

# Governing Body Meeting Minutes

**School: St Agnes CE Primary School**

**Quorum: 5**

**Chair: Helen Thompson**

**Clerk: Andrew Crosbie**

**Date of meeting: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**Venue: St Agnes CE Primary School**

## Attendance

Name	Governor type	'End of Term of Office' date	Present (P)/apologies (Ap)/absent (A)
Shoab Uddin	Headteacher (HT)	N/A	P
Shelley Lynton	Deputy Headteacher (DHT)	N/A	P
Helen Thompson	Foundation (Chair)	07/09/22	P
Charlie Mok	LA Governor	31/10/23	P
Lesley Gutteridge	Co-opted Governor	22/03/21	P
Afeefah Ali	Co-opted Governor	01/03/22	P
Catherine Collinson	Parent (Vice Chair)	01/03/21	P
Anwar Gulzar	Parent	10/02/20	P
Aurangzeb Farooq*	Parent	10/02/20	P
Rev Eugenia Adoyo	Foundation	N/A	Ap
Sarah Oxley	Staff Governor	01/03/22	Ap
Bethan Jones	Co-opted Governor	01/09/22	Ap
Margaret Taylor	Foundation	01/09/20	Ap

*\*Joined meeting late in item 3*

## Others present

Name	Role
Andrew Crosbie	Clerk (One Education)

## Agenda Items

<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies &amp; Welcome</b>		
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were apologies from Margaret Taylor, Sarah Oxley, Beth Jones and Rev Adoyo.			
	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>2</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest</b>		
There were no pecuniary interests expressed regarding any of the agenda items.			
	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting (26.09.19) and Matters Arising</b>		
The minutes of the previous meeting (26.09.19) were reviewed and the following amendments noted:  Page 4, item 6, final paragraph 7 should read: ..what has been successful in EYFS and KS1 and trying to introduce this into KS2.  Minutes were approved as an accurate record and a copy was signed by Chair for retention on file.  <u>Matters Arising</u> Page 2, item 3 It was noted that since the last meeting, Shelley Lynton has been confirmed as the permanent Deputy Head Teacher (DHT), following a rigorous interview process. Chair congratulated Shelley on her appointment which further stabilises the senior leadership team.  It was noted that Anwar's term of office as a governor ends on 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2020 and this will therefore be his final GB meeting. Chair thanked Anwar for all his support and service to the governing body over the years.  Page 5, item 6 HT advised that the roof leaks continue to impact on various areas of the school and the matter now needs to be urgently addressed. Together with Kane, he has prepared a comprehensive summary of issues to date and has taken this up with the Diocese and the local authority, with limited success to date.  HT's proposal is that a dedicated building sub-committee is set up to deal with this situation, comprising members of staff, parents and governors, and a timed action plan be produced. It is likely that the matter will need to go down the legal route.  <i>*Zeb Farooq joined the meeting</i>  Any governors interested in being part of this sub-committee should confirm with HT or Chair asap so that a meeting can be held in January/February 2020.			

Q. How long has there been this problem?

There have been issues since the new school was built 10 years ago.

Q. What is precise nature of the problem?

There is a punctured membrane directly below the rooftop playground and because there is no escape route for water, it tracks round the building causing leaks to different parts of the school. There is an obvious design flaw but there are no building plans available for this part of the building which might help to explain the problem.

Q. Do the leaks impact on class time?

Not specifically, but furniture has to be moved around to manage the leaks and the constant dripping of water is inconvenient and disruptive.

Governor suggested that it would be prudent for the school to start recording the level of disruption and impact it is having on school time.

Q. Could the school afford to commission an initial structural engineer's report into the problem?

This may be worth considering.

Page 7, item 10

Lesley Gutteridge confirmed she had attended the HT's performance management review. Whilst acknowledging some disappointing results in terms of pupil outcomes, the review was positive and recognised that, since the HT's permanent appointment, good progress has been made and the school is moving in the right direction.

Page 9, item 11

Clerk confirmed that, according to the Instrument of Government, 3 parent governors were allowed on the governing body. Chair confirmed that recruitment of new parent governors would be undertaken in January.

Chair noted that, at future meetings where there are a lot of support papers, iPads will be provided and the papers shown for discussion on the screen.

	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minutes of last meeting 26.09.19 approved with minor amendments and signed.</li></ul>	Governing Body	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Building Sub-Committee to be set up to address roof leak issue. Governors to confirm interest in joining committee.</li></ul>	Governing Body	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use of iPads to be considered at future meetings.</li></ul>	Chair/HT	

#### **4 | Head Teacher's Report**

A copy of the HT's report was circulated in advance to governors and the following issues were raised in discussion:

Q. There appear to be a high number of International New Arrival (INA) pupils joining the school?

Yes, there has been a huge influx, especially in Y6. In discussions with other cluster schools in Longsight, the average number of INAs in each school is between 10 and 12. There is no doubt the community context is changing, with more and more flats and apartments, rather than houses, in the neighborhood and many more different nationalities moving into the area.

Q. Will the school start to visit potential new entrant residents?

This has been done amongst Nursery and Reception pupils and is being considered for even younger children arriving in the area. It is a lot less intimidating for children to initially meet teachers in their own homes.

Q. Is language a barrier to learning?

Yes, more and more children seem to be Spanish-speaking and it can be a barrier.

Item 4.1 in the report showed a pie-chart representation of attendance broken down by illness type.

Q. What do the figures in this pie-chart represent?

They represent the number of pupils off with each particular illness, for example 55 children with 'coughs', 117 with colds/temperature. The same children could be recorded more than once if they have been off with different illnesses.

It was noted that there has been a major issue this term with flu sickness.

In item 2.1 it mentions a supply teacher replaced one class teacher who left on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Q. Are there plans to replace this teacher with another permanent teacher?

There are plans but, initially, the supply teacher will be monitored to see how that role works out. There will be another review at the end of the February half term before deciding on whether to offer a permanent contract.

Q. Does the school have a good relationship with agencies when it comes to releasing supply teachers into full time positions?

Where there is a good relationship with an agency the school may be able to negotiate preferential rates and reduced notice periods.

Q. Has the school tried any permanent recruitment?

It has looked at recruiting through universities but the calibre of NQTs has not been sufficient in terms of experience.

Lesley Gutteridge suggested that the school should consider a recruitment drive for mid-range teachers possibly looking to return to teaching to see if there are any suitable candidates available.

It was noted in item 5, Pupil Premium, that following an external audit by Trevor Matthews, there were lots of school strengths identified but also several recommendations.

It was noted that during Parent Consultation week, there was a big push on parents registering online for PP eligibility. This process will be carried out periodically, including with all new Nursery intake. Out of 16 applications, 3 were successful and their applications will now be processed.

Q. Does that low proportion of successful applications suggest the criteria is difficult?

Much does depend on their level of tax credits and benefits. INA pupils do not qualify for PP.

It was noted that Appendix 1 provides a new template to be used during education learning walks and lesson observations, which will provide a more detailed and consistent picture of what is happening across each term. It is a RAG-rated system and, although it won't all be immediately green, the picture will hopefully improve across the year.

M means 'meeting criteria' and W means 'working towards criteria'.

Q. Will the system be more efficient for observers to use?

Yes, the template will be much more efficient. It has already been shared with staff at curriculum improvement sessions and it can only be accessed online by appropriate staff.

It was noted that Appendix 2 is a RAG-rated list of SIP priorities and current journey.

Q. Is there anything causing specific concern at the end of Term 1?

Priority 1.2, to improve attainment in reading, remains the biggest challenge, along with Priority 3, to improve quality of leadership and management.

Q. Has there been any impact on Reading yet?

Yes, raising the overall profile of improved whole class reading has worked well and the school is trying to encourage more pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure, as well as study set texts and books. The school is trying various techniques aimed specifically at encouraging more boys to read, and there is a need to source better texts for some year groups.

It was noted that Appendix 3 is a revised report template for QA visits. The new format had been explained in detail at the latest Chairs' Briefing as having been influenced by the new Ofsted inspection framework.

Q. Given that the Autumn QA visit report indicates 'Good' across all areas, can the school be confident that this is accurate, 9 months on from the last Ofsted inspection?

HT believes that this is an accurate report given secure position now with English and Maths and increased focus carried out on humanities subjects. He believes that if Ofsted re-visited now they would see the school as Good.

It was noted that current Y6 is a weak cohort and their outcomes may drop and not meet National Average.

Q. Can school maintain Good throughout despite this challenging cohort?

As long as the school can demonstrate everything that has been done to address a weak cohort and work towards improved progress, it should still achieve a Good rating.

Self Evaluation Report (SEF)

A copy of the draft Self Evaluation Report was also circulated for comments. This provides a colour-coded summary of judgements across several key areas. Most areas were summarised as being Good although Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development were seen as being Outstanding.

Q. Does this SEF get published on the website?

No, it has never been a public document. The SIP would, instead, be published online for parent scrutiny.

Q. Given that attendance remains an issue in school, how can Behaviour and Attitudes still be rated Outstanding?

The rating is actually based on last year's results when attendance was better. The fact remains that current absence and persistent absence (PA) needs to improve, although it is usually more of an issue with parents than with the pupils themselves.

Although recent illness has had an impact on attendance figures, the overall trend is still improving. The school is able to demonstrate it is doing all it can to improve attendance within the context of the local community.

Q. Within the colour-coded judgment, what does No Grade mean?

It means there is insufficient evidence available to arrive at a judgment.

Parent Survey

A copy of the latest November 2019 parent survey was circulated and discussed. The survey was based on about 100 responses, some 34% of all parents.

Overall, the survey results were very positive. The biggest discrepancy amongst parents was on whether school provides appropriate homework, with 10% (highest figure) disagreeing that it does. The results fail to confirm whether parents feel there is too much or too little homework.

There is also some confusion over whether school deals effectively with bullying concerns. Governors agreed that both bullying and homework can be subjective issues, but it will continue to communicate effectively with parents on both matters.

Parking and traffic issues were raised as a key area of concern. It was noted that the school no longer has a lollipop person and the bollards which were installed as a preventative measure have already been knocked down. The physical presence of school staff at drop off and collection is vital in improved safety and de-escalating parent disputes.

	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

## **5 | Committee Reports**

Copies of minutes for the following recent committee meetings were circulated for reference:

Leadership & Management 14.10.19

Finance & Resources 06.11.19

Standards & Curriculum 22.11.19

Within the Finance Committee meeting it was noted there had been discussions on the Local Authority's clawback of balances which the school has appealed.

Lesley explained that, at a recent Chairs Briefing, it had been suggested the clawback would be unlikely to happen in future years because of the government's commitment to fund any shortfall in high needs. This, however, was no reassurance as circumstances were the same this year when clawback did occur.

The school's appeal was turned down and it has not had any money back, however there remains concern that no explanation has been given as to how the clawback is being used. Lesley and the Chair will both seek clarification on how the clawback has been spent.

	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification on LA clawback expenditure to be sought.</li> </ul>	Chair/Lesley Gutteridge	

## **6 | Policies and documents for review**

### Policy Schedule

An updated policy schedule has now been circulated by HT and everything is up to date at Autumn term. Clerk to keep this schedule updated as decisions are made at meetings. Clerk to also forward HT/Chair a copy of the Instrument of Government.

### Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy

This policy is currently unchanged although One Education is amending this in the new year and a copy of revised version will be brought to the next meeting. Policy approved.

### Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy

This policy is unchanged and was approved.

### SEND Report

This document needs to be published on the school website.

The report is retrospective so its date should be 2018/19.

For GDPR purposes the SENCO's full name will be removed but her contact details kept in.

On page 7, HT confirmed dates shown should be 2018/19.

Subject to those amendments, SEND Report approved.

### SFVS

The schools financial value standard helps to provide schools with assurance they are meeting the basic standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management. The new format document was discussed. It needs to be completed and submitted by March 2020. It was noted that this document was discussed at length by the Finance & Resources Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> November.

Lesley had some reservations about the fact that the school's average teacher costs are shown as being at the lowest end when, in fact, the school does still have an expensive teaching staff. She suggested that the main criteria when comparing with other schools is that they are all two form entry schools, which could mean there is a higher proportion of London or southern schools being considered, potentially skewing average staff cost figures.

There were also concerns that the SFVS refers to a quarter of the budget being spent on 'other things' and questioned whether, with shrinking budgets, there should not be greater explanation of what 'other things' refers to within the budget.

HT to review governor's queries and concerns before SFVS is brought back to Finance & Resources meeting in Spring for final approval before submission in March.

	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy review schedule to be maintained.</li> <li>• Copy of Instrument of Government to be forwarded to HT/Chair.</li> <li>• Disciplinary &amp; Dismissal Policy approved.</li> <li>• Grievance, Bullying &amp; Harassment Policy approved.</li> <li>• SEND report approved for online publication.</li> <li>• SFVS to be reviewed and re-presented for final approval at next F&amp;R meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Governing Body</p> <p>Governing Body</p> <p>Governing Body</p> <p>HT</p>	<p>03/02/20</p>

<b>7</b>	<b>Government Body Housekeeping</b>
<p><u>Link Governor Visits</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that Afeefah had completed a link governor visit to the school on 11<sup>th</sup> December and will present report to the next GB meeting.</p> <p>Lesley submitted a report of her Safeguarding link governor visits on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 22<sup>nd</sup> November. HT confirmed that the Safeguarding SEF has been submitted.</p> <p>Chair asked all governors to refer back to the link governor visits schedule and liaise with appropriate members of staff to make appointments to visit.</p> <p><u>Governor Meetings</u></p> <p>Chair and Lesley both confirmed attendance at recent Chairs' Briefings at which explanation of the new Ofsted inspection framework had been a key focus.</p> <p><u>Training</u></p> <p>Chair reminded governors that there are various training opportunities available, particularly through MGA. She will circulate a new schedule of training events in January.</p> <p>Chair advised of a training course being offered by Liverpool Hope University on 'Improving Church School Governance' which appears to be very relevant to St Agnes. The course runs from January to April 2020 and, although there is a cost, the school would be prepared to fund this training. Chair to circulate PDF information and governors to respond if interested in the course.</p> <p><u>Governor Vacancies</u></p> <p>There are two parent governor vacancies and recruitment will start in new year with prospective parents contacted.</p>	

### Meeting Dates

The following meeting dates were agreed:

Leadership & Management - Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020 @ 9.30am

Finance & Resources - Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February @ 5pm

Standards & Curriculum - Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March @ 9am

Full GB – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April @ 5.30pm.

### Calendar 2020/21

HT provided copy of proposed calendar from Manchester LA together with proposed St Agnes calendar. The proposed change is to increase Spring term 2 by reducing the Easter holidays and adjust the five days into the yellow highlighted dates.

The short Spring term means less time to prepare for SATS and the scheduled dates for Eid ul Adha, Eid and Ramadan will all impact on attendance.

It was noted that these dates had been shared with staff yesterday with mixed response, depending on how staff were individually affected. Governors agreed that staff buy-in to any changes will be important as they will need to motivate the pupils pre-SATS.

Governors to review the proposed calendar and feedback comments at next meeting.

	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Link Governor visit report to be prepared.</li></ul>	Afeefah Ali	02/04/20
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Governors to confirm link governor visits in Spring Term.</li></ul>	Governing Body	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Governor training opportunities, including 'Improving Church School Governance' course details to be circulated to governors.</li></ul>	Chair	Jan 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parent Governor recruitment to commence in January.</li></ul>	Chair/HT	Jan 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spring Term committee meeting dates confirmed.</li></ul>	Governing Body	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revised 2020/21 calendar dates to be reviewed and discussed at next GB.</li></ul>	Governing Body	02/04/20

<b>8</b>	<b>HT Wellbeing</b>		
<p>HT advised that, although it has been an exhausting first term for all staff, everything is fine in terms of his wellbeing and this is helped by having a very supportive DHT and wider leadership team.</p> <p>DHT acknowledged that her safeguarding responsibilities can be challenging because it is difficult to stop worrying about the children outside of school hours, but she too welcomed the collaborative support of all staff.</p> <p>Q. Is there an employee support programme in place?          Yes there is free, 24 hour support available through the Local Authority and coordinated by DHT. Several staff have taken up this provision following recent bereavements. Feedback from middle leaders is that the school does care about their wellbeing.</p>			
	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>9</b>	<b>AOB</b>		
<p>Twitter Account</p> <p>HT confirmed that the school's Twitter account is now up and running and circulated examples of recent tweets which seek to reinforce the message of curriculum enrichment. It was noted that maintaining the account is not too onerous or time-consuming but the school should try to issue at least a couple of tweets each week in order to maintain interest and increase 'followers'.</p>			
	<b>Actions or decisions</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>Date and time of next meeting:</b>	<b>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 @ 5.30pm</b>
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