

OUR LADY & ST JOSEPH CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Meeting of the Governing Body

Held by video conference

10 February 2021

Governors Present	Foundation: Paul Mokwenye (Chair), Derek Hyett, Staff: Sean Flood (Headteacher), Theresa Garnett Parents: Michelle Hogan-Tricks LA: Julian Vennis (Vice Chair) Associate member: Rapture Orafu
Guests/ Observers	Aoife O'Grady (Dep Head) Judyta Ruminska, Sarah Woodhouse (Asst Heads) Theresa O'Hagan (School Business Manager) – items 1 – 4 only Louise Campion (Finance Consultant) – items 1 – 4 only
Apologies	Cecilia Amadasun, Diane Porter
Clerk	Susan Moyse
Abbreviations	LAC (Looked After Children), HLT (Hackney Learning Trust), LA (Local Authority – Hackney Council), EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage), KS1 (Key Stage One – Years 1-2), KS2 (Key Stage Two – Years 3-6), SIP (School Improvement Partner), SDP (School Development Plan), SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability), EHCP (Education, Health & Care Plan), CPD (Continuing Professional Development), HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant), SLT (Senior Leadership Team), CAMHS (Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service), GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations), CES (Catholic Education Service), RCDOW (Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster), SFVS (School Financial Value Standard), GLD (Good Level of Development – expected level at end of EYFS), RWM (Reading, Writing and Maths Combined)

MINUTES

Due to the pandemic, there would be no committee meetings this term. Resources and Curriculum & Standards matters had been included in the main GB agenda.

Paul Mokwenye in the chair

1.	Prayer, Welcome and Apologies	ACTION
1.1.	Prayer and welcome Paul Mokwenye opened the meeting at 6.30pm welcoming all present. Father Derek Hyett led the governors in prayer.	
1.2.	Apologies Cecilia Amadasun and Diane Porter had set apologies for absence.	
2.	Governing Body Organisation	
2.1.	There were no declarations of interest in item on this agenda.	
2.2.	Governors had been asked to complete the register of business/ pecuniary interest (2020-21) by email.	Clerk
2.3.	Membership The current membership had been circulated to all governors. The Headteacher was following up the foundation vacancies with Fr Derek Hyett.	

3.	Minutes						
3.1.	Governors agreed the accuracy of the minutes of the 14 October 2020 meeting.						
3.2.	Matters arising (not covered elsewhere)						
a.	Asset Register / Link Visit Agreed that the Chair would check the asset register (Parago) with Theresa O'Hagan when safe to do so.		Chair to check asset reg with TO'H				
b.	DFE Laptops Governors asked whether laptops had been received from the DfE. School staff advised that 20 had been received and more could follow. If sufficient laptops were received, the school would use the PTA donation for other resources. Governors thanked the PTA for their generous support.						
3.3.	Chair's action None to report						
4.	School Reports						
4.1.	Headteacher's report						
	The Head referred to his written report which had been circulated for governors' consideration in advance of the meeting. He said that this had been an extraordinary time for governors, staff, children and families. He highlighted in particular:						
a	Staffing No changes to report but high levels of absence due to coronavirus, isolation, bereavement etc.						
b	Curriculum Remote learning was in place. It was going well but was not a complete substitute for being in school. There were good connections with children and families. The Head added that more than 50 children were in school (i.e. 26% compared to the Hackney average of 12%). It was challenging for staff in a small school to offer both remote and in-school provision. The majority of children were engaging well. It was hoped to open from 8 March.						
c	Performance management Completed as scheduled						
d	SEND Data noted						
e	Child protection Exceptionally challenging during lockdown						
f	Admissions Hoping to have a full Reception class in September 2021						
	Governors discussed:						
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Governor Question</th> <th>School Response</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Enough laptops now?</td> <td>The 20 DfE laptops had covered the urgent need. Could use more. Expecting a further DfE order. Able to allocate to all who required. Some issues in setting them up – IT service have to set up each one. And issues for some families e.g. bandwidth if more than one child</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Governor Question	School Response	Enough laptops now?	The 20 DfE laptops had covered the urgent need. Could use more. Expecting a further DfE order. Able to allocate to all who required. Some issues in setting them up – IT service have to set up each one. And issues for some families e.g. bandwidth if more than one child		
Governor Question	School Response						
Enough laptops now?	The 20 DfE laptops had covered the urgent need. Could use more. Expecting a further DfE order. Able to allocate to all who required. Some issues in setting them up – IT service have to set up each one. And issues for some families e.g. bandwidth if more than one child						

	Are teachers able to deliver both remotely and in school?	Yes. It is challenging especially for younger children – helpful if parents present. Numbers logging in and contributing are increasing. Would like to see more work submitted. Head has been able to ‘drop-in’ and seen some great activities e.g. music.		
	Children missing peer interaction, problem solving, group work etc?	Definitely. Also quality of handwriting and speech has declined. Have given parents advice about amount of screen time.		
	Protocols etc e.g. being naughty online?	Predominantly using Google Classrooms and Hangouts. Safeguards are built in but children have been inappropriate on occasion. Parents have been advised when this happens.		
	Admissions – demographic changes affecting Catholic schools/ Catholic education?	Eastern European families have left London. This school has however been historically oversubscribed and should be ok. May need to look at criteria in future.		
4.2.	Budget monitoring			
	Governors thanked Louise Champion, Financial Consultant, for attending. She referred governors to her circulated report: Budget Monitoring Period 10 (April 2020-January 2021). Governors noted the overall position: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecast in-year deficit -£25k approx • Balance brought forward from 2019-20 +£60k approx • Forecast cumulative surplus +£35k approx Turning to the annotations. LC highlighted:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 99% income received to date ○ EY paid in full – clawback expected (Nursery closed) ○ No income expected for extended school, catering, trips ○ Exceptional costs £3k grant applied for – may not be awarded ○ Catch Up funding received ○ Sports grant received ○ Income forecast reduced by £18k since last report 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staffing reviewed and budget reduced by £15k ○ After school staffing reduced by £15k ○ Gardening reduced by £8.5k ○ Phone bills will fall after initial expenditure £8.5k on new VOIP system ○ Costs increased ICT, Insurance and Agency staffing ○ Costs reduced for specialist teaching ○ New purchase of Hackney HR services £2.2k ○ Overall expenditure increased by £36k since last report 			
4.3.	Benchmarking			
	LC and TO’H referred governors to the 2019-20 benchmarking report. LC explained that this data was derived from government DfE national data and			

	<p>the comparator schools may be outside inner London. Governors noted the areas where costs appeared high:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff costs – inner London; Hackney pensions particularly high cost; extended school (operated in 2019-20) • Cleaning – outsourced at this school so appears as non-staff (other schools might use this code only for cleaning materials); savings have been made since 2019-20 • Energy – Agreed to check value of energy bulk contracts provided via Hackney Council 		TO'H to check value of HC energy contracts
4.4.	School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)		
	<p>The draft SFVS self-assessment and dashboard had been circulated before the meeting. Governors noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All statements had been answered 'yes' • No 2020 SATS data therefore no outcomes recorded • Admin and other staff costs were high – Hackney pensions – see above • Average teacher cost high – inner London • SLT % high – small school therefore % high 		
	It was agreed to submit the SFVS to the local authority.		TO'H to submit SFVS
4.5.	<p>School Fund Account TO'H referred to the written account summary February 2021 (circulated in advance) and advised governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current balance: £29,851 • Balance at 1 April 2020: 39k • Income since 1 April: £4k • Expenditure since 1 April: £13.5k <p>There had been no income from the Head's Ofsted work (no inspections during the pandemic). Income from the NAHT would be shared between the School Fund and the main school budget. Governors recalled that School Fund monies had been used previously to bolster the main school budget. It was agreed to request parent donations for the buildings fund at £20 per child (or £40 for 2+ children) for two terms rather than the usual full year.</p>		TO'H to launch building fund requests
	Governors thanked LC and TO'H for their input and they left the meeting at 7.20pm.		
5.	Reports from Committees, Working Parties and Link Governors		
	There had been no committee meetings since the last full governing body meeting. Committees would be re-convened after the Covid19 crisis. There were no other governor reports.		
6.	Policies and Other Documents		
6.1.	SFVS – see above		
6.2.	There were no other documents / policies for review		
7.	Briefing Papers		
	Governors had all received links to the following documents.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Handbook https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook • Competency Framework Link as above • KCSIE - Keeping Children Safe in Education (revised edition Sept 2020) 		

8.	Governor Training	
	The governing body noted the training on offer from the Diocese, Hackney Education and other providers which had been emailed to all governors. Governors were reminded that costs would be met by the school and they were encouraged to attend at least one session each year. Agreed to purchase the Hackney package starting from 1 April (new financial year).	TO'H to purchase Hackney training package

9.	Any Other Business: Academies	
	<p>The Chair and Head referenced the circulated correspondence between the Diocese, Hackney education and the NAHT about the Diocesan proposal to academize Catholic schools.</p> <p>The Head, Chair and Vice Chair fed back on the meeting they had just attended with schools and the Diocese:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal to form Catholic Academy Trust (CAT) of Hackney and Tower Hamlets schools • Issue of declining rolls – but Diocese did not address how a CAT might help • Timing – felt inappropriate when schools were under pressure due to pandemic • Voluntary Aided currently schools benefit from both local authority and Diocese input • Partnerships across Catholic schools (and others) are already strong • No additional funding • Unclear why being proposed and why now – these questions were asked but not well answered • Diocese said – in the meeting – that schools would not be ‘forced’ to become academies <p>The Head added that schools had found out about the proposal through a leak just before Christmas. Schools were now being encouraged by the Diocese to undertake due diligence with a view to conversion. Chairs and Heads who had attended the meeting were not on the whole supportive, especially given the timing.</p> <p>Governors discussed:</p>	

Governor Question	School Response
What is motivating the proposal?	The Diocese wants to preserve Catholic education in face of falling rolls etc but it is not clear how this proposal will help
Why Hackney?	There are 4 boroughs affected. Pupil numbers are falling across London (although Diocese has withdrawn Islington from the proposal). Hackney Education provides very good support but it would lose resources if more schools become academies. Academies have their funding capped to provide resources to the CAT. Diocesan services have not been as good historically as the borough's

	Would there be a 'super head'?	Yes. There would be a CEO over a number of schools		
	What is the timeline? As soon as possible; after Covid19 crisis?	There would be a formal consultation period after the school's GB had made the decision		
	<p>Governors noted that staff would have a new employer, contracts and possibly terms and conditions. They also noted that if governors felt that recruitment/ pupil numbers were too low, the school could review its own admissions policy under the current VA status.</p> <p>It was agreed to hold an additional meeting in order to consider the Diocese's proposal.</p>			Clerk to arrange additional meeting
10.	Dates for Governing Body and Committee Meetings			
	Noted: 14 October/ 10 February/ 5 May			

There was no confidential business.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher and staff for their hard work in these very difficult times. He closed the meeting at 7.40pm wishing all well.

Signed (Chair) -----

Date _____

Minutes prepared by Susan Moyse
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