Durham effective April 2019.</p> <p>Governors noted that the Local Children’s Safeguarding Board had been replaced by the Durham Safeguarding Children’s Partnership; a link to a document detailing the new arrangements was provided within the briefing paper.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>All documentation to be updated to reflect the new safeguarding arrangements.</p> | <p>Executive Acting Headteacher/ Link Governor for Safeguarding</p> |
| 26 | <p><u>Internal Audit and Risk Management</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper which outlined the changes to the School’s Financial Value Standard (SFVS) for 2019/2020.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>To ensure completed submissions were made in the new format and submitted to Internal Audit by 31 March 2020 following approval by the Finance and Premises Committee/full Governing Body.</p> | <p>Executive Acting Headteacher</p> |
| 27 | <p><u>Pupil Voice Update – Making Your Mark</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper which provided an update on the work with children and young people within all phases of Durham schools and settings to determine the extent to which they felt they had a ‘voice’. The paper provided information on the forthcoming ballot for representatives to join Durham’s Youth Council.</p> <p>The paper also provided information regarding the Making your Mark ballot which allowed children and young people to vote on issues to be discussed by the UK Youth Parliament.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>To ensure all pupils had the chance to have their voice heard in school.</p> | <p>Governors</p> |

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| <p>28</p> | <p><u>Admission Arrangements 2021/2022</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper from the Local Authority regarding admission arrangements for 2021/2022.</p> <p>Details of the school's proposed Published Admission Number for 2021/2022 were also presented.</p> <p>Governors discussed the Published Admission Numbers for both schools for 2021/2022 and agreed with the recommended admission number for St Joseph's RCVA Primary School. Governors requested that an alternative admission number of 17 be considered for St Thomas More RCVA Primary School.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>Local Authority to be requested to consider an alternative Admission Limit of 17 for the 2021/22 academic year.</p> | <p>Clerk</p> |
| <p>29</p> | <p><u>Dates of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>The following date for meetings of the full Governing Body which were to be held at St Joseph's Church was agreed:</p> <p>Spring Term 2020: Thursday 6 February at 6.00pm</p> <p>The committee meetings, which were to be held at St Thomas More RCVA Primary School, dates were to be agreed:</p> <p>Curriculum and Standards Tuesday 5 November at 8.30am Finance and Premises Thursday 7 November at 8.30am</p> | |

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Signed

Date

Chair