



School Lane, Milton Heights, Oxfordshire, OX14 4DR. Headteacher: Mrs R Leach  
Telephone 01235 831368 email: office.3260@st-blaise.oxon.sch.uk

**Minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Board held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
at 4.00pm at the school**

**Present:**

- Ruth Leach (**RL**) (Head teacher)
- Mark Smith (**MS**) (Parent)
- Caroline Darling (**CD**) (Parent)
- Karen Green (**KG**) Staff
- Kevin Moyes (**KM**) (Co-opted) Chair
- Richard Webber (**RW**) (LA)

**In Attendance:**

- Sarah Metcalfe (Clerk)
- Linda Shatford (**LS**) (Associate Member)

**Apologies**

- Liam Tremayne-Reichsburg (**LTR**) (Co-opted)
- Jane Robinson (Foundation)

The meeting was quorate.

Item	Details	Document Ref	Action
	<b><i>Governors' Challenge shown in Italics.</i></b> Numbers in details = document reference number		
1.	<b>Welcome and Opening Prayer</b>  <b>KM</b> welcomed everyone and opened with a prayer, a collect for Lent, sent by <b>JR</b> .		
2.	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Were received and accepted from JR and LTR.		
3.	<b>Urgent additional items</b> -None		
4.	<b>Declarations of interest</b>  None		
5	<b>Approval of minutes from the previous FGB meeting</b>  A governor confirmed that given the pending building work, the action to update the agreement with Red Dragon would be completed next year when the new building is in place.	<b>1.FGB Minutes 07/02/17</b>	

	<p>All governors then agreed the minutes and they were signed as an accurate record and filed in school.</p>		
	<p><b>Matters arising and not covered elsewhere on the agenda:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>KM</b> informed the board that some flowers had been sent to <b>JR</b> so she knew we were thinking of her. JR had sent an email of thanks.</li> <li>• <b>Heating- RL</b> updated the board on potentially having one company maintain the whole system. After communications with both companies, <b>RL</b> was informed that it would not be possible, as the control panel company cannot maintain the other aspects of the system. Governors agreed that this was disappointing and noted that with the school expansion, serious thought would have to be given to any new systems installed. Having additional suppliers could potentially bring complications in the future.</li> <li>• <b>Hardship fund for families-</b>It was clarified that Margaret Patching has the information regarding how to access this and that information has been shared with the family and will be shared with other families as needed in the future.</li> <li>• <b>Advert for Associate members- KM</b> at the last meeting it was agreed that recruiting associate members would be a good succession planning tool and allow those potentially interested governors to become involved in governance and support the school. KM to send the advert to governors for their feedback before circulating to local businesses and placing in the school newsletter next week.</li> <li>• <b>Use LA Proforma for site walk and work with school to complete Disaster Recovery Plan including insurance arrangements- MS</b> agreed to this, noting it was not an urgent issue, but will book in a time with <b>CB (Office)</b> during this.</li> <li>• <b>Partnership schools commitment at the partnership meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February-RL</b> received responses and forwarded this information to the Chair.</li> <li>• <b>Schools Financial Value Standard assessment form-</b> The Chair informed the board that following discussions and email confirmations that this was submitted before the deadline. All governors agreed that the document read well and was very useful in helping to self-assess our policies and practices.</li> <li>• <b>Foundation Governor Vacancy-</b>The board were informed that <b>RL</b> had met with the candidate and was very happy. <b>RL</b> felt that she would fit in well, had a similar ethos, had valuable</li> </ul>	<p>2.SFVS</p>	<p>KM</p>

	<p>skills and experiences and was very children centred. The candidate is currently SENCO for another school and has a lot to offer. The board discussed the timescales of bringing in the new foundation governor, with the chair explaining that this would depend on the timing for the Diocesan appointment board. The chair explained that she could be brought in as an associate member in the meantime, as a way of speeding up the induction process. KM confirmed he is due to speak to the candidate tonight and will then pass her details onto the Diocese. The candidate will be able to start in Mid-April (as moving to the Village).</p>		
7	<p><b>Headteacher's report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers have stabilised, having lost 3 pupils, but is now back up to 65. Parents can also be informed that more spaces will be available in September with the 4 class structure. The headteacher informed the board that one child had left, but has returned. The yr6 secondary places have all been allocated (with the headteacher happily noting that all pupils had got their preferred choice) and the reception admissions will be decided by Easter. Future numbers are currently ok, but the school wants them to rise and HT and governors will continue to actively promote the school.</li> <li>• <b>Attendance</b>-This has improved slightly. The headteacher explained that this is monitored closely, noting that the year 1 cohort has shown to have a low attendance, but other classes, reception in particular have very good attendance.  <b>Q. Do you have any plans in place to deal with this?</b>  <b>A. Holidays taken have reduced in general and there was one child that was on a part-time timetable, which impacts on figures. All other incidences were reviewed and there was no clear pattern/issues to be actioned.</b>  The headteacher noted that the LA is not as involved as they used to be, when it comes to poor attendance. The school have to pay for specific training annually in dealing with it and it is the school that would issue any penalties and not the LA. The headteacher reiterated the fact that there are few families that take holidays within term time and that the school is still above target at 96.2% (the target is 96%). Attendance tends to pick up once they are over the worst of the winter bugs/illnesses.</li> <li>• <b>Pupil Premium</b>-Numbers have fallen, which will have an impact on the budget. The headteacher noted the importance of making sure families are aware if they are eligible for PP.</li> <li>• <b>Staff</b>- Following the approval to an increase in the number of teachers at the last FGB meeting, an advert has gone out for the new class teacher. The candidate ideally needs to be an NQT because of budget implications and because we are keen to support developing new teachers. It will work well because</li> </ul>	9.Headteacher report	

	<p>KG, as a very experienced teacher would be able to mentor the new teacher. The headteacher highlighted the difficulty in recruiting in general, noting that the expense of living in the area is often a stumbling block for many candidates.</p> <p><b>Q. If developers would ring-fence a small number of properties for teachers, would that help?</b></p> <p><b>A. Yes, it would marry up a lot of issues, but also it may not be best for a member of staff to live too close to the school.</b></p> <p>Another governor noted that measures are supposed to be in place for key workers, but it does not always work out that way once developments are finished.</p> <p><b>Q. Is there a backup plan if no one applies for the job?</b></p> <p><b>A. Not at the moment, but the advert has gone out early giving us plenty of time to go through the recruitment process carefully.</b></p> <p>After considering where the recently appointed teacher would be best placed, given his experiences and skills, RL confirmed that he would be teaching y3/4.(and will move up with them). He will also take on Maths, Computing and assessment, which he is happy to do.</p> <p>The new TA is settling very well, proving to be keen and conscientious, which is pleasing. The Chair agreed to mention this in the next newsletter and had emailed her to welcome her to the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tea with the head-</b>The headteacher asked if any of the governors would be able to join in with this, as a way of celebrating the pupils' achievements. It will be a regular thing and a number of governors agreed that they would be able to attend them. The headteacher explained that governors would be made aware of when they were happening and could then sign-up.</li> <li>• <b>SVM-</b>This is ongoing and very busy. There will be a careful handover between the incoming and outgoing teacher to ensure all coordinator aspects are covered.</li> <li>• <b>SAT's-</b> In general the children are progressing well. There was some discussion around a number of schools going into RI around progress and noted that the level of progress throughout the school was strong.</li> <li>• <b>3&amp;7 year overview-</b>The document had been completed by the headteacher and a governor and shared with all governors before the meeting. Governor discussed the details of the documents and agreed that they were extremely useful in setting out our long term aspirational vision for the school and bring in all internal and external factors. The documents helped to set out the areas we want to change in the future and those</li> </ul>	<p><b>10.Long term vision map</b></p> <p><b>11.SVM 3yr plan</b></p>	
--	---	---	--

	<p>we want to retain such as our family ethos.</p> <p><b>Q. How often do you revisit it?</b></p> <p><b>A. At key points throughout the year. It's an ongoing document.</b></p> <p>The governors agreed that it was useful for future decisions (to ensure that short term decisions do not impact our long term direction)</p> <p><b>Q. Should we put it on the school website?</b></p> <p><b>A. It would show that we are being open and transparent about the future we wish St Blaise to have.</b></p> <p>It was agreed by the board that the document would be placed on the governors' page of the website, with a note explaining its purpose and that any questions regarding it, the governors would be happy to explain. It will also be referenced in the next communication from governors</p> <p>It was noted that this would have to be reviewed again before the end of the school year and so would be discussed again at the June FGB meeting.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the headteacher for her report.</p>		<p>RL</p> <p>Clerk</p>
8.	<p><b>Building/housing development</b></p> <p>The board were informed that RL &amp; KM had met with Adrian Butler, the planning officer regarding the development (Visit report to follow). There was discussion around a proposed footbridge over the A34 that would link into the Milton Park area and some of the new housing. RL challenged the proposal wanting clarification as to whether it was to link the school to the new houses, as they would be in the catchment area.</p> <p>The board discussed the ongoing dispute over the land needed for the school expansion, with one governor informing the board that negotiating the price of the land was a factor in the delay. It was acknowledged that the Parish Council's position was in support of the school expansion. A governor raised the question as to whether a compulsory purchase order was possible or likely, but it is unclear about that at this time.</p> <p>A governor raised the point that the new 4 class structure and giving up our community room was agreed on the assumption that the housing development would take place and a new community space would be built. If the development does not happen, the school would struggle to sustain a 4 class structure. After discussion it was agreed that the board would draft a letter to all parties involved explaining the school's position on the matter.</p>		<p>KM/RL</p>
9	<p><b>SVM</b>-Information covered in the headteacher's report.</p>		

10	<p><b>Lead Governor Updates including any monitoring:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SEN format change</b>-The lead governor explained that this would be revisited in July, when looking at the annual report. To be added to the agenda.</li> <li>• <b>SIAMS</b>- A few monitoring worship visits have taken place, as well as some pupil voice pieces. All reports have been sent to LS and a summary report of the SIAMs monitoring will come to the next meeting.</li> <li>• <b>Red Dragon update</b>- It was clarified earlier in the meeting when agreeing the minutes that this would be addressed at a later date.</li> <li>• <b>Budget update</b>-The lead governor explained that there was a meeting booked in for the 4<sup>th</sup> April to discuss the draft budget. The budget will then be brought to the FGB meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup> for approval. The final budget will then be submitted on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Visit reports:</b> All reports are on Governorhub  02.02.17 GVisit LS SEND  07.02.17 GVisit CD Stay and Play  21.02.17 Maths and Middle Leadership monitoring visit  01.03.17 Parents' Afternoon-The governor that carried out the homework questionnaire wanted to make a point of thanking all the parents that took part, noting that the feedback was very useful. It was agreed by the board that a letter would be sent out to parents to thank them. On considering the useful feedback from the questionnaire, the headteacher decided that a questionnaire regarding school dinners would also be helpful and will be planned in. Full details of the questionnaire responses and next steps will come to the next meeting.</p>	<p><b>3.Budget</b></p> <p><b>Doc's:4,5,6 &amp; 8</b></p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>LS</b></p> <p><b>LS</b></p> <p><b>RL</b></p> <p><b>LS</b></p>
11	<p><b>Safeguarding:</b></p> <p>The headteacher informed the board that there had not been any incidents in school since the last meeting.</p>		
12	<p><b>Governor Communication:</b></p> <p>The chair agreed to draft a communication to the parents in the schools next newsletter, including an advert for new associate members.</p> <p>A note regarding the parents' afternoon thanking them for completing the homework questionnaires will also be sent out.</p>		<p><b>KM</b></p> <p><b>LS</b></p>
13	<p><b>Governor future visits and monitoring:</b></p> <p>Governors agreed to look at the updated SMSC schedule and</p>		<p><b>ALL</b></p>

	conduct monitoring visits where necessary.		
14	<p>Governor training update:</p> <p>KM confirmed he has completed the Safer Recruitment Training as his was due to expire and will send the certificate to RL Clerk to update the log. Some governors were made aware of Safeguarding training that would need to be undertaken soon. There was some discussion as to whether governor services offer some and RL agreed to enquire with the partnership, as a way of sharing training costs.</p> <p>KM confirmed he Chaired the recent Abingdon Partnership Meeting where they heard about 2 of the local Abingdon MAT solutions (Abingdon Learning Trust and Vale Academy Trust) . KM informed the board that he gave a presentation regarding governance without committees and the other changes we have made, which provoked thoughtful discussion, debate and questions around suitability for very large schools.</p>		<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>RL</b></p>
15	<p><b>Academy Working Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KM confirmed that he also presented to the Abingdon Partnership on the Academy working group, which he has now set up. It is the Abingdon Partnership (South Cluster) Academy Working Group. The group will have one Governor and the Headteacher on it from each interested school. The aim of the group is to carry out the assessment of MATs and the due diligence process together. The aim to agree on one MAT for all schools in the group or 1-2 MATs for different schools (depending on need). This way of working will give smaller schools, those in RI or with budget deficits or buildings in poor repair greater leverage in negotiating with MATs for inclusion. It will ensure that schools are selecting the MATs and not the other way around. Responses from interested schools are being collated and some have come in from outside of the Cluster (which the group will consider). The group will have no decision making power but will produce a detailed recommendation report which each governor will take back to their own board for approval A meeting will be booked before the end of the month to elect a Chair, agree the terms of reference and set out agendas KM agreed to keep the board updated.</li> <li>• RL informed the board that Jonathon Denet had asked to come in for a meeting with her to share a headteacher update on the Abingdon Learning Trust.. Any useful information will be fed back to the governors.</li> </ul>		<b>KM</b>
16	<b>Policy Review/approval:</b>		

	There were no policies for review and it was confirmed that all policies (as per the schedule are up to date)		
17	<p><b>Review of new Governance Structure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The headteacher again stated that the new structure is working well for her and continues to save her meeting time.</li> <li>• It gives a better overview for the whole board</li> <li>• Demonstrates that the board is reflecting on own practice and modernising.</li> <li>• A governor raised the point that monthly meetings enabled the board to plan in advance.</li> <li>• It was also noted that should other schools adopt it, then it could be beneficial when it comes to academisation and sharing best practice because the leads could meet with their counterparts from other schools</li> </ul>	7.Governance review	
18	<p><b>Review and confirmation of agreed actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and send out advert for associate members</li> <li>• Book in visit to do site walk and work with school to complete Disaster Recovery Plan including insurance arrangements.</li> <li>• Governors who can attend 'Tea with the head' to arrange with headteacher</li> <li>• 3 &amp; 7 Year development plan to go on website</li> <li>• Draft letter to all parties involved in the Land dispute</li> <li>• Send out a letter of thanks to parents who took part in the homework questionnaire</li> <li>• Draft a school dinner questionnaire</li> <li>• Include a governor communication in the next school newsletter</li> <li>• Update on the academy working group at next meeting</li> <li>• Update governance review document</li> </ul>		<p>KM MS ALL</p> <p>RL KM</p> <p>LS</p> <p>RL KM KM Clerk</p>
19	<p><b>Items for next meeting (as per our annual schedule)</b></p> <p><b>-Headteacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIAMS &amp; SMSC</li> <li>• Review and discuss report on mid-year appraisal for support staff</li> </ul> <p><b>-Learning and Teaching:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss possible residential visit for years 3 &amp; 4</li> </ul> <p><b>-Update on the building</b></p> <p><b>-Sports/healthy living questionnaire</b></p>		

The meeting closed at 5.50