



Dr South's CE Primary School

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Nurture, Educate, Inspire

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Minutes of the Local Governing Body (LGB) meeting held on Tuesday 30th November 2021 at 7pm on Zoom

<u>Present:</u>	Calum Miller (CM) [Community], Chair Kathryn Campbell (KC) [Foundation] Jon Conibear (JC) [Foundation] Liz Halsey (LH) [Staff] Steve Hayes (SH) [Foundation] Huw Morgan (HM) [Co-Headteacher] Jonathan Nicholl (JN) [Foundation] Matthew Nicholson (MN) [Foundation] Mandy O'Sullivan (MOS) [Parent] Hannah Penwarden (HP) [Parent], until 7.50pm Helen Watson (HW) [Co-Headteacher]
<u>In attendance:</u>	Bryony Thomas (BT), Clerk Eamonn Gearon, invited to attend
<u>Apologies:</u>	Rob Dallison (RD) [Foundation], Ruth Sibly (RS) [Foundation]
Confirmation of Quorum - Quorum was met	

No.	ITEM	ACTION
1	Welcome and opening prayer CM welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced Eamonn Gearon, who had been invited to attend the meeting as an observer and a potential new governor. SH led governors in an opening prayer.	
2	Receipt of apologies for absence and declaration of confidentiality for blended meetings Apologies were received and accepted from Rob Dallison and Ruth Sibly.	
3	Declaration of any new interests including related party transactions (RPTs) There were no new declarations of interest. No RPTs were declared.	
4	Review of the RPT register There were no RPTs to review.	
5	Notification of any urgent business A risk assessment and Covid risk register had been circulated prior to the meeting for information. These should have been completed in September but had not been received by the school.	

	The school was partially closed last week, because of a lack of staff due to Covid. The school had moved to remote learning, with the school open for children of key workers and vulnerable pupils. Governors discussed the situation and the decisions made by HM and CM, which they endorsed. The school is now fully open. Eight staff had been ill and are now returning to work. The breakfast club is operating as normal, though afterschool care is currently being provided rather than afterschool activities, until the remaining staff who are absent are able to return. Governors questioned whether additional measures are in place to help prevent the spread of Covid. Although not encouraged by the government, partial bubbles have been re-introduced, with assemblies now online or with reduced numbers and masks worn in communal areas. One governor had been in school on the Monday when the school had first partially closed, and was impressed by the calm atmosphere and efficiency with which the closure was carried out. <i>Q: Who is in charge of the school in the absence of HM and HW?</i> <i>A: ODST.</i> Governors expressed their thanks to HM and HW for their leadership of the school through a difficult period, and to the rest of the staff for their continued professionalism and hard work to enable the school to provide learning under such circumstances. Positive feedback had been received from parents on the decision and on quality of communications from school during the week. Governors also expressed the hope that staff would only return to school when fully recovered.	
6	Approval and signing of the minutes from the previous LGB meeting held on 14th September 2021* The minutes were approved, with no amendments, as a true record of the meeting. CM to leave a signed copy at school.	CM
7	Discussion of matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:	
7.1	Update on teaching assistant (TA) vacancy There has been no appointment to date and the school is now on its third round of job adverts. There has been one unsuccessful trial day, and two more are planned. It is a continued problem to recruit TAs countywide.	
7.2	Volunteer to work on governor induction with CM/BT No volunteer had come forward.	
7.3	Update on working group for senior leader recruitment No volunteers had come forward but this issue is discussed further under item 16.1.	
7.4	Confirmation that all governors have read Keeping Children Safe in Education and completed the questionnaire All governors had confirmed their declarations on GovernorHub except one.	
7.5	Update on response to letter sent to ODST expressing the board's dissatisfaction	

	with the schedule of delegation The school enjoys a lot of informal autonomy but, formally, ODSST retain a lot of responsibilities. CM to raise the matter with ODSST (either through letter or in conversation with senior leaders) in the new year.	CM
7.6	Renewal of designated safeguarding lead training for HW HW has completed the first part of her renewal training, with the second and final part of the training booked for 9th December.	
8	Additional Meeting Focus: SIAMS and the focus of Dr South's as a church school LH, HP and SH had prepared a presentation on SIAMS and the focus of Dr South's as a church school. Their aim was to cover four areas: • To familiarise all governors with the expectations of church schools, as indicated by the SIAMS framework. • To highlight the activities and actions taken at Dr South's that respond to the SIAMS framework. • To identify any challenges and opportunities in future work in this area at Dr South's. • To consider how being a church school relates to the work on the vision and values of Dr South's. SIAMS seeks to establish the answer to the question "how effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?" The inspection involves a self-evaluation carried out by the whole school community, before an inspection, and governors are responsible for ensuring the self-evaluation process happens. Vision and leadership oversee the different complementary strands of the evaluation schedule. The vision is fundamental and must be biblically rooted. A concise statement of 50 words should encapsulate the vision, which is then reflected in school policies, procedures and website. The SIAMS framework is reflected throughout the school. Examples include: • syllabus and framework for RE is in place • collective worship • nominated governors for SIAMS support • inclusion of prayer in governor meetings • evening session on brainstorming the Christian ethos of the school. Governors discussed the school prayer and ensuring that this very clearly reflects the policies and ethos of the school, and is visible for visitors. The school currently has prayer blessings in the lobby that visitors are invited to use. Governors were not sure how visible and how child-friendly these are, though they had in fact been written by pupils. It was agreed that there is an opportunity to ask pupils to write prayers and develop a school prayer that could be used in assemblies and become part of school life. It could be added to the school newsletter template. Examples of how being a church school relates to the work on the vision and values of Dr South's were outlined:	

	• Embedded actions reflect the ethos, such as respect and kindness. • Bullying is carefully monitored and reported in meetings. • Questionnaires sent to parents and pupils include questions about the ethos of the school. • Pastoral care is available for children and staff. • The shared headship was offered willingly despite its impact. • The school encourages pupils to question things and keep an open mind, using big questions in RE to encourage debate. There is a need to collect evidence of what is done and its impact. There is to be a brainstorming session on the school vision at the January INSET day on Wednesday 5th January in the morning and all governors are invited to attend. Governors discussed the presentation. The possibility of more community service was raised, but safeguarding and health and safety would need to be carefully considered before this could be pursued. Governors raised the challenges of rooting ethos and actions within biblical teaching, which caused problems at the previous inspection. It will therefore be important to not only develop a vision that captures the values and priorities of the school but also to ensure these are biblically rooted. Once developed, all school activities will need to reflect the vision. LH, HP and SH were thanked for their presentation. HP left the meeting at this point.	All gobs
9	Receive and discuss report from T&L* Minutes of the November meeting had been circulated. The problems in Oak class were highlighted, where high numbers of pupils had been absent with Covid and remote teaching meant that evidence for attainment measures was less robust. The next data drop is likely to be in March and should show greater progress has been made, with consequently better attainment.	
10	Receive and discuss report from FPP, including update on staff welfare* Minutes of the November meeting had been circulated. The meeting did not have quorum. With regard to finance, the 2020-2021 turnout had been better than predicted, with more funding received than expected. For the current budget, a larger than normal drawdown from the Trust Fund is required because of costs from Covid and maternity cover. The Trust Fund holds the school's accrued donations and its pre-academy reserves. One element of the funds comes from the school's self-insurance for long-term staff absence and maternity cover. The fund is in a healthy position from donations, and strong pupil numbers over several years have meant school finances have been robust. With regard to personnel, the chair of the committee had received and approved the report on the teacher appraisal process and confirmed teacher pay decisions. A staff survey is scheduled, but HM is waiting until there are more details available on the survey planned by ODST. Wellbeing is better this year. The problems of TA recruitment were discussed.	

	<i>Q: Following your discussions of the charging policy for food, is the school considering charging for artwork to be taken home?</i> <i>A: No. The committee has asked for figures on ingredient costs for cookery classes so that it can review the charging policy, but it is not considering charging for artwork.</i>	
10.1	Approval of revised budget for 2021-22* The revised budget was unanimously approved.	
11	Review self-evaluation form (SEF) and agree gradings for LGB-monitored section* The SEF is based on the Ofsted framework, and its purpose is to enable an ongoing review of the performance of the school. The gradings are shown as colours: green – performance good, secure; yellow/orange – work to be done on this area; red – urgent action required; blue – better than good. There appears to be a drive within Ofsted to remove the outstanding grading for schools. At Dr South's, the aim is to be consistently good in all areas. Before reviewing the leadership and management section overseen by the LGB, governors were asked for any comments on the areas monitored by the T&L committee. There was robust discussion on the item "learners develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and achieve well." There was a view that the data from Oak class meant that this item should not be graded as good. However, only data from external assessments (i.e. phonics tests, SATS) are used by Ofsted, and the point was made that the progress made by learners was good so this item would remain green. It was agreed that it would remain green, with a note concerning Oak class, and this will be reviewed at the next T&L meeting. Governors also questioned the item that had not been graded: "learners are prepared for future successes". This is new to the framework this year, and there is no evidence to grade it yet. Governors suggested that a note is added that it is yet to be evaluated, and it was agreed that it will be difficult to assess. T&L will look at possible measures. <i>Q: Should the one incidence of bullying mean that item 25, "bullying or discrimination is not tolerated, and is dealt with quickly" be marked down from green?</i> <i>A: This item also covers how a school deals with bullying, and T&L are happy with this.</i> The meeting reviewed the eight measures of leadership and management. • Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for a high quality, inclusive education – the school is working on its vision. Approved as good. • Leaders focus on staff development – this has been challenged by the pandemic but there is a pastoral environment within the school. Leaders have shown clear capability and commitment over the last fortnight. Approved as good. • Leaders engage with the whole community – there are examples of community engagement, such as the talent show. Approved as good. • Leaders take account of pressures on staff, managing their workload, and	T&L T&L

	protect staff from bullying and harassment – governors have frequently expressed concern over staff workload, though have been unable to alleviate it. Approved as good. • Governance is carried out effectively, and leaders are held to account. Approved as good. • Governance ensures that the school fulfils its statutory duties. Approved as good. • There is a culture of safeguarding. Governors felt there is evidence for outstanding in this area. Approved as good. • The school manages safe recruitment and deals with allegations effectively – this is closely monitored. Approved as good.	
12	Safeguarding	
12.1	Receive update on current position No matters were raised.	
12.2	Approve Annual Safeguarding report* Each year the local authority requires a safeguarding self-audit which then needs formal approval. The safeguarding governor and HM review the form in detail, which has been done. Governors were happy that the review was thorough and approved the report.	
13	Approve SEN Information report* The report is updated annually. Not much had changed this year, and the links are all still valid. The report was approved and LH and her colleagues were thanked for all their hard work over such a challenging year.	
14	Policy ratification	
14.1	Admissions policy* Governors questioned the paragraph in red type with missing data. This will be completed when the data is available, but the policy is required 2 years ahead. The front cover needs changing, but other than this governors unanimously approved the policy	
14.2	Teachers' pay policy* This model policy was approved unanimously.	
15	Receive update on health and safety There is nothing of significance to report. MN had completed the November governor walkabout and had found nothing of note.	
16	Governance	
16.1	Update on chair of governors CM had expressed a wish to step down as chair at Christmas. However, no volunteers had come forward and he is prepared to stay on as chair until the end of the academic year. He will need help, as the pressures on his time have not eased, and a shared leadership model was proposed. The small group will comprise JC and MOS as chairs of the subcommittees. MOS will stand down as vice-chair and KC was proposed as new vice-chair to become the fourth member of the group.	

	The shared leadership model was approved, and KC was voted new vice-chair until the end of the academic year. Committee membership will be reviewed, and arrangements for next year considered.	CM
16.2	Review governor roles and appoint governors for SEN, health and safety and whistleblowing Governor roles will be considered when CM discusses committee membership with governors.	CM
16.3	Receive update on new governor appointments There are two co-opted governor roles and CM will discuss one of these positions with Eamonn after the meeting. RD wishes to stand down as governor, creating a foundation governor vacancy, and MN would like to retire from his role as foundation governor from Easter. Both RD and MN were thanked for all their work as governors.	
16.4	Update on governor visits and training undertaken When visiting the school, governors were reminded that they should complete the yellow forms and these are then uploaded onto GovernorHub. Monitoring visits for the school action plan are due shortly. SH had been in to school recently to monitor handwriting and has started a means of record keeping for future years. KC had attended training on the complaints process, and governors were encouraged to attend as much training as they can while the school has a subscription to the Governor Services training programme.	All govs All govs
16.5	Discuss possible future focus topics Two suggestions were proposed: • Target setting for progress and attainment. • With the current challenges of recruitment, understanding of the staff mix and careers in education may help in considering where to look to recruit. Governors were asked to consider future topics , and the next meeting will have time for an additional focus.	All govs
17	Any other business SH is happy to set up Zoom meetings for the LGB when required. Governors were thanked for their attendance, particularly staff members who were all recovering from Covid. They and their colleagues were thanked for their commitment.	
	Meeting closed at: 8.45pm.	
	Proposed dates of next meetings: LGB – Tues 15th Feb at 7pm (29th Mar, 24th May, 19th July) T&L – Mon 14th Mar at 5pm (3rd May, 11th July) FPP – Tues 18th Jan at 7.30pm (8th Mar, 3rd May, 5th July)	

*Indicates documents are associated with this item. *Italic text highlights governor questions, and the answers given.*
Red text highlights action points arising from the meeting.

Quorum required: At least 4 governors, one of whom should be a Foundation LGB Member

Action points arising from the meeting

CM to leave a signed copy of the minutes for the previous LGB meeting held on 14th September 2021 at school.

CM to raise the matter of the board's dissatisfaction with the schedule of delegation with ODS in the new year.

All governors are invited to attend a brainstorming session on the school vision at the January INSET day on Tuesday 5th January in the morning.

T&L to review item 11, learners develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and achieve well, within the SEF at its next meeting.

T&L to look at possible measures for item 36, learners are prepared for future successes, within the SEF at its next meeting.

CM to review committee membership and discuss with governors, along with governor roles.

Governors to complete the yellow forms when visiting the school. Monitoring visits for the school action plan should start shortly.

Governors to attend as much training as they can while the school has a subscription to the Governor Services training programme.

Governors to consider future topics for additional focus at LGB meetings.