



Holy Family Catholic Primary And Nursery School Governing Body

Full Governing Body Meeting Wednesday 28th November 2018

Present

Foundation Governors

Dave Dawson (DD) V Chair
Sharon Lewies (SL)
Andrew Szeliga (AS)

Parent

Francis Mwangi (MT)
Dale Wall (DW)

Guests

Sharon Clift (SC)
Roy Stephen (RS)
Mark Donovan (MD)

Staff

Karen Bathe (KB) Head, Emma Elliott (EE) Mandie Thoburn (MT).
Linda Ostaszewska Clerk

Hand in hand in God's loving family we will dream and learn, growing into the best we can be.

DD opened the meeting with a prayer.

1 Apologies and welcome new Governors following parent/staff elections

- 1.1 Father Gary Brassington – work commitments. Danusia Thomas (DT) and Denise Slaght (DS) have stepped down from the Governing Body.
- 1.2 Dale Wall and Mark Donovan were welcomed to the meeting.

2 Presentation of the accounts by Monahans

- 2.1 Heather Weeks (HW) from Monahan's presented the accounts. HW said that the Audit took place at the end of September and went well. There had been a "clean" audit report with no irregularities. There were no related party transactions.
- 2.2 HW explained that there were two parts to the accounts. The first was the statutory Governors' statement and review of their activities. The second part was the accounts and determining if funds had been spent correctly.
- 2.3 Income was £1.72m, (£1.63m-2017) up on last year due to the grant for the Nursery and conversion of the Caretaker's House. The General Annual Grant (GAG) and Pupil Premium (PP) funding decreased due to the fall in pupil numbers.
- 2.4 Expenditure was £1.68m (£1.69m-2017) slightly down on last year due to small changes in the staffing structure and a decrease in salary costs.
- 2.5 The deficit on the pension fund was £156k but this was down from last year, HW said that this would impact contributions going forward. AS said that there could be another method of accounting for the deficit and asked HW to investigate. HW said that she would discuss this with VE.

- 2.6 Assets had to be readjusted to remove the school building from the accounts as these were owned by the Diocese (£2.3m) and were not to be reflected in the Balance Sheet. Net Assets were £822k.
- 2.7 HW noted that there was £586k cash in the bank which was due unspent grants for the Nursery and Caretaker's House. Removing these, there is a reserve of £343k in the bank which comprises £125k unrestricted funds and £218k GAG. HW said that the Reserve policy was to have one-month worth of expenses in the bank, which was about £129k, well below current reserves.
- 2.8 HW asked if there was anything that had happened since the accounts closed that would impact the final report. The Governors said that there had been no changes.
- 2.9 There was one point in the Management letter relating to budgeted deficits going forward. On review of the 5-year budgets produced, including that of the nursery budget, it was noted that these all show forecasted deficits with funds expected to run out in 2021/22.
- 2.10 The Recommendation was that the trustees take action to ensure the ongoing viability of the academy and formulate a plan to achieve a balanced budget going forward.
- 2.11 AS said that the school always budgeted conservatively and had managed to sustain a healthy surplus over many years when it was forecast to run out. There was no intention of going into deficit.
- 2.12 KB said that the school had overspent its income by £60k in 2017. In 2018 the school underspent by £45k so the net loss over the two years was £15k.
- 2.13 It was agreed that the school needed to review its expenditure to avoid depleting its reserves. Income and expenditure should balance, and the reserves used for additional projects such as the Nursery.
- 2.14 HW was asked if this matter needed to be resolved urgently. HW said that this was a medium risk and there was time to resolve this.
- 2.15 Once the school approve the accounts they need to be signed by the Chair and Monahan's will send the accounts to the EFA.
- 2.16 HW was thanked for presenting the accounts. A special mention was made in thanking HW for her work supporting the school open its Nursery in very tight timescales.
- 2.17 HW left the meeting. Link meetings took place with teachers and governors and the meeting reconvened at 6pm.

3 Appointment of New Governors

- 3.1 Mr Dale Wall (DW) was appointed a Parent Governor and Mr Mark Donovan (MD) was appointed a Committee Governor. While all Governors are allocated to each committee, DW will join the Resources committee and MD will join the Facilities committee as their focus. The appointment is for a four-year period. This was unanimously agreed.

4 Review of previous minutes

- 4.1 These were approved.

5 Matters Arising

5.1 None which will not be covered later on the agenda.

6 Head Teacher Report

6.1 The Heads report was reviewed. The Governors noted that the absence figures were not correct and asked KB to check them. **KB**

6.2 KB said that the 95% attendance for November was due to a part time child. Readjusted the figure would be 96.7%

6.3 There were several fixed term and internal exclusions for four children. KB said that fixed term has legal implications and is used as a last resort to protect the child, other children and adults. An internal exclusion was not legal but a level down, where there is less risk to staff and pupils and involves parental support.

6.4 KB confirmed that the number on roll was 298 and that funding was based on the January 2017 Census. The nursery also receives funding, but it is dependent on the age of the child and parental circumstances. There are 18FTE in the Nursery which will rise to 20 FTE in January. There was also interest from parents beyond that date.

6.5 KB was asked to define "missing children". KB said that it was children and their parents with whom they had no contact for 10 days. However, if the school had a concern, they would contact parents much earlier than this.

6.6 KB said that Ana Whittle the Office Manager had won an LA award for effective office systems and processing.

7 Governor School Improvement Plan

7.1 The School Improvement plan had been discussed in depth at the Resources meeting but had been issued to the full governing body. Science had been included as requested by the Governors. The Notes of Visit by the School Improvement Partner on 16th November covering EYFS and Assistant Headship was also distributed.

7.2 The School Self Evaluation (SEF) had also been distributed. KB asked the Governors to review it for discussion at the next FGB. DD said that the aim was to be outstanding, but the school had marked itself good (grade 2) in its evaluation of activities. (The exception being personal development, behaviour and welfare – marked grade 1) **ALL**

7.3 KB said that the OFSTED framework was changing in Sept 2019 and there would be less emphasis on data and more on delivering a broad and balanced curriculum that maximised outcomes for pupils. There were three headings to consider for the curriculum, intent, implementation and impact. KB said that the SLT would spend a day in the spring reviewing the changes.

8 SEN

8.1 SL said that as SEN Governor she had met with Sharon Clift to discuss SEN provision in the school.

8.2 SL said that she was preparing a SEN Governor Audit document that outlined the reports/policies/procedures and other information required by Governors from the SENCO. SL also wanted SEN as a recurring agenda item at FGB to ensure awareness of SEN issues was sustained.

- 8.3 SC said that she was pleased to have a supportive Governor who understood and was interested in SEN matters.
- 8.4 It was agreed that the audit could be used as a model for other areas such as Pupil Premium and Safeguarding.

9 Finance

- 9.1 KB said that a separate Finance meeting was being arranged to discuss the budget and how to avoid a yearly deficit. VE would be pulling together more detailed information to drill down and determine high spend areas within budget headings. Once this exercise was completed recommendations could be made going forward.
- 9.2 KB said that the Nursery was not breaking even although this was expected in year 1. The issue was whether this was sustainable.
- 9.3 AS said that there should be no rush to provide any recommendations. The Auditors said that this was not urgent, and it was better to take time and full consideration over any strategic decisions. This was agreed. A meeting will take place in January, this may be an Extraordinary meeting.
- 9.4 SL said that the school should investigate any local funding e.g. Nationwide. KB said that the school was constantly looking for grants.

10 Asset Management

- 10.1 The Caretaker's House is almost finished and will become a Nurture area from January called the Haven. KB will write to parents and explain its use.
- 10.2 A failure with the heating closed the school for several days last year. KB explained that there had been another failure, but the school had not shut. The likelihood of a catastrophic failure this winter was high.
- 10.3 KB said that a bid had been put into the EFA for a replacement system, but the school would not know it had been successful until March and work can only take place in the summer term.
- 10.4 KB explained the contingency plan which would ensure the Nursery and all year groups would be able to continue in a class setting.

11 Health and safety

- 11.1 There has been a Health and safety Audit and a report will follow.

12 Questions from Resources

- 12.1 There were no questions and AS said that the minutes were very comprehensive.

13 Correspondence

- 13.1 There was a letter from the Diocese asking for governors to join a working party to discuss the vision and operation of a multi academy trust (MAT). KB said that this will shape Catholic education and was important as a school "Requiring Improvement" (RI) would force an Academy Order and it would have to join a MAT and possibly be stripped of its Catholicity.

13.2 There was a thank you letter from the Sisters for the 300th Anniversary Mass for Nano Nagle.

14 Policies

14.1 The following policies were approved, Pay, Appraisal and RE.

14.2 The Admissions policy has been updated to reflect the increase in the PAN in KS2 to 48. The was agreed by Governors and the policy will go out to consultation.

15 School Visits and training

15.1 LO and SL attended a SEN workshop. However, both said that spending an hour with Sharon Cliff was more beneficial in understanding SEN needs in the school.

15.2 Father Gary hosted Foundation stage at the Church this term.

15.3 There was feedback from a Governors LA briefing. This discussed the changes to the Ofsted framework as mention by KB in item 7.3 The challenge posed to Governors was how to verify that the school was delivering a quality curriculum.

15.4 The briefing said that it was important that Governors challenged the Head and that this was reflected in the minutes. Peter Nathan also said that external improvement partners should provide an additional quality assurance to the Heads assessment of school provision.

15.5 DD said that it was important that Governors make an independent assessment of school provision and there should not be over-reliance on the Head for information. Challenge was essential.

15.6 SL expressed her continued disappointment relating to the school's Articles of Association which prevented the appointment of Foundation Governors who wanted to contribute to the school.

15.7 Bernice Weiss also gave an overview of her role at the briefing and asked Governors to be aware of the Encompass project which enabled the police to call the school if they suspected a pupil was witness to domestic violence. KB said that the school had been involved in this for many years.

16 Ratification of Heads Pay

16.1 All staff left the room and the Heads pay was discussed. SL said that she had done the Heads Performance Management with Denise Slaght and KB had met her objectives. DD confirmed that the Heads pay was agreed by the Pay Panel. The Governing Body agreed the Heads pay increment. All staff returned.

17 AGM

17.1 LO said that the AGM with the Diocese would be on the 7th of December.

18 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

18.1 LO asked if any governor had a pecuniary interest in the meeting discussions. There were none. LO specifically asked the new Governors if they had any related party interests and it was confirmed there were none.

19 AOB

19.1 SL said that she would be seeking re-appointed as a Foundation Governor.

19.2 In response to a question KB said that there would be a meeting with the pre-school next week for a joint discussion about current and future plans.

20 Action Plan

20.1 KB to check absence figures

KB

20.2 All Governors to review the school SEF (9 pages)

ALL

20.3 VE to investigate pension accounting

KB/VE

The meeting closed at 7pm

Next FGB Meeting- 27th February 2019