

RICHARD TAYLOR CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

held on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 7 p.m. online

Governing Body Core Functions

Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction

Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff.

Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

Present: Emma Crisell (EC), Caroline Simpson (CS), Anne Robertson (AR), David Sanderson (DS) - Chair, Laura Singleton (LS), Simon Dowson (SD), Kris Starkey (KS), Jean Atkinson (JA), Victoria Amella (VA), Lynsey Barraclough, Niki Hutchinson (NH) and Noel Duke (ND)

In attendance: J Rennison (JR) – Clerk,

1. Opening Prayers

Simon Dowson opened with a prayer.

2. Apologies

Steve Scarisbrick and Jan Johnson – all consented absences.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 10th February 2021

Proposed: ND

Seconded: VA

EC questioned whether governors would like the PE Challenges scheme to continue at school. It was good for home learning but there's been a decline in interest following the return to school. The costs of it could be met through the sports funding premium but the money could be better used elsewhere.

Governors agree that the PE Challenges scheme can be discontinued.

4. Admissions Policy and SIF 2022-2023

This was updated for the admissions this year and remains unchanged for 2022/23.

Families will face the same issues regarding church attendance next year. The clergy cannot very easily check back on the service recordings to see who was in attendance. Parents should be encouraged to present their forms for signature as early as possible.

Q: Due to the extension of the covid rules, how are the new starter taster days being affected?

A: We cannot run the taster days as planned due to the restrictions. There will be other transition events with recordings from the staff plus the virtual tour which can be viewed repeatedly.

AR confirmed she and Abi Rothera will telephone each family for a 15-minute consultation and during the first week back there will be face to face meetings, whether these are indoors or outdoors will be decided nearer the time. It is a loss for the children and the staff haven't had the opportunity to get to know the parents this year.

5. Correspondence

Letter from Sarah Bonson requesting the reduction in her admin hours of 3 hours and an increase of 2 hours for her Business Manager role. It will be cost neutral. EC has asked SB to consider whether she can manage her workload in fewer hours, it can be a challenge even at her current level. The governors stated they are comfortable with the change although EC maintained she would like to clarify SB's expectations around her

workload.

6. Governor end of term succession planning

Both staff governors – KS and JA are at the end of their 4-year term. It will be offered up to all staff, although both current members are happy to stand again.

DS thanked Laura Singleton for her support, especially to science during her time as a governor. This is her final meeting.

7. Academy Update

Skipton Parish has now joined the MAT, supported by Pannal. They are still in a category and are regularly joining in the network meetings. They have come a long way, needing less support, although they did ask for some guidance regarding their SIAMs inspection. **EC refrained from offering to help due to our current challenges and her decision was fully supported by governors.**

8. Head Teachers Report

This was EC's first report as Acting head teacher and governors thanked her for her hard work. EC expected the governors to have pre-read the report and to come to the meeting with any questions. This new approach was received well.

Q: EC was asked to expand on the complaints received by Ofsted

A: Both had been anonymous and therefore difficult to investigate. Ofsted have confirmed they are entirely satisfied with the school's response to the matters.

Q: Why are anonymous complaints allowed?

A: As soon as the words 'safeguarding issue' are used, the matter is rightly taken seriously. Jane Goodwin helped with the second case and the MAT are not concerned. EC wanted to thank the governors for their support since returning to school, confirming that the SLT are a strong team and welcome the chance to have weekly, open conversations with governors. The school advisor will be coming into school soon and will be highlighting our strengths, encouraging the school to continue with the best practices introduced and taking these ideas forward. This year has produced personal and professional difficulties for everyone, pushing us to the limits but the children are thriving, and EC would like to thank the school community.

We have a year 5 bubble closed at the moment; the staff had one day to prepare for online and in person learning following their return from Scargill House and it has been a seamless transition.

Looking at staff in the HT report – Jackie Lovell cannot commit to covering Coverdale next year. Emily Styles is still in much pain after her leg break so Judy Williamson will cover for her for 2 days a week until the end of term.

We have needed to deal with some out of school online incidents which are affecting behaviour in school. Consequently, EC has arranged for our PCSO to visit the school and speak to all year 6's. Online safety is part of the ICT curriculum and having someone from the community is very useful. Governors felt that other schools would be interested in this opportunity but that it should be aimed at both the year 5 and 6's.

Q: Please expand on the mental health issues raised on page 7 of the HT report.

A: The mental health issues are around the adults and parents which are affecting the children. They are unsettled and it is manifesting itself in behaviour changes and friendship difficulties. There are anxieties about certain subjects too, and whilst teaching online works well it doesn't allow the teacher to give small signs of encouragement to those that need it most. Personal relationships are so important.

SD is on the board of the Richard Taylor Education Foundation and confirmed that there has been a diminished call on the funds over the year. Consequently, there could be extra funding for individual support or other wider programmes. The next meeting of the Foundation is on 8th September. EC acknowledged that the Foundation are providing funds for a family to access after school provision while their brother, who has specialist needs is self-isolating at home. This gives the siblings breathing space. This could be used for other families in need. The HT report mentions changes to the SENCo provision in school – 1 child is moving to Mowbray school from September and another, where RTS feels the child needs more specialist support is considering moving to Forest school in Knaresborough.

CS and AR expanded on the year 6 trip to Scargill House stating that the venue feels like the place RTS belongs to. There are shared values and a spiritual belonging. Covid

has meant a loss of community at school which was highlighted in a KS1 outside shared worship today. We want to keep Christianity central to our school and it is this that we can tap into at Scargill House. It is 13 years since our last visit there and CS was so pleased to be able to go back to basics; to enjoy the lovely chapel, take walks, and complete the village and river studies and even visit Linton Church with David Macha. The whole trip symbolised community, service and fun. Busy days and a quiet, calm evening. It was emotional to be fortunate enough to have the year 6's together as a group. The PGL holidays are great but children often have the opportunities to take part in those activities anyway, not many simply walk in the Dales. Awe and wonder will be found in the simplest of things. And it gives us ideas for our school such as the labyrinth set up in their church.

9. Staffing

This has largely been covered in the Head teachers report. DS confirmed that Andrew Symonds has been signed off work until 4th July with a referral to the Occupational Health team on 28th June. When it is that AS returns to work, will be guided by the Doctor not OH. The OH can only answer the questions we ask such as "How long is it likely to be before AS is fit to return to work?" We all want to see him return as soon as possible but there is no pressure for him to do so until he is ready. Fortunately we have something in place for the September term as EC has offered to support AS during his phased return. **AS will need to discuss his return with Jane Goodwin and Chris Burt at the MAT. ND, SD and DS will also be involved as governors.** We expect some sort of return during the Autumn term. DS thanked EC for stepping up and filling the role of Acting Head teacher. **Governors feel they have a better understanding of the role of head now.**

10. School website updates

Covered in the Head teachers report.

11. Annual Reports to Governors of Racial Incidents, Exclusions and Formal Complaints

Covered in the Headteachers report.

12. Child Protection

Covered in the Headteachers report.

13. SEND Update

Covered in the Headteachers report

14. Governor Visits

Government guidelines still state that governors should not be visiting schools unless it is necessary. VA and SS attended to help with interviews and the other governors have had telephone calls with their subject leads, class teachers and SLT link.

15. Policies for Review

There are 4 folders on Teams – there is nothing to do regarding the new and unchanged YCST policies except for the governors to be aware of them. The updated RTS policies have had only minor changes but governors do need to look at the new Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy. The school's curriculum must be compliant in this area by September 2021. All staff have had a chance to discuss the issues and decide on the most appropriate wording. Since then CS has worked hard to create the new policy ready for the next stages of consultation with governors and parents. The Relationship section is statutory for all pupils to study, parents are able to withdraw their children from the Sex Education part, although we hope they will discuss their concerns first. The main change is the inclusion of how babies are conceived and born. **After some discussion governors confirmed they are happy with the policy with a couple of amendments and are pleased to see it still reflects the Christian ethos of the school.** The consultation with parents must take place soon and although the time scale is short it still gives them enough time to consider the minor changes being made to the existing policy. Some of the content is from the KS3 science curriculum but the recommendation is to introduce it in upper KS2 in the correct, safe environment as children are growing up quicker these days. The content can be quite graphic in year 7 and they are naïve in some areas. The curriculum at RTS does cover homosexuality and the Crucial Crew sessions mention LGBT. RTS teaches that all relationship should be happy and healthy whatever faith, gender or background we come from. CS will drill

down into the specifics of the lesson planning and how explicit they should be.

RSE Policy proposed: VA

Seconded: NH

16. Governor Training and MAT Networks

MAT networks will set their meeting dates for next year. They may still be held virtually especially with the inclusion of Skipton Parish. Meetings could be hybrid, but it will depend on the content.

17. Committee Meeting Updates

Finance was the only meeting to be held this term, during which the 3-year budget was agreed. RTS is fighting a deficit, but we are working hard to bring that down. The majority of the costs are staff related. EC confirmed the school is reducing hours by bringing down full time TA hours, using GTAs to cover absences and not bringing in any new TAs.

18. AOB

An article in The Key stated that 78% of governors felt that virtual meetings were a good thing. The majority of RTS governors agreed and wondered whether sub-committees could be held virtually and the termly LGB in person.

19. Date of Next Meeting

There will be no Governor conference this year. Governors will meet one more time this term for an update on the situation with AS.

20. Statement of Impact

Governors welcome the new approach to presenting the Head teachers report and commit to reading the full report before each meeting, sending in any questions they wish to raise before the meeting. They feel it is a better use of the board's time to discuss issues raised.

Governors support the parental consultation of the RSE Policy following a thorough discussion with useful input from CS as subject lead.

Governors appreciated the comments given by CS and AR about the recent year 6 visit to Scargill House. The importance of such a trip resonated with them and underlined the importance of rebuilding the Christian community of the school after such a difficult year.