



AUTUMN 1 – Part 1 Minutes.

**Local CAST Board Meeting
11th October 2023 6pm in school**

Governor Attendees			
Name	Type of Governor	Present	Apologies
Cathy Blatchford (CB)	Executive Headteacher	Y	
Kelli Reynolds (KR)	Head of School	N	Y
Frankie Phillips (FP)	Foundation	Y	
Frances Dennehy (FD)	Foundation	N	Y
James Cookson (JC)	Foundation	Y	
Ann Hall (AH)	Prospective Foundation (TBC)	Y	
Jemma Standen (JSta)	Staff	N	Y
Sarah Osbond (SO)	Co-Opted Governor	Y	
Seb Mills (SM)	Community	Y	
James Pope (JP)	Parent	N	Y
Other Attendees		Present	Apologies
Ali Brocksom (AB)	Clerk to Governors	Y	

	Decision / Question / Action
<p>1. Welcome and Opening Prayer CB opened the meeting with a prayer.</p> <p>2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum Apologies were received from KR, FD, JS and JP. The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.</p> <p>Governance Procedures <u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no declarations of interest.</p> <p><u>Clerk to confirm all Annual Return documents including Pecuniary Interest, Code of Conduct, and Safeguarding Declaration are complete.</u> This was confirmed. All Governors have completed the annual return.</p> <p><u>Approve Minutes from last meeting 13th September 23 (Housekeeping Meeting)</u> The minutes were approved and signed.</p>	D

<p><u>Summary of Outstanding Actions:</u></p> <p>New Governors to attend CAST new Governor training [<i>date of next training event issued 15/10/23 to new Governors by AB</i>]</p> <p>All Governors were asked to complete the governor self-evaluation form that AB will send out. [<i>Sent 15/10/23</i>]</p> <p>School Leadership</p> <p><u>Receive Headteacher's Report – Curriculum and Standards Governors (SO / JP) to lead questioning, Inclusion Governors (AH / FP) to lead questioning on attendance and exclusions</u></p> <p>A full HT report including data will be provided at the start of each term.</p> <p>CB discussed the recent CAST review with the Director of Education and 2 SIOs which was useful, reassuring and positive. We are waiting for the final report to upload to Governorhub to share. Governors are aware of our next steps in the HTR. It did identify that we have strength in subject leadership with regards to the intent of subjects– we now need to ensure we see impact.</p> <p>Attendance of staff has been a challenge so far this term, especially with teachers. We have had COVID and teachers off on long term sick.</p> <p>A copy of targets was uploaded to Governorhub. We have identified children to target who we can move into the next threshold and will monitor these children.</p> <p>Pupil attendance is now supported by an external, experienced Attendance Officer who will provide reports to Governors and also support families. We use PP funding to buy this service. Attendance is not a concern at St Nicholas but we do want to target persistent absentees.</p> <p>AH reported back from Ofsted training - attendance is high on Ofsted's agenda at the moment. There is an attendance portal we also use to check our data against National figures.</p> <p><i>AH asked how the Attendance Officer will work with the FSW? They have worked together before and do work together on the same day in school to support families and improve attendance.</i></p> <p>We have not had any exclusions so far this term but we are monitoring a few children whose behaviour has escalated.</p> <p>Recruitment of staff (TAs) is a continuing issue. We have an advert out currently for a TA but interest is low - this is a national problem. We do have a new TA starting with us after half term.</p> <p><u>Receive verbal update from Headteacher on current priorities for development within the School Improvement Plan (SIP)</u></p> <p>These were discussed at the last meeting. Next week SLT will review where we are with these and then report back at the next meeting. We are making good progress.</p> <p><u>Governors Question's submitted in advance</u></p> <p><i>Do we have any more info on how St Nick's compared to other schools locally in SATS outcomes - is there a pattern?</i> Data comparing us to local schools has not been released yet. When it is, we can analyse the data.</p>	<p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>
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<p><i>There was supposed to be info in the HT report about progress scores - can we have a short update on this please?</i></p> <p>These have been released: Reading – 0.8 (good – above average), Writing - 0.2 (just below average) Maths - 2.9 (below average).</p>	<p>Q</p>
<p><i>FP queried whether we can look at progress data for children who have always been at St Nicholas compared to those who joined us in Yr 5/6? We will look at these results comparing children who joined in Yr 5 or 6 against those that had been with us since EYFS or KS1.</i></p>	<p>Q A</p>
<p>Children with EHCPs last year affected progress data – either they did not sit the SATs or did not achieve as well as they could have done.</p>	
<p><i>FP queried why this was?</i> We updated the maths curriculum and it was not embedded last year. We are now using Power Maths across the school and there is fidelity. We are seeing progress in our current data and a good number of children on track for GD.</p>	<p>Q</p>
<p><i>JP: Data for End Summer 23 vs Targets for Summer 24, in the Year 1 row, is that the 2023/24 Year 1, and how they finished Reception (July 2023) with their target for finishing Year 1 next summer (July 2024)? Assuming that is correct, there are some ambitious targets across Year 2 and Year 4 in particular. Yes we do need to raise attainment in these cohorts and have been able to identify children who are borderline. Our next data drop is at the end of term.</i></p>	<p>Q</p>
<p><i>AH asked if data is looked at alongside attendance – are the year groups with highest absence also the children with the most concerning data (Yr 6, 4 and 1 had the worst attendance?)</i> CB will ask JS to analyse the data.</p>	<p>Q A</p>
<p>SO suggested the next Governor’s day has a focus on assessment, looking at children with Pupil passports etc to understand how we support them in school and the assessment process. Also to look at Power Maths and see the journey the children are on, to see the success stories and identify children who need additional support.</p>	
<p><u>Receive Note of Visit from Curriculum and Standards Governors (SO / JP) following meeting with Curriculum Lead/Headteacher to evaluate the progress against the previous year’s SIP</u></p>	
<p>SO discussed her very positive visit on Governors Day, discussing the Trust visit and the new literacy curriculum. School leaders have clearly identified targets. A visit note has been uploaded.</p>	
<p><i>FP asked if we can have an update on priorities - the HT full report isn't now expected until Spring term, so it seems a long way into the year to have an update on the priorities or is this covered in the SIP?</i> Yes – the SIP will be updated and milestones will be updated and highlighted at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Q</p>

<p><i>FP: Should we be concerned about the implications on the budget of falling numbers - only 2 years are at PAN (slightly above) and KS1 all below PAN and the reduction in % catholic children?</i></p> <p>Overall numbers match this time last year for Catholic children. We are doing all we can to attract Catholic families to the school by involvement in the parishes. Chaplains are up and running and taking part in activities with links to the parishes. Both churches are involved in the school and priests come in regularly. A new seminarian will come in each week too.</p>	<p>Q</p>
<p><i>FP queried whether we could have more school presence in the masses – for the children to take part? CB is exploring this in the meeting she has had with Fr Jonathan and MQ. Numbers attending mass are good. A good number of families also attend GIFT. We need to ensure we keep the % of Catholic children at St Nicholas as high as possible. AH indicated even with lower Catholic children in school we are still a Catholic school due to its ethos. However SM indicated it is better for children to see Catholic peers demonstrating their faith. CB affirmed we are a Catholic school and this underpins all we do.</i></p>	<p>Q</p>
<p><i>FP queried if we are so good at helping SEN Children that more and more parents wish to send their children here. She queried whether this may deter some parents? We become a school with very high SEN? We cannot turn children down based on need when they apply. We are inclusive.</i></p>	<p>Q</p>
<p><i>SO queried the school's presence in the community? Could we do more to strengthen links? We have established a link with a local care home. Yr 6 children have recently had a talk about the Torbay Civic award (similar to DofE for primary children). They have to work in the community and raise money for charity. CB is also liaising with the Head of Monkerton school to arrange a visit as they were awarded outstanding in Early Years. We are also taking part in an Exeter wide football tournament based at St Peters and other sporting activities. CB and KR are also involved in 'Devon Heads' which helps networking. CB is also liaising with a head in St Christopher's MAT to arrange a history visit – HBalletto has already visited a school to look at geography.</i></p>	<p>Q</p>
<p>RE and Catholic Life</p> <p>Fr Jonathan has left the Board and FP and JC agreed to take on the Catholic Life responsibility.</p> <p><u>RE and Catholic Life Governor (JS) to seek assurances from Headteacher that the curriculum is taught in the light of Gospel Values and actively promotes the spiritual and moral development of all pupils</u> This was confirmed. The school teaches the diocesan recommended schemes. All R and Yr 3 teachers will have attended attend new RED curriculum training on new materials which must be implemented from September next year. Information about this has been uploaded and KR has also attended RED training. All year groups need to be teaching in the new RED curriculum from September 2025. Plymouth Diocese are working with Cliffden Diocese on an implementation plan to ensure this is in place. <i>SO asked how well this new material has been received?</i> A working party of CAST teachers are creating the curriculum for the Diocese and obtaining input and feedback from heads and teachers to revise it as needed.</p>	<p>Q</p>

<p><u>RE and Catholic Life Governor (JS) to seek assurances that relationship and sex education is taught in accordance with CAST Policy</u> Yes – we use Life to the Full (a diocesan scheme).</p> <p><u>RE and Catholic Life Governor (JS) to share the results (written update) and lead the discussion on the “The Catholic Life of the School- Annual Self-Evaluation of the Governing Body” with the LCB.</u> This was completed with Fr Jonathan last year. FP and JC will ask questions on this once distributed and presented. CB to email it to FP and JC and questions will be asked at the next meeting.</p> <p><u>School RE Lead to provide a written report referencing pupil outcomes in RE, the quality of teaching and learning in RE across the school, observations made by the RE leader around the quality of planning, and work in pupils’ books, and all teaching is in line with the Religious Education Directory (RED).</u> To be completed? A report on outcomes was uploaded to governor hub for the meeting?</p> <p><i>SM asked how we advertise job vacancies and whether we could use LinkedIn?</i> AB described the ways we advertise (Devon Bulletin, Indeed, Exeter Consortium website, school and parish newsletters, school website, DfE website). We would consider also using Facebook. The forms to complete may be a barrier in that they are long and there are a few to fill in. These are CES forms that cover safeguarding requirements.</p>	<p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>Q</p> <p>A</p>
<p>Curriculum and Standards</p> <p><u>Curriculum and Standards Governors (SO / JP) to plan for SLT / middle leaders to attend one LCB meeting to discuss the curriculum and their leadership role</u></p> <p>To create connections with SLT and teachers, Governors will instead attend a staff meeting. Governors to let AB know availability.</p>	<p>A</p>
<p>Safeguarding and Child Protection</p> <p><u>Receive assurance from Headteacher that SG1 has been submitted to CAST – SG1 has been submitted.</u> Yes</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Governors (FD / JC) to provide verbal summary of Note of Visit following Summer 2 learning walk to test the culture of Safeguarding within the school and check on SCR</u> This is on GH.</p> <p><u>Receive assurance from Headteacher that SG Policy is in place and all staff have signed to adhere to it</u> Yes this was confirmed. All staff have undertaken SSS CP training including new staff.</p>	
<p>Health, Safety and Data Protection</p> <p><u>Receive assurance from Headteacher that the Trust’s H&S and OEVOSA Policies are being effectively implemented and how this happens in school.</u> Confirmed.</p> <p><u>Receive assurance from Headteacher that the Trust’s Data Protection Policies (DP, SAR Data Protection Request, FOI, and Data Retention Policy) are being effectively implemented and how this happens in school.</u> Confirmed</p>	

Receive assurance from the Headteacher that the school is registered with the ICO and has access to adequate DPO arrangements Confirmed All staff have also completed a CAST GDPR quiz. This will also be issued to Governors [issued 15/10/23]

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Whole LCB Responsibility

Effectiveness of school communication with all stakeholders - Chair to lead discussion

We have recently sent out a parent's survey and results had been shared. There were many positive comments and some negative - we have only had 58 responses. CB discussed reasons why parents may be disgruntled (e.g. being in receipt of attendance letters or safeguarding referrals). Parents have noted a lack of play equipment on the playground but this indicates we need to increase understanding of OPAL. Homework is also an issue – some parents want more, some parents want less. We take a flexible approach. All children have a reading record and are encouraged to read.

Chair to lead discussion on how the school is ensuring market visibility and discuss strategy to maintain sustainable pupil numbers. We have a good number of families coming for open days in November for September 24 entry. We will keep this under review.

Clerk to ensure the website is up to date and advise LCB of any areas of non-compliance. The website is up to date and is constantly under review by AB.

SM queried the 'not secure' status of the school website. We are open to attack by hackers who could clone the site. Visitors may also be concerned about this status. AB will look into this and find out what can be done to resolve this.

SO confirmed that all Governors have read KCSiE 2023.

Q
A:AB

CAST Policies (For information – these were noted)

H&S policy (distributed)

Data Retention

Letting Hire

CCTV

Principles of Personal Development

Curriculum Policy

Model Behaviour Policy

CAST SEND policy

H&S policy

School Level Policies - none

Next meeting: 8th November at 6pm in School (classroom TBC as Bickleigh Room in use) – to be attended by Sandy Anderson, Link Director.

Governors Day: 2nd November 1pm

Signed (Chair) (Clerk)	Date
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