



# St Michael's CE Primary School

The Causeway, Steventon, Oxfordshire OX13 6SQ Telephone and Fax: 01235 831298

Headteacher: Mrs. Leyshon-Brady

Email: [head.3241@st-michaels-pri.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:head.3241@st-michaels-pri.oxon.sch.uk)

[www.stmichaelssteventon.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelssteventon.co.uk)

*Cultivating Respect, Persevering, and Learning with Courage*

## Minutes of the Full Governing Board (FGB) Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 5.30pm (virtual meeting)

<b>Present:</b>	Robin Conway (RC) - Co-opted Governor – Chair Hayley Leyshon-Brady (HLB) – Headteacher Adele Frankum (AF) – Parent Governor Nigel Goode (NG) – Local Authority Governor Ruth Gardiner (RG) – Staff Governor Steve Green (SG) – Parent Governor Tim Owen (TO) – Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair Alex Rennie-Lis – (ARL) – Parent Governor Ann Parham (AP) – Co-opted Governor Philip Sutton (PS) – Foundation Governor
<b>Apologies:</b>	Sam Shaw – (SS) – Co-opted Governor Kathryn Mendus (KM) – Foundation Governor
<b>Absent:</b>	None
<b>Vacancies:</b>	Foundation Governor / Co-opted Governor
<b>In attendance:</b>	Nicole Brooks (NB) Local Authority (LA) Clerk, Lina Sipson (LS) SENCO, Tui Solomon (TS) – Prospective Governor, Sarah Hudson (SH) – Prospective Governor

Item	Details	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Opening Prayer and Admission of Observers</b></p> <p>The meeting was held virtually, via Google meets and started at 5.32pm. RC welcomed everyone to the meeting, including newly elected Parent Governor Steve Green.</p> <p>He informed the board that there are two prospective governors who would like to join the meeting (Sarah Hudson, and Tui Solomon). The board agreed for SH and TS to attend as observers until confidential items need to be discussed. RC will admit them to meeting when they open the meeting link.</p> <p>There was a short discussion to establish that there is second Co-opted Governor vacancy opening up in May because TO will leave the board when his term of office expires.</p> <p>PS opened the meeting with a prayer.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>As reported previously, due to work commitments, SS is unable to attend FGB meetings on a Thursday for this academic year and the board have accepted this. Apologies were received and accepted from <b>Kathryn Mendus</b> – Foundation Governor and <b>Sam Shaw – (SS)</b> – Co-opted Governor</p>	

Chair of Governors.....*PL*.....Date.....16<sup>th</sup> February 2024.....

	The meeting was quorate and remained quorate throughout.	
3.	<p><b>HT report</b></p> <p>3.1 HT report (<a href="#">Appendix A</a>)</p> <p>HLB invited questions.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – The school is taking an additional child in Yr1. This will take the number over 30.</p> <p>HLB replied. One child in that year group is also leaving so the number will remain at 30.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Attendance seems to be a problem. Can HLB provide some further information on this?</p> <p>HLB stated that a letter has gone out to one family recently and the process will be followed if needed.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – What is the issue / barrier to attendance?</p> <p>HLB answered that the reason given for absence is illness.</p> <p>Sarah Hudson joined the meeting at 5.36pm – the board welcomed them</p> <p>HLB continued to explain that national attendance average is 94.5%. St Michael's attendance is currently 93.4%. This includes the reception age children at statutory attendance age. Those children who are not yet at statutory attendance age are still tracked and those families with poor attendance are encouraged to improve attendance. Once they do reach the statutory attendance age, the school policy is enforced if absence is a problem.</p> <p>The number of children with authorised absence is also high due to illness being the reason given. If there is a pattern of sickness absence, this is identified, and families are contacted. The school cannot ask for a GP sick note unless the family is on an attendance contract, but even so, GPs do not supply them now anyway.</p> <p>The school works hard to engage with the families to improve attendance.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – What about the pupil voice? What do they say about their absence?</p> <p>The pupils say they were sick.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – What are the consequences for the pupil and the school for poor attendance?</p> <p>HLB explained that for the pupil they miss out on learning, social interactions and building friendships. Unfortunately catching up on missed learning is not easily achieved and quite often not possible because the teacher has moved onto the next level.</p> <p>For the school / teachers there is frustration because the child falls behind and gets held back when they have missed a certain amount of learning.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Can these pupils be given the opportunity to attend before / after school club to try and re-gain the lost time?</p> <p>HLB advised the board that there is a small pot of money they have that could pay for some children to attend breakfast club or out of school club, but their efforts to date have not been successful. The result has been the child does not attend.</p> <p>The parents must take responsibility for their child's attendance. The school can only do so much.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Re: pupils not moving on to the next steps if they have missed so much learning. Can a child re-take a year?</p> <p>HLB stated that the school cannot do this and there is also not enough capacity in classes for this to happen.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Is there an effective way to quantify to parents what their child is missing out on due to school absence?</p> <p>HLB puts information in newsletters. It is unlikely to be read / taken on board.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Is there any incentive for good attendance?</p>	

The governors discussed this. Rewards for attendance are a very emotive subject. At primary school age, it is the parent who is responsible for attendance. It is very difficult to make a definition of where rewards / awards for attendance would fit in. Rewarding improved attendance would disadvantage those who attend as expected. Awards such as 100% attendance in a term would disadvantage those who had a genuine illness and miss just one or two days. Removing authorised absence (i.e., sickness) from the data to not disadvantage those with minimal sickness absence would then just encourage more parents to use sickness as a reason for absence.

**Governor question** – Is there a parent advocate who could try and engage with parents. Removing the school authority figure?  
HLB stated that there are quite a few difficulties with this – one of them being confidentiality issues. Also – if the parent isn't on the school site often there isn't the opportunity to make those connections.

TS joined the meeting at 5.50pm

RC interjected. It is important that the board is aware of attendance issues and what the school is doing to tackle them. The board did have a lengthy discussion in a previous FGB meeting this academic year and different approaches / strategies were suggested at the time. RC is aware that HLB has implemented as many as she can that are workable and that the school does have a very good handle on tackling attendance. A recent bout of sickness and diarrhoea and cases of chicken pox have affected attendance in recent weeks.

Rewards for attendance have been considered, but they are also very difficult to match with the school's values.

The school currently acts on the policies that are in place and continues to send messages out on the importance of attendance.

**Governor question** – Suspensions for SEND pupils appear to be higher than whole school suspensions. Is this correct?

HLB confirmed that this is correct. She has received the data from the SENCO and gave a brief explanation as to why the data looks this way. The SENCO could always explain when she joins the meeting shortly.

**Governor question** – Re: after school clubs. How do we encourage more boys to join the choir and more girls to join PE clubs?

HLB is aware of this imbalance. The school is overall very sporty. This term fewer children have signed up across the board. For example, dance club had 20 spaces but only 10 pupils signed up.

There was a short discussion. Pupils are invited individually, and pupil premium pupils receive an invite for priority booking. Even science club and book club interest are low.

**Governor question** – Have the children been asked why they are not signing up?

The school initially asked the pupils what clubs they would like, and this has been catered for. They run clubs every day after school, and they also offer a wider choice of subjects to try and widen the children's horizons.

HLB does not know why interest is so low currently and does not have an answer as to how to change the gender imbalance on certain clubs.

School Improvement Officer (SIP) visit ([Appendix B](#))

The SIP Officer visited at the start of Term 4. The report is very complimentary about the teaching in Early Years.

A query was raised about the lack of validated data used when target setting. HLB stated that they did this for Y6, but not Y1 because there is no data available for the school to use at the moment.

Comments on writing were positive. There will be another visit later in the year.

**Governor support** – It is good to see the validation of the work that the school is doing.

	<p><b>Governor support</b> – On behalf of the board – Well done to HLB.</p> <p>A discussion took place that was recorded under confidential minutes.</p>	
4.	<p><b>SEND update</b> (<i>Appendix C</i>)</p> <p>LS joined the meeting at 6.10pm. The board welcomed LS and thanked her for her SENCO report.</p> <p>LS spoke to the board about her role and the workload priorities. It has been a busy year. There are lots of annual reviews to complete along with planning for pupil transition across key stages and into secondary school. External support has been decreasing for some time. There is more work to do with higher needs of pupils.</p> <p>Assessment and diagnoses for neurodiverse pupils have significant delays of up to 5 years through the NHS route. LS has talked to parents about getting an assessment done privately if they can afford it.</p> <p>The OCC SEN Officer is extremely busy, and it is very difficult to contact them. St Michael's buys into the SEN inclusion team support and this includes educational psychology time too.</p> <p>Questions were invited:</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – The report mentions a 10-session course aimed at engaging with parents. This had a poor response. Another course of 4 sessions is now being offered. Can LS expand on the value of these courses?</p> <p>LS replied. The take up rate for the 4 sessions is better. There is value in running these groups, but to commit to 2 hours per week for 10 weeks at the time offered was hard for a lot of parents. LS will review and they will decide if it is realistic to continue with the 4-week course.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Are the benefits clear and would any of the parents be an ambassador?</p> <p>LS had not yet had a chance to analyse the data for the 10-week course yet. Parents have fed back that they are implementing the changes at home. LS suspects that the benefits are more subtle and not easy data collection outcomes.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Re: the difficulty accessing external SEND services. The private option can be very expensive and may be out of reach for many parents. If the need is very acute, can the school access funding for this?</p> <p>HLB replied. The school has supported parents by referring them to SARINK to apply for funding directly. There has been varied responses and experiences.</p> <p>For the school to do this directly would be problematic to set up, and to find the resources to run and manage such schemes. There is also no room in the basic budget so they cannot offer to pay for this directly.</p> <p>The governors discussed briefly and agreed that going directly to SARINK is the most appropriate route.</p> <p>LS advised that the educational psychology time is always used up before the end of the year, but this service is always directed where it is most needed.</p> <p>The inclusion officer has been very helpful to LS, and she also finds the networking events very useful.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – There are currently 24 pupils on the SEN register. How does this compare to previous years?</p> <p>LS replied. The number of pupils on the SEN register fluctuates year on year, and throughout the year. As the academic gap widens the school will review a pupil and add them to the register if needed. There are also pupils that come off the register as well. LS stated that 24 is not the highest number they have had on the register.</p> <p>It was noted that pupils coming off the SEN register is very positive.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – The number of boys on the SEN register is much higher than girls. Is this something to explore further?</p> <p>LS agreed that the number of girls on the SEN register is lower than national figures.</p>	

	<p>Girls can often mask signs of ASD and it can be harder to pick this up. LS is a SENCO in another school too and stated that St Michael's SEND demographic is not dissimilar to other schools.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) document talks about providing a supportive environment. How many recommendations and strategies in the classroom are having a positive impact (i.e., TA support). LS spoke about how she carries out learning walks and observations to see the strategies and interventions. The school has recently changed how they support the TAs by carrying out more regular termly supervisions. LS stated that the interventions the school provides are tracked well. The communications and interactions team are coming into school to provide further training for the TA team. The expectations on TAs has increased over time and a need has been identified to further upskill these staff. Both the teachers and TAs are involved in direct support for SEND pupils.</p> <p><b>Governor support</b> – It is good to hear that the SEND pupils still receive direct support from the teachers.</p> <p>The governors thanked LS for her hard work as SENCO. They also extended thanks to the TA team.</p> <p>LS commented that it is positive that there is a SEND focus in FGB meetings.</p> <p>LS left the meeting at 6.30pm</p>	
5.	<p><b>Urgent Additional Items –</b></p> <p>RC advised that an extra FGB meeting needs to be arranged because the budget is not ready for approval at this meeting and the next FGB meeting in May will be after the submission deadline.</p> <p>There are two dates proposed: Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April or Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April. Most governors are available on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p><b>Decision</b> – Extra FGB meeting for budget approval to be on <b>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April – 5.30pm (remote meeting).</b></p> <p>NG gave a verbal budget update to the board: Pupil numbers are moving in the right direction and the school can produce a sensible and defensible 3-year budget. The school has found out that it will receive a £30K grant from the DfE. This will be a capital grant and will have to be spent on energy related improvement for the school.</p>	
6.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> – No interests in agenda items were declared.	
7.	<p><b>Approval of FGB Minutes</b></p> <p><b>7.1 Minutes of 02.02.2023</b> (<i>Appendix D</i>) The minutes were agreed as an accurate record. <b>Action:</b> Chair to sign minutes of 02.02.2023 &amp; file at school.</p> <p><b>7.2 Action log (to note – relevant actions on agenda)</b> The link to the action log is on the agenda. This document is a google doc on the shared drive. Actions not yet completed are covered within the meeting tonight.</p>	RC
8.	<b>Matters arising not covered on the agenda</b> – None	
9.	<b>Update from the Chair</b> – Recorded under confidential minutes	
10.	<p><b>Governor Business and Communications</b></p> <p><b>Governor vacancies</b> This agenda item has been covered under discussion earlier in the meeting.</p> <p><b>Governance Policies for review can be found:</b></p>	

	<p><a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-Q7RMeVrc9dM2ZE1uNYpcWS4m1j1shcL">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-Q7RMeVrc9dM2ZE1uNYpcWS4m1j1shcL</a></p> <p><b>10.1 Anti-bullying policy</b> (<i>Appendix E</i>)  This policy was first discussed at the December FGB meeting. It has now returned to the GB following a period of consultation with staff and parents regarding language around and definition of bullying.  HLB stated that there was quite a low response from parents during consultation, but she gave everyone opportunity. Her decision was based on the majority opinion of responses received.  HLB feels that the revised policy covers everyone and provides the most flexible definition for bullying.  <b>Governor question</b> – Does the policy cover HLB and staff from bullying too?  HLB stated that it does, however, the HT and staff are covered with other policies such as dignity at work and parents code of conduct.  <b>Decision made – the policy was approved.</b></p> <p><b>10.2 Charging &amp; remissions policy</b> (<i>Appendix F</i>)  This is an OCC model policy, and it is not recommended to make unnecessary amendments.  <b>Decision – The policy was approved</b></p> <p><b>10.3 Internal financial procedures manual</b> (<i>Appendix G</i>)  This manual is OCC guidance, and it is not recommended to make unnecessary amendments.  NG added that the last time this guidance was reviewed it was found to be a sound documents and one that the school followed. A document was also created to work alongside to reflect the school structure  <b>Action:</b> It was noticed that the wording of Co-HT should now be amended to reflect HT.  <b>Decision – The procedures manual was approved</b></p> <p><b>10.4 School Hall hiring policy</b> (<i>Appendix H</i>)  <b>Governor comment</b> – The rates are not detailed in the policy and wording states rates are reviewed annually but not when in the year.  HLB added that the rates are on the school website, but it was agreed to check when the rates were last reviewed and to discuss at the next FGB  <b>Action:</b> Review school hall hire rates at next FGB meeting.  <b>Decision made:</b> Policy was approved in principle pending review of rates.</p>	<p>HLB</p> <p>ALL at May FGB</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Governor Updates Since last meeting</b>  ARL and RC carried out the HT mid-year review on targets this morning.</p> <p><u>11.1 Governor monitoring plan:</u> HLB (Appendix I)</p> <p>HLB advised the governors that she has loaded a governor monitoring plan on to the hub. Please can all governors look at this and book an available date shown on the plan. Please email HLB directly and she will book the visit dates in. The 2 weeks for monitoring next term are: w/c 17<sup>th</sup> April and w/c 1<sup>st</sup> May.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Governors to book their monitoring visits during the two scheduled week. As many visits as possible would be great.</p> <p>RC will carry out a website policies review over the Easter break.  <b>Action:</b> Website policies review over Easter</p> <p><u>Safeguarding monitoring</u> – TO and KM need to come in and complete their safeguarding monitoring. They plan to listen to the pupil voice and at least 2 members</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>RC</p>

	<p>of staff with a safeguarding themed discussion.  <b>Action:</b> Complete safeguarding monitoring April / May</p> <p>HLB informed the board that she is advertising internally for a Deputy HT position. The interviews will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. If any governor is available to sit on the panel please let HLB know.  <b>Action:</b> If you can sit on the panel for Deputy HT interview on 3.5.23 let HLB know this.</p>	<p><b>TO / KM</b></p> <p><b>ALL to consider</b></p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Governor Training Update</b>  <b>17.1 Updated Governor Training Log</b>  Governors are to update the training log with any training courses attended.  <b>Governor comment</b> – AP has recently completed exclusion training and she would recommend that more governors on the board attend this training too.  <b>Action:</b> More governors should attend exclusion training  TO stated that when he returns from his holiday he will contact new governor(s) for their induction  <b>Action:</b> Induction of new governor(s) in early May</p>	<p><b>ALL to consider TO</b></p>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Observers to leave the meeting</b>  TS and SH left the meeting at 6.51pm  RC asked governors for any comments / feedback re: TS and SH and their suitability for joining the board. Please email to RC within the next few days.  RC will communicate with TS and SH over the next few weeks to follow up on their interest in becoming a governor.  <b>Action:</b> Email to RC and comments / feedback re: prospective governors  <b>Action:</b> RC to contact ST and TS to follow up their attendance at the FGB</p>	<p><b>ALL RC</b></p>
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Items for next agenda (in addition to actions and as per annual governance schedule, governance meeting schedule, policy planner and Governor Monitoring schedule)</b></p> <p><b><i>Focus: Academisation and implications for St Michael's.</i></b></p> <p>RC stated that this will be an introduction to the idea of academisation and to explore what this would mean. No decisions to be made at this stage. RC will circulate pre-reading for the subject.</p>	
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b>  There have been no bullying or racist incidences since the last FGB meeting. No further safeguarding reports or updates.</p>	
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>GDPR</b>  There were no updates, breaches, or reports for this agenda item.</p>	
<b>17.</b>	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b>  HLB advised that the H&amp;S audit has taken place. The audit went very well, and they received a glowing report. All areas audited were green. Every action from the last audit had been completed. The inspector was very complimentary. Any items raised were very minor.  HLB gave one example. The school employs a handyman. He is over 70 years old and a policy reflecting this age needs to be in place.  Thanks, and congratulations extended to Sharon Scaysbrook (SC) (school business manager) for her work on H&amp;S in school.  <b>Action:</b> HLB to share a policy reflecting the age of the handyman with governors.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – A question to tie up loose ends. The safeguarding audit raised a point about the height of the fence at the side entrance of the school. Has this been addressed in the H&amp;S audit too?  HLB replied. There isn't anything the school can do about the height of the fence. It</p>	<p><b>HLB</b></p>

	<p>was investigated at the time. A comment has been inserted in the safeguarding audit and into the H&amp;S audit too.</p> <p><b>Governor question</b> – Damage to the outdoor classroom (due to weather). Was this picked up on during the audit?</p> <p>HLB stated that it was noted and discussed. The inspector also noted the general improvements around the school site, and it was agreed that the maintenance schedule has achieved what it was meant to in terms of improving the buildings.</p> <p>The board thanked NG, HLB and SC for this work.</p>	
<b>18.</b>	<p><b>Meeting schedule</b> - Meetings for 2022-23 will be as follows:</p> <p>Extraordinary Meeting: Budget Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 5.30pm (remote)</p> <p>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 5.30pm (remote)</p> <p>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 5.30pm (remote) – <b>Note</b> - There had been a typo with this date. It has been amended to show 8<sup>th</sup> June, not 5<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p>Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June: In-School Day then meeting at 3.30pm (in person).</p>	
<b>20</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>None</p> <p style="text-align: right;">The meeting closed at 7pm.</p>	

NB 30.03.2023

### Appendices (documents and reports discussed)

Agenda Item	Appendix	Name
3	A	HT report
3	B	SIP Report
4	C	SEND governor's report March 2023
7	D	St Michael's Minutes & confidential minutes 02.02.23
10	E	Anti-bullying policy (draft)
10	F	Charging & Remissions policy
10	G	Internal financial procedures manual
10	H	Hiring policy
11	I	Governor monitoring overview (schedule Term 5)

### Action Log

Meeting Date	Item Number	Action	Owner	Deadline
30.03.23	7	Chair to sign minutes of 02.02.2023 & file at school	RC	Next FGB
30.03.23	10	Internal financial procedures manual. It was noticed that the wording of Co-HT should now be amended to reflect HT.	HLB	Next FGB
30.03.23	10	School hall hire policy. Review school hall hire rates at next FGB meeting	ALL	May FGB
30.03.23	11	Governor monitoring Governors to book their monitoring visits during the	ALL	During T5

		two scheduled week. As many visits as possible would be great.		
30.03.23	11	Website policies review over Easter	RC	Easter break
30.03.23	11	Complete safeguarding monitoring April / May	TO / KM	T5
30.03.23	11	Deputy HT interview If you can sit on the panel for Deputy HT interview on 3.5.23 let HLB know this	ALL	ASAP
30.03.23	12	More governors should attend exclusion training	ALL to consider	By next training opportunity
30.03.23	12	Induction of new governor(s) in early May	TO	Early May
30.03.23	13	Prospective governors Email to RC and comments / feedback re: prospective governors  RC to contact ST and TS to follow up their attendance at the FGB	ALL  RC	ASAP  Next 2 weeks
30.03.23	17	Share a policy with GB reflecting the age of school handyman	HLB	Next FGB

■ End