



St Michael's CE Primary School

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Cultivating Respect, Persevering, and Learning with Courage

Minutes of the Full Governing Board (FGB) Meeting held on 28th April 2022 at 5.30pm

Present:	Ann Parham (AP) – Co-opted Governor Robin Conway (RC) - Co-opted Governor – Co Chair Nick Field (NF) – Parent Governor – Co Chair Hayley Leyshon-Brady (HLB) – Co-Headteacher Grant Mottram – GM – Co-Headteacher Nigel Goode (NG) – Local Authority Governor Adele Frankum (AF) – Parent Governor Tim Owen (TO) – Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair Ruth Gardiner (RG) – Staff Governor Alex Rennie-Lis – (ARL) – Parent Governor
Apologies:	Philip Sutton (PS) – Foundation Governor Kathryn Mendus (KM) – Foundation Governor
Absent:	None
Vacancies:	Foundation Governor / Co-opted Governor
In attendance:	Nicole Brooks (NB) Local Authority (LA) Clerk,

Item	Details	Action
1.	Welcome and Opening Prayer The meeting started at 5.33pm. The meeting was held virtually, via Microsoft Teams. NF welcomed everyone to the meeting, and GM opened the meeting with a prayer. The agenda is shorter than usual today – this is because there is a focus on reviewing and approving the budget. The Chairs extended thanks to Sharon Scaysbrook (School Business Manager), NG, HLB and GM for their work on budget preparation. NF will Chair items 1-6, RC to Chair items 6-14.	
2.	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from PS and KM. The meeting was quorate and remained quorate throughout.	
3.	Urgent Additional Items - None	
4.	Declarations of Interest – No interests in agenda items were declared.	
5.	Approval of FGB Minutes 5.1 Minutes of 24.03.2022 (<i>Appendix A</i>) The minutes were agreed as an accurate record. Action: Co-Chairs to sign minutes of 24.03.2022 & file electronically.	RC/NF

	<p>5.2 Action log (to note – relevant actions on agenda) (Appendix B) The action log was shared with Governors (all actions included on the agenda). RC has made contact with several governors to confirm if their actions have now been completed. Action: AP asked if she and HLB can remain online at the end of this meeting to book in AP's next monitoring visit.</p>	<p>AP/HLB</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Governor updates since last meeting 6.1 Agree governor monitoring actions for the coming term (Appendix C) The scheduled has been circulated and monitoring for this term has been identified. Any governors who haven't visited the school this academic year so far need to schedule at least one visit before the end of the Summer term – Thursday afternoons are particularly welcome. Effective monitoring needs to be continued. Visits can be arranged by contacting the HTs. NF, RC and AP all have monitoring visits booked in – any newer governors could join them on the visit to shadow and gain knowledge / confidence in monitoring. Please contact one of them via email to arrange. RC's visit next week is for 'Open the book'. AF requested to join this visit. Action: RC and AF will co-ordinate this visit. Action: Any governors who haven't visited the school this academic year so far need to schedule at least one visit before the end of the Summer term. There is a SIP meeting scheduled in June with teaching staff. Governors are welcome to attend this too. NF and PS have a visit booked for Wednesday 25th May at 1.30pm if anyone wants to join that one. HLB added that on that day they are holding an 'Open classroom' event. Parents are invited into school from 2pm to see their child's books and learn more about the learning at school. It would be good to have some governor presence, so please do consider this. Governor question – When will there be another middle leader attendance at an FGB meeting? There was a short discussion, and it was agreed to ask Chris Paynter (CP) to the June meeting to present. Action: Invite CP to present at the June FGB meeting</p> <p>6.2 Co Chairs meeting with HT (Appendix D) The report was loaded to the hub. There were no questions or comments.</p> <p>Finance 6.3 Draft budget 2022-23 (Appendix E) 6.4 2019-25 Budgetary balances (Appendix F) NG reported. The approved budget must be submitted to OCC by the end of next week. A 1st draft has already been submitted for initial feedback and received positive comments from the OCC Finance team. Since that point, there have only been minor changes (£2-3K of amendments). This has given the school confidence in this task because previously, an external bursar would set the budget. It has improved their understanding greatly and given validation to their work.</p> <p>The spreadsheet (Budgetary balances) has been created by NG to give context to the numbers on the budget sheets. It shows the financial management and how this has developed since 2019. NG drew attention to pupil numbers, the school was going through a difficult time in 2019, but since then it has improved and increased pupils on roll. This is due to the HTs and staff and it a testament to their hard work.</p> <p>From 2019 the school consciously overspent for two years. They explained the reasons to OCC (school improvement) and they are now back on track. This reflects the scrutiny and how well the school staff have spent the money. GM added that the have been fortunate to receive £20K a year from SARINC (Steventon Allotments and Relief in Need Charity) and without that they would have</p>	<p>RC / AF Anyone who hasn't done a monitoring visit</p> <p>HTs</p>

<p>struggled. NG drew attention to the forecast surplus in budget year 3. Governors will have to keep an eye on this because OCC may decide to claw it back if it does not get spent.</p> <p>Governor question – Can NG confirm the extent to which maintenance projects have been built into the budget? NG confirmed that £33K has been set aside for maintenance work (including unforeseen repairs). In previous years this has been £3-4K.</p> <p>Governor question – If there is a surplus, does the school keep it? It is possible that it would be clawed back. The school and GB need to be aware of the rules around this. Action: Ask OCC for clarification on the rules around surplus funds.</p> <p>GM informed the governors that this year they have received a percentage increase in funding, but the effects of Covid and the cost of living are likely to exceed this. They won't get additional funds in future years to support this, they will be expected to absorb the additional costs. It is important that there is a realistic plan and purpose to future planning. He believes that £80K surplus funds is reasonable. The SARINC money is not a guarantee every year, so this is not included in initial budgeting drafts. More money could be invested in maintenance to improve the school site. It was noted that nursery funds are included in budget income. GM confirmed the funding is based on a per session allowance.</p> <p>Governor question – Thinking about what is a sensible amount to carry forward. The school and GB have a moral duty towards current pupils and how money could / should be spent to benefit them now. GM spoke about putting in place projects that don't have a long-term price tag. Current examples: The SENCO has had adjustments made to her working schedule to maximise impact. There are also several targeted interventions that support the needs of children, and the school also commits expenditure to support pupils prior to funding being received.</p> <p>Governor question – The supply teacher costs state £190 day rate – Is this still the current price? GM confirmed that they have not had supply teachers in for a long time now (mostly because there are none available) but they used the figure from the last time they did book supply teachers.</p> <p>Governor question – School lunches – does the school make profit / loss or break-even? The school breaks-even with school lunches.</p> <p>Governor question – What services / membership for governors has the school bought into? i.e. Governor Services / The Key / NGA They have bought the OCC governor training package and National Governance Association (NGA) membership. They do not currently subscribe to The Key. HLB confirmed that membership is £610 p/a (there is a 25% discount available). Although it is a good source of information, it is not used regularly enough to justify subscribing.</p> <p>RC has signed up for their 30-day free trial in the past. He suggested that governors sign up for the free trial, have a thorough search of the site and feed back to the board. The governors can then discuss if it would be a worthwhile resource to have. Action: Sign up for The Key 30-day free trial – look at what is available and report back at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Governor question – There is a projected increase in income of around a third from 2019/20 to 2024/25 – is this due to increased pupil numbers? GM confirmed this was correct. They are predicting a rise in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>NG</p> <p>ALL</p>
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	<p>Governor question – Can more clarification be given around the increase in Teaching staff costs? GM answered. This is primarily due to higher pupil numbers. As class numbers increase the costs become more viable and sustainable.</p> <p>Governor question – Other than energy costs and cost of living, are there any items that carry significant risk or margin of error? NG replied. The 2022/23 budget year is the most significant and predictable. They believe the figures are well forecast. Budget years 2 and 3 are less certain, but OCC want to see that the school is looking ahead and has a reasonable plan in place. Energy costs have been budgeted for a 100% increase. GM added that negotiations with teaching unions over salaries have not taken place yet. He is certain that the school won't receive extra funding to match the percentage increases that are negotiated.</p> <p>Governor question – How many pupils are on roll right now. HLB confirmed there are 174. They have a full reception class to start in September. The are oversubscribed so they will be expecting some appeals for places.</p> <p>Governor question – Will any Ukranian refugees be joining the school? There are none so far.</p> <p>Governor question – An observation of the Wrap around care income of £29K. This looks to be healthy / successful. Does this service make a profit? The wrap around care for the most part breaks even – there might be a small profit. When more pupils use the service they have to add more staff for ratios. The priority of the school is to provide a service, and this attracts more families to the school. The nursery is also doing well financially – the ratios are good, and they are happy with how it is working.</p> <p>Governor question – Support staff expenditure is significantly higher than income from SEN and Pupil Premium (PP) funding. As there are 2 pupils with EHCPs leaving, is the school potentially over resourcing in this area? HLB replied. Although those 2 pupils are leaving the school, there are 3 x EHCP applications going through so the number will not likely stay reduced. The school employs a lot of part time staff to support these pupils, and this can increase the expenditure when the on-costs are considered. The HTs have assumed that external services will be less available in the future, so they are investing in support within the school so that they can make a difference to their pupils. They will of course keep reviewing and monitoring this. When they employ staff for this purpose, they start off with a fixed term contract until funding is in place and then they can make the employment longer term.</p> <p>Decision made - The governors approved the budget for submission to OCC. NG stated that OCC will scrutinise the budget one more time in the next week or so.</p>	
7.	<p>Safeguarding HLB reported. There have been no new safeguarding cases since the last FGB meeting. She gave a brief summary of the number of families with child protection and child in need support.</p> <p>There has been a change of social worker for one family. The school had not been notified; it was the parent that advised the school. The social worker had not been returning their calls.</p> <p>There have been no racial or bullying incidences.</p>	

	Governor safeguarding training is available online on the 5 th May. Please book onto this training if you need to do it.	
8.	<p>Health & Safety HLB reported that a pupil fell in the playground and fractured their arm. They tripped over a raised section of the playground area. The child was taken to hospital for an x-ray. GM has an action to paint the elevated area (and any others around school) with yellow paint. Action: The next H&S monitoring visit will include looking at trip hazards.</p>	NG
9.	<p>GDPR There are no GDPR reports / updates.</p>	
10.	<p>Policies for review / approval – 10.1 Policy Tracker <u>Complaints policy</u> RC raised the substantive points that have been made. The opening statement – it isn't believed to be ambitious and reflective of the school's values. RC proposed a new statement to replace this. The governors had read the statement, there were no objections. The statement was approved. There was a query around whom complaints should first be addressed to. It was confirmed this should be the class teacher. Governor question – Why is the Early Years (EY) separate? HLB confirmed this was because EY can be inspected separately and there are distinct notifiable events. This will be kept in. Governor question – Page 6 Mediation stage. The policy states that a mediation stage can be offered before a GB panel meets, if the complainant and HT feel it would be beneficial. The governors discussed whether offering a mediation stage should be included in the policy. Some schools choose to include this. RC read out the guidance from Gov.uk website. The wording was very neutral. There were differing opinions. Some experiences have shown that mediation doesn't work, but there were others where it had. GM added that outside of a formal complaint, you would do everything to try and avoid it getting to that stage by talking it out and trying to reach a resolution. It was suggested that mediation was only likely to be successful with a skilled mediator. Having a governor steer this may not be the best course. Offering mediation could delay a swift outcome. <u>Decision made</u> - The governors decided to remove the option of offering mediation. It was acknowledged that mediation could still be offered at the informal stage but not as part of the formal complaint stages. How a panel is convened. RC proposed an inclusivity statement to be included. <u>Decision made</u> – The governors agreed to this. Page 8 - Where there are insufficient governors for a panel. The statement “nominate governors with minimal prior knowledge of the complaint” seems to be vague and doesn't clarify what knowledge of the complaint would be critical to eligibility AP advised that governors from other schools can be contacted to sit on a panel, if the school has insufficient governor numbers. <u>Decision made</u> – The governors agreed to amend to approach governors from other schools. Appendix 2 – a summary of the policy. RC asked if anyone knew the purpose of this summary? It was suggested it might be for the purpose of parents, but the policy is very clear and probably not needed. NF commented that the first couple of paragraphs contain useful information. Is this published elsewhere – in a parent handbook for example? GM opened the handbook document and read out a statement that is already there.</p>	

	<p>The governors were satisfied this was covered and that it is also published on the school website. <u>Decision made</u> - It was agreed to delete Appendix 2 from the policy.</p> <p>Governor question – AP suggested an amendment to the sentence that a complainant can have a person with them for support during meetings / panel hearings. She recommends this is made clear to be a suitable companion, and <u>does not</u> need to be a legal representative. AP also recommended a sentence to state that meetings will not be recorded unless there is a requirement for a reasonable adjustment. Schools are the data controllers in these cases. Insert “Appropriate recording would have to be agreed by all parties” and to insert Government best practice text. <u>Decision made</u> - Both of these recommendations were accepted and agreed by the governors.</p> <p><u>Decision made</u> – The complaints policy was approved with the agreed changes.</p> <p><u>Whistleblowing policy</u> RC informed the governors that there are very few changes made from the model policy. The contacts are now up to date, although there may well be changes with OCC contacts. The governors discussed appropriate contacts for this document. It is important that up to date contacts are clear. The policy has been tested in the past and it does work, so governors were happy with the policy content itself. They agreed to amend the contacts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co Chair contacts • General contact for OCC • Ofsted and NSPCC contacts <p><u>Decision made</u> - The policy was approved with these changes.</p>	
11.	<p>Post FGB communication</p> <p>NF and RC will draft a communication to bring to the next FGB meeting for discussion. Action: Draft communication to be presented at the next FGB meeting</p>	NF/RC
12.	<p>Items for the next agenda</p> <p>RC has again listed all items that are shown on the annual schedule and has struck through any that have already been discussed or fit in with other items. There were no objections to the items that have been struck through.</p>	
13.	<p>Meeting schedule</p> <p>Meetings will continue to be virtual. The next meeting on 26th May will be virtual. To start at 5.30pm: Thursday 26th May 2022 – Virtual Thursday 23rd June 2022 – Virtual Thursday 14th July 2022 – Virtual</p>	
14.	<p>AOB</p> <p>RC thanked everyone for attending and for reading the documents in preparation of the meeting – this helps to make the meeting run smoothly and on time.</p> <p>TO gave his apologies for the next meeting.</p>	

The meeting closed at 6.54pm.

NB 28.04.2022

Appendices (documents and reports discussed)

Agenda Item	Appendix	Name
5.1	A	St Michael's Minutes 17.02.2022
5.2	B	Action Log from March FGB meeting
6.1	C	Monitoring schedule 2021-22
6.2	D	NF RAC HLB meeting term 4b
6.3	E	Draft budget v2 2022-23
6.4	F	2019-25 Budgetary balances

Action Log

Meeting Date	Item Number	Action	Owner	Deadline
28.04.2022	5.1	Co-Chairs to sign minutes of 24.03.2022 & file at school	RC / NF	Next FGB
28.04.2022	5.2	AP and HLB can remain online at the end of this meeting to book in AP's next monitoring visit	AP / HLB	Today
28.04.2022	6.1	RC and AF will co-ordinate a joint monitoring visit	RC / AF	For next week
28.04.2022	6.1	Any governors who haven't visited the school this academic year so far need to schedule at least one visit before the end of the Summer term in July.	Anyone who hasn't done a monitoring visit	End of this term
28.04.2022	6.1	Invite CP to present at the June FGB meeting	HT	June FGB
28.04.2022	6.3	Ask OCC for clarification on the rules around surplus funds	NG	Next FGB
28.04.2022	6.3	Sign up for The Key 30-day free trial – look at what is available and report back at the next FGB meeting	ALL	ASAP
28.04.2022	8	The next H&S monitoring visit will include looking at trip hazards.	NG	Next H&S walk
28.04.2022	11	Draft communication to be presented at the next FGB meeting	NF / RC	Next FGB

■ End

Blomley