Believe and Achieve

ST NICHOLAS CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Monday 10 July 2023 at 6.45pm held at the school **MINUTES**

FGB ATTENDANCE TRACKER					
Name	Governor Type	4 Oct 22	6 Feb 23	18 May 23	10 Jul 23
Kate Birss	Staff Governor	Р	Р	Resigned	21/4/23
Delia Bonner	Foundation Governor	Р	Р	Р	Р
Stuart Burnett	Foundation Governor	Р	Р	Р	Α
Simon Caunce	Foundation Governor	А	Р	Р	Α
Rizelle Crouch	Headteacher	Р	Р	Р	Р
Hilary Doherty	Foundation Governor	Р	Р	Р	Р
Dr Hannah Draeger	nnah Draeger Parent Governor P		Р	Р	Р
Caroline Fleming	Foundation Governor	Р	P P		Р
Dr Catherine Harvey	Co-opted Governor	Р	Р	Р	Р
Henry Loweth	Foundation Governor	Р	P P		Р
Lucy Parr	Foundation Governor	Р	Р	Р	Р
Natalie Pepper	Parent Governor	Р	Р	Р	Р
Mary Jean Pritchard	Local Authority Governor		Р	Р	Р
ev'd Dennis Stamps Foundation Ex-Officio P P		Α	Р		
In attendance					
Tracey Norris	HFL Education Clerk	Р	Р	Р	Р

Р	Present	
Α	A Apologies provided	
N	Not present	
0	Observer	

1. School Council Presentation

Tom and Liliane, pupils from Y6, joined the meeting and shared a presentation on their work during the year:

- Fundraising activities during Red Nose day had raised over £120.
- Earth day focus in school assembly.
- A friendship meeting point had been established in the playground; signage created with smiley faces.
- The school council wrote to Rothampsted Park, thanking them for hosting the school's sports day.
- Representations had been made to the school cook to introduce a salad bar.

Questions and comments were invited:

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•	Q Has the salad bar been introduced? Yes and this was a great addition to the
	lunchtime selection and offered pupils more fruit and vegetables.

- Q How was the Earth Day organised? Pupils participated in events in their houses rather than with their class which was great. It was lovely to mix with different aged pupils.
- Q What ideas did you come up with? Compost bin for food waste this was being investigated.
- Q What made sports day so much better this year? It was in a different location and there was good access to toilets. Everyone had fun.
- Q What things would they suggest needed changing/improving at St Nicholas? The school was happy and kind and they hoped all pupils found school fun so they could enjoy learning. There could be more DT and drama. The year 6 residential trip was fantastic.
- Tom and Liliane had both enjoyed their time on the school council, it was great to be able to contribute to discussions and make recommendations for changes at the school.

Governors thanked Tom and Liliane for their time and wished them well in secondary school.

2. Welcome and Prayer

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Rev'd Stamp led the meeting in prayer.

3. **Procedural matters**

- a. <u>Apologies</u>: Apologies for absence had been received and were approved for Stuart Burnett and Simon Caunce. The meeting was quorate.
- b. <u>Declaration of any conflict of interest:</u> None relevant for this meeting. DS's ongoing conflict (church hall letting) was noted.
- c. Notification of other business: None raised.
- d. <u>Minutes</u>: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 May 2023 were approved as an accurate record.
- e. <u>Matters arising:</u> All actions from the previous meeting had been completed or were in progress:
 - RC to include additional 1:1 TAs in budget projections: completed.
 - RC/office manager to put in place processes to ensure the Admissions Committee was consulted prior to an in-year application being approved: completed.
 - Move DB to associate role at end of July: updates to GB will be made at the end of July.
 - Move HDr to coopted role at end of July: updates to GB will be made at the end of July.
 - All governors to think about their wider network for potential governors: ongoing.
 - CF to approach local secondary schools and liaise with DS re pew sheet notice: see discussion at agenda item 9 as several potential new governors had been identified.
 - Parent governor elections to be held in September: c/f to Autumn term.

School office

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- RC to ensure the office had procedures in place to maintain a register of staff relationships with pupils outside of school as per the staff code of conduct: completed.
- School office to read all GDPR/data protection policies: completed.
- CF to send corrections to business continuity plan to the office: completed.
- CF to arrange date for governors' afternoon tea/cakes for staff: Monday 17 July at 4pm
- DB to organise annual governors' prizes for pupils and share process with MJP: completed.

4. Headteacher's Report

RC referred to her HT's report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and the HIP summer visit which had taken place on 10 July. This meeting had supported RC with the creation/review of the SDP priorities for 2023/24. She highlighted the following and invited questions:

- The HIP had noted in today's visit that all actions from her June visit had been completed, and that a lot of work had been completed in a short space of time by the new leadership team who displayed good morale and optimism for future challenges.
- Q In-year admissions, how did these impact the split classes going forward? Ans: RC and CF shared a spreadsheet with governors which mapped out the year groups going forward and the implications for each of the four classes.
- A notional cap of 33 pupils per class had previously been agreed for Sapphire class but this had recently been breached with 35 pupils. This would resolve itself in September but should be avoided in the future. A class of 35 was too large in terms of the physical space in each room and also impacted the capacity of the teacher.
- The role of the admissions committee to scrutinise and approval all in-year admissions was raised, it was noted that not all in-year admissions had been approved in this way.
- Action: School to use Admissions Committee to approve in-year admissions and consider impact on class allocations in future years.
- RC explained the particularly exceptional circumstances which had resulted in Sapphire Class reaching 35 students.
- Governors raised concerns about the disparity between some classes (in terms of pupil numbers) Q How did this impact staff? Ans: There was a cap on Garnet and Topaz of 30 pupils (in compliance with DfE guidance re pupil teacher ratios). Diamond and Sapphire were historically larger and when RC had first joined the school there had been 36 pupils in Diamond class.
- HL noted that at the last Admissions Committee meeting the following caps had been agreed:
 - Diamond Class; maximum of 34 pupils (aiming to only reaching 34 in exceptional circumstances)
 - Sapphire Class: maximum of 33 pupils
- This decision was supported by the full governing body and would remain unchanged.
- RC and CF had mapped out the September intake (19 pupils would be joining Reception) and the future years' class allocations accordingly. This document was

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- shared with the governing body. RC was expecting one pupil to defer admission to September 2024 due to a serious medical condition.
- It was noted that whilst the Admissions Code stated that the school could not guarantee a deferred place, in practice it was expected that a place would be available for September 2024.
- Q Update on in-year admissions? Ans: Four offers had been made and all had been accepted, two pupils would join Y1 and two would join Y3.
- Governors noted the positive feedback from parents and stakeholders on the good communication and strong brand/presence of the school.
- Y1 phonics: 65% achieved the pass mark. Q Was this lower than expected? Ans: Yes.
- Q Did the school need to review its SPS (synthetic phonics scheme)? Ans: RC was happy with the quality of the Rocket Phonics scheme and its implementation; it was well structured and well resourced. Staff felt the issue was down to lack of practicing of the actual test.
- Seven out of twenty pupils did not achieve the passmark, of which four pupils missed the required standard by only a few marks. Three pupils had scored below 10 marks; all had additional S&L and auditory needs.
- Actions taken forward:
 - o More practice of the screening test on a 1:1 basis
 - Half termly assessments to track progress and identify pupils who needed additional sessions.
- The Key Stage SATS data was shared with Governors after the meeting as data was only available the morning after the meeting:
- Pupil outcomes KS1:
 - o KS1 reading: 78% achieved EXP
 - KS1 writing: 70% KS1 maths: 87%
 - o KS1 science: 95%
- Pupil outcomes KS2:
 - o KS2 reading: 83%
 - KS2 grammar, punctuation and spelling: 88%
 - KS2 writing: 92%KS2 maths: 96%KS2 science: 92%
- Q What was Zones of Regulation? Ans: This was a therapeutic approach to behaviour regulation, which helped pupils identify how they were feeling. Staff modelled this and RC demonstrated with the coloured pots and lollypop sticks with each child's name which could be found in every classroom. On arrival each morning, pupils were encouraged to place their lollypop in the coloured pot which matched how they were feeling (sad, angry, calm etc).
- Q What options do teachers have when the pupil indicates that they are in the blue zone (sad)? Ans: The teacher will ask the pupil to write down what it is that is making them feel this way and then follow it up a break or lunchtime.
- A series of interventions had been delivered in Diamond Class to support regulation of the red zone (anger management) and the blue zone (underlying sadness).

School development plan

- The annotated SDP 2022/23 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and RC highlighted the following:
 - Reading: Long term and medium term planning was in place for each class so that there was clarity on the key skills being taught to each year group throughout the school year (this covered intent). The teaching of reading (implementation) would need to be embedded. The newly appointed ECT would need additional support.
 - The assessment of phonics would be reviewed to ensure the early identification of any pupils falling behind and that there were procedures in place to enable these pupils to catch up.
 - Subject leadership: Some subjects had been reallocated due to staffing changes. Where needed, subject leadership training would be arranged. NB: there were more subjects than teaching staff.
 - o Focus subjects for 2023/34: RE and DT.
 - Q What were the issues with DT, how had this been selected? Ans: Staff were not as confident in this subject as others and planning documents were not detailed enough.
 - SIAMS inspection was not due in 2023/24 but the subject could benefit from the development of assessment and world view.
 - A discussion followed on the cross curriculum links between DT and technology and the need to have technology added to the SDP for 2023/24 vs being a governor focus for 2023/24. The issue of technology spanned all committees (equipment used by staff and pupils, the teaching of technology and the expertise of staff) and it was agreed it did not need to be included in the SDP.
 - Q Had staff been involved in the review of 2022/23 priorities and the creation of 2023/24 priorities? Ans: A staff survey had captured how confident (or not) staff were in the teaching of foundation subjects (DT had been raised by a number of staff).
 - Q Was lack of confidence in DT due to the lack of practical skills and knowledge/confidence of staff or the lack of IT/equipment? Ans: A resource audit had been made by IT technician. A further set of class laptops was needed plus staff training on the use of the technology they were meant to be teaching.
 - A staff wellbeing committee had been set up without SLT presence. This
 followed best practice and provided staff with a forum to comment freely. A
 member of staff was leading on staff wellbeing as well as pastoral support for
 pupils.
 - Q How frequent were the wellbeing meetings? Ans: Every three weeks, there
 was a new wellbeing notice board which promoted forthcoming events and
 signposted support.
 - Q Should writing be included in the SDP? Ans: No, current research pointed to the need to secure improvements in reading as a priority with writing following on as a secondary outcome of reading.
 - Q Was there a consistent approach to homework and was this effectively supporting reading? Ans: There were always conflicting opinions about

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6.	Pupil Premium	
	confirmed as Hannah Draeger.	
	 A CLA pupil would be joining the school in September – the link governor was 	
	apparatus.	
	this becoming a regular occurrence? Ans: The decision had been made to remove this	
	 Another serious incident had been recorded on the monkey bars in May 2023 Q Was 	
	 Action: Amend references to "Clubs" to "all lettings" in policy 	
	The H&S Audit had been discussed in the Resources Committee meeting.	
	safer recruitment requirements had been followed.	RC
	two new starters and those members of staff would require a change of contracts. All	
	 Q SCR audit? Ans: The SCR was up to date. All checks had been completed for the 	
	on site and available for parents to contact.	
	had the appropriate safeguarding policies in place and a nominated DSL of their own	
	companies who let the school premises during term time and in the school holidays	
	 Q Process governing lettings? Ans: It was the governors' responsibility to ensure all 	
	was noted that taking on this role was a steep learning curve for new to DSL staff.	
	 The new DSLs had completed their training (Mrs Kennett and Dr Cherniaeva) and it 	
	would be added to the agenda of the first meeting of the autumn term for noting.	
	The new iteration of KCSiE had been circulated on Governor Hub by the Clerk and	
	of pupils in Y6 to their secondary destinations.	
	 The HIP also shared the key changes to KCSiE and scrutinised the transfer of records 	
	priority cases and the processes behind any referrals.	
	spot checks on some of the record of concern forms and followed up any high	
	 The HIP had conducted a safeguarding audit as part of her summer visit and made 	
	CP register: 0	
	CP issues: 1	
	SEND issues: 13	
	Number of exclusions. 0. Number of bullying incidents: 1 (relating to equality)	
	Number of exclusions: 0.	
	The following was noted (see also appendix 1 of the HT's report):	
	H&S audit	
	 CLA progress report to the Virtual School 	
	The following reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting: Termly safeguarding report to governors	
5.	Safeguarding The following reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting:	
_	parents/carers in a newsletter.	
	shared with staff at the INSET day in September with comms to	
	Action agreed: RC to ensure standardised expectations re homework were	RC
	and lower KS2, but there could never be enough reading/being read to.	
	of vocabulary. Some schools believe that homework should not be set in KS1	
	reading would be taught in school and reinforced at home with the learning	
	the expectation was that homework would be set in each class (one page),	
	parents/carers or teacher workload (marking homework). RC confirmed that	
	reviewed post-covid? Ans: A balance was needed to not overwhelm	
	homework and what the appropriate level to set should be. Q Had this been	

	This report would be updated with outcomes from the summer term. It would be uploaded to the website in due course. The pupils should not be identifiable from the report and care would be taken to retain that anonymity which was more challenging in a small school. Action: RC to upload PP report to website when updated.	RC
7.	Risk Register	
,	RC had circulated an example of a risk register from another school which was reasonably complex. She planned to work on a risk register for the school over the summer. The following was agreed: Clerk to send examples of risk registers to RC: completed. Committees to identify top risks and add to register. Risk register to be a standing agenda item at FGB meetings. Some premises risks had already been identified in the H&S Audit (see agenda item 5) and areas to progress were noted: Request to the council/PACC re safety bollards in front of the wooden fence in Kirkwood Avenue. Wider barriers between the pavement and the road in front of the school entrance	All
	door.	
8.	Committee Meetings Committee minutes had been circulated in advance of the meeting and matters to escalate were noted: a. Resources: • Ongoing recruitment of TAs: interviews would take place w/c 17 July. • The deployment and allocation of TAs to classes had been raised in exit interview. RC noted the constant juggling of TAs due to part time hours, resulting in different TAs supporting a class. • Budget setting process; learnings for next year when this would be performed without the expertise of the finance link governor, SB, who would be leaving in October. • School condition report: initial cost of a boiler replacement was in range of £40,000 - £80,000. • An application would be made to the Diocese and Harpenden Trust for a grant to support the repair/replacement of both the boiler and church hal kitchen equipment owned by the school. • Q How urgent was the R&M of the Rothampstead Avenue wall? Ans: It had been re-pointed several years ago and was not as urgent as the new boiler. • NP would attend a sustainability webinar. • The next meeting had been arranged for September. b. School Effectiveness: • SEN agenda item: overview and feedback of provision. • New national SEN standards were going to be introduced and the link governor would monitor this. • The HIP report had been reviewed. • Planning for the joint staff/governors INSET training event on 1 September from 9-11am. All governors were welcome.	

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 An application had been made for a Bishop's Certificate for a member of staff who was leaving at the end of term after many years' service.

c. Admissions:

- Work had begun on the admissions criteria for 2025/26 which would need to be submitted in February 2024, it was agreed that no change was required to the current rules which were noted as:
 - o Criteria 1: CLA
 - o Criteria 2: Siblings
 - o Criteria 3: All other pupils ranked according to distance from the school.
- Q Where would pupils joining with an EHCP fall? Ans: Under Criteria 1.
- Q How many pupils joined the school with an EHCP in place? Ans: Few, it took some time to collate the evidence needed for a successful EHCP application.
- The policy would be presented for final approval in the autumn term.

Communications working group:

- Open day dates had been confirmed as 11 October, 4 November, 29 November and 10 January.
- Some small tweaks would be made to the format following parental feedback.
- Parent survey comms: comms would go to parents along the lines of "...you said xxx, we listened, and this is what we have done differently...."
- The school was growing its presence on social media.
- Work was ongoing to ensure parent/teacher comms was effective, if teachers
 put the effort into posting/updating documents etc it was important to know
 that this was valued/appreciated.

The PTA would create a permanent donations page on the website.

- Q Friends of St Nicholas? Ans: Families of Y6 children were contacted to join the Friends of St Nicholas. CF had written a letter.
- Action: RC to check this letter had been sent out.
- Plans were being drawn up for the replacement of KS1 mud kitchen (to be paid for by the Friends of St Nicholas). The notice board would be replaced with donations by the Y6 leavers.
- Induction lunch for new starters may be a good opportunity to identify potential new parent governors, although this will be open to all parents in September.

9. **Governor Business**

- a. <u>Governor composition</u>: Staff governor appointment: Anna Cherniaeva.
 - Retirement: Delia Bonner would move from a Foundation Governor to an associate member.
 - Charlotte McCrossin approved as a Foundation Governor at the recent St Nicholas PCC meeting on 3 July. All agreed her finance, business and grant skills will be of great value to the GB.
 - Hannah Draeger would move from a parent governor to a Foundation governor.
 - New governors had been identified to take over governor roles when CF and SB step down in October and HDo / SC expected to step down in February.

b. Governor roles:

- Lucy Parr would take over as Chair from September.
- Natalie Pepper would take over as Chair of Resources from September subject to a detailed handover from SB.

RC

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		 Hannah Draeger offered to consider the vice-chair role. 	
	c.	Governor Visits: CH had created a summary of visits made during the year; the	
		following was noted:	
		 Good range of visits made with obvious links to the SDP. 	
		 There had been a focus on early years. 	
		 Some lovely comments had been made which should be shared with staff. 	
		 Not all visit reports had been written up (NB Topaz). 	
		 CF had conducted some exit interviews. She would discuss the themes emerging 	
		with RC (changing profile of pupils, more complex needs and behaviour	
		management – some of these issues had already been addressed with additional	
		1:1 cover for a high-profile pupil and more time for SENCo to support behaviour	
		management).	
		The chair's meeting with staff to discuss wellbeing would continue.	
	d.	Review of new committee structure: the following was discussed:	
		The workload of the resources committee was high.	
		■ The timings of meetings needed further consideration to be more evenly spaced	
		out whilst at the same time synchronising with key data drops/financial	
		monitoring reports.	
		 Communication should remain a standing agenda item on every committee. The 	
		working group would meet as and when required for specific projects.	
10.		licy Review	
	The	e following policies had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were approved:	
	a.	<u>Health and safety</u> : this was approved subject to further amendments re the letting	
		paragraph. Governors stressed the need for office and site staff to read this	
		document. A defibrator had been delivered to the school, the location of where this	
		should be mounted had not yet been agreed.	
	b.	Supporting pupils with medical conditions: approved.	
	С.	Restricted physical restraint: approved.	
	d.	Behaviour policy: Changes had been made following Steps Training and a more	
		therapeutic approach to behaviour management. Staff training/CPD would be given	
		to embed the practice of restorative conversations. Governors were concerned that	
		the steps were too complicated and might not be followed in a moment of crisis.	
		Action: Review the implementation of the behaviour policy in the Spring term.	SLT
		The behaviour policy was approved.	
	e.	<u>Lettings policy</u> : approved subject to references to Covid-19 being removed. Action: CF to check that the drugs policy had been deleted.	
		Action: Or to check that the drugs policy had been deleted. Action: NP to check if a reference/link to the H&S policy was required/appropriate	CF
		within the lettings policy.	NP
	Δn	y other business	
	a.	Forthcoming dates:	
		 Leavers' service: governor book prizes to be handed out. 	
		 Celebration tea party for staff on Monday 17 July at 4.00-5.00pm. 	
		■ INSET training: 1 September at 9-11am	
	b.	<u>Delia Bonner:</u> The governing body thanked Delia Bonner for 13 years of service to the	
		school and RC was delighted to know that DB would continue to support her with	
	<u> </u>	sales and the demonited to know that be would continue to support her with	

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	recruitment duties as an associate governor. A small gift and a Bishop's Certificate	
	were presented to Delia.	
11.	Closing prayer	
12.	Date of next meeting:	
	■ Thursday 5 October 2023	
	■ Governor day in school - Thursday 30th November 2023	
	 Wednesday 7 February 2024 	
	■ Tuesday 14 May 2024	
	■ Thursday 20 June 2024	

Meeting closed at 9pm

Summary of actions arising from the meeting			
No	Item	Who	Status
1	Hold parent governor elections in September	School office	
2	RC to ensure the school used the Admissions Committee to	RC	
	approve in-year admissions and consider the impact on		
	class allocations in future years.		
3	RC to ensure standardised expectations re homework were	RC	
	shared with staff at the INSET day in September with		
	comms to parents/carers in a newsletter.		
4	Amend references to "Clubs" to "all lettings" in policies	RC/office	
5	RC to upload PP report to website when updated.	RC	
6	RC to draft risk register, committees to identify key risks in	RC	
	their areas, standing agenda item on FGB	Committee chairs	
7	RC to check that the letter about joining the Friends of St	RC	Completed
	Nicholas had been sent out.		
8	Review the implementation of the behaviour policy in the	Clerk/SLT	Agenda item for
	Spring term		February 2024
9	CF to check that the drugs policy had been deleted from the	CF	
	policy schedule.		
10	NP to check if a reference/link to the H&S policy was	NP	
	required/appropriate within the lettings policy		