

**ST MARY & ST PANCRAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY  
held on**

**Tuesday 10 February 2015 at 6.00pm**

**ATTENDEES**

| <b>Governor Type</b>   | <b>Name</b>                | <b>Term of Office End</b> | <b>Present/Absent /Apologies</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Incumbent (COM)        | Rev Anne Stevens           | Ex-officio                | Present                          |
|                        | Father Paschal Worton      | Ex-officio                | Present                          |
| LDBS                   | Gregory Watson             | March 2017                | Present                          |
|                        | Sophie Steel (Chair)       | Feb 2016                  | Present                          |
| Deanery (South Camden) | Vacancy                    |                           |                                  |
|                        | Marion Rushbrook           | Sept 2017                 | Present                          |
| Foundation Parent      |                            |                           |                                  |
| P CC                   | Mark Paul-Clark            | Aug 2016                  | Apologies                        |
|                        | Vacancy                    |                           |                                  |
| Local Authority        | Nana Oye Adjepong          | Nov 2016                  | Present                          |
| Parents                | Vacancy                    |                           |                                  |
|                        | Marie LeMaitre             | Sept 2017                 | Present                          |
|                        | Diederick Santer (V-Chair) | May 2015                  | Present                          |
| Headteacher            | Sheila McCalla-Gordon      | Ex-officio                | Present                          |
| Staff                  | Vacancy                    |                           |                                  |
| Staff                  | Nick Tidey                 | Jan 2018                  | Present                          |
| <b>Also present</b>    |                            |                           |                                  |
| SBM                    | Debra Griffith             | NA                        | Present                          |
| DHT                    | Lucy Heard                 | N/A                       | Present                          |
| Cover Clerk (LDBS)     | Pat Elcock                 | N/A                       | Present                          |

*Meeting opened at 6:00pm*

**Part One (Non Confidential)**

**80. Opening Prayer**

80.1 The meeting opened at 6: 00pm with a prayer led by Father Paschal Worton.

**81. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

81.1 The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting and introduced Ann Foster from the London Diocesan Board of Schools (LDBS) as in attendance for the first part of the meeting to deliver a presentation to governors.

81.2 Apologies from Mark Paul-Clark were noted and ACCEPTED. The meeting was quorate.

**82. Presentation on 'Changes on Educational Policy – Ann Foster**

82.1 Ann Foster thanked governors for inviting her to their meeting to advise them of the changes in educational policy that have taken place over the last couple of years and of their impact to school governance. She stated that she had attended a conference held by the Local

Government Association earlier that day and had detected a notable emphasis on expectations of governors from the Department of Education and Ofsted to drive school improvement.

82.2 Ann circulated copies of her PowerPoint presentation and talked governors through its content.

82.3 A brief discussion was held about the raised expectations of governors in a climate of diminishing external support. Governors noted the requirement of governing bodies of maintained schools to re-constitute itself to bodies that are smaller, more focused and professional in its conduct. Ann advised of a change in language whereby governing bodies were referred to as Boards of Governors and the expectation that they act along similar lines to corporate boards in the private sector. Governors acknowledged that they had used the analysis of their governors' skill audit to inform their recent decisions about its future size and make up under the new Constitution Regulations.

82.4 Ann advised governors of Ofsted's recently closed consultation to revise its inspection framework from September 2015 to that of an even lighter touch and of the current consultation to consider establishing a requirement that governing bodies of maintained schools to publish information about how they fulfil their responsibilities on the school's website. A further discussion was held about what this report would look like and whether information already captured within the leadership and management section of the school's SEF could be published or used as a starting point for the report.

82.5 Ann reminded governors of the impact of Ofsted's recently carried out no notice inspections, the lessons learnt from them and the importance of governors knowing their school context and vulnerable groups of children.

82.6 The following **RECOMMENDATIONS** were made from the presentation and governors' discussion. The Governing Body to:

- Establish a Governors' Code of Practice;
- Carry out a review of its practices and effectiveness using the NGA 'Twenty Questions' as an evaluating tool to do so;
- Consider publishing an annual Governors' Report;
- Consider establishing a Governing Body Decision Planner; and
- Consider placing agreed information about the Governing Body and its work (including its impact) on the school website.

82.7 In response to a governor question, Ann explained that a good governing body would have a structure that effectively monitored and evaluated the performance of the school. The Headteacher explained that the Governing Body had moved to a monthly meeting cycle and two previously established committees had been reconvened as working groups to meet outside of that cycle to report back at these monthly meetings. In addition, governors would provide meaningful challenge through appropriate questioning, have the ability to interpret and understand its school data (including the ability to spot trends and patterns) and be aware of the key National and local issues and of the possible implications to their school.

82.8 The Chair thanked Ann for her presentation and the thought-provoking discussion and ideas that it had generated. It was AGREED that the recommendations noted above would be explored by governors at their future meetings.

*Ann Foster left the meeting after this item.*

### **83. Declaration of Interest – Pecuniary and Otherwise**

83.1 None declared.

### **84. Part 1 Minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on the 13 January 2015 & Matters Arising**

84.1 The Part 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2015 previously circulated with the agenda papers were reviewed by all governors in attendance at that meeting.

84.2 The Minutes were **agreed as a true and accurate record** subject to the following amendments:

- Item 68.3 – Correction of Mark Paul-Clark's name.

A copy of these minutes was SIGNED by the Vice-Chair of Governors and handed to the School Business Manager for filing.

84.3 Matters arising - the agreed actions from the previous minutes were reviewed and the following comments noted:

- Item 65.3 – Action remains outstanding
- Item 68.3 – Completed. In response to a governor's question the Headteacher provided clarification about the school's systems for tracking pupil progress.
- Item 69.3 – Completed.
- Item 69.4 – Completed.
- Item 70.3 – Completed.
- Item 71.1 – It was noted that the action that the Admissions Policy Working Group be a standing agenda item was a decision taken by governors and is ongoing.
- Item 74.2 – Completed.
- Item 77.1 – Completed.

## **85. Headteacher's Verbal Report**

85.1 The Headteacher (HT) provided governors with an informal written report. It was agreed that the document should be attached as an appendix to the minutes.

85.2 The HT explained that the school SEF had been updated and was being reviewed by the Senior Management Team before its presentation to governors. The HT guided governors through her paper and advised of its update with regard to the Ofsted judgement areas for: quality of teaching and learning; achievement of pupils; and leadership and management.

85.3 Governors noted the positive impact of the school's use of Learning Studies and the benefits already noted by teachers on how it has helped them to reflect upon their practices to improve their teaching. The HT reminded governors that Ofsted now judged the quality of teaching alongside pupil outcomes and advised governors of the school's systems to monitor this. Governors acknowledged that the school routinely carries out half-termly pupil progress reviews and senior leaders meet with all teachers to review pupil data including evidence collected from the scrutiny of pupils' books and work to monitor whether children are on track to meet expectations. In response to a governor question the HT confirmed that the reviews included the close monitoring of the performance of its identified vulnerable groups of children. Governors acknowledged that the Learning study is a now well established and embedded teaching and learning self-review tool in the school. This led to a governor discussion about the impact of the removal of pupil levelling and in the absence of any external guidance the need for schools to develop its own assessment methods. Governors appreciated the dangers of the schools 'doing their own thing' and welcomed the Headteacher's information school clusters had now been established by Camden Council to encourage schools to peer moderate, develop and share good practices. In response to a governor question the HT stated that the maths curriculum was proving to be particularly challenging and that only the Year 1 group was relatively unaffected in terms of teachers needing to revise their teaching strategies to support the learning of more challenging concepts at earlier stages.

85.4 The HT advised of the impact of the more challenging new curriculum and that a notable proportion of pupils in each cohort were not at age related expectation. The HT asked governors to note teaching and learning is good in the school and that the school has carried out investigations to determine the reasons for each pupil's underperformance and put in place bespoke support to accelerate their progress. An outline of the interventions put in place by the

school was provided to governors. A discussion was held about the monitoring methods explained by the HT and in response to a governor question the HT advised that evidence to date suggested that overall children were responding positively to the targeted support. The school is actively supporting a small minority of children that had not responded to the interventions as expected. The HT advised that in all cases (though few in number) where children did not take up the offer of intervention outside school hours these children are from White British backgrounds and are not being adequately supported and encouraged from home.

**ACTION: The Headteacher to provide governors with appropriate performance data for each cohort for review at their next meeting on 10 March 2015.**

85.5 The HT advised governors of the school's development of three middle leaders as part of the school's succession planning activities under leadership and management.

85.6 The HT explained that the school had carried out a number of activities to support its safety of children. Examples of activities included:

- E-Safety Parent workshop held earlier in the day – led by Nick Tidey.
- Upgrading of the school website.
- The school is currently working to the achievement of Level 2 within the 'Rights & Respect in Schools' initiative.

85.7 Governors noted that co-ordinators have updated their relevant areas on 'School Centre. Net', which provided evidence of progress with regard to the prioritised objectives in the School Improvement Plan.

## **86. Governing Body Re-Constitution**

86.1 The Chair updated governors of the progress of its new Instrument of Government. Governors were provided with copies of the Draft Instrument of Government and noted that it had now been agreed as suitable by all consulted parties and now needed their formal approval before it is forwarded to Camden Council. All governors in attendance agreed that the contents of the draft IOG accurately reflected previously agreed decisions about the future size and make-up of the Governing Body and that the date for its implementation be **12 May 2015**.

**Action: The Draft Instrument of Government was approved by all governors in attendance and it was AGREED that the Chair/Clerk would forward it to Camden Council for its legal endorsement.**

86.2 The Cover Clerk advised of the need for the Governing Body to consider its current make-up including existing vacancies and whether there was a need for governor elections and appointments in light of impending changes. Governors understood that the School Governance Constitution Regulations 2014 implied that current governors would transfer over subject to any expiry of terms of offices. It was noted that Diederick Santer's term of office as a parent governor was due to end in May 2015 and that a parent election would be required. Governors also acknowledged that two foundation governor vacancies needed to be filled by the Parish of Old St Pancras PCC and the South Camden Deanery Synod. Father Paschal advised of the ongoing challenge to find governors and that continued efforts were being made to do so. A brief discussion was held about the governors' skills audit identifying a need for more finance expertise and that this should be noted with regard to the appointment of governors by the Governing Body (co-opted) and foundation governors.

**Action: The School to initiate a parent governor election at the beginning of the summer term for the replacement of Diederick Santer in May 2015.**

**The Parish of Old St Pancras PCC and the South Camden Deanery Synod to be advised by the Chair of the need for governor appointments to the school to fill its outstanding vacancies under the new Instrument of Government.**

## **87. School Business Manager's Report**

87.1 The School Business Manager (SBM) referred governors to her previously circulated report and talked them through its contents. In response to a governor question the SBM explained that agency staff costs were incurred for the cover of staff absent for training. A brief discussion was held about how training costs compared to that of last year and whether the high expenditure of last year would be repeated. The HT advised that she did not envisage this being the case as last year was an unusual circumstance with the introduction of a new curriculum and a SEN Code of Practice requiring significant staff training.

87.2 A concern was raised about the school's current year end projection (a surplus of £64,769) when considered alongside the its opening balance of £180,000. The SBM explained that funding for the school's previous Children Centre had subsidised a number of school costs which now had to be self-financed. A brief discussion was held about the level of overspend and of its unsustainability in the longer term. It was AGREED that this was a matter that needed to be urgently discussed by the Finance Working Party.

**Action: The Finance Working Party to agree a date to meet immediately after the half-term to investigate the reasons for the school's overspend and to establish an appropriate 3 Year Budget Plan for the school. It was AGREED that the Working Party would report back its findings and proposed budget plan to governors at their next meeting.**

87.3 School Financial Value Standard (SFVS) 2014/5 - The SBM referred governors to the completed SFVS document previously circulated with the minutes. Gregory Watson advised governors of the changes made to the responses in the document and the reasons for them. All governors in attendance acknowledged the comments/evidence in the document and approved it as appropriate for referral to Camden Council.

**Action: The School Financial Value Standard (SFVS) 2014/5 was signed and dated by the Chair of Governors and handed to the SBM for forwarding to Camden Council by 31 March 2015.**

87.4 The SBM advised governors of the premise updates in her report. The following governors' comments/observations were made:

- Hall flooring – it was suggested that an exact date is determined to ensure works are carried out in a timely fashion;
- Boilers – the SBM confirmed in response to a governor question that Camden Council is responsible for the provision of replacement parts and that this is actively being chased;

- Fire drill – the HT explained that a recently held fire drilled was hindered by her prevention of allowing some children to proceed to the school playground bare-footed for the fire-drill. Governors agreed with the HT's intervention and supported her introduced rule that children are required to wear footwear in transit to the school hall for PE; and
- External fencing – a discussion was held about the reasons for complaints about the noise levels from the use of the ball area. The HT informed governors that she was advised by Camden Council that the fencing was not unusually noisy and replacement fencing was deemed unnecessary. It is suspected that users are responsible for the complaints about noise levels and signs have now been put up requesting they use the area with due consideration for neighbours. Governors were satisfied that the school had exercised all reasonable efforts to try to resolve the situation.

## **88 Admissions Working Party**

88.1 The HT advised governors that the School Admission's Policy discussed at the previous meeting still needed to be formally approved.

**Decision: All governors in attendance APPROVED the school's current Admission Policy as appropriate for school admissions for September 2015.**

88.2 The HT advised governors that the School Admission's Working Party would be meeting on 23 February 2015 to consider admission applications for the next academic year intake.

## **89 School Polices for discussion & approval**

89.1 None.

## **90. Noting of any feedback forms of visits by governors.**

90.1 Deferred to next meeting.

## **91 Report back from Governors on their subject link progress.**

91.1 Deferred to next meeting.

## **92 Training Plan for Governors.**

92.1 Deferred to next meeting.

## **93 Any Other Business**

93.1 The Headteacher referred governors to previously emailed guidance to governors from Camden Council regarding staff Disqualification by Association and the request that governing bodies adopt and follows the local authority's Interim Guidance. The Headteacher talked governors through the guidance, the practices proposed and reasons for them. It was acknowledged that the HT had carried out a survey among staff to canvass their views and to explain the reasons for requesting declarations from them. Staff members were advised that definitive guidance was still being drawn up in consultation with union representatives. The HT informed governors that no noted concerns had been raised by the staff. The following practices will be implemented from immediate effect subject to the approval by the Governing Body:

- School will record that staff have been asked to declare of any known convictions of persons they reside. Declarations will be sought on an annual basis.
- Staff members will be asked about changes in their circumstances during performance appraisal reviews.
- Staff will be advised that the Headteacher is required to advise the local authority of any unsigned declarations and of their implications.
- Even though the guidance relates to Childcare Law for Under 8s all staff will be asked to make a declaration as it is acknowledged that all staff in the school will inevitably come into contact with all children.

**Decision: All governors in attendance AGREED to the school's adoption of Camden Council's Interim Guidance on Disqualification by Association from immediate effect.**

93.2 Nick Tidey informed governors that he is in the process of obtaining previous non-confidential governing minutes so that they can be placed on the school's website.

**94 Dates of next meeting**

94.1 The date of the next meeting was NOTED to be held at 6pm on 10 March 2015.

94.2 There being no other non-confidential items to discuss the meeting closed at 8:10pm

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Chair of Governors Sophie Steel**

**On behalf of the Governing Body for St Mary's and St Pancras Church of England Primary School**