

**St Augustine's Catholic Primary School**  
**Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting**  
**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012, 7.30 pm at School**

**Present:** Mrs Lisa Bonn, Mrs Sarah Chater, Miss Simone Curry,  
Mr Mark Dennison (Chair), Mrs Florence Duffield, Mr David Glynn,  
Mrs Judy Green, Mrs Henriekje Harrington-Vogt, Mr Nick Jotischky,  
Mrs Jan Mann (Head Teacher), Mr Francis McGee, Mrs Amber Moth,  
Father Peter Stodart, Mrs Ann Theobald.

**In Attendance:** Mr Stephen Bryan – Assistant Director to the Education Commission  
Mrs Jackie Warren – New Head Teacher  
Mrs Beverly van Winkelen (Clerk).

- 1. Opening Prayer:** Fr Peter asked for God's guidance as the Governors met this evening to make decisions for the school community.
- 2. Archdiocese's Presentation:** Mr Dennison introduced Mr Bryan from the Archdiocese of Southwark who was attending the meeting to talk to Governors about the Archdiocese's plans to convert Catholic schools to Academies.

Since the creation of the Academies Act, the Secretary of State for Education can force underperforming schools to convert to academies. Also under the new Ofsted framework, 'satisfactory' judgement had been replaced with 'required improvement'. The Archdiocese has responded by setting up a proposal for all schools to convert to academies so that the Catholic ethos and education can be preserved. The standards of the schools have been mapped out by the Archdiocese and some schools were found to be at threat of forced conversion due to falling standards. Schools that were in special measures or below the floor targets would have to convert to academies. The decision to remove the transport subsidy in Kent also prompted action as this will affect Primary Schools and the ability of families to send their children to their preferred schools.

Meetings had been held with Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors to discuss the available models and it was decided that the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) model with a scheme of delegation would be developed. This would create some changes to the way a Head Teacher was appointed to the school; at present the decision is made by the Governing Body (GB) but on conversion to an academy the GB would need to consult with the Archdiocese before an appointment could be made. Additionally the GB would be responsible to the trust and they would also set floor targets for the school. The GB would be responsible for the day to day running of the school and the MAT would be responsible to the Secretary of State. This would include the statutory policies laid down by the Department for Education (DfE)

The Directors of the Trust would be a mixture of ex officio and elected members including two parent members. These members would form three committees for school improvement, finance and resources and a joint appointment committee. The scheme of delegation would detail the relationship between the directors and the local Governing Bodies.

By forming the MAT member schools could benefit from a stronger voice within the DfE and the opportunity to develop a strong brand to attract staff and parents.

Governors were told that fourteen schools had currently signed up to become academies and that the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership would be meeting tomorrow (12<sup>th</sup> December) to decide the makeup of the full board of directors. The Board would be made up of interim members to begin with as some posts would need to be advertised and appointments would not be made until the start of the new academic year. The schools comprise six secondary schools and eight primary schools. Of these there is a mixture of outstanding, good and failing schools. The first schools would not convert until April 2013

Governors were concerned about the funding schools would receive and how this would be administered when no finance director was in post. They were informed that the Archdiocese would be working with a business manager and taking advice in this field. Funding for schools would not go down under the proposed scheme; instead the MAT would top slice just 5% of the grant (Kent currently retains 8%). This money would be used to help failing schools improve standards. Other schools would be able to make bids for the money but it was effectively being removed from their budgets. Governors were also keen to learn if the formula used by KCC to calculate the amount of money a school received would remain the same and were told that the finance directors would make that decision and that the budgets of the schools already signed up to the scheme were known. Governors were concerned that good schools would not see much money returning to them and that would impact on standards at these schools. The money would also be rolled over to build up a pot to support schools in the future. Governors were nervous about accepting assurances that the funding formulas would not change and that they were effectively being asked to do more with less funding.

Governors were concerned that there was no proven track record of what the directors could supply and Mr Bryan told them that a list was being developed to provide school support.

Issues were also discussed surrounding the ownership of the land and buildings as some of these would be in the ownership of the Archdiocese and some with KCC. There were various grants available to help schools convert to academies and the amount received would depend on the legal issues surrounding ownership.

These varied between £25,000 and £160,000. A Primary Grant was also available to three primary schools converting at the same time; this offer would be withdrawn after 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012. Converting as a group would mean an increase in the outreach opportunities that the schools needed to move from good to outstanding,

Governors continued to debate the arguments for and against converting to an academy and accepted that the proposals were good for Catholic education but had concerns about what was best for the children; those that already attended good schools would suffer as funds and attention were diverted to those that were failing. Mr Bryan disputed this.

Before a school can convert an application must be made to the MAT and consultations held with staff and parents. Mr Bryan responded to a parent governor's question that consultation with parents had been minimal; they had either put an advertisement in the Parish Magazine or sent an email. Staff would TUPE across with the same pay and conditions.

Governors thank Mr Bryan for his informative presentation and were content that they had been informed of the Archdiocese's intentions; there was no rush to make a decision.

Mr Bryan and Mrs Warren left the meeting at 8.30 pm

- 3. Apologies:** Mr Jon Crozier (Deputy Head), Mrs Carol Mellors, Mr Paul Noonan.
- 4. Declarations of Business Interests:** No pecuniary business interests were declared against any agenda items.
- 5. Minutes of the Meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012:** These were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

It was necessary to hold an election for the post of Vice Chair; Mrs Judy Green had put her name forward for the post and was unanimously elected as the Vice Chair for the remainder of the academic year. As Vice Chair Mrs Green will co-ordinate governor visits and monitoring, linked to the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

A new Foundation Governor is needed to replace Father Behruz; Fr Peter made a suggestion but further advice is needed as the person is a priest and has children at the school. Parent Foundation governors should not exceed one third of the GB.

**Action Point 1: Fr Peter to contact the Archdiocese regarding the new Foundation Governor.**

**Action Point 2: The Clerk will put a standing item for training on each agenda.**

The Governor Action points from the previous meeting had been completed but Mr Jotischky would do further work in forming a link with another school. He will take the matter up with Miss Phillips.

**Action Point 3: Mr Jotischky to speak with Miss Phillips regarding school links abroad.**

Mr Dennison updated the Governors regarding the confidential minutes of the last meeting. This matter is still considered to be confidential and is filed separately.

- 6. Head Teachers Report:** Mrs Mann gave her heartfelt thanks to the Staff and Governors for all the support that they had given her through the good and not so good times whilst she had been Head Teacher at St Augustine's.

The report had been circulated to the Governors prior to the meeting and the Governors asked questions relating to the content. It was noted that some challenging targets had been set and that these had been presented by the Curriculum Committee at the last meeting. Mr Noonan had been into visit the school to monitor his targets since the last meeting.

Governors voiced continuing concerns about the safety of children around the school at drop off and pick up times. To provide a Road Safety Officer would be an additional cost to the school. The Governors considered the reasons for the increase in traffic around the school and were told that a car park at St John's had been closed. Discussions were held to consider the ways in which the volume of traffic could be reduced; these included a change to the finish time at the end of the day and the implementation of a voluntary one way system to ease congestion. When the walking bus had been in use congestion had been reduced and the instigation of the system using a voluntary rota was also discussed.

**Action Point 4: Mr Dennison to speak to the PTA to ascertain whether they would be willing to fund the cost of the Crossing Patrol Officer.**

An updated version of the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) had been circulated to the Governors and a shortened version of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) had also been circulated to include a monitoring timetable to which the Governors were linked to provide evidence of monitoring and challenge. Terms 3 and 4 of the timetable have been left with spare capacity for the new Head Teacher to make an input.

## 7. Committee Report:

7.1 **Finance Committee:** The minutes from the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012 and 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012 were all approved.

Governors had been concerned that the school does not receive the same amount of funding per pupil as similar schools in the area. Questions had been asked of KCC but the answers had not been satisfactory further enquiries were to be made.

In September the rollover was reported as £61,986 with an anticipated in year deficit of £3990, this had worsened slightly to £5721.

The capital surplus is £16868 against £18678 at the start of the year.

The Finance Committee had considered a number of policies and approved them:

- ❖ Governor Allowances: an increase in the cost of child care had been made from £8 to £10.
- ❖ Health and Safety: this policy is in line with the KCC model policy.
- ❖ Lettings: The charges for the use of the school had not been changed.
- ❖ Whistleblowing: KCC model policy and no further points were added by the Archdiocese.
- ❖ Finance Committee Terms of Reference.
- ❖ Schools Financial Values Statement (SFVS)

7.2 **Pay and Staffing Committee:** Approved the following policies

- ❖ Pay and Reward: minor changes were made.
- ❖ Performance Management Review.
- ❖ Terms of Reference for the Head Teachers Performance Management: Penny Bowles had been appointed by KCC to advise the Governors.

7.3 **Curriculum Committee:** The minutes of the previous meetings in July and November were approved and special thanks given to Mr Crozier for his work on Making Figures Speak for Themselves (MFSFT) that went into the SEF.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) were approved and as new policy on E Safety had been written. Some amendments had been made to the policy but these had not yet been cross referenced. Mr Jotischky would take the lead

responsibility for the policy, Mr Crozier would be the ICT co-ordinator and he would report back to the Governors and social networking sites would be monitored. The policy was approved subject to the cross references being proved correct.

Governors asked whether the staff had school mobiles and were told that if staff needed to contact families they used their own or if on school trips, families were contacted via the school. It was agreed that the school would purchase some pay as you go phones for use on school trips.

**Action Point 5: Mr Jotichsky to check the ICT policy and report back to the Governors.**

**Action Point 6: School to purchase pay as you go phones for external trips.**

The following policies were approved:

- ❖ Target Setting
- ❖ Tracking
- ❖ Terms of Reference
- ❖ E Safety (Subject to Action Point 5)

7.4 **Community Committee:** Mrs Mann and Mrs Bon had completed the Single Equality Scheme (SES) and had included some bullet points regarding disability in the Action Plan.

The following policies were approved:

- ❖ Admissions
- ❖ Child Protection
- ❖ Looked After Children
- ❖ Behaviour
- ❖ Equal Opportunities
- ❖ Race Equality
- ❖ SES

The responses from the parent's questionnaire were discussed and the analysis had been published in the Newsletter. There had been forty responses from two families in the school, but those that had replied showed overwhelming support for the school.

Mrs Green had stood down as the Chair of the committee to take on the role of Vice Chair of the Governing Body; Mr Francis McGee had duly been elected Chair of the committee with Mrs Amber Moth as Vice Chair.

7.5 **RE Report:** Moderation had been completed, children had completed assignments and staff had come together to moderate the work. Fr Peter had attended a course on Preparation for Moderation.

The new scheme 'Come and See' was now used across the school.

7.6 Governor Visits: This item would be added to the next agenda.

**Action Point 7: Clerk to add Governor Visits to the next Agenda.**

**8. SFVS:** A working party had been convened made up of Mr McGee, Mrs Moth, Mrs Chater and Mrs Sarjeant and a timetable of deadlines was being worked towards.

The immediate action was for all Governors to consider the twenty three questions needed to comply with SFVS and report back to the working party with any questions as soon as possible so that areas that might need further focus were known. Mr McGee also had a Skills Audit form for Governors to take from the meeting and complete. The Finance and Building committee had already completed this exercise. Governors were asked to return the forms to Mrs Sarjeant by 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Final submissions for SFVS had to be made by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013.

Action Point 8: Governors to complete SFVS question paper by 18<sup>th</sup> January

**9. Chairs Actions and Correspondence:** The Chair had received a letter from the Archdiocese relating to increasing the school to a two form entry per year. A feasibility study had been carried out and it was concluded that the restraints on the site would not allow for this.

Mrs Mellors term of office had come to an end and was being processed by KCC at the time of the meeting. A final decision would be made on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2013 but it was not envisaged that there would be any concerns about her re-appointment.

Mr Dennison would like the Governors to consider a Vision for the school over the coming years and would take the matter up with Mrs Warren in the New Year.

**10. Safeguarding:** Mrs Green and Mrs Moth are to attend a training session on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

Mrs Harrington-Vogt is to undertake Health and Safety Training.

The Clerk would ask Governor Services to provide a training record for the Governors and each Committee was asked to keep an accurate record of the training courses that they attended.

**Action Point 9: Clerk to obtain a current training record from Governor Services.**

- 11. Any Other Business:** No matters were brought to the Governors attention.
- 12. Confidentiality:** Matters considered under Item 5 were considered confidential and are filed separately.
- 13. Dates of the next Meetings:** Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013, Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013. All meeting begin promptly at 7.30 pm at school.

The Meeting Closed at 9.53 pm