

GOVERNING BODY FOR ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING **HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

Name	Governor Type	Term End	Present/Apologies/Absent
Alessia Errico (Chair)	Foundation	31/8/24	Present
Sylvia Lehrian (Vice Chair)	Foundation	31/8/24	Present
Fr John McKenna	Foundation	31/8/21	Present
Fr James Fasakin	Foundation	31/8/24	Apologies
Francesca Giacon	Foundation	31/8/24	Present
Peter Moger	Foundation	31/8/21	Present
Peter Collins	Prospective Foundation		Present
Vacancy	Foundation		n/a
Gordon Fisher	Local Authority (LA)	13/1/21	Present
Julie Burke	Parent	6/3/23	Present
Liz Reeve	Parent	16/5/22	Present
Liam Fitzpatrick	Parent	17/12/23	Present
Maureen Kelly	Staff (Headteacher)	n/a	Present
Úna McAuley	Staff	7/6/22	Present
Non-Voting Attendees			
Marc Boucherat	Associate Member (Committees)	24/11/23	n/a
Holly Evans	(Interim Deputy Headteacher)	31/8/20	Present
Nicki Whatley	(Interim Deputy Headteacher)		Present
Lydia Pavlou	(Interim Deputy Headteacher)		Present
Sheila Bennett	Clerk	n/a	In Attendance

PART I

The meeting opened in prayer.

20/67 WELCOME

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance at the first Governing Body meeting of the new academic year 2020/21 via Zoom, due to the Covid-19 pandemic precautions.

20/68 ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been submitted and were accepted from Fr James.

The Clerk took the Chair for the next item.

20/69 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Clerk explained that the Diocese of Westminster (the Diocese) was still in the process of reappointing two Foundation Governors, Alessia Errico and Francesca Giacon. Once their reappointments were fully confirmed, it was expected that their terms of office would be backdated to 1 September 2020 to run for four years to 31 August 2024. The Clerk would this follow up with the Diocese.

Action: Clerk

Nominations were invited for the position of Chair. Alessia Errico was proposed and was willing to continue in the post from her reappointment. Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body **RESOLVED** unanimously that Alessia Errico be appointed as Chair for the academic year 2020/21, or until her successor was appointed.

20/70 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

Nominations were invited for the position of Vice Chair. Sylvia Lehrian, who had been reappointed for a further four-year term, was proposed and was willing to continue in the post. Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body **RESOLVED** unanimously that Sylvia Lehrian be appointed as Vice Chair for the academic year 2020/21, or until her successor was appointed.

Alessia Errico asked Sylvia Lehrian to take the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

20/71 **ANNUAL REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

All Governors present completed this form, to be retained in the School office for audit purposes. It was noted that this could be signed electronically.

The Clerk had reminded those Governors who had not yet submitted this to do so as soon as possible.

20/72 **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN THE CURRENT AGENDA**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests in the business to be discussed.

20/73 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 4 JUNE 2020**

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 4 June 2020 were **CONFIRMED** as being a fair reflection of it.

20/74 **MATTERS ARISING**

The Chair confirmed that all actions had either been completed or would be addressed at this meeting.

20/58 Verbal Report of the Headteacher: Consultation During this consultation, a parent had suggested that the practice of shoeless learning should be reviewed.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had considered this suggestion. They had decided that it was better to keep the children in their usual, familiar routines if possible, following the lockdown caused by the pandemic.

The Resources Committee had also considered this when they had met. They concluded that there was no additional risk to the children's safety by continuing in this way at this stage.

The Headteacher had produced her report to update Governors on what was happening in the first few days back at school.

School Roll

The numbers in each year group were noted. The Headteacher was delighted that there were 60 children in place in Reception, and no appeals had been made. There was a waiting list, despite mobility having increased, with weekly changes taking place. Governors noted the reasons for this mobility, which was a borough-wide phenomenon. Some families had relocated to other countries or different parts of the UK, while two others has taken up private education offers.

QUESTIONED on whether the majority of families on the waiting list were of the Catholic faith, the Headteacher was pleased to confirm this. Other families were of other Christian or Greek Orthodox faiths.

Catholic Life

The Headteacher thanked Úna McAuley and Eloise Yates for taking the lead in this area of the School. The restrictions relating to the pandemic had prevented the School gathering together in worship. A video message by Father John had welcomed everyone back to school in prayer. The School had bought into the Ten-Ten worship and relationship package. All year groups very much enjoyed the Gospel Assembly on Zoom and this would be continued weekly, eventually separating into separate Key Stages.

From Friday 2 October 2020 Father John would lead Yr 6 in meditation to support their well-being. The children had also been given many opportunities to discuss and reflect on their experiences of the lockdown.

Attendance

The Headteacher was delighted to report that, following a review of the 2019/20 attendance figure, this had been revised upwards to 97.46% from Yr 1 to Yr 6. This was because the lockdown period had been included in the original figure.

Governors were pleased to hear that no children at present had Covid-19 symptoms, although parents were understandably keeping their children away from school more often when they had colds.

Standards & Progress Audit

On the return to school, each teacher had carried out an audit of every individual child in their class in respect of their well-being, readiness for learning and academic attainment. The Headteacher was pleased to report that the lockdown did not appear to have had too great a negative impact on most of the children. Their well-being and readiness to learn had not been unduly affected.

Teachers had then made an overall assessment of their class in terms of strengths and areas for development.

Pupil progress meetings had resumed from 28 September 2020; there had been four so far. The Senior Leadership Team would discuss with class teachers the results of the audit and the overall needs of their class cohort. Governors noted that lessons were being planned to encourage the children to make rapid progress. Some children would be supported by specific interventions and referrals to outside agencies would be made if necessary.

Once these meetings had taken place the data would be shared with the Learning & Achievement Committee and new targets would be set for the year.

Pupil Premium

The Headteacher had given information in her report on how this funding had been spent to support the children in this category over the lockdown period.

Governors were pleased to note the increase in funding in 2020/21 of £1,345 per child. There were 49 children receiving this support, which amounted to 11% of the total number of children in the School.

Post Looked After Children (LAC) would receive £2,345 this financial year. There were three children in this category.

Holly Evans, Interim Deputy Headteacher, was in the process of updating the Pupil Premium Impact document.

Staffing

The Headteacher said that 33 people had applied for the three level 2 teaching assistant posts that had been advertised. Interviews would take place this Friday.

QUESTIONED on where the advertisements had been placed, the Headteacher replied on the School's and the local authority (LA)'s websites.

Communication with Parents

As parents were not allowed on the premises at present, the School was communicating with them as often as possible, in an effort to continue to include them in the School's community. The SLT were at the school gate at the start and end of each day. Parents could also text or email the School, and the weekly newsletter was now in an improved format.

Parent consultations would be via Zoom. A discussion had taken place with teaching staff to decide how they wished to conduct these. A collective decision had been made to release teachers for the whole day so that they could have 30 Zoom meetings. Parents would be able to pick a time. It was hoped that

especially working parents would also find this more convenient and that virtual meetings would result in a 100% take up.

Parent Partnership meetings were taking place half-termly via Zoom. Parent representatives for each class would be appointed.

The PTA had met and were planning virtual events for the autumn term.

Appraisals

Teacher appraisals were taking place and would be completed as usual by 31 October 2020.

Behaviour & Safety

A list of multi-agency referrals from 1 January to 24 September 2020, together with the number of children referred, was given in the report.

Governors noted the three racist incidents that had taken place that term. The Headteacher explained that often children used words because they thought they sounded cool. They did not understand the meaning of them or how people could be offended by this name-calling.

QUESTIONED whether these incidents only related to children rather than parents, the Headteacher confirmed that they were. She was pleased to report that the other children quickly told an adult if they heard a child use this type of language. Class teachers dealt with these incidents in a sensitive way.

There had been no exclusions or bullying incidents so far that term.

Health & Safety

Keith Betts, the Caretaker, was thanked for his hard work improving the School's environment over the break. He had installed new gates on the decking; repainted handrails, canopy upstands and the blue fence, redecorated the girls' toilets and had revarnished and repainted where required.

School Trips

Governors heard that regrettably the residential trip for Yr 4 had been cancelled. It was most unlikely that the Yr 6 residential trip in the summer term would go ahead, due to the pandemic.

It was also noted that no day trips had yet been planned.

Leadership & Management

The Headteacher explained that as it was not possible at present to show candidates around the School, the appointment of the Deputy Headteacher had been deferred. The responsibilities and roles of this post were being shared by

the Assistant Headteachers, who were now entitled Interim Deputy Headteachers. They were all present at this meeting.

Governors noted that the RE Leadership was being shared between Úna McAuley and Eloise Yates. PSHE was now a core subject which was shared between Scarlett Sonenfeld and Eloise Sykes.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Training via Zoom and Teams was taking place. The Headteacher and Interim Deputy Headteachers were attending LA meetings to make sure all Covid-19 information was up to date. Additional courses on planning following the lockdown, supporting children and their well-being had also been undertaken.

School Improvement Plan (SIP) & Self Evaluation Form (SEF)

The Headteacher stated that the update of the SIP would be delayed while the children were being assessed. This would be followed by the revising of the SEF later in the term, with the assistance of the Learning & Achievement Committee.

QUESTIONED on how the staff were coping, the Headteacher said that the SLT was supporting staff well. An example of this was allowing staff flexibility in deciding their own arrangements with parental consultations. Regular teaching staff and teaching assistant meetings took place, as well as the Friday morning briefing. Staff were reminded to let any member of staff know if they had any concerns, as they would be listened to and their worries would be addressed.

Úna McAuley said that staff were happy to return to normality. The eagerness of the children to return to school had been uplifting for staff. She confirmed that the SLT offered good support.

QUESTIONED on whether parents should be asked for further comments on the Risk Assessment; the return to school; and how they were coping with dropping off their children, the Headteacher replied that she was not planning to consult further on the Risk Assessment. She explained that every family's needs were different. Those with three children having to be taken to three different gates at various times did find it hard. The School's priority was to manage the School throughout this pandemic in the safest way possible. She understood that regrettably some procedures might be difficult for some families to cope with.

The parental questionnaire would be reissued in October 2020 as planned, with the same questions as before, so that comparisons could be made. These questions were recommended by Ofsted.

Governors noted that a Survey Monkey had recently gone out to parents, asking them to inform the School of any changes to their home lives since the start of the lockdown in March 2020. Parents had shared their experiences and how this had affected their children. Nicki Whatley, Interim Headteacher, said that parents sometimes did not realise how changes to home life affected their children. Getting in touch in this way also helped families feel less isolated.

The Headteacher said that the response to the Survey Monkey had been overwhelming; 80% of parents had replied. They had found it very easy to use. Future parental questionnaires might be communicated to parents in this way rather than paper copies being completed at parent consultations. A suggestion was made to make this optional, as some people wanted to put their names on the form when making suggestions or asking for help. The format of future parental questionnaires would be considered further at a later date.

Action: Headteacher/Chair

QUESTIONED on how the information from the Survey Money had been followed up, the Headteacher said that relevant information, such as illness in the family that might have an effect on a child, had been passed on to teachers so that they were aware. Referrals had already been made in some cases.

Alessia Errico left the meeting as her internet connection ceased.

20/76 **PERFORMING ARTS HUB TWO-YEAR-OLD PROVISION UPDATE**

This would be discussed later in the meeting under Reports of Committees.

20/77 **PUPIL PREMIUM**

Francesca Giacon had requested some assistance with this area of the School. Peter Collins was thanked for offering to help her with this responsibility.

Francesca Giacon had sent some questions to Holly Evans prior to the meeting. She thanked the Headteacher for her response to these in her autumn term report. Holly Evans would be meeting the Pupil Premium Governors to discuss the interventions and plans once the Pupil Premium Impact document had been updated.

20/78 **SPORTS PREMIUM**

Due to the lockdown, this funding had been underspent by £18,232. It had been rolled over to September 2020 but had to be spent by March 2021.

Sports Premium funding of £19,870 had been received for the financial year 2020/21, giving a total of £38,201.

It had been planned to spend this funding on improving the playground surface, re-marking the netball court and the mile-a-day trail and replacing the sheds used for the storage of PE equipment.

Governors heard that the quotations for the playground resurfacing had contained some inaccuracies and would need to be changed. The new quotations had yet to be received. This matter would be followed up by Liz Reeve and Nicki Whatley, who would report back to Governors at the next meeting.

Action: Liz Reeve/Nicki Whatley

20/79 **SAFEGUARDING, ON-LINE SAFETY & GENERAL PROTECTION
REGULATION (GDPR)**

Sylvia Lehrian, the Safeguarding Governor, had met the Headteacher in June 2020 to discuss safeguarding issues. Another meeting was planned before half term. An update on safeguarding measures in respect of combating Covid-19 had been contained in the Headteacher's report.

Sylvia Lehrian emphasised that she and the Headteacher liaised on any safeguarding matters that arose throughout the term, without waiting for a meeting. There was constant dialogue between them on anything of relevance pertaining to children and parents.

The Chair and Vice Chair had worked with the SLT on keeping the Risk Assessment updated after the re-opening of the school. The normal safeguarding agenda set for each half term would be resumed as soon as possible.

20/80 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Catholic Life

There had not been a meeting as yet, but one was planned before half term. Father John would get in touch with committee members to confirm this date.

Action: Father John

Learning & Achievement

A meeting would be arranged before half term, when school data would be available. Julie Burke undertook to arrange this date.

Action: Julie Burke

Resources

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2020 had been sent prior to the meeting. Arising from the minutes:

School Budget Peter Moger reported that some issues had arisen in relation to some unexpected cost-of-living increases for staff, which were not known when the budget had been set. The cost of these increases had not yet been confirmed. A further meeting of this committee would take place later in the term to consider this matter.

Covid-19 Funding Peter Moger said that an application to refund the cost of extra resources in respect of the pandemic had been submitted.

Renewal of Policies Some minor changes had been made to update the **Finance, Debt Management, Whistleblowing and GDPR & Data Protection Policies**. These had been **RATIFIED** by the committee.

Two-Year-Old Provision Governors were delighted to hear that this provision had now been completed. They noted that currently the space was being used as an additional staff room for the lower school, to help improve social distancing.

The Headteacher had been in touch with the LA by phone and email as the committee felt it would not be sensible to open this provision in the current climate. So far she had not received a reply. This situation would be monitored. It was an excellent facility and would be opened when it could be done safely.

Performing Arts Hub Peter Moger reported on financial difficulties that had arisen with the contractors employed by Barkers. He regretted that alternative quotations would have to be reconsidered and warned that these would be more expensive than the original one. Additional funding to complete this project might be required. He emphasised that it would not be practical to look at the plan again because planning permission had already been granted.

Barkers were trying to get a breakdown of costs with the alternative contractor. A meeting would be held with them next week. Peter Moger would then see if the funds available were sufficient or if it would be necessary to make alternative arrangements.

Governors noted that a dead tree would have to be removed from the site.

Covid-19 Grant Gordon Fisher reported that a grant of £80 per pupil over the next three terms, which would amount to approximately £30,000 had been provided by the government.

Safeguarding

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted.

20/81 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEES & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee list was updated. It would be circulated to Governors with the Part I unconfirmed minutes of this meeting.

Action: Clerk

20/82 **RATIFICATION OF POLICIES**

The following policies had been distributed to Governors prior to the meeting.

Anti-Bullying

Governors noted that some changes had been made to this policy to update it in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE) document.

Following consideration, this policy was **RATIFIED**.

Code of Conduct for Governing Body

This Code of Conduct was updated using the model policy recommended by the Diocese. Following a short discussion on how the School promoted itself within the local parishes and local community, this was **RATIFIED**.

Complaints Procedure

This policy, which had been reviewed and updated, was **RATIFIED**.

Safeguarding & Child Protection

This policy had been updated in line with the KCSIE (2020) and was **RATIFIED**.

20/83 **DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & LEARNING'S REPORT**

The autumn term 2020 report of the Director of Education & Learning had been distributed to all Governors prior to the meeting. They noted the following:

1 Transfer of the Education & Skills Service to BELS

From 1 September 2020, the Education & Skills Service transferred from Cambridge Education to a wholly-owned council company entitled the Barnet Education & Learning Service (BELS). Ian Harrison's title had changed to Chief Executive and Director of Education & Learning.

Apart from the School Meals Service, which in future would be managed by BELS with Alison Dawes as the contact, all services to schools would continue uninterrupted.

2 Covid Recovery Curriculum & Support to Schools

Governors noted that strategic plans were being devised by headteachers to:

- ensure pupils resumed learning the school's curriculum, including the blend of classroom teaching and, where necessary, remote education;
- ensure that pupils were settling back into expected routines and behaviours;
- identify specific health and well-being issues for pupils and ensure that these were being addressed;
- ensure that their schools were still safeguarding children effectively.

Governors were asked to note that the above would be the focus of any Ofsted visit in the autumn term, rather than a regular Ofsted inspection.

The Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI) would be supporting schools with a Covid Learning Recovery Training Package (Appendix 1) and adapted school visits.

Appendix 2 gave information on supporting children and young people's education and skills following the Covid-19 pandemic.

3 Safeguarding Update

BELS would continue to support schools to fulfil their safeguarding duties. A link to the 2020/21 audit tool was given which incorporated new guidance in KCSIE (2020) and Covid-19 safeguarding guidance.

A training programme for schools: Wellbeing for Education Return and comprehensive training via the Educational Psychology Service, was also noted.

4 Safeguarding Audit

Headteachers have received this audit from BELS. Governors noted that the following documents should be considered in regard to it:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE)
- London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

5 Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

The purpose of the EEF was to support schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning and close the attainment gap, by generating evidence of 'what works'. A link was given to online EEF resources for Governors to note: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/governors-guidance/#closeSignup>

6 Governor Training

It was noted that schools were not charged for training last term, following the pause caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Governors Covid-19 Handbook had been sent instead.

This term, the Governor Training Programme would again be available for registration at: www.barnetce.org.uk/ (click on 'All Traded and Other Training' and then 'Governor Services' to see this term's courses).

7 Prevent Online Training via the Home Office

The training, on an introduction to the Prevent Duty, could be found at: <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk>

8 Schools Libraries Resources Service (SLRS)

This traded service, to support schools with books and resources, had now recommenced. The Reading Road Map would also be offered again.

Links to a new range of resources to support children's well-being were noted:

Happy & Healthy KS1
<https://youtu.be/hWASJwHRppl>

Happy & Healthy KS2
https://youtu.be/Ou3Zg_NgOfU

9 Handling Complaints during the Covid-19 Outbreak

The new guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on the handling of complaints during this period, together with model policies, was noted.

20/84 GOVERNOR TRAINING

Liam Fitzpatrick was thanked for offering to take on the role of Training Governor. The Clerk would send him the links to courses, below.

Diocese training: <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk>

LA training: www.barnetce.org.uk

The link for any LA course queries: SDTUed.Admin@barnet.gov.uk

It was noted that only online training would be available until further notice, due to the pandemic.

Liam Fitzpatrick had taken part in the Govern Ed leadership development programme. This had consisted of three webinars focusing on the knowledge and skills identified in the DfE's Competency Framework for Governance as being essential for school improvement and effective governance.

20/85 GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

Reappointment of Foundation Governors

Sylvia Lehrian and Father James had been reappointed as Foundation Governors from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2024. The Diocese was in the process of re-appointing Alessia Errico and Francesca Giacon, and appointing Peter Collins.

There remained one vacancy for a Foundation Governor.

Forthcoming End of Term of LA Governor

Gordon Fisher was thanked for offering to continue as the LA Governor. The Clerk would get in touch with George Peradigou, Governor Services, at the LA to arrange this.

Action: Clerk

20/86 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ofsted

QUESTIONED about how Ofsted might conduct inspections at this difficult time, the Clerk undertook to send out information on this after the meeting.

Action: Clerk

20/87 **WHAT WAS THE IMPACT ON THE CHILDREN?**

Úna McAuley gave an overview of how this meeting had been focused on the children:

- All the children had happily come back to school following the lockdown. There was a full cohort 60 in Reception. The spiritual well-being and the safeguarding of the children were priorities for the staff.
- An audit had been carried out to assess the children's well-being, readiness for learning and academic achievement, which had been more positive than expected.
- Parents were being communicated with regularly and information about families' well-being had been sought.
- The Headteacher and Safeguarding Governor were maintaining a constant dialogue throughout the pandemic to ensure the safety and welfare of the children.
- The School's environment had been improved with redecoration over the summer by the Caretaker.
- The Two-Year-Old Provision was now complete and this facility would be available to parents as soon as possible.
- Foundation Governors had been, or were in the process of being, reappointed so that they could continue their work for the School.

20/88 **DATE OF NEXT GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

The Vice Chair thanked everyone for a very useful meeting. She said it was lovely to see and speak to everyone again, if only virtually.

The date of the second Autumn Term meeting would be decided at a later date.

Action: Chair/Headteacher/Clerk

20/89 **MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

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

Chair's Signature: *Alessia Errico*

Date: 14 December 2020