

GOVERNING BODY FOR ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING HELD

AT THE SCHOOL ON TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2021

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 James Fasakin	Foundation	31/8/24	Present
Fr John McKenna	Foundation	31/8/21	Apologies
Francesca Giacon	Foundation	31/8/24	Present
Peter Moger	Foundation	31/8/25	Present
Peter Collins (Vice Chair)	Foundation	31/8/24	Present
Vacancy	Foundation		
Gordon Fisher	Local Authority (LA)	13/1/25	Present
Julie Burke	Parent	6/3/23	Apologies
Liz Reeve	Parent	16/5/22	Apologies
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)		Present
Sheila Bennett	Clerk		In Attendance

PART I

The meeting opened in prayer.

21/53 **WELCOME**

Sylvia Lehrian thanked everyone for their attendance at the first Governing Body meeting of the new academic year 2021/22.

The Clerk took the Chair for the next five items.

21/54 **ACCEPTANCE/NON-ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been submitted and were accepted from Julie Burke, Liz Reeve and Father John.

21/55 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Nominations were invited for the position of Chair. Alessia Errico was proposed and had indicated prior to the meeting that she was willing to continue in the post. Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body **RESOLVED** unanimously that Alessia Errico be appointed as Chair for the academic year 2021/22, or until her successor was appointed.

Alessia Errico joined the meeting and asked Sylvia Lehrian to continue in the Chair.

21/56 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

Nominations were invited for the position of Vice Chair.

Sylvia Lehrian explained that succession planning in terms of the Chair and Vice Chair posts had been discussed prior to the meeting. It was noted that although Alessia Errico was happy to continue as Chair, she would have to step back in a few months due to expected pressures of her work. She regretted that she would not be able to devote quite as much time as she would like to the post, but did not wish to fully step down.

Sylvia Lehrian had indicated in the past, and now confirmed, that she did not want to take on the role of Chair. A decision had therefore been made to appoint two Vice Chairs to the post, in order to better assist Alessia Errico in her role when her work commitments increased. This decision was **APPROVED**.

Following this discussion, Sylvia Lehrian was proposed to be reappointed for a further term. Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body **RESOLVED** unanimously that Sylvia Lehrian be appointed as one of the Vice Chairs for the academic year 2021/22, or until her successor was appointed.

Peter Collins was then proposed to fill the other Vice Chair position. Upon a show of hands, the Governing Body **RESOLVED** unanimously that Peter Collins be appointed as the other Vice Chair for the academic year 2021/22, or until his successor was appointed.

21/57 **ANNUAL REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

All Governors present were asked to complete this form if they had not already done so. It would be retained in the School office for audit purposes. This form could be signed electronically.

The Clerk would follow up those Governors who had not yet complied to do so as soon as possible.

Action: Clerk

21/58 **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN THE CURRENT AGENDA**

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

Sylvia Lehrian, Vice Chair, continued as Chair for the rest of the meeting.

21/59 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 29 JUNE 2021**

The minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 29 June 2021 were **CONFIRMED** as being a fair reflection of it.

21/60 **MATTERS ARISING**

The Chair checked through the action points in the minutes not yet completed or dealt with elsewhere in the agenda:

21/39 Matters Arising: Ratification of Policies: Pay Policy The Headteacher said that she had been unable to complete this policy as intended, because she was awaiting information from the trades unions regarding the latest updates.

It was **AGREED** that the revised Pay Policy would be considered in detail by the Resources Committee for ratification as soon as the relevant information had been received.

Action: Headteacher/Resources Cttee

21/40 Report of the Headteacher: Staffing Sylvia Lehrian reported on the exit interviews she had conducted with Kim McKenzie, Business Manager, who had taken notes. Sylvia Lehrian had then drawn up a summary of a selection of different types of staff, which was shared with the Resources Committee. The results had been overwhelmingly positive, with some action points to consider.

21/40 Report of the Headteacher: New Ofsted Framework The Headteacher was thanked for arranging some excellent training on Ofsted the previous week, which all Governors had attended. Slides from the training had since been distributed to everyone.

21/44 Reports of Committees: Catholic Life: School Uniform Francesca Giacon confirmed that this matter would be on the agenda of the next meeting.

Liam Fitzpatrick highlighted that some new guidance on uniforms was available. This included a requirement, which had not yet been passed into legislation, for schools to offer at least two suppliers to parents, and to reduce school logos on uniform items, in order to cut costs. The Chair asked for more information on this guidance, as it would be useful for the committee to have while considering future uniform changes expected to be implemented in the next academic year.

Action: Liam Fitzpatrick/Catholic Life Cttee

21/61 **VERBAL REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER**

The Headteacher said that her full report would be distributed at the second autumn term Governing Body meeting. She gave an overview of the term so far:

Return to School

Governors were delighted to hear of the very successful return back to school for the children. Families were being asked to bring their child into the playground with only one family member, as far as possible.

This change was not only having a positive impact on the children's behaviour, they were also able to run around in the extra space. The Senior Leadership

Team (SLT) was available every day to speak to parents if required, as was the Learning Mentor.

Peter Collins, Vice Chair, wished to highlight that Keith Betts, the Caretaker, was a great ambassador for the School. He spoke to every child and parent as they came in, and this made such a difference to the atmosphere. The Headteacher undertook to pass on the thanks of the Governing Body to him.

Action: Headteacher

Two-Year-Old Provision

This new provision had opened on 13 September 2021 with six children attending so far. The opportunity created by having fewer children was being used to further train the new staff in Early Years teaching. Úna McAuley was responsible for overseeing the Room Leader.

It was noted that one member of the staff had been required to undergo jury duty at the present time.

Gordon Fisher had visited the provision earlier that day to see how the children were settling in and to speak to the new staff.

Covid-19

The Headteacher confirmed that a risk assessment was in place, a copy of which was on the website. Governors noted that the guidelines were being followed when cases arose. Three cases among children and one member of staff had been arisen so far and the Outbreak Management Plan was in place for two weeks. The Headteacher went on to explain that those affected would not attend assembly in the hall. Changes had also been made in the classrooms and teachers were maintaining a two-metre distance. Governors were pleased to hear that the children were now very good at rigorous handwashing.

Catholic Life of the School

The Headteacher spoke about a lovely morning that had been arranged for the children to see Father John, Father James and meet Father John, who was the Chaplain at St Michael's Catholic Grammar School. The importance of maintaining links with Catholic secondary schools was appreciated.

Governors were reminded that Father James would be leaving the country at the end of October 2021. Father David Pember would take his place and would be welcomed into the Governing Body.

School Numbers

Governors heard that there were 64 children in Reception at present. One child had moved to another school, and would be replaced with the next child on the waiting list. There were five vacancies across year groups which were gradually being filled.

QUESTIONED on the forthcoming census, the Headteacher said that this would take place on 4 October 2021. All children accepted into the School by 30 September 2021 would be included in this census. Each school place represented £4,000 so it was important for the health of the budget that the School was as full as possible.

Performing Arts Hub

The Headteacher said that some Governors had been able to look at this beautiful building, which was now nearing completion. This exciting project would further enrich the already broad and balanced curriculum on offer. Children were being targeted across the School to make as good use of this facility as possible.

Peter Moger gave a further update on work still needing completion. He explained that some of the flooring was unsuitable and alternatives were presently being considered. It had also been decided to extend the stage beyond the bi-fold doors.

The Headteacher said that the kitchen had been fitted. She had realised that adult toilets were about to be installed, rather than junior ones, and this was corrected. The washbasins would also be lowered.

Peter Moger was pleased to report that it had been a smooth project so far, which would be a fantastic asset to the School. He spoke about the good rapport between the Caretaker and the builders, who were a specialist team of experts in this type of building work, setting up similar facilities across the country.

Staffing

Governors heard that a new teacher, employed for two days' a week, had made a good start and was liked by the children.

The Headteacher said that the new staffing structure, which was on the website, was being followed. Weekly meetings took place with the SLT, middle leadership and all staff, including teaching assistants. These meetings enabled stronger communication between all members of staff.

Teaching assistants were taking part in training to support interventions such as language groups, fluency and reading. The budget was being used to help narrow gaps and enable the children to achieve as well as possible.

The Headteacher reported on a significant number of staff absences due to Covid-19; three or four each day. These absences were often caused by members of their family awaiting PCR tests. Although every day brought challenges to staffing management, the children were being provided with the best quality education.

QUESTIONED on when the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) would be ready, the Headteacher replied that these

documents had already been prepared and would be shared with Governors in committee during this term. This would enable Governors to take a full part in target setting contained in these documents.

Inclusion

It was noted that five children had Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs). Two more were in the process of being approved. Visits from speech and language, occupational therapists and educational psychologists had already taken place.

School Clubs

The Headteacher was pleased to report that clubs were offered before and after school as well as at lunchtimes. The take-up had been very good. Further details would be given to Governors in committee.

21/62 **PUPIL PREMIUM**

Francesca Giacon said that she and Peter Collins would meet Holly Evans, Pupil Premium Lead, later in the term for an update on this area of the School.

21/63 **SPORTS PREMIUM**

The Headteacher said that Liz Reeve, who was absent that evening, had met Nicki Whatley, the Sports Premium Lead, earlier that day. A report on this meeting would follow, and would be discussed in detail by the Catholic Life committee.

Action: Catholic Life Cttee

Governors were pleased to note that there were 15 sports places available in the after-school clubs for disadvantaged children.

Teaching staff were presently undergoing training in gymnastics.

Governors also heard that the climbing frame in the Nursery had now reached the end of its warranty. This would be discussed further at the next Resources Committee meeting.

Action: Resources Cttee

21/64 **SAFEGUARDING, ON-LINE SAFETY & GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

Governors had received the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) document for 2021/22 prior to the meeting, together with some slides pointing out the most important changes. Governors were reminded that they needed to be completely familiar with Part 1 and Part 5 of this document.

Action: All Governors

Sylvia Lehrian, the Safeguarding Governor, spoke about her recent Safeguarding Committee meeting which had focused on the wellbeing of the children and staff. She said it was very good to hear of the positive return back to school.

The initiative to encourage teachers to keep one evening free of schoolwork and to leave at 4 pm on that day was highlighted. This was designed to help relieve stress on teaching staff. This idea was strongly **APPROVED** by Governors.

Governors were reminded that the School was very fortunate to have two Mental Health Leads. Maureen Kelly and Nicki Whatley had both trained, during the last academic year, as psychological first aiders and youth mental health champions.

Sylvia Lehrian was pleased to report that both staff and Governors were fully up to date with safeguarding training. She thanked Perryn Jasper for his particularly enlightening and very useful training on Prevent.

Sylvia Lehrian spoke about the thorough analysis of the Single Central Record (SCR) recently undertaken by Jane Morris, School Exclusions & Safeguarding Lead at the local authority (LA). She was pleased that the SCR was completely up to date and was being maintained at a very high standard. Governors noted that she had carried out spot checks on the SCR this term and no issues had been raised at all.

21/65 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Most committees had not yet met.

Safeguarding

The minutes of the meeting dated 16 September 2021 had been distributed with the agenda and had been noted in the previous item.

21/66 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEES & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee list would be reviewed later in the term if necessary.

Committee chairs were asked to place Review of Terms of Reference as the first item on their next agendas.

Action: All Committee Chairs

21/67 **RATIFICATION OF POLICIES**

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2021/22

This document, which was based on a model policy, had been distributed to Governors for consideration prior to the meeting. The Chair said that safeguarding audits, including one of the building, had been carried out. She also highlighted that internet filters, to ensure that children and staff could only access appropriate material online, were being considered.

QUESTIONED on the three key areas of concern recently identified in the Underhill area: the level of domestic abuse; sexual abuse; and burglaries, the Headteacher replied that the level of domestic abuse was the biggest concern for the School. Holly Evans, Inclusion Leader, confirmed that some children in the School were damaged by being exposed to domestic abuse.

The Headteacher went on to say that contextual safeguarding crimes taking place nearby not only had an impact on the local community, but undoubtedly affected how the School supported children and families. The Headteacher regretted to report that, since the lockdown, there had been more referrals to the police and social services. This had resulted in more children going into care.

QUESTIONED on why in some parts of the policy the font was red, the Headteacher thanked Governors for bringing this to her attention. She confirmed that both policies would be thoroughly checked for any typos after the meeting.

Action: Headteacher

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

Peer on Peer Abuse Policy 2021/22

Governors had also received this policy prior to the meeting. The Chair said that the fact that this was now a separate policy from the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2021/22 was a measure of its importance.

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

21/68 **GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP**

Foundation Governors

Father James's Forthcoming Resignation

Father James would be resigning from the Governing Body at the end of October as he would be moving to Spain for a sabbatical. Father David Pember would be taking his place.

The Chair thanked Father James for his kindness, wisdom and all his support of the School over the years. Governors wished him good luck in the future. Father James thanked everyone and said that it had been wonderful working with the Governing Body and the School.

Ends of Terms The terms of office of Father John and Peter Moger had ended on 31 August 2021.

Peter Moger had been reappointed by the Diocese for a further four-year term, ending on 31 August 2025.

Father John was going through the process of reappointment. In the meantime he would attend meetings as a non-voting observer.

Foundation Governor Vacancy

There remained one vacancy for a Foundation Governor on the Governing Body.

21/69 **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

Training for Governors on Ofsted 2021 had taken place on 20 September 2021. It was noted that, as the last Ofsted inspection had taken place in April 2009, it was very likely that an inspection would occur in the near future.

Liam Fitzpatrick, Training Link Governor, would send Governors the register of their training. He asked them to let him know of any additions they may have.

Action: Liam Fitzpatrick/All Governors

The links for online training courses were as follows:

Diocese training: <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk>
Link to LA training: www.bels.org.uk
The link for any LA course queries: SDTUed.Admin@barnet.gov.uk

21/70 **DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & LEARNING'S REPORT**

The autumn term 2021/22 report was not yet ready. The Clerk would circulate it to all Governors as soon as it became available.

Action: Clerk

21/71 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Preparation for Ofsted

The Chair said that, following the recent excellent Governor training on the new Ofsted framework, it was necessary to consider how the Governing Body would prepare for inspection. Initially this would be discussed in committee to enable everyone to share their thoughts. A Governor highlighted that a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats (SWOT) analysis of the Governing Body was very important.

21/72 **WHAT WAS THE IMPACT ON THE CHILDREN?**

This meeting had been focused primarily on the needs of the children:

- The children had returned happily to school after the summer break. New arrangements in the playground had made coming into the School a better experience for the children and parents. The very few vacancies in some year groups were quickly being filled from the waiting list.
- The school uniform was being reconsidered for the next academic year, with the help of new guidelines, so that it was fit for purpose and easy for parents to acquire as cheaply as possible.

- A successful start had been made in the new Two-Year-Old Provision, which had opened this term.
- A risk assessment remained in place and was being followed to ensure the safety of the children during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The children had celebrated the Catholic Life of the School with the help of Father John and Father James that term.
- The Performing Arts Hub was nearing completion as final adjustments were made to make the building as good as possible within the confines of the budget. This facility would help broaden the curriculum still further and provide stimulating new opportunities for the children.
- Staff were working hard, despite some unavoidable absences, to provide an excellent, high quality education for the children.
- Staff and Governors had received updated safeguarding training to make sure that the children were safe and secure at school. An emphasis on improving the mental health and wellbeing of the children and staff, which had suffered due to the pandemic, was a focus for this academic year. Checks were made throughout the term to ensure that all safety procedures continued to be robust.

21/73 **DATE OF NEXT GOVERNING BODY MEETING**

The date of the second autumn term meeting of the Governing Body was **CONFIRMED:**

Thursday 2 December 2021 at 7 pm

The Clerk undertook to write to Father David Pember to invite him to this meeting.

Action: Clerk

21/74 **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: 2 December 2021