

MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
held via video conferencing at 6.30pm on Tuesday 25th April 2023

Governors Present: Beverly Jones (Chair), Sarah Abrey, Andrew Blake (Associate Member), Suranga Chandratillake, Helen Darrell (Headteacher), Barry Fuchs, Sharon Geva, Simon Jarvis, Liam Kelly (Associate Member), Imogen Nay, Russell Re Manning, Jonty Roland, Kate Sharkie and Alex Smith.

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk)

(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in bold)

1. GOVERNOR BUSINESS

i Apologies for Absence

NOTED: apologies for late arrival from Liam Kelly. Kate Sharkie apologised that she would have to leave the meeting briefly part way through. Philip Murray was absent.

ii Declarations of Interest

NOTED: Imogen Nay was a CsoC trustee.

Barry Fuchs and Sharon Geva joined the meeting at this point

iii Minutes of Previous Meetings: 6th December 2022 and 23rd March 2023

NOTED: the minutes as uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. The Clerk led the review of the minutes and action points.

NOTED: the following matters arising from the minutes:

Date	Min. Ref.	Action	Lead	Completed
20/9/22	1vi	the Head and Finance Link Governor would further consider costs associated with subject delivery and report back to the next FGB meeting.	H Darrell/ S Chandratillake	Completed. Part of budget discussions – subject plans being costed
	2i	A 360 degree review of Governing Body effectiveness involving pupils, staff, parents, other stakeholders and possibly the clerk should be considered for 2022/23.	B Jones/ S Chandratillake	Still to be done. Brief discussions had taken place with Jonty Roland
	2i	the governing body skills audit and a governance improvement plan based	B Jones/ S Chandratillake	To be undertaken as part of the previous action. Actions to

		on the School SIP would be considered alongside the possible 360 degree review.		commence with the Chair undertaking a Skills Audit in May 2023
	3i	the Headteacher would consider the wording for objective 2 of the SIP and the relationship between staff professionalism and well-being. She would also advise link governors when it was a good time to visit the school and would report back to the next FGB meeting on how staff were responding to greater freedom in setting their development plans.	H Darrell	Completed
	3iv	Hilary Aldred, Andrew Blake and Kate Sharkie would meet to review the critical incident that took place in July and would feedback any recommendation to the December FGB meeting.	S Chandratillake	Report written by HA but not shared with other governors. Head, Russell Re Manning and Suranga Chandratillake had reviewed report. School had meticulously followed LA procedure. No outstanding recommendations and identified risks. Suranga would upload a redacted version of the report to GovernorHub for all to read.
	4i	Bev Jones, Helen Darrell and Sharon Geva would meet to discuss how to reach out to all stakeholders. Other governors were welcome to participate	B Jones/ H Darrell/ S Geva	Postponed – still to take place
6/12/22	1iii	in Hilary's absence, Imogen Nay would scrutinise the SCR when she next visited the school.	I Nay	Had discussed SCR but not scrutinised it. Scrutiny no longer required by OFSTED but still recommended by CCC
	1v	Imogen Nay would ask CSoC's opinion of Cambridge schools joining the DMAT academy.	I Nay	Outstanding
	1vi	Alex Smith would talk to the	A Smith/ S	Completed – with

		Head and Deputy re. the Sports Premium Strategy. Stephanie Florczyk would forward a copy of the Sports Premium strategy to him	Florczyk	thanks to Sarah Abrey for taking on Sports Premium
	1vi	Sarah Abrey and Suranga Chandratilake would consider how best to share monitoring reports going forward	S Abrey/ S Chandratilake	Completed – v.1 on agenda
	2i	the Chair would consider an evaluation questionnaire so all governors could share their views on the new way of working.	B Jones	Ongoing
	2ii	the Chair did not wish to stand for re-election as Chair in 23/23, though she was willing to continue as a governor. She asked governors to consider expressing an interest in standing as Chair as soon as possible to permit succession planning and a meaningful handover	All	No volunteers had come forward – ongoing
	2iii	Foundation governors would reflect on the Skills Audit and the requirements for the replacement Foundation governor when they met the following week.	Foundation Governors	Completed – Philip Murray had identified a potential governor from a different church
	2iv	the 24/24 Admissions Policy would be uploaded to GovernorHub in the Spring Term for governor approval.	H.Darrell	Completed - on agenda
	3iii	governors should respond individually to the congestion charge consultation before the deadline and highlight the predicament of the school. The Chair would contact Cllr. Richard Howitt regarding the situation. The Head would let staff know that governors were pursuing the matter.	All/ B. Jones/ H. Darrell	Completed
	3iv	the Headteacher would upload the annual	H Darrell	Completed

		safeguarding return to GovernorHub for governors' information.		
	5	the agenda would include a monitoring update from Suranga Chandratilake. The Chair would invite Jon Lewis or an LA representative to attend the meeting to talk about the steps towards Academy status	B. Jones	Monitoring Update on agenda. No LA representative available. Chair to speak further to LA
	7	AGREED: the following five points: i. school improvement priorities being actioned ii. the development of solid PP and SP strategies iii. the sharing of good practice with other schools iv. increased parental involvement in the school v. increased community links, including the Botanic Gardens project The Chair would use these points to draft, with the Headteacher, an update to staff and parents.	B Jones/ H Darrell	Completed
	8	the Clerk would ensure future meeting dates were listed on GovernorHub.	Clerk	Completed
23/3/23	Assorted	Budget and SFVS related actions	Assorted	Completed
	4	Head to analyse where pupil intake is from to establish any changes in patterns of catchment or out of catchment	H Darrell	Cannot be undertaken until September 23 at earliest

Kate Sharkie left the meeting part way through the above discussions

NOTED: there were no other items from the minutes that governors wished to raise.

AGREED: the minutes of the previous meetings held on 6th December 2022 and 23rd March 2023 as true and correct records. The minutes would be physically signed by the Chair and passed to the school for safekeeping when circumstances permitted.

iv Governor Training Activity

NOTED: seven training activities had been added to the training record, **but more activity would be good given the size of the FGB. In response to Governor comments, it was noted that governor induction involved a meeting with the Chair, the NGA handbook, LA induction and safeguarding training.**

AGREED: SEND and Safeguarding would form part of discussions at the June workshop meeting
Action: B Jones

v Ratification of Decisions Taken via Governor Hub

NOTED: decisions taken online via GovernorHub or information posted on GovernorHub.

NOTED: feedback from governor visits and monitoring activities from November/December 2022 onwards. Governors were invited to read and reflect on the comments, but only strategic issues were suitable for governor action. Operational matters were for the school to take a view on. **Governors liked the new system of capturing visits, but acknowledged the need to write the report on the day of the visit.** An iPad was available at the school so the visit could be reported on while in progress. **When asked by a governor if eleven visits was a good number,** the Clerk suggested an at-a glance list of activities undertaken and link areas covered would be helpful to demonstrate the spread of visits.

AGREED: Sarah Abrey would consider creating an at-a glance record of visits that could be uploaded to GovernorHub.
Action: S Abrey

NOTED: the Admissions policy for 24-25 had been approved online.

AGREED: to ratify documents posted and approval of:

- Admissions Policy 24-25

2. ENSURING CLARITY OF VISION, ETHOS, STRATEGIC DIRECTION

i Academy Status Update

NOTED: CSoc's opinion of Cambridge schools joining the DMAT academy was not yet known and an LA presentation had not been possible. The Clerk highlighted the news item recently posted on GovernorHub regarding the government's updated views on Academy Trusts. **A governor shared informal information from a recent conference. It was confirmed that the LA was considering establishing an Academy Trust, but an arrangement with the Diocese had not been mentioned. The staff governor highlighted that many staff were opposed to the concept of academies.**

ii Governor Improvement Progress Report

NOTED: as reported at the December meeting, **the Chair did not wish to stand for re-election as Chair in 23/24, though she was willing to continue as a governor. The current Vice Chair was also uncertain about standing again.** The Clerk stressed the FGB had to have a Chair and a seamless handover was desirable. **Governors noted that some FGBs had two Co-Chairs. Both St. Mathews and Steeple Morden Primary were highlighted as schools where co-Chairing worked well.**

NOTED: Suranga Chandratillake was coming to the end of his term of office as a Co-opted

Governor in June 2023. He had confirmed he was willing to stand for a further term, but there had been insufficient time to place his re-appointment on the agenda.

AGREED: to waive the practice of placing a governor appointment on the agenda in advance and that Suranga Chandratillake was not required to leave the meeting while his re-appointment was discussed.

NOTED: the two Associate Members indicated they would be happy to continue as Associates when their terms of office came to an end. Suranga Chandratillake was nominated and seconded as a continuing Co-opted governor.

AGREED: following a ballot by show of hands, that Suranga Chandratillake be re-appointed as a Co-opted governor for a further period of four years beginning on 25 June 2023 and ending on 24 June 2027. The school would arrange for a fresh DBS check to be undertaken.

Action: H. Darrell

iii Church School: Christian Distinctiveness

NOTED: the Foundation Governor meeting would be taking place later in the term. Imogen Nay had attended a training session on SIAMS and had uploaded her notes to GovernorHub. She added there was work to be done in relation to SIAMS.

iv Legal and Regulatory Compliance including policy update

NOTED: the policies listed on the agenda for approval and commented on online:

NOTED: the Admissions Policy and related documents had been approved under item 1v.

AGREED: the Appraisal and Capability Policy

AGREED: the Attendance Policy.

AGREED: Equality Information and Objectives

AGREED: the Whistleblowing Policy

NOTED: a governor queried whether the school had sufficiently signalled its inclusivity regarding same sex marriage given the range of messages emanating from the Church of England? The meeting discussed the matter in detail, focusing on how the school could make it clear that it welcomed same sex couples and their children. Some governors queried why one particular group should be highlighted as the school was wholly inclusive. The negative messages previously associated with the Church of England, even if its views had partially changed, as advised by some governors, were raised along with whether the school's Equality and Diversity policy, which adhered to UK law, was compatible with CofE guidance. Imogen Nay, in her capacity as Vicar of St. Paul's Church, confirmed that the church as well as the school was focussed on welcoming all. She felt the CoE decision to offer same sex blessings was an indication of the inclusion of same sex couples by the CoE. The school stressed its reading materials were inclusive and included same sex parents.

Kate Sharkie re-joined the meeting at this point

NOTED: it was suggested the meeting should focus on the demonstrated inclusivity of the school and how to emphasise this further, rather than legal compatibility with evolving CofE guidance.

The Chair invited all governors to think further about the topic and highlighted the value of being able to have such an open debate. All governors were supportive of the school's welcoming and inclusive approach.

3. HOLDING THE HEADTEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL

i School Improvement Plan 2022 -2023

NOTED: the Head advised that, over all, the SIP was on track. She would provide fuller feedback with her termly Head's report to the July meeting.

ii Pupil Data

NOTED: the data group report formally uploaded with the agenda and a subsequent update from the group posted on the GovernorHub noticeboard by a governor before the meeting but after the agenda had been published. The Head advised it was a draft report that she had not had an opportunity to comment on and was based on draft school data. **Simon Jarvis summarised the noticeboard comments and asked what the governing body should be doing to support the school and its pupils, including the allocation of additional financial resources to address under performance? The Chair welcomed governor scrutiny of data, but stressed it was down to the school to lead on what resources it needed to address any identified issues.** The Head concurred that her report to the data group had identified data currently showed the school was likely to be below its 22/23 achievement targets, but also that there was still a term left to address any issues and that it was possible that some of data was driven by overly pessimistic staff evaluation. This was being looked into. The school had a high number of EAL pupils and a high pupil turnover. This impacted on the data. EAL pupils ranged from those who were fluent in English and other languages to those with little or no English language skills. The school had a range of strategies to improve the weaker areas of its performance, including a focus on reading and writing, whilst continuing to develop its strongest areas.

Liam Kelly joined the meeting at this point

NOTED: governors discussed resources needed to address perceived weaknesses. The Clerk advised the school should lead on operational matters.

AGREED: the Headteacher would identify additional resources, if any, to support the school's learning goals.

Action: H Darrell

iii Staff Well being

NOTED: there had been no significant absences or staff turnover. **Glowing comments made about the school by a supply teacher were noted. A governor commented that it would create a more accurate picture of the school if governors could note the school's successes, as observed during visits, rather than just perceived areas for improvement.**

iv Safeguarding

NOTED: there had been no significant safeguarding issues. Staff had received safeguarding training updates. **Eynesbury School was running a Safeguarding training event and was happy to welcome St. Paul's staff and governors.**

V Health and Safety

NOTED: there had been no significant issues. A planned health and safety walk would be taking

place shortly.

4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY

i Financial Monitoring Update

NOTED: in response to a question from governors, that the item had been requested to enable the Finance lead governor to update the rest of the FGB on the school's ongoing financial performance.

Noted: the finance lead governor summarised financial procedures at the school, including the monthly account updates sent to him. 22/23 updates had been positive and within budget. A £195k balance had been carried forward from 22/23 into 23/24. The budget setting process for 23/24 was summarised. Ray Byford, the LA adviser, had been very positive about the draft budget, commenting that St. Paul's was only one of a few schools not proposing an operating deficit. The SFVS for 2023 had been approved at the extraordinary March FGB meeting.

ii Budget Update

NOTED: the budget proposal uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. Turnover was around £1m. A small surplus was proposed for 23/24, but the school system was forecasting deficits for 24/25 and 25/26. **The finance lead governor felt the system-generated forecasts were unrealistic, with predicted income unnecessarily conservative. The school was robust financially at the present time, with cash reserves that could be reinvested to support the school's learning goals, if requested by the school.**

NOTED: governors asked questions about the school staffing establishment, how many posts were filled by supply cover, why it was difficult to recruit to TA posts, whether a strategy could be developed that meant school income and expenditure was not subservient to pupil numbers, whether more realistic financial forecasting could be carried out, premises costs and whether energy efficiency savings could decrease future deficits. Staffing details were summarised. TA recruitment was a problem nationally, as it was easy to earn more doing a less stressful job. The school would run with 6 classes in September. 23 Reception place offers had been made for the new academic year. The local population was historically transient and this was reflected in pupil numbers. Premises costs were detailed in the budget reports. LA financial systems were not able to produce customised financial forecasts, but **rough calculations by the Finance Lead governor indicated future deficits would be smaller than forecast.**

AGREED: unanimously, the proposed school budget for 23/24.

AGREED: unanimously, that cash reserves up to the predicted £15.6k surplus could be utilised to support and enhance classroom practice, subject to need being identified by the Head.

AGREED: Liam Kelly would consider creating more realistic financial forecasts for the school outside of the LA system.

Action: L Kelly

5. ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

AGREED: the following items would be considered at the July meeting:

- Termly written Head's report. Currently there were 172 pupils on roll with 23 Reception places offered for 23/24. Full information would be provided in the report.
- A proposed meeting schedule for 23/24 (**Action:** Head/ Chair and Clerk to meet to discuss before the next meeting)

- Strategic priorities for 23/24 would be discussed at the June Workshop.

6. AOB

NOTED: governors thanked the Head, Business Manager, Suranga Chandratillake and Liam Kelly for their work on the 23/24 budget.

7. FIVE POINTS TO SHARE WITH STAFF AND PARENTS

AGREED: the following five points:

- agreed surplus budget for 23/24, with the LA praising the school's budget planning
- 172 pupils on roll, signifying a return to pre-COVID levels
- 22/23 budget outturn generated a small surplus for the school
- planned 23/24 surplus would be used to enhance classroom practice
- governor visits had explored a wide range of experiences across the whole school

The Chair would use these points to draft, with the Headteacher, an update to staff and parents.

Action: B Jones/ H Darrell

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED: the next scheduled meeting would take place on Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 6.30pm by video link

NOTED: the governor workshop on 27th June 2023 would consider 23/24 strategic priorities to feed into the school's Improvement Plan. It would be a face-to-face meeting.

The meeting concluded at approximately 20:30 hours

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts

Clerk to the Governors

26 April 2023

Approved by The Governing Body on:

Date: 4th July 2023.....

Signature (Chair):

FGB Action Summary Grid

Date	Min. Ref.	Action	Lead	Completed
20/9/22	2i	A 360-degree review of Governing Body effectiveness involving pupils, staff, parents, other stakeholders and possibly the clerk should be considered for 2022/23.	B Jones/ S Chandratillake	Still to be done. Brief discussions had taken place with Jonty Roland

	2i	the governing body skills audit and a governance improvement plan based on the School SIP would be considered alongside the possible 360-degree review.	B Jones/ S Chandratillake	To be undertaken as part of the previous action. Actions to commence with the Chair undertaking a Skills Audit in May 2023
	3iv	Hilary Aldred, Andrew Blake and Kate Sharkie would meet to review the critical incident that took place in July and would feedback any recommendation to the December FGB meeting.	S Chandratillake	Report written by HA but not shared with other governors. Head, Russell Re Manning and Suranga Chandratillake had reviewed report. School had meticulously followed LA procedure. No outstanding recommendations and identified risks. Suranga would upload a redacted version of the report to GovernorHub for all to read.
	4i	Bev Jones, Helen Darrell and Sharon Geva would meet to discuss how to reach out to all stakeholders. Other governors were welcome to participate	B Jones/ H Darrell/ S Geva	Postponed – still to take place
6/12/22	1iii	in Hilary's absence, Imogen Nay would scrutinise the SCR when she next visited the school.	I Nay	Had discussed SCR but not scrutinised it. Scrutiny no longer required by OFSTED but still recommended by CCC
	1v	Imogen Nay would ask CSoC's opinion of Cambridge schools joining the DMAT academy.	I Nay	Outstanding
	2i	the Chair would consider an evaluation questionnaire so all governors could share their views on the new way of working.	B Jones	Ongoing
	2ii	the Chair did not wish to stand for re-election as Chair in 23/24, though she was willing to continue as a governor. She asked governors to consider expressing an interest in	All	No volunteers had come forward – ongoing

		standing as Chair as soon as possible to permit succession planning and a meaningful handover		
	5	agenda would include a monitoring update from Suranga Chandratilake. Chair would invite Jon Lewis or an LA representative to attend the meeting to talk about the steps towards Academy status	B Jones/ Clerk	Monitoring Update on agenda. No LA representative available. Chair to speak further to LA
23/3/23	4	Head to analyse where pupil intake is from to establish any changes in patterns of catchment or out of catchment	H Darrell	Cannot be undertaken until September 23 at earliest
25/4/23	1iii	The minutes of the two previous meetings would be physically signed by the Chair and passed to the school for safekeeping when circumstances permitted.	B Jones	
	1iv	SEND and Safeguarding would form part of discussions at the June workshop meeting	B Jones	
	1v	Sarah Abrey would consider creating an at-a glance record of visits to be uploaded to GovernorHub.	S Abrey	
	2ii	The school would arrange a fresh DBS check for Suranga Chandratillake's reappointment	H Darrell	
	3ii	the Headteacher would identify additional resources, if any, to support the school's learning goals.	H Darrell	
	4ii	Liam Kelly would consider creating more realistic financial forecasts for the school outside of the LA system.	L Kelly	
	5	the following items would be considered at the July meeting: - Termly written Head's report. - a proposed meeting schedule for 23/24	Clerk plus H Darrell /B Jones	

		(Action: Head/Chair and Clerk to meet to discuss before next meeting) Strategic priorities for 23/24 would be discussed at the June Workshop		
	7	i. agreed a surplus budget for 23/24, with the LA praising the school's budget planning ii. 172 pupils on roll, signifying a return to pre-COVID levels iii. 22/23 budget outturn generated a small surplus for the school iv. planned 23/24 surplus would be used to enhance classroom practice v. governor visits had explored a wide range of experiences across the whole school The Chair to use the above points to draft, with the Headteacher, an update to staff and parents.	B Jones/ H Darrell	