



Learning God's Way

**FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING**  
**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 7pm in the Staff Room**

Meeting Focus – Finance, Staffing and Premises

The meeting was opened with prayer.

	<p><b>Present:</b> Brian Baker, Jane Burke, Emma Craughan, Kate Goater, Mike Jee (Head), Al Knox, Leila Kemp, Carolyn Lorimer, Debbie Ricks, Chris Snell (Co-Chair)  <b>Apologies:</b> Helen Fletcher-Reilly (Chair) Mark Standen (Vice-Chair)  <b>Clerk:</b> Jennie Ring  <b>Also present:</b></p>	<b>Action</b>
157	<b>Apologies for absence</b> – were received and accepted from Helen Fletcher-Reilly, Kate Goater and Mark Standen.	
158	<b>Declaration of Interest</b> – none	
159	<b>Urgent matters to be considered for inclusion</b> - none	
160	<p><b>Approval of minutes and Confidential Part II Minutes of meeting 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023.</b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed and signed. The Confidential Part II Minute had one amendment. The Clerk agreed to amend and bring to June's meeting for signing.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
161	<p><b>Reflection</b></p> <p>How did the inset day go? It was excellent.</p>	
162	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p><b>General matters arising</b> - none</p> <p>The action table from April's meeting was reviewed:</p> <p>Item 1 (minute 145) - The cost of the Y6 Leaver's Party without the cost of food is £475. A discussion took place on how food would be provided and paid for, whether the PPA would support with funds, and what level a voluntary contribution should be set at. It was agreed that Governor's fund would cover both elements supported by funding from the suggestion that the event be ticketed at £5 per person.</p> <p>Item 2 (minute 145) – this is still outstanding</p>	<b>Co-C</b>

	<p>Item 3 (minute 145) – this is still outstanding. The Head agreed to extract figures from BROMCOM and share via Governor’s Virtual Office (GVO), making the general comment that there was no cause for concern with reference to teacher’s absence and that support staff absence figures are slightly down.</p> <p>Item 4 (minute 154) – see minute 170.</p>	<b>Head Clerk</b>
163	<p><b>Questions arising from monitoring visits - none</b></p> <p>Two governors mentioned visits they had made in the last few months and their intention to submit reports.</p>	<b>KG CL</b>
164	<p><b>Budget monitoring</b></p> <p>The Head tabled copies of the final expenditure cost centres 2022-23 previously shared with governors via GVO and summarised the comments made in the accompanying notes.</p> <p>Governors asked <a href="#">questions on various details indicated by the figures</a>, including figures relating to wellbeing costs, rates, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HTLAs), the reading scheme, the library, locality, what is included in SENCo Projects, the Tomlin account, with reference to individual class budgets this year and going forward, whether the school makes attempts to access funds from grant making bodies or community charities, premises hire during the summer, IT hardware and photocopying.</p>	
165	<p><b>Approval of School Financial Value Statement (SFVS)</b></p> <p>Governors examined the SFVS.</p> <p>References to the Finance Committee in statements 2 and 12 need to be amended to reflect the fact that there is no longer a committee and financial matters are known and handled by the whole governing body.</p> <p>With reference to statement 24 it was suggested that the comment, evidence and proposed action box requires updating given it refers to classes add to the school since 1996.</p> <p>With reference to statement 17 one governor asked if the school was still in line with other schools, indicated through benchmarking, on the size of its senior leadership team (SLT). A brief discussion took place on the SLTs in surrounding schools, the current and possible future situation at St Margarets, the changes and costs this would involve, and ended with the conclusion that the school is still in line with schools of similar size.</p> <p>With reference to statement 12 the reference to LCVAP fund requires amendment to its current name. This is funding which the Diocese receives from central government for the upkeep of premises and is available from the Diocese through a bidding process. Governors have to make a 10% contribution to the cost of projects bid for.</p> <p><a href="#">If we became an academy would we be going through the same processes for building work?</a> We can do. The local authority require schools to use contractors who have insurance. The Diocese have a list of approved builders. The school has always employed builders who have worked on schools previously. The Premises Manager can</p>	

	<p>do many tasks. This has meant savings during the creation of the Studio. However, he is not completely skilled.</p> <p><a href="#">Who sees this document?</a> The local authority. <a href="#">Would it still be required if the school became an academy?</a> I don't think so. However there would be something similar for submission to the Trust Board.</p> <p>It was agreed to amend the SFVS as above for approval and to be signed by the Chair at the June meeting.</p>	<p><b>Clerk Head</b></p>
<p>166</p>	<p><b>Approval of other financial documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>- Statement of Internal Control</li> <li>- Best Value Statement</li> </ul> <p>The Scheme of Delegation was examined. The Head outlined the purpose of the document. Questions were asked for context and understanding and clarification. The need for amendments were noted: statement 42 – “Pay Committee” moved to the “Committee(s)” column; statement 28 – “Deputy Head” in the row below to be moved up to statement 28’s row.</p> <p>Governors were invited to add any further comments to the document through GVO Comments for updating, approval and signing by the Chair at the June meeting.</p> <p>A brief discussion took place on the health of the Governor’s Account, known as the London Account, which has a reducing balance according to decisions made on its use and the fact it has no incoming funds.</p> <p>The Head agreed to look into what is now required with regard to the Statement of Internal Control and Best Value Statement and report back to governors.</p>	<p><b>Clerk Gvs Head</b></p> <p><b>Clerk Head</b></p>
<p>167</p>	<p><b>Approval of 2023-24 Budget</b></p> <p>The Head tabled 2023-24 Budget document, a working document, and referred to the notes included in the meeting pack. Governors asked detailed questions on staffing costs; the office staffing levels and benchmarking of this; the division of tasks amongst administrative staff and the history which has led to the present position; the pupil roll numbers and the effect on the budget of changes in pupil numbers; the buildings cost centre, the premises staff cost centre and the reasons for its level; what expenses come out of this cost centre; the reasons for less in the gas cost centre; the reasons for the absence of a cost centre for rates; who is included in the Classroom Support Staff cost centre; whether there were any cost centres for the Special Support Centre; what this year’s approach to subject funding will be; and the possible uses for the Devolved Formula Capital Grant (DFCG).</p> <p><a href="#">Is the compensation money that may be paid to us ear-marked?</a> It’s too soon to have any definite plans for it. It will be a pragmatic decision if and when the funds are received.</p> <p>The local authority say that 20% of schools are in deficit, likely to rise to 35% next year. Deficit budgets mean the school has to work with the local authority on a plan to address this. The Head expressed the view that, through the strategic decisions taken and sources of funding available, the school has been able to mitigate as much expense as possible; and with pupil numbers potentially rising with the population pattern, families connected</p>	

	<p>with the SSC and new housing being built in the school catchment area, the prospects are for tight budgets but with possibilities.</p> <p><b>Teachers this year is down on last year – why is this?</b> The benefit of Early Career Teachers and one staff member still on maternity leave.</p> <p>A brief discussion took place on the disposing of eggs from the chickens – they are only available to staff for a donation.</p> <p><b>What impact on the children will this stripped back budget have?</b> It may mean, for example, doing less of the extras, and less in the way of support staff eg sharing of TA’s between classes – a standard practice in schools.</p> <p><b>Have short contracts for teachers been considered?</b> If the number of pupils on the roll continues to fall a staffing restructure may be required. This wouldn’t be considered at least until the temporary dip in population has passed. A brief discussion on staffing and contracts took place.</p>	
168	<p><b>3 Year Budget</b></p> <p>The Head tabled copies of the budget document included in the meeting pack explaining its broad contents, context and bottom lines.</p> <p>Having spoken to the local authority it is evident that most schools’ 3 year-budgets look similar. The budget is a snapshot of what we know and have projected. It has been reviewed with the local authority.</p> <p>A discussion took place on the reasons behind the increasing deficit over the 3 years, covering pupil numbers, the funding coming to the budget per pupil, lettings charges, what changes could reasonably be expected to happen but which can’t be adjusted for in the budget, eg staff leaving which leaves room creative solutions to staffing needs and costs, the history of pupil numbers with a view expressed on future numbers and the effect of an increase in the number of children with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) for which funding comes but rarely covers the cost of the support stated in the plan.</p>	
169	<p><b>Special Support Centre (SSC) buildings update</b></p> <p>Building works have well and truly begun with access facilitated and digging up beginning in front and behind the staff room.</p> <p>On the first Monday following half term there is a meeting with the local authority team, who are visiting all centres in the county, to discuss finance, the service level agreement and how the local authority will fund the Centre. The fixed cost list produced by the Bursar and the Head will inform discussions.</p> <p><b>Is there much disruption near classrooms because of the building work?</b> There has been some relocation necessary. <b>How long?</b> Work is scheduled to finish around the end of November/beginning of December.</p> <p>One governor spoke of <b>noticing that Y5 and Y6 children (some on their own, some with parents) were sometimes not crossing the road with the lollipop lady.</b> The Head responded by saying that she had been moved in consultation with her Chief at county.</p>	

	<p>Assemblies are being used to communicate safety issues surrounding the building works and adjustments made as necessary. The roadworks causing this issue will be gone after half term.</p> <p>The Head and one long-standing governor gave some background on donations received by the school from a local family, the Tomlins. The son of the family who held the family's interest in donating to the school has now died and part of the estate will come to the school. It was suggested that the Special Support Centre be named the Tomlin Centre, after the family.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Head contact the solicitors to suggest the idea to the family, and if agreed, the Centre be called the Tomlin Centre and made known appropriately, eg through a plaque.</p>	<b>Head</b>
170	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>Data Protection Policy 2023 is still outstanding.</p> <p>The Early Career Teacher Policy 2023 and Collective Worship Policy 2023 are still being written/reviewed.</p>	<b>Head</b>
171	<b>Chair's action - none</b>	
172	<b>Date of next meeting – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 7pm, in the Staff Room.</b>	

## ACTION TABLE

D = Done

P = In progress – give update

O = Still outstanding

	Minute:	Action from:	Action by:	Status
1	160	Clerk – ask Chair to sign amended minutes	15 <sup>th</sup> June meeting	
2	162	Co-Chair – check with Chair re possible auditor details before further action	By next meeting 15 <sup>th</sup> June	
3	162	Head/Clerk – Head extract staff absence figures from BROMCOM, Clerk import to GVO	By next meeting 15 <sup>th</sup> June	
4	163	Mrs Goater and Mrs Lorimer – monitoring visit reports	By next meeting 15 <sup>th</sup> June	
5	165	Head/Clerk – amend SFVS and bring to next meeting for approval	Post meeting/agenda planning	
6	166	Governors/Clerk/Head – Scheme of Delegation – any further comments from governors. Head amend. Clerk share for approval	Post meeting/agenda planning	
7	166	Head/Clerk – SIC and Best Value Statement – Head – what is required now. Clerk bring anything necessary back to governors	Post meeting/agenda planning	
8	169	Head – contact Tomlin family solicitors to propose idea of calling the SSC the Tomlin Centre	By next meeting 15 <sup>th</sup> June	

9	170	Head – find out status of Data Protection Policy, take any action required to bring ECT Policy and Collective Worship Policy to governors. Clerk – ag pl	Post meeting/agenda planning	
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