

Toddington St George Church of England Academy
Meeting of the Board of Governors
Wednesday 16th March 2016 7:30pm

Present:	Tony Williams - Chair	Luke Mitchell
	Jane Spencer – Head Teacher	Rachel Choosey
	Clare Oakley	Kirsti Meachem
	Dee Walker	Jackie Stringer
	Louise Taylor	Clare Brown
	John Keith	Bob Heal
	Victoria Sharp - Clerk	

In Attendance: Jo Tillin – School Business Manager
Liz Collins - Deputy Head Teacher

Apologies:	Dee Curtis	Rev Ann Crawford
		Richard Phelan

Agenda	Action
The FGB meeting was opened in prayer. JSp led this as Reverend Anne had sent her apologies to the meeting.	
AOB – Government Announcements re. Academy Status (See 5.) Ground Breaking Ceremony for New Classrooms	
1 TW welcomed guests from Caddington Lower School, the Chair and vice Chair of the Governing Body and also the Head Teacher. TW is their appointed National Leader to assist with their Governance.	
2 Register of Pecuniary Interests The Register was circulated and interests noted.	
3. Minutes and Matters arising from the FGB Meeting 4th November 2015 <u>Safeguarding</u> Prevent training has been rolled out across the staff team and all Governors should also be taking part in this as a matter of urgency. LM and BH have been trained. A governors training evening date will be circulated after the Easter break. All Sub-Committee Chairs are asked to complete this training.	ALL
JK has reviewed the Single Central Record. A couple of Governor checks are being followed up on in the light of the most recent recommendations, otherwise the record is currently compliant.	JSP
<u>Equality Plan</u> This has been revised by the Head and fed into a policy tied into the SDP. JK to review on behalf of the Governors.	J SP
<u>Fundraising</u> It is essential that the Governors take an active role in sourcing and applying for grants and fundraising to support the School. CB volunteered to look at this with JT.	JK

HAST Fundraising

HAST Head Teachers Sub-committee are now to look at the allocation of funding with the intention that extra funding that is available will be used across the schools. There is hope that it can be used for Educational Psychologist consultations to support children's SEN needs and assessments.

CB – JT

The Head is leading the HAST group on this and will report back to TW accordingly.

TW/JSP

EYS Business Plan

This was to be discussed in the main meeting (See below).

Sub Chairs

Terms of Reference

Chairs were reminded that these are to be reviewed in each subcommittee and fed back to next FGB.

TW

Code of Conduct for Governors

Ongoing – TW to complete this review.

Admissions Policy

16/17 Policy (as agreed previously) has been in use for September admissions and places will be awarded to applicants just after the Easter break.

17/18 Policy has been agreed and circulated as required and the Diocese have also reviewed and approved the policy.

Advertising

It was decided not to advertise the nursery places on the village Face Book page after the last meeting.

All

Governors Reviews

These have been carried out and were reviewed later in the meeting.

Governors to attend School Council Meetings

The date agreed had to be altered due to Governor ill health. The date will be incorporated into the Governors visit day (see below).

Early Years Funding

The ongoing concern that SEN Early Years funding does not follow through from Toddington Child care into school. The Early Years team have visited the school they are fully aware of the concern and the need for absolute clarity about the necessity of recommending support for pupils clearly in reports..

DC - LM

Health and Safety Walk

DC and LM had had to alter their original agreed date. Ongoing

JSp
CO TW

CO and Tw will review Target Tracker. The school offered a training day but no one could attend – a new date to be set.

THE MINUTES WITH AGREED AND SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD.

Chair and Sub-Committee Reports to the FGB

Curriculum and School Improvement Committee Report

Standards and Progress

CB shared data from 2 sources – The Family Fisher Trust Governors Dashboard and the CBC Locality Area School Results.

Family Fisher Trust, Governors Dash Board.

The summary is that it highlights many strengths and very few weaknesses at all and shows the school to be in a very positive position. The data indicates that St Georges is performing above the majority of primary schools.

There is a dip in Science levels compared to Maths and Literacy. The year 2 staff had discussed this with JSp and had felt as a school we potentially under assessed some Level 3 learners and therefore this would be reviewed this academic year

Local Area School Results.

This is formulated through the EYFS returns data. St Georges is in the Chiltern Vale Locality and the data confirms what was expected. St Georges is above the national and local average and is very encouraging. This year there is a high level of boys with reading needs, which had a marked effect on the results even with the above average standing. These children are currently all in Y2 and support has been given to enable these children's learning. Precision learning is having a strong impact (see Head's report).

New Leadership

The new Senior Leads have been appointed – Jane Wood for Maths and Beverley Kemp for Literacy. They have just taken up post and will be invited the FGB in June.

National Curriculum

The NC has been imbedded into the school and the progress against the curriculum expectations is pleasing but there will need to be further changes due to the new Moderation arrangements that are to be rolled out this year.

LC explained The new moderation arrangements and changes in SATs for year 2 and 4 this year. (EYFS may also be moderated). The moderation arrangements have caused a huge increase in work for teachers and increased pressure on staff and children. As the arrangements have only just been shared with schools this has added to workload for staff. 18 children's work will be assessed but class teachers must have ready all children's work as they will not know which children's work will be selected. There is a significant change in the expectations for age related expectations (ARE) and the bar is much higher in relation to age related expectations. This means children who have previously been working to their age related level (national expectations), may now appear to be below it.

Each child must meet all of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for their year group. 100% of all indicators must be met to meet the necessary level for the age related standard.

Another change is that a child can only meet writing age related criteria if they also meet all handwriting and spelling targets too. This may mean that many dyslexic or dyspraxic children who are capable readers and writers will end up failing to meet ARE criteria.

Staff have had to revisit all of the children's work in a year group, compile grids of the KPI's and cross reference work to each KPI to mark it up for ease of identification for moderators. This is a huge undertaking and particularly time consuming.

JSP explained to the committee that the danger is that due to the shift in the levels the school could be seen as having lower standards than previous years. It should be expected that this should be reflected across the board nationally and all other schools that are also outstanding will see the same reduced percentages as there should be a national shift in all standards for this year.

JSP went on to say that it is a pilot year as there is a need for a benchmarking of national data to ascertain national percentages.

LC and JSp stated that it is important to support the children through all of this and also very clear robust communication to parents so that they can understand. There is a meeting with the Y2 parent's tomorrow.

Target Tracker, the schools' new online tracking system is helping staff review pupils progress. Governors need to view progress and attainment with caution as a child can be working well within an age related band in Target tracker but, if they do not reach all 100% KPIs, then that class overview report becomes misleading as those children will actually fail to have met the ARE requirements.

Progress in Literacy curriculum– Pupil targets reviewed due to the new moderation process (see above). Good progress with Hamilton Trust in place. Grammar Hammer going well.

Progress in Maths curriculum – Pupil targets reviewed due to the new moderation process (see above). Good progress with Hamilton Trust in place. Calculation policy clears across the school. Mastery to support progress is the ongoing focus and CPD has begun.

Specialist Music offer is being delivered very well by Inspiring Music

The new challenging computer scheme is successfully being delivered

TS is delivering against the PE plan and LT delivers the MFL curriculum.

Training

All staff received training on Lego programming and kits have been purchased. These align with the scratch computing program so pupils can now program Lego models accordingly.

Staff have done Moderation training

LC and JSP have carried out Arts Mark training. Teaching Assistant Teresa Gaskin who supports this in school has received a nationally recognised award for her work.

EYFS staff all received training for moderation and baseline and now using baseline assessments with all Reception and Nursery cohorts.

School Awards

Mrs Stringer has worked to enable the school to gain the Healthy Schools Award again.

Mrs Clough has re-gained the Green Flag with the support of DC. Both showed strong leadership to support us gaining these Awards. Other Awards will be submitted this year. Update at next term's meeting.

School Council Thrives under the leadership of AS and the Council has completed a number of school improvements and charity events including Operation Shoebox, Children in Need and Mercy Ships.

Staff

Training

LT and PA have settled into their new roles. CA is supporting PA to achieve her fast track teaching qualification. BK mentored a trainee teacher and supported her on her journey into teaching.

Governor visits

RC visited the school for the Healthy Hearts Day-see report attached. DC has been very supportive with the Eco Team and Collective Worship. Rev Ann has attended school and led Collective Worship (JSp and LC have also carried out observations of Collective Worship and have had outstanding feedback).

Governors links to classrooms

Dates for when Governors link into school class groups will be arranged now Governors are aware of year group links they will have. Parents will be advised so that they can link with the Governors at a day to day level to make regular communication even more effective.

BEHAVIOUR and ATTENDANCE

LM has looked at the attendance logs, how they are formatted and to look at outcomes, with JT. These are very clear and comprehensive records which are managed by Mrs Child
Attendance and behavioural issues were discussed at the Curriculum Sub-Committee. The Governors were confident there was effective and consistent management of these issues.

GOVERNANCE REVIEW

All governors need to check the attendance details on the draft review sheets circulated and amend accordingly for JSp.

The Safeguarding review reflected very strong practice that has a direct impact in children's well-being and safety. Documentation logs are very good. Every staff member knows how to and why to report relevant issues. LM has attended Prevent training and Luke is attending a HAST meeting about inter school safeguarding issues with the Head and Deputy next week. Clear next steps are circulated in the draft summary circulated to Governors and these will be reviewed by sub committees next term.

A SEN review modelled on the APTGO was carried out in the Autumn term.

There has been good progress against the required actions.

Governors completed the Self Evaluation and it was very strong. Clear next steps are circulated in the draft summary circulated to Governors and these will be reviewed by sub committees next term

Pupil Premium

Whilst there was evidence of very good practice it was agreed this was the least comprehensive review currently as practice for Governors has been developing for a relatively shorter period in school. Actions are being worked on and it was agreed the key issue with PP is to make sure that parents are aware of what is on offer to them, what their child has access to or is entitled to. The parents must apply to the LA for the PPG to be allocated to school. There is currently limited uptake on trying to claim in Reception but this could be because parents are not aware of their entitlement. A parent leaflet was prepared by LC and re circulated to reinforce entitlement (UFSM has raised some confusion for parents with regard to applying for PPG.

Much of the money used is 'unseen' as it is used to fund targeted learning support e.g. precision teaching or a small group intervention. Parents see the use more tangibly when it is a trip or visit, a term of music and or a term of a particular club which is funded as part of the policy.

- to review the PP documents on the website
- ensure parents understand the PP leaflet to help parents understand how to claim better.
- that Target Tracker is set up to review PP across year groups and this will be used for reporting in the summer term.
- the Child Champions for each child to be formally agreed

Pen portraits and Audit IT opportunities are beginning and ongoing. Progress will be reported to the C and SI committee next term.

Governors completed the **Effective Self Evaluation** as part of their Governance Review.

The key areas for development were identified as

- to review the Governors page on the website
- ensure parents links through Year group arrangements
- that Target Tracker is set up to review PP and this will be used for reporting in the summer term.

All Groups are to meet and review at sub-committees (with the exception of Governance and PE) and report back to the FGB in June.

Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee Report

Statutory accounts Update

Following a meeting on the 1st of December 2015 with the Accountants and after all queries from the circulated accounts were dealt with the Board of Trustees ratified the Academy Accounts. Therefore, the accounts have been submitted

The Board of Trustees agreed to be members of the RPA – this is recommended across Academies.

BUDGET

JK explained that the budget is very tight to the end of Aug 16 as the operating surplus will be small.

The change has been primarily due to a member of staff in the nursery being on long term sick leave. This is not covered under the school's insurance scheme. The school have therefore had to recruit cover and, whilst Mr Nchorri is providing good support and feedback is positive, this is expensive and has impacted the school budget.

The staff member on sick leave is due back in May, and should be going onto Statutory Sick pay a couple of weeks before they are due to return to work.

The school had no capacity to cover this due and it was essential to ensure continuity of support to the children to buy in supply.

The subcommittee have considered options and felt that they needed to keep the cover staff in nursery to retain the continuity and best resource for the children.

JT – The budget is tight due to the following Increased costs and Decreased Income

- Agency supply cover for staff long term sick
- Increase in pay for 11 members of staff due to NL Wage
- Increased Employer Pension Contribution (24% LGPS/16.48 for TP)
- End of NI rebate (3.4%) for contracted out staff
- Less children eligible/applying for PP
- Lower funding for EYFS due to lower take up
- Overdue emergency buildings maintenance eg plumbing
- More SEN support on equivalent/less funding

JT -The Following Actions have been put in place

- Complete reforecast process for final part of the academic year (April-August)
- Freeze on staffing except where cover cannot be sourced through internal staff

- Cost of future trips/visits to be fully covered by parents and PTA
- Freeze on additional training and CPD
- Essential Buildings/maintenance work only
- Increase cost awareness across the school eg. reduce printing or print in black and white, only turn off lights.
- Look for Grants funding eg Parish Council, Eon energy
- Additional lettings eg CBC
- Moved to RPA Membership for insurance.

JSP explained that this problem is potentially only a 6-month issue as she explained that there is income that will be generated when the new EYFS provision begins. This will be approx. £30K per annum if the school goes with a staggered intake or an additional £35-40K if all children start at once, dependent on number.

It was stressed that the current pressures are not a reflection of actual cash balance in accounts.

The subcommittee have considered options and felt that they needed to keep the cover staff in nursery to retain the continuity and best resource for the children, due to constraints being probably only for 6 months however,

if things get any tighter at the end of April then supply staff in nursery will be stopped and existing staff will have to cover.

JT is planning ahead and she and the Head meet regularly to review the options for the school. TW is updated accordingly.

EARLY YEARS

The working party met and discussed the three available options and the proposal is to offer two daily sessions as follows:

8:30am – 11:30am

12:30pm – 3:30pm

This allows for an hour lunch break for staff and also fits in with the staggered pick up for parents. There will be one intake as a staggered intake cannot be sustained. If all the places are taken up @15hours a week the benefit could be as much as 30K and with no additional costs or resources doing this way.

Stage 2 of the offer would involve changes to age groups and hours, this is a build on offer but must be done in stages.

The only negative impact using this proposal would be that Mrs Edwards in the Autumn term would no longer be available to carry out extra phonics sessions to Y1, however, TAs have been trained to ensure that the children can continue to receive the additional phonics support.

J SP/LC

The Governors all decided that they would agree to this proposal and it should be actioned by the Head and Deputy after Easter.

Staff Welfare

JSp

JK carried out a session for staff around welfare and work based priorities. The Governors wanted all the staff to know that they are aware of all the

pressures that they are currently under and support them wholeheartedly.

JSp will be feeding back to JK about actions from the session which was a very helpful and important meeting.

HT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

TW, NC ,DC CB and JSp met with the new School Improvement Partner (Paul Harpin) and set targets for this year. The Governors were very pleased in the way JSp has continued to run the school in the last year especially in the light of changes to the National Curriculum and the introduction of 'ARE'. They also acknowledged how well JSp knows every child and how that remains as so important for parents and Governors.

Buildings Sub-Committee Report

The main feedback from the new building on school site is that it is all going very smoothly and the contactors (Reds 10) are managing the build very successfully. The subcommittee had visited the site at the end of their meeting. A further bid for the Nursery roof is in place and we await confirmation of the success of that bid.

LM JT

Head Teachers Report

The Head led the Governors through her report (attached).

a) The main focus of the report alongside updating the FGB on all aspects of school development were the following **actions**

- concentrate decisions around the EYFS offer
- ensure awareness of the assessment implications for this year
- confirm the Governors page website review
- ensure Governors were aware of the revised targets shared with the SI committee
- Governor Link dates: May 25th was agreed as a visit date and key personnel for this date would be:

KM – Pupil Premium

CO – Target Tracker

CB - Literacy and Numeracy staff

Nb, SEN –visit already completed

KM

CO

CB

b)Apprenticeships

Governors were made aware that there would be a concern if it became a legal requirement to offer these as the school cannot afford this currently as does not qualify for the grant allocation.

c)Mentoring for staff has been introduced very successfully and staff were giving positive feedback to this personalised professional development

d)Precision Teaching

Targeting children for 1.1 literacy and maths for precision teaching is having very successful results.

e)SDP

JSp and LC have written the new Plan for the next 4 years and there are Key priorities organised into 7 sections.

Chairs

The Chair of each sub-committee is to read and review the SDP.

SDP has been sent out with the Heads report.

Currently the SDP does not address the new Academies legislation as announced by the Government this week.

f)Governors Page

The Governors have a page on the school website but it is not really representative of the consistently effective work that is carried out by the governors e.g. the Vision day, links to school, the Governance Reviews etc. CO volunteered to follow this up. Input from other Governors was agreed.

CO

DW

g)Toddington Childcare

DW gave an overview: the new room for babies is ready and there will be a launch day on Monday. Leaflets will go out and also released on the Facebook page. There are detailed discussions with the Parish Council around the provision of an afterschool club, aimed for September. There is an issue with asbestos in the proposed building but using it for Toddington Childcare will give the building a more sustainable and stable use of the building for the community. DW to update the FGB in the summer term.

HAST

A survey report was commissioned by the Harlington Area Schools' Trust (HAST) in order to evaluate the views of different stakeholders (Governors, and staff in member schools including St Georges) about current assessment, moderation and data-sharing practice, the desire for any further development and provide feedback on possible routes to further development.

The aims behind this include:

- ensuring that transfer between schools is less stressful for learners
- helping teachers to be better prepared and able to plan for different groups of learners effectively
- responding positively to recent changes in assessment systems
- ensuring there is continued confidence in the three-tier system of schools, the contribution made by each phase and the ways this information can be communicated to stakeholders in order to promote confidence

Almost all participants saw the benefit in a closer working partnership between the schools and understand that this will benefit the learning journey of the pupils across the trust.

Following the survey HAST has written to all Governing bodies inviting them to commit their schools to working collaboratively to achieve the aims of the survey. The September 2016-time frame to achieve this is challenging with all the other requirements currently. However, HAST

TW JK

want a reply to the recent Letter of Intent. It is not a legally binding commitment but an aspirational ongoing commitment to work together. Governors agreed to participate and also agreed that our response should be worded as follows: *'We share your aspirations of a shared approach and look forward to discussing these in further detail in due course'*.

TW and JSp state that there needs to be a very clear model and that the Upper school does not dictate to other levels what will happen.

NB it is important to also recognise that OFSTED is looking at non-standard transitions (2 Tier) and will not look favourably if HAST are not working together.

Community Links

DC – send a list of her contribution to Community links this term, they are as follows:

Community Garden, Choir singing at the Ploughman's lunches, Village Remembrance Sunday, Indoor Christmas Market, Light up Toddington, Carols on the Green, Clean for the Queen and the main Big Tidy Up this coming Saturday.

5.

AOB

Ground Breaking Ceremony

This will be held on 24th March at 11am to formalise the new classrooms that are being constructed. Nadine Dorries, MP will be attending. TW and DW to attend. TW/DW

Academies MATS and DMATS

BH explained the government's announcement today regarding Academies and stated that he had a meeting last week with the Regional Commissioner of Schools (in his role as Business Manager for a school in St. Neots). There is an expectation that Bedfordshire will be targeted to focus on MATS next due to relatively poor KS 2 and GCSE results.

The Governors had a discussion about Toddington being member of a Multi School Academy Trust (MAT).

TW explained that discussions around this with HAST hds previously fallen apart partly due to the St. George's church status. The Diocese would not agree to St George's giving up its status to be part of a MAT with the rest of HAST.

Other Church of England schools locally are Greenfields and Pulloxhill and Silsoe.

JSP stated that the St Albans Diocese had sent a letter this week advising that they will be moving towards DMATS. These are MATS that are led by Church schools but can include non church schools

This is significant as JSP explained that was understood that church schools that were not improving as an Academy could be taken back under Government control at which time the church status could effectively be taken away.

Discussion was had around the style and format of a MAT – governors thought that a CEO would be better leading as it would free teachers to get on with actual teaching.

A church school can lead a MAT and also a DMAT can have non faith schools.

Governors felt that being part of a MAT could have a huge impact on our school as you are only as strong as the weakest partner. On the other hand though BH stated that there were benefits and that it would be an opportunity for the school leadership team to bring up other schools. Other benefits include shared support staff/admin and teachers could work across sites. CPD opportunities could also be offered.

Access to other services e.g. family worker, improved 6th form and teaching possibilities could result.

TW stated that although MATs are being pushed they can go very wrong e.g. Barnfield, but MATS will be discussed at the next HAST meeting for Head teachers next week.

The Governors agreed there was much to consider and the next FGB would be too late.

This has huge implications for the school and all governors agreed that they need to compile a working group immediately to protect the school and the provision for local children.

JSp DW TW BH JK JT meet after the Easter Break as a matter of urgency. LC to also attend. Questions to address in addition: what is going to happen to Statutory services e.g. SEN provision - how will these be commissioned?

TW,BH,JK,
JSp,JT,LC,DW

Closing Prayer

AS the Rector could not attend JSp led the Governors in a prayer to end the FGB meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

6th July 2016 at 7:30pm

Meeting ended at 9:55pm Signed _____ Date _____