

ST PETER'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2016 AT 6.00PM

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mrs Caroline Chivers (Vice Chair), Mr Andrew McGlown (Headteacher), Mrs Anne Doran, Mrs Ruth Fisher, Mr Clive Hough, Fr Bernard Jackson, Mrs Nicola McLaughlin, Mr Bob Morris, Mrs Geraldine Oldfield, Mrs Krystyna Pilkington, Mrs Samantha Tunney (from 6.10pm)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Tim Carroll (Acting Clerk)

1. OPENING PRAYER

Fr Jackson opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Terry Sweeney. In his absence, Mrs Caroline Chivers chaired the meeting.

3. ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED UNDER AOB

Proposed rearrangement of the Premises, Health and Safety Committee meeting.

4. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY/BUSINESS INTEREST

No declarations were recorded.

5. GOVERNING BODY REVIEW

a) Professional Clerking Service details and appointment of temporary clerk

It was proposed that Wigan Council Governor Services should take responsibility for clerking of the meetings of the Full Governing Body and Committees on a temporary basis until the end of the Summer Term 2016. The Headteacher referred Governors to the previously-circulated outline of the service to be provided by Governor Services. Governors agreed to this temporary arrangement. A decision about future clerking arrangements would be made at the July 5 meeting of the Full Governing Body

Action: The Acting Clerk to include clerking arrangements for 2016-17 on the agenda for the July 5 meeting of the Governing Body.

b) Role of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor

Governors noted the previously-circulated document outlining the role of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor. The suggested questions were seen as a useful resource/checklist for governors to draw upon in visits and meetings. Mrs Nicola McLaughlin and Mrs Ruth Fisher were planning to visit school on 18 April to discuss safeguarding and pastoral provision.

Q. The document mentions lettings. How is safeguarding dealt with in this context?

A. Lettings are now managed by SLS. All of their staff are vetted, and the company is aware of its responsibilities for safeguarding.

c) Governor Services Buy-back for 1/9/16 to 31/8/17

Governors **agreed** to continue with the Governor Services Buyback for 2016-17, and to opt for membership of the National Governors' Association. It was decided not to renew the Modern Governor subscription.

6. HEADTEACHER'S TERMLY REPORT ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Student Progress

The Headteacher referred Governors to his previously-circulated termly report. He reported that students were on track to achieve good results this year, in line with or better than those of 2015.

Q. Why are the "working at" and "predicted" scores for mathematics so different?

A. At this stage of the mathematics course intensive practice usually leads to rapid improvement.

Q. You identify three levels of progress in mathematics for disadvantaged pupils as a "key battleground". Why is this?

A. This is where the attainment gap is currently greatest. The current "working at" score of 44% would be very disappointing, but this is before the Easter Schools and the revision sessions. The final 2 months are very important, particularly for the students eligible for Pupil Premium.

(Mrs. Samantha Tunney joined the meeting at this point).

Q. So is the 85% prediction for three levels of progress likely to be achieved?

A. Probably not – there are 27 students in this group, so each one represents almost 4% of the total. However, it is very likely that a sufficient number will make three levels of progress to bring the group above 60%, the national average for all children.

Q. Is the Progress 8 score better for that reason?

A. Yes, mathematics is double weighted, but still only counts as 2 of the 8 subjects.

Q. Will there be an updated table for us to study next term?

A. The examination is at the end of May, so there would be little point in providing an updated table. Outcomes will be reviewed once the final results have been received in August.

The Headteacher reminded governors that this cohort of GCSE candidates would not have sat any maths examinations until the end of the course. This meant that performance was less predictable because it would be more heavily influenced by factors including whether individual students were having a good/bad day, absences for illness, etc.

Q. How are the students feeling about the approaching exams?

A. Fairly good – they now seem less stressed, and are getting on with the work. There has been very good attendance at revision sessions. Communication with parents has been good, and there is often strong support from home. Over 80 (targeted) students are planning to attend Easter School. The mood is positive. The school's holiday pattern, which allows a five-week run-in to the exams after Easter, is helpful.

Q. Do we have any information about planned student destinations?

A. All but two students have applied to college or for apprenticeships. A breakdown will be provided to governors in due course.

Mrs Fisher commented that students she had spoken to recently had been quite motivated about their future plans.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance was very slightly below the school's ambitious target of 97%, at 96.57%. management of attendance was a high priority, and very effective. It was probable that this level of absence represented a normal level of illness in the student population.

Q. How is the figure (0.51%) for students late to school calculated? Are students included in this if their school bus is late?

A. No, in these circumstances they would not be counted as late.

Q. Do you have figures for staff absence

A. These can be made available. There are no long-term absences and managers are not overly concerned about staff absence.

Exclusions

Q. The number of exclusions is high. What are the reasons for this?

A. This rate of exclusion is not going to become standard practice. Most of the exclusions relate to 2 groups of Year 11 boys, whose behaviour has proved challenging ever since they arrived in school. One student has now been successfully placed in the Three Towers Pupil Referral Unit following consultation with the parents and other agencies. Four of the students concerned have been

given reduced timetables, in consultation with the LA, to focus support for them while reducing the impact on others of problem behaviour.

Q. Is the use of E-Cigs increasing?

A. This is a problem – hopefully temporarily. There is more supervision/locking of the toilet areas. The school is taking, and will continue to take, a strong stance. Any student caught using E-Cigs more than once is likely to be excluded. Many schools are having problems with this issue. The industry is targeting young people, and the product ingredients are unreliable and sometimes suspect. Peer group pressure is helping to make E-Cigs attractive to some.

Pupil Premium

Governors discussed the school's duty to account for the impact of Pupil Premium funding, and were pleased to note that most students eligible for Pupil Premium in the school had achieved at or above the national averages in 2015. For example:

- Capped point scores for disadvantaged pupils were significantly above national average at 312.6.
- In English, 67% of disadvantaged pupils had achieved Grade C or above, 16 percentage points above national average.
- In languages, 80% of disadvantaged pupils had achieved Grade C or above, 21 percentage points above national average.
- In humanities, 80% of disadvantaged pupils had achieved Grade C or above, 31 percentage points above national average.
- Value added for disadvantaged pupils had been 1010.6, 34.7 points above national average.

The Headteacher referred governors back to the earlier “Narrowing the Gap” table for the emerging evidence for the impact of 2015-16 monies.

Admissions

206 pupils had been admitted to Year 7 for September 2016. There was only one appeal pending. No baptised child in or close to the school's partner parishes had been denied a place

Leavers' Mass

All governors were invited to attend the Year 11 Leavers' Mass on Friday 6 May.

Action: Governors planning to attend the Leavers' Mass to email Angela.

6a Technology Department Review

Governors received the previously-circulated report on the Technology Department Review. Mr. Bob Morris and Mrs. Anne Doran, who had represented governors on the review team, commented that:

- The review session had been superb.
- The department was very effectively led.
- Student work was of high quality.

- Students were very focussed on their work, and showed enthusiasm for what they were doing.
- Behaviour was very good.

The Headteacher thanked Mr Morris and Mrs Doran for their contributions to the review.

Governors **noted** the Headteacher's Termly Report on School Improvement.

7. SAFEGUARDING

The Headteacher explained that it had been decided to include a standing agenda item on safeguarding, to enable the Governors/Headteacher to raise any safeguarding issue not covered elsewhere in the agenda. He reported that there were no safeguarding matters to bring to governors at this time, apart from the policy to be considered later in the meeting.

8. LA ITEMS FOR ACTION:

a) Estimated Financial Outturn statement for 2015/16

The Headteacher referred governors to the previously-circulated Estimated Financial Outturn statement for 2015/16 and reported that the projected end-of-year balances were slightly better than anticipated:

- Delegated Budget £275,000
- Devolved Formula Capital £4,539
- School Fund £51,075

b) Approval of Delegated Budget 2016-2017

Governors considered the previously-circulated budget plan for 2016-17. This showed a projected Delegated Budget balance of £21,441 at 31/03/17, meaning that most of the current year's balance would be used. However, the Headteacher explained that the Local Authority had recently agreed to provide £154,000 towards the costs associated with growth, and the Archdiocese had indicated that it was likely also to provide support.

Q. Where will the school get the money for fitting out the new build?

A. This is now likely to come from the £154,000 to be provided by the LA.

Q. Was that always the intention?

A. It had not been realistic for the school to save towards this, but the LA had said they would consider providing support if the school agreed growth. The Archdiocese had also indicated that it would try to help.

Q. Staff costs are considerable. Have staff changes/recruitments been reflected in the budget?

A. Yes, the information is up to date with our current knowledge of the likely staffing.

Q. What might be the impact of the proposed changes to the national funding formula?

A. It is not possible at present to assess potential impact on the school. The plan is to grow in the leanest possible way so as to be able to respond to any future circumstances. One consequence is that class sizes will have to rise.

Q. What is the average class size now?

A. Twenty-two. This will rise to twenty-six. This is an average – different subjects demand different class sizes. For example, English can be taught effectively in larger classes than is advisable for technology.

Mrs Tunney and Fr Jackson confirmed that the Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Helen Pinnington, had provided them with a detailed explanation of the complexities of timetabling/grouping of classes on their recent link visit.

The Headteacher added that the school was reviewing whether it could afford its existing curriculum in the future. For example, the sustainability of subjects with low take-up needed to be considered.

Governors **approved** the Delegated Budget for 2016-2017.

c) Pupil Premium Information

Information about the deployment and impact of Pupil Premium funding had been considered during discussion of the Headteacher's Report.

d) Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) approval

Governors considered the previously-circulated Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) return, which the school was required to submit to the Local Authority each year. The Finance Committee had considered the SFVS in detail on 8 March 2016.

Governors **approved** the SFVS return.

9. ITEMS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE FOR ACTION

a) Determination of Admission Arrangements for 2017-18

It was **agreed** that there would be no change for 2017-18 to the admission number (205) or to the oversubscription criteria.

10. GOVERNOR REPORTS:

a) Link visits

Fr. Jackson and Mrs. Tunney circulated a report of their visit to school to meet Mrs Pinnington (Deputy Headteacher) on 16 March 2016.

The early part of the visit had been a discussion during which Mrs Pinnington had explained how the school deploys its staff to ensure the most effective teaching. This included discussion of the many variables and constraints to be considered in timetabling. A specific concern had been discussed that although schools were under pressure to increase numbers completing the EBacc, this was not appropriate for all students.

The remainder of the visit was a learning walk including two English classes, a chemistry lesson and a PE session. Fr Jackson and Mrs Tunney commented that:

- All pupils were on task.
- The teaching appeared to be very good.
- Students/staff managed the distraction of visitors well.
- The problem solving approach in PE was interesting to see.
- Teachers seemed to know their students and their learning needs very well.
- Students appeared to pay attention to detail, and respond well to challenges.
- The visit had provided very useful insights to inform their work as governors.

Governors **noted** the visit report.

The Teaching and Learning visit had been carried out by Mrs Doran and Mr Morris as part of the Technology Department Review.

Link visits were planned for the Summer Term, including:

- Headteacher (Mr Sweeney and Mrs Chivers)
- Safeguarding and Pastoral (Mrs Fisher and Mrs McLaughlin)
- Student Progress (Mr Hough and Mrs Pilkington)

Q. Was there any teacher feedback from the recent governor visits?

A. The teachers really enjoyed the visits and appreciated the support and challenge of the governors. It provided an opportunity for them to talk about what they do, and refine their priorities.

The Headteacher stated his intention to conduct reviews for all departments, involving parents, students, governors and staff.

Mrs Fisher and Mrs McLaughlin reported that they had recently met with the Teaching Assistants. This appeared to be a very strong team.

b) Governing Body Membership

Governors noted that the current term of office of four Foundation Governors (Mrs Chivers, Fr Jackson, Mrs Pilkington and Mr Sweeney) was to 31 August 2016. The Archdiocese would require nominations for the new terms of office.

11. GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

a) Approval of the minutes

Governors **agreed** that the minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 15th December 2015 should be signed as a correct record by the Chair, and authorised

publication in accordance with the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

b) Matters arising from the Minutes

Governors briefly discussed safety on school visits, following the terrorist incidents in Belgium earlier in the day.

The Headteacher outlined the school's general approach:

- Every trip, whether abroad or in the UK, was subject to a risk assessment.
- Where relevant, Foreign and Commonwealth Office guidance was followed.
- In addition, common sense was applied to avoid unnecessary risks.

In recent months, trips had been modified to avoid Paris, and other venues that could be regarded as having "national significance" (e.g. Mont St Michel) at a time of increased apparent risk. The school would not arrange a visit to Brussels in the current climate. Nevertheless, the key decision about whether or not a child should travel to a particular destination lay with the parents.

A Parent Governor observed that in her experience the school had been extremely thorough in preparing for visits and assessing the requirements of the children involved.

Concluding the discussion, the Headteacher expressed pride in the fact that the school arranged a large number of educational visits, which helped to widen the horizons of the students. He was keen that students should continue to have such opportunities, and commended the time and energy that the staff put in to make the visits so valuable.

12. COMMITTEE MINUTES

Governors received the following committee minutes:

- Premises, Health and Safety – 19th January 2016
- Personnel – 26th January 2016
- Student Progress and Curriculum – 9th February 2016
- Finance – 8th March 2016

Matters arising:

- A meeting with Metrofresh was scheduled for after Easter. However, there seemed little value in rescheduling payments as discussed.
- The issue of children arriving early in school had been successfully addressed. They were now kept within the main body of the school, not in peripheral areas.
- Mrs Fisher would be attending the Safer Recruitment training at Hope School on 12 May.
- All of the Senior Leadership Team were going to complete the NSPCC online safer recruitment training.
- Mrs Pilkington had completed the training and would forward her certificate to school.

- Governors would complete DBS checks each time they were appointed for a new term.
- The Local Authority now offered a service which allowed schools to identify which children were eligible for Free School Meals/Pupil Premium.

13. **POLICIES FOR REVIEW**

a) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Governors noted that the previously-circulated policy had been considered by the Personnel, Pupil Progress and Premises, Health and Safety Committees.

Governors **approved** the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Headteacher reported that the school rugby league team had reached a national final, and would be playing Castleford Academy at Leigh Sports Village on 26 April at 7.00pm.

Governors **agreed** to reschedule the next meeting of the Premises, Health and Safety Committee to Tuesday 3 May. It was recognised that Mrs Pilkington and Mrs Oldfield would be unable to attend on that date, but it was noted that the meeting would be quorate if all other members of the Committee were present.

The Headteacher gave a verbal update on the outcomes of recent appointment processes, and current /likely vacancies.

15. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

No items were considered confidential.

(The meeting closed at 7.20pm)