

**GOVERNING BODY FOR ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL**  
**ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2018**

**FOUNDATION GOVERNORS**

\*Dr Alessia Errico (Chairman)  
\*Father James Fasakin  
\*Mrs Francesca Giacon  
\*Ms Sylvia Lehrian (Vice Chairman)  
\*Father John McKenna  
\*Mr Peter Moger  
2 x vacancies

**LA GOVERNOR**

\*Mr Gordon Fisher

**PARENT GOVERNORS**

\*Mrs Jasmeet Fyfe  
\*Miss Rosana Hermosa  
Mrs Casey Tolaini

**STAFF GOVERNORS**

\*Miss Maureen Kelly (Headteacher)  
\*Mrs Eleanor Carruthers

**NON-VOTING OBSERVER**

\*Mrs Mary Ainger (Deputy Headteacher)

\*denotes member present

**In Attendance**

Mrs Sheila Bennett (Clerk)

**PART I**

The meeting opened in prayer.

18/01 **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first Governing Body meeting of 2018. She suggested that the Academy Status discussion be brought forward after the next item, and this was **AGREED**.

18/02 **ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been submitted and were accepted from Casey Tolaini, who was absent due to child care issues.

18/03 **ACADEMY STATUS**

The Chairman reminded Governors that the School had attempted to form a multi-academy trust (MAT) with local Catholic primary schools in 2015/16. After a great deal of time, effort and expenditure by the School, the Diocese of Westminster (the Diocese) had finally decided not to approve the proposal.

*Jasmeet Fyfe joined the meeting.*

The Chairman said that the Diocese now proposed that much larger Catholic Academy Trusts (CATs) be formed by 2020. The CAT proposed for the School to join would consist of 15 schools. These schools were a mixture of primary, secondary and private Catholic schools. If this proposal went ahead, the Governing Body wanted to be in a good position to lead this initiative.

The Chairman had attended two meetings recently about this proposal with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. Governors heard that only eight of the schools in the proposed CAT had been represented.

Governors noted that no definite timeline had yet been agreed. Concerns had been raised at these meetings about this, and regarding finance. The Diocese had indicated that funding would be assigned to each CAT and then distributed to the schools within it. While it had been confirmed that PTA funding would belong to the school that had raised it, it had not been made clear how Governors' Fund income, from parental donations, would be allocated.

A further meeting had been held at Finchley Catholic High School, to which the Chairman had been unable to go. The Vice Chairman, the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher had attended. The Chair of Governors of Finchley Catholic High had led this meeting. Only six schools of the schools within the proposed CAT had attended. The Vice Chairman said that while 74% of all secondary schools in the country had now converted to academy status, only 28% of primary schools had done so. She said that this hesitancy reflected the uncertainty on the part of primary schools as to how conversion would benefit them. Governors felt that many questions had not yet been answered, particularly on future finance allocation. At this meeting it had been decided to increase collaboration between the schools, to work together to improve effectiveness. The areas of collaboration decided were:

Training It was noted that the School did share training with other local schools. The Headteacher would look further into sharing INSET Days and training with this group of schools on matters such as data protection and safeguarding.

Governance All schools had difficulty in recruiting governors with the right skills. It had been suggested at the meeting that it might be possible to help other schools by creating a pool of shared governors. It would also be helpful to be able to appoint governors from other schools on appeals panels, for example.

Contracts & Services When contracts were being renegotiated, the possibility of joining forces to get a better deal would be investigated.

Staffing When interviewing for posts, good candidates sometimes had to be turned away. It had been suggested that, if permission were given, their details could be shared with other schools, thereby shortening the interviewing process.

Sharing Best Practice This already took place between some Catholic schools, and could be extended.

The Vice Chairman said that a further meeting would be arranged in the summer term, to which all schools within the proposed CAT would be invited. The Chairman emphasised the importance of the School taking the lead on this. She added that this would also be an opportunity to look at the strengths of the School, and how these could be developed further.

Governors discussed the lack of appetite generally among primary schools to convert to academy status. The absence of a business plan model and detailed information on the conversion process on the Diocesan website was regretted. Other implications about possible savings, changes to land ownership and staffing were also discussed.

The Chairman would circulate information on this matter to all Governors as soon as it was received. Any Governor wishing to get more involved with this was welcome to contact her.

*Action: Any Interested Governor*

18/04 **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN THE CURRENT AGENDA**

Gordon Fisher declared that his wife worked as a Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI) consultant for the School.

There were no other declarations of pecuniary interest in the current agenda.

18/05 **PART I MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 20 NOVEMBER 2017**

The Part I minutes of the first autumn term meeting, held on 20 November 2017 were **CONFIRMED** and signed by the Chairman as a fair reflection of that meeting.

18/06 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES DATED 20 NOVEMBER 2017**

The Chairman checked through the action points not yet completed or dealt with elsewhere:

*17/135 Annual Register of Business Interests* The Clerk reminded those Governors who had not already done so, to return their completed forms. This was essential for the completion of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS).

*Action: All Governors – check please*

*17/136 Report of the Headteacher: Pupil Premium* The Headteacher confirmed she had updated all Governors on Pupil Premium directly after the meeting, as follows:

“We currently have 29 Free School Meal (FSM) children in the school, with an additional three in Nursery, for whom we will receive funding in the spring term. For 2017/18 we have received £98,680 in Pupil Premium funding according to the Department for Education (DfE) website. This is based on current FSM and Pupil Premium children who have received free school meals in the last 6 years. This equates to 73 children. The four "post looked after" children are also included in this figure. Service children are included in this category, but we do not have any recorded on roll. An evaluation of how Pupil Premium funding has been spent so far has been published on the School's website.”

*17/137 Evaluation of Governors' Remit: Effective Governance Checklist* This checklist was in the process of being completed. The Clerk confirmed that it

would not be checked by Sarah Beaumont, Governor Services Manager, as the School did not buy into the GAO Service. However, it was important to carry out an annual evaluation of the Governing Body to ensure that it was working as effectively as possible.

*17/137 Evaluation of Governors' Remit: Governors' Skills Audit* It was confirmed that this audit had been completed.

## 18/07 **VERBAL REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER**

### **Catholic Life**

The Headteacher was delighted that informing parents of dates well in advance had improved their attendance at class masses.

### **Staffing**

The Headteacher reported on the new appointments made that academic year, including the new post of Assistant Headteacher, Ms Aldridge. The appointments of Mr Reilly, PE & Sports Instructor, and Miss Sykes, who worked in the office and as a teaching assistant in Yr 5, were also noted. A new teaching assistant had also been appointed for child support. Mr Pagnotta, Sports Apprentice, had been appointed using Sports Premium funding.

Governors noted that Mrs Matteoni, Inclusion Leader, was now on maternity leave. Mrs Lewis, Office Manager, would leave at half term, after many years' dedicated service. An advertisement for this post had been published that week.

### **Teaching & Learning**

The Headteacher reported on the monitoring and pupil progress meetings taking place at present. The latest data drop had given information on the progress of the children in the autumn term which had been considered in depth by the Learning & Achievement Committee.

When questioned by a Governor about pupil progress meetings, the Headteacher explained that she, the Deputy Headteacher and the Special Education Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDSCO) discussed each child individually with the class teacher. Strategies were put in place for any child at risk of not meeting their key stage target.

Governors also noted that monitoring had begun; observations would begin the following day. The scrutiny of the children's books had started and would continue over the next few weeks. There would be two external moderations. This monitoring process would provide evidence for teaching and learning standards.

In response to a Governor's query about the outcomes from the book scrutiny so far, the Headteacher replied that, following feedback, precision marking was in place, where only work that had met the learning objective would be highlighted.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Governing Body, congratulated the Headteacher, all staff and the children on the 2016/17 outcomes at Key Stage 2. The School was in 7<sup>th</sup> place in Barnet, and was among the top 3% primary schools in the UK.

When questioned, the Headteacher said that she had no concerns about teaching and learning overall at present. She reminded Governors that the School Improvement Partner from the local authority (LA) had scrutinised all the School's data thoroughly last year. She had confirmed that no significant groups of children were underachieving or were not making expected progress. The Headteacher's aim was to continue the high standard of teaching and learning. Governors were aware that, regarding cohort-specific children, case studies were in place to explain the reasons behind the results.

### **Attendance**

The Headteacher was very pleased to report that current attendance was outstanding at 97.5%. The School had been placed third for good attendance out of 89 schools in the borough. When questioned, the Headteacher said that the average attendance in the borough had improved to 96.10%, which was above the national average.

Governors wanted to know how the School achieved such good attendance. The Deputy Headteacher spoke about the assembly held every week on each class's attendance; the children were very proud of their attendance record. A trophy was awarded weekly to the class with the best attendance, and this was celebrated in the newsletter. At the same time, the children were reminded that non-attendance caused by illness was unavoidable, and could affect attendance percentages.

### **Exclusions**

It was noted that there had been three fixed-term exclusions since January 2018. Support had been provided by the LA in respect of this. Governors were pleased to hear that exclusions were becoming more rare.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

The Headteacher reported on the new starters in the Nursery, some of whom also used the breakfast and after-school clubs. This provision was of great benefit to working parents, and would be checked by an Early Years officer from the LA later in the term.

The children in the Nursery were making very good progress under the leadership of the new teacher, Ms McAulay.

In reply to a Governor's query, the Headteacher confirmed that the Nursery was full; only some very specific times could be offered to parents.

18/08 **PERFORMING ARTS HUB UPDATE**

Peter Moger updated Governors on this matter. He reported that a delay had occurred. This was due to the School requiring confirmation on the ownership of the land on which it was hoped to build the Performing Arts Hub. In response to a question from a Governor about keeping the PTA and parents informed on the progress of this matter, the Chairman replied that she would be writing to update parents after half term.

*Action: Chairman*

18/09 **EVALUATION OF GOVERNORS' REMIT**

This matter had been dealt with earlier in the meeting, under item 18/06.

18/10 **PUPIL PREMIUM**

Francesca Giacon was thanked for taking over responsibility of Pupil Premium from Casey Tolaini. She would be meeting the Inclusion Leader after half term with Casey Tolaini to complete the handover.

Governors were given an update on Educational, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs). A funding application to Panel was noted, to be followed up by the Headteacher.

*Action: Headteacher*

Francesca Giacon said that the LA's High Incidence Support Team (HIST) had provided some support to the School. She highlighted concerns over the lack of speech and language therapists and educational psychology support from the LA. Information on emergency funding and external professional provision was given.

The Headteacher reminded Governors that the School was experiencing an increasing level of need compared with other schools. It was noted that there were now eleven children with an EHCP, with a further one being applied for.

Information on Pupil Premium had been given earlier in the meeting by the Headteacher in item 18/06. There were now 74 children in this category on roll. Francesca Giacon gave Governors an overview of the varied range of support being given to children in this category at present. Governors noted that a best practice form for Pupil Premium children would be completed and displayed on the School's website after half term.

18/11 **SPORTS PREMIUM**

Rosana Hermosa, Governor with responsibility for Sports Premium, had met Miss Hoctor, the PE, Sports Premium & Healthy Living Lead earlier that day. She gave an overview to Governors on the work of the new PE staff. Some outdoor lesson plans for PE had been updated. Miss Hoctor and Mr Reilly were providing continuing professional development (CPD) to some staff. Mr Pagnotta was currently being paired with Mr Reilly to observe high-quality PE lessons. He would gradually be paired with class teachers, to help low achievers and allow

teaching staff to work on their assessments. Both these appointments had been well received by staff and children.

*Father James left the meeting as he had another meeting to attend.*

Governors noted that new equipment for PE had been purchased, including stickers to recognise the children's good attitude to sport as well as achievement. iPads would be introduced soon for peer assessments and videoing during lessons.

Ellie Carruthers and Rosana Hermosa updated Governors on the children's excellent achievements in football and netball matches. The Deputy Headteacher spoke about the encouragement of children by staff during PE, which helped build confidence. The children were looking forward to the Dance Festival in March 2018.

Governors were very pleased to note the wide variety of sporting opportunities for the children, including the Change4Life Sports Club. Rosana Hermosa said that the children, through the School Council, would be asked their opinions on PE provision. Governors congratulated the children on their efforts and achievement in PE and recent competitions. The Headteacher reminded Governors that the School held the Gold Award Sports Mark.

Rosana Hermosa would be attending the LA's training course on The Primary PE & Sports Premium on 12 March 2018. Miss Hctor would be giving staff training in PE assessments and funding at a forthcoming INSET day.

Governors were invited to take part in a learning walk for PE on 5 March 2018.

*Action: Any Interested Governors*

## 18/12 **SAFEGUARDING, E-SAFETY & DATA PROTECTION**

Sylvia Lehrian, the Safeguarding Governor, provided an update for Governors. She wished to place on record her thanks to Cathy Lewis, Office Manager, for her dedication in ensuring that all the School's records were up to date. Spot checks were regularly undertaken of the Single Central Record (SCR) to ensure compliance. Kim McKenzie would be keeping the records updated until the post of office manager had been filled.

Sylvia Lehrian reminded Governors that the Educational Visits Policy had been reviewed last year in response to terrorist attacks in London. Two trips were now planned, and she confirmed that, subject to risk assessments, these trips were expected to take place.

The Lockdown Procedures Policy, based on a model LA policy, had been approved for ratification by the Resources and Safeguarding Committees. A low-key approach had been recommended. It would not be necessary for the children to practise this procedure. It was confirmed that all staff were fully aware of the signal to be used and how to react in such an event.

In reply to a Governor's question, the Headteacher confirmed that all staff would sign the Lockdown Procedures Policy to ensure that they had read and understood it. This policy would be ratified by the Governing Body soon.

*Action: Headteacher*

## 18/13 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

### **Catholic Life**

Father John gave an overview of the meeting held on 26 January 2017, the minutes of which had been previously distributed to Governors.

School Website Governors had discussed the Spiritual Life section of the website, where the dates of all masses and prayer services were published. The increasing number of parents attending class masses had been noted with pleasure. The Headteacher's aim was to make the new website more accessible and simple to use. Governors were pleased with the improvements and commented that the new site was much easier to use.

Photographs In reply to a Governor's question, it was confirmed that while photographs could be taken during assembly, this was not acceptable for masses.

Learning Walk Governors noted the learning walk arranged for 14 March 2018 at 11 am, with a focus on the Pupil Voice.

*Action: Any Interested Governors*

Rosana Hermosa was thanked for her help in supporting Father John with the Catholic Life Committee.

### **Learning & Achievement**

Casey Tolaini had sent the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2018 to the Chairman. Arising from the minutes:

School Data The autumn term data, discussed earlier in the meeting under item 18/07, had been considered. Governors were aware that the children's progress would improve over the academic year. They commented that the rapid progress already being made by some groups was very encouraging. It was noted that Writing remained a focus across the School. Various strategies in place had been discussed, including the positive impact of Talk Partners. In response to a Governor's query, the Headteacher said that there had been very good feedback from parents.

It was noted that data was now being produced for the Nursery children.

School Improvement Plan (SIP) The updated SIP had been considered in detail by the committee. The Headteacher undertook to circulate it to all Governors directly after the meeting for consideration and comment.

*Action: Headteacher*

Learning Walk This would take place on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018 from 10.30 am. The committee would be meeting the School Council, followed by observation of modelling language. Governor were invited to attend.

*Action: Any Interested Governors*

## **Resources**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2018 had been distributed to Governors prior to the meeting. Arising from the minutes:

School Budget Gordon Fisher said that the budget had been reviewed against the set budget and virements. Governors were pleased to hear that it was in a healthier state than expected, and therefore some departmental spending had been increased. At present there was a contingency of £230,000 but this was expected to be reduced to £110,000 by the end of the financial year.

Governors noted the successful appointment of a new accountant.

Peter Moger gave an overview of the breakfast and after-school clubs. He was pleased to say that they were breaking even, and some were in profit.

Three-year Forecast Governors noted that, by the third year, with the loss of the additional class, the budget was expected to be very tight.

Premises Peter Moger updated Governors on premises matters. The Nursery gate needed attention, and quotations were being received for this.

Lease terminations in respect of computer equipment were being dealt with.

Governors noted that, following difficulties with the company providing the canopy for the Nursery, another company had been approached. The new canopy, costing £8,500 would be funded from the School Travel Plan.

When questioned by a Governor on the installation of this during term time, the Headteacher replied that this company had great experience of working in schools. There would be no adverse impact on the children.

Fundraising – Gift Aid Peter Moger paid tribute to the Vice Chairman for her dedicated work in sorting out gift aid contributions, which went back some years. He was pleased to say that a good system was now in place, and back-dated payments were expected to amount to £10,000.

The Vice Chairman wished to encourage parents who made contributions to the Governors' Fund to use gift aid. She was beginning the task of thanking each parent individually for their generosity in donating to the School for the benefit of the children. The Chairman said that gift aid could be brought to parents' attention at the New Parents' Meeting. It would also be an opportunity to remind them that their donations would help to create the new Performing Arts Hub.

## 18/14 **RATIFICATION OF POLICIES**

### **RE Policy**

This policy had been recommended for ratification by the Catholic Life Committee, following an update. The Ethics, Philosophy & Religion (EPR) Policy had been added, together with the addition of Citizenship & Rights Respecting Schools initiative.

The Chairman wished to add the words: *each week* to the second sentence under Time Allocation on page 4. Following this clarification, the RE Policy was **RATIFIED**.

### **Term Dates 2018/19**

The Headteacher thanked Governors for ratifying these dates on 19 December 2017 by email. She apologised that there had been no opportunity for a full discussion on these dates, and invited them to let her know of any questions.

Governors noted that their strategic role was to ensure that the School year was 190 days (38 weeks) long. It was at the discretion of the Headteacher, in her operational role, to set the actual term dates.

## 18/15 **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP**

The Headteacher said that the FAB Partnership had met the previous week. There had been a discussion about group purchasing of The Key. This online service would help school leaders work more effectively by providing information on new legislation and model policies.

A directory of good practice was also being set up to support the schools within the Partnership.

Governors were pleased to hear that Chris Fairbairn, the Principal of The Totteridge Academy, was willing for his teaching staff to support primary schools either at their school or at the Totteridge Academy.

The next meeting of the FAB Partnership would be taking place on 20 March 2018.

A Governor asked how being involved in this Partnership would work if the School became an academy. The Headteacher replied that all the schools within the Partnership worked in close proximity; they could phone each other for advice and were more powerful as a group. If the School became an academy, then this support, including training, would be drawn from the CAT. At present the School would continue its collaboration with the FAB Partnership and the cluster of proposed CAT schools.

18/16 **TRAINING LINK GOVERNOR'S REPORT**

Jasmeet Fyfe, the Training Link Governor, highlighted the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training which she had recently attended. This new legislation would come into force on 25 May 2018. Governors noted that every school would need to appoint a data protection officer. The Chairman and Vice Chairman had also completed this training. Following a discussion, it was decided that a PowerPoint presentation on GDPR would take place at the start of the second spring term Governing Body meeting.

*Action: Jasmeet Fyfe/Clerk*

18/17 **EDUCATION & SKILLS DIRECTOR'S SPRING TERM 2018 REPORT**

**1 Update on School Funding**

Governors noted the link to the Annual Report on School Funding in Barnet for 2018/19, together with the key points from the report.

**2 Latest Attendance Information for Barnet Schools**

This matter had been discussed earlier in the meeting, under item 18/07.

**3 Governance Self-Evaluation Audit Tool**

This had been discussed earlier under item 18/06.

**4 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

This matter had been discussed in the previous item.

**5 Governor Services: GAO & Associate Clerking Service**

The information was noted.

**6 iTrent Transfer Project**

This information was noted.

**7 New for 2018 from the Safeguarding Children's Partnership**

Governors noted the information about the new website, the new Barnet Continuum of Help & Support & Resolution Policy and Safeguarding Guide.

18/18 **GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP**

**Foundation Governor Vacancies**

The Chairman said that, when considering candidates for the two Foundation Governor vacancies, a priority should be to appoint a person with legal experience.

**Foundation Governor Reappointments**

Governors were pleased to note that Father John had been reappointed by the Diocese for a further term of office until 30 August 2021.

18/19 **WHAT WAS THE IMPACT ON THE CHILDREN?**

The Deputy Headteacher gave an overview of the impact of the meeting on the children:

- Governors had considered information from the Diocese on conversion to academy status. The Chairman had suggested that initially the School should work in collaboration with the cluster of family schools. Positive meetings had been attended by herself, the Vice Chairman and Headteacher with some of the other schools, and the key areas for collaboration had been agreed.
- The Catholic Life of the School had been discussed and masses and prayer services had been scheduled for the coming months. The large number of parents attending class masses had been celebrated. The RE Policy had been ratified.
- The Headteacher had given a summary of new staff and changes to staffing. The School was fully staffed.
- The children's progress and the excellent 2016/17 Key Stage 2 results had been noted and they had been congratulated by the Governing Body. Pupil progress meetings and observations were about to take place to help improve the children's learning.
- The children's excellent attendance record of 97.5% was recognised by the Governing Body.
- Governors had discussed the new starters in the Nursery and the very good progress being made by the children under the leadership of the new teacher.
- Francesca Giacon, who had taken over responsibility for Pupil Premium and had given the Governing Body an update.
- Rosana Hermosa had met the PE Leader and reported back to Governors. The wide range of sporting activities delivered to the children and the high level of competitions they could enter across the borough was celebrated.
- Sylvia Lehrman updated Governors on Safeguarding matters. She had confirmed that the Single Central Record was kept up to date and regularly checked to ensure the safeguarding of the children.

18/20 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

18/21 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Governing Body meeting was **CONFIRMED:**

2<sup>nd</sup> spring term meeting: Thursday 15 March 2018 at 7 pm

18/22 **MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

It was **RESOLVED** that, because of its nature, the business to be transacted be treated as confidential and not for publication.

*Ellie Carruthers and Mary Angier left the meeting at this point.*

Chairman's Signature: *Alesia Erica*

Date: 15 March 2018