

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

Local Governing Body (LGB) – Minutes of Part 1 Meeting held on 5th December 2023 at 5.45 pm at the School

Governors present:

Mrs N Ahronson (to 7.00 pm)	NA	Y	
*Mrs M Down	MD	Y	
/Mrs K Marchesi	KM	N	
Mr A Holliman	AH	Y	
Mrs A Keith	AK	Y	
Revd N Parish	NP	N	
Ms E Smit	ES	Y	
Ms R Squizzoni (from 5.50 pm)	RS	Y	
Mrs J Taylor (Chair of Governors)	JT	Y	
Mrs A Todd (Vice Chair) (to 7.00 pm)	AT	Y	
Mrs L Wang	LW	Y	
Vacancy			Foundation Governor (D)
Vacancy			Foundation Governor (PCC)

In attendance:

Mrs T Jones (TJ) Clerk to the Governors

* The Co-Headteachers (Mrs M Down and Mrs K Marchesi) share the role of Headteacher governor but count once towards a quorum and have a single vote where the Local Governing Body needs to vote on a matter.

Observers to Part 1: None

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence from this meeting had been received from NP and KM and were accepted. The Local Governing Body sent its best wishes to Mrs Marchesi.

Declarations of Interest and confidentiality

1. There were no interests declared in the agenda items for this meeting. Governors noted the confidentiality statement and the St Martin's Vision Statement provided in the agenda which underpinned all that was done at the Schools.
2. TJ reported that a resignation had been received from Sarah Jeffery, PCC appointed Foundation Governor. The Local Governing Body noted its thanks to Mrs Jeffery for her contribution during her term of office as governor and wished her well for the future.

Governance structure, Governor monitoring including SIP priorities

3. JT reported that ES had agreed to take on the role of Safeguarding Governor temporarily following the resignation of the appointed Safeguarding Lead and the Local Governing Body was asked to appoint a Governor to this role permanently. The Local Governing Body considered the skills and experience of the Governing Body and agreed to appoint ES as the Safeguarding Governor.
4. MD asked governors to consider how to ensure governor focus on mental health and wellbeing. It was agreed that ES would monitor this as part of her safeguarding role. The subject would also be monitored through the Education and Wellbeing Committee.
5. AK volunteered to undertake the role of Lead Governor for SEND, previously held by ES, but highlighted that her daughter had an EHCP. The Local Governing Body felt that this potential conflict of interest could be managed and agreed to appoint AK as the SEND Lead Governor. ES volunteered to support with handover.
6. The Local Governing Body appointed AH as governor lead for Health and Safety and agreed that JT would monitor HR, shadowed by AK.

Monitoring approach

7. Governors discussed their monitoring approach and noted that where there had previously been governor leads for finance and Quality of Education/Personal Development and Behaviour, these would be monitored through the Finance and Resources Committee and the Education and Wellbeing Committees respectively. School of faith would be monitored by Governor leads NP and AK and reported to the E&W (covered in the terms of reference of this committee)
8. Governors noted the aim to focus their monitoring more tightly and discussed how they could seek, for example, appropriate assurance of quality of education through their visits. It was noted that the summer term learning walk led by the Co-head teachers had been a useful approach and MD suggested as an alternative that a group of older pupils could lead a learning walk around the School. This would also be an opportunity for governors to speak with pupils as part of monitoring pupil voice. Governors might also attend a pupil leadership group, such as the Eco group, and AT said she would also like to attend a Pupil Forum. Governors asked if the Prayer Leaders met regularly; they did not have regular meetings, although they had training and an educational visit to Guildford Cathedral together.
9. It was agreed that Lead Governors should contact their staff links at the beginning of January (or liaise with the Co-Head teachers) to plan the focus of their visits. This would include focus on relevant SDP priorities and be highlighted in their visit reports. **Action: Lead Governors**
10. To support induction, new governors would shadow more experienced lead governors on a visit and were asked to contact the lead governor they wished to accompany on a visit. **Action: New governors**

Chair's Actions and other Urgent Business

11. The Local Governing Body ratified the appointment between LGB meetings of ES as interim Safeguarding Lead Governor. JT reported that she had not had to take any other emergency actions on behalf of the Governing Body since the last FGB meeting.

Leadership report from the Co-Head teachers

12. A number of questions had been pre-submitted by governors and responses are attached as an appendix to these minutes. Governors noted the IDSR documents and the report from the School improvement visit.
13. MD clarified the data over time document, provided in response to a query, and drew attention to the context of the current Year 2, which had high levels of special need and disadvantage. Interventions were being provided for this vulnerable cohort, a very experienced lead had been allocated who could provide interventions and Meerkat staff were supportive. ES asked if attendance was also a challenge for this year group; attendance was not as much of an issue as it could be given the context. It was agreed to focus on this Year group at meetings of the Education and Wellbeing Committee during the year. **Action: TJ (agenda)**
14. AT said that she was disappointed to read of the need for action to address the behaviour of parents on the School site. Background was given and MD said that learning from the experience, the Co-Head teachers would ensure if possible that in future they had earlier conversations with relevant parents to prevent escalation. AK asked if the behaviour had been directed towards staff and this was confirmed. AT asked if there was anything that governors could do to support and AH suggested that training, for example on 'having difficult conversations', could help in addressing any future incidents. MD said that this would not have helped staff in these circumstances but assured governors that the member of staff had handled the situation well and been supported by leaders.
15. Regarding the Absence rates for EHCP pupils, AH had asked for clarification of whether the infant and junior authorised absences rates of 16.65% was the overall authorised absence rate for EHCP or the % of EHCP absences which were authorised (i.e. 16.65% of 27.6%) and if it was the former, whether the junior figure was correct as the overall EHCP absence rate is 5.2% i.e. lower than the authorised absence rate; MD would ascertain how the Junior figure had been shown. **Action: MD**
16. AH asked how the autumn 2023 attendance figures compared with autumn 2022 and to support visibility had requested provision of the previous year's data; attendance was currently 96% for both the Infant and the Junior School and the fact that the school was breaking up this term at the same time as local secondary schools was likely to support attendance. Governors asked if the priority to improve attendance had been suggested by the Trust; attendance was a national issue and also a priority for the Trust central team.
17. Governors thanked the Co-Head teachers for the detailed attainment data for SEND and disadvantaged pupils provided in response to their query, which demonstrated ambition and achievement. AH asked about Year 6 attainment of greater depth in science; MD said that greater depth attainment was no longer published and the focus was to get as many pupils as possible to expected standard.

Finance – 1st draft budget 2024-25

18. JT noted that an initial discussion had been held with the Chief Finance Officer at the autumn term Finance and Resources Committee meeting and Governors had discussed follow up actions to the

figures presented during part 2 of their meeting. An additional Finance and Resources meeting was planned for Monday 29th January 2024.

Governor monitoring

19. The Local Governing Body received the written report from the visit of the SEND Lead governor on 26 September 2023 to monitor special needs. ES reported that she had been very enthused by the visit and highlighted in particular the SEND vision, relationships between the school, teachers, parents and the work of the new SENCo, RS. ES reported that oversight of the SEND Action plan and comparison with the plan for 2022-23 demonstrated the progress made. AK noted evidence of SEND practices being introduced throughout the School.
20. ES welcomed the success of Meerkat and in particular reintegration of pupils into the main school following interventions at the provision. Evidence she had seen during her monitoring of SEND supported the points made during recent governors' discussions. JT said that it was unusual to see such integration and MD said that there was good feedback on the provision from external agencies and confirmed that the Co-Head teachers planned to write to Surrey to make clear of the savings being delivered to County through Meerkat and seek financial support. AK noted that St Martin's was well respected for its SEND provision in the community and said that seeing relevant children settled and supported in Meerkat helped siblings and family members with the pupils at home.
21. Governors welcomed the clarity of the SEND vision and evidence of the inclusive approach from pupils from Year reception upwards. The vision also linked with the wording of the Learning Pledge and its focus on 'every child'.
22. MD thanked Governors for their feedback on the longer-term strategic priorities for St Martin's and felt that the exercise had been particularly useful for the Co-Head teachers who were new to the role. Given the correlation with the ELT Pledges & Principles, which had been published with papers for the meeting, MD suggested that there was no need for a separate set of longer-term strategic priorities for St Martin's. AT asked how much the Co-Head teachers could input into aspects such as the vision and principles of the Trust and MD said that this was through their participation in the Head teacher Board meetings. In addition, the Co-Heads were able to tailor the core ELT teaching and learning policy to reflect priorities of St Martin's and decide which WalkThrus to implement.
23. JT invited governors to contact her and TJ if they wished any specific SDP priorities to be added to the agenda to be addressed within a committee meeting.

Safeguarding

24. ES reported that from her initial induction meeting with KM on the role of safeguarding lead governor and highlighted use of the CPOMS online safeguarding recording system to log all concerns, ensure the recording of the chronology for events and alert issues to the DSL team for follow up as needed. ES planned to attend the termly audit of safeguarding practices to be undertaken with the ELT team and meet with children and staff to seek assurance about how safe children feel and staff knowledge of safeguarding procedures. AK asked how the pupils would be selected for this exercise; the group would be selected which was representative of St Martin's demographic.
25. ES reported that she had felt assured by her visit that the approach to safeguarding was robust. As a suggestion, ES felt that there could be greater clarity on the School website of who to contact if a parent had a concern. **Action: Co-Head teachers**
26. JT thanked ES for stepping into the role of Safeguarding Governor to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of the previous lead.

Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

27. The draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Governing Body held 12 September 2023 were approved as an accurate record for signature by the Chair. The report on actions arising from the previous minutes was taken as read.

Minutes from Committee meetings held this term

28. No questions were raised on the minutes from the committee meetings held this term (E&W 26 September 2023 and F&R 29 November 2023). AT said that it had been interesting to read the minutes of the committee of which she was not a member.

Governance Update

29. The Local Governing Body was reminded to complete the log of governor training undertaken and encouraged to access the NGA Learning Link modules for their governor training. Training on changes to the SIAMS framework would be provided as update training for all governors and it was agreed to invite Mrs Woolvet to present an update on SIAMS to the E&W meeting in the summer term.

Compliance, Policy and document review

- 30. The Local Governing Body noted that the Trust had formally adopted the new Surrey agreed RSE syllabus for use in VA schools in the Diocese of Guildford. Governors could now access the Diocese documentation from the Education page on the Diocesan website and noted that the unit plans had been shared with St Martin’s for trial prior to formal adoption.
- 31. Update on Admissions policy – TJ reported that the Trust Board had approved the request from St Martin’s governors to change the Admissions policies from 2025-26 to reflect recent changes at St Barnabas. A consultation for the 2025-26 policies to reflect this change and using the new ELT format would run for a six-week period to 31 January 2024. The Local Governing Body agreed to delegate to the Admissions Committee consideration of the feedback from consultation for recommendation to the Trust Board. An online LGB meeting would be scheduled to receive recommendation from the Committee; for approval by the Trust Board. **Action: Admissions Committee**
- 32. The LGB noted that the previously determined Admissions Policies for entry in September 2024 would not be amended to reflect these changes but that in the past, very few applicants had stated membership of St Barnabas parish on their application forms.

AT and NA left the meeting at this point.

- 33. The LGB approved the SEND policy and Information Report and noted update to the Emergency plan and testing by the Co-Headteachers
- 34. The LGB approved the School Fund Constitution which was an appendix of the new Finance Regulations Manual. Governors asked about the proportion of parents who contributed to the School Fund and noted the benefit of giving information in the letter on what contributions would be used for. Governors suggested that parents might support the School through purchasing resources from a ‘wish list’ and this would be considered further. **Action: Co-Head teachers**
- 35. The Charging and Remissions policy was under review and the LGB noted the approval by the Trust since last meeting of the Finance Regulations Manual and the Whistleblowing Policy
- 36. The Local Governing Body noted the bank of shared resources on the Local Governing Body Team channel.

Date of next meeting

- 37. The next LGB meetings were confirmed as 5.00 pm on Wednesday 20 March 2024 and Thursday 27th June and would be held at school. To support their understanding, Governors were encouraged to attend online or in person meetings of the Committee which they were not a member for the rest of this academic year.

Meeting evaluation

- 38. Governors reflected on the impact of their meeting on children’s outcomes and confirmed that their decisions and discussion had been in line with the Christian values of St Martin’s. Governors welcomed discussion at this meeting of the approach to assurance seeing and would be invited to attend a further WalkThru learning walk in the spring term. It was expected that the Trust Director of Primary would lead the session. **Action: MD**

Part 2 business

Confidential matters were discussed before Part 1 of the meeting and are recorded separately.
The meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

Signed.....Chair Date.....

ACTIONS LGB Meeting 5 December2023

Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date/Update
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9	Include focus on relevant SDP priorities in governor visits and report through visit reports.	Lead govs	
10	Contact relevant lead governor to accompany on a visit	New govs	
13	Focus on Year 2 at meetings of the Education and Wellbeing Committee during the year.	TJ	To agenda
15	Ascertain how the Junior figure for EHCP absence was shown.	MD	
25	Make clearer on the School website who to contact if a parent had a concern.	MD/KM	
34	Consider encouraging parents to purchase resources for the School from a 'wish list'.	MD/KM	
38	Invite governors to attend a further WalkThru learning walk in the spring term, follow up inviting that the Trust Director of Primary to lead the session.	MD	
	<i>Brought forward from previous meetings</i>		
10	Consideration would be given to T4W forming the focus for a Governor Learning Walk.	KM/MD	Carried forward
43	Clarify with new academic year procedures any change to DBS clearance requirements for governors.	TJ	Carried forward
52	Provide a written report of their regular visits to support Christian distinctiveness, including leading and participating in assemblies	NP/AK	
	Complete Safer Recruitment training on Edudare.	AK	
	Include in future agenda - question to support understanding of safeguarding information and keep the info current; Diversity and Inclusion	DSL /TJ	Ongoing – termly.