

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

Local Governing Body (LGB) – Approved Minutes of Meeting held on 7th March 2023 at 5.30 pm at the School

Governors present:

Mrs N Ahronson (NA)	NA	Y Mrs A Keith	AK	Y
Mrs S Chorley (from 5.15 pm)	SC	Y Revd N Parish (to 7.00 pm)	NP	Y
*Mrs M Down (MD)	MD	Y Ms E Smit (to 7.30 pm)	ES	Y
/Mrs K Marchesi (KM)	KM	Y		
Ms P Gadsby	PG	Y Ms R Squizzoni	RS	Y
Mr A Holliman	AH	Y Mrs J Taylor (Chair of Governors)	JT	Y
Mrs S Jeffery (online)	SJ	N Mrs A Todd (Vice Chair)	AT	Y

In attendance:

Mrs T Jones (TJ)	Clerk to the Governors
Miss J Mason (JM)	Inclusion Leader (to 6.15 pm)

* 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

No apologies had been received from Governors for absence from this meeting. An apology had been received from the ELT Chief Operations Officer who was not able to be in attendance. The meeting was in quorum.

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. JT welcomed new staff governor RS.

Quality of Education – Vulnerable Pupils including L20s

2. JM presented the context for provision for vulnerable pupils at St Martin's. Governors welcomed the increasingly diverse school population. JM clarified that the term EAL related to the language that pupils first heard as a baby and governors were interested to know the languages most used by pupils at St Martin's. An explanation was given of the terms Special Guardianship Order (where a child was looked after as a result of an order through a court) and Looked After Children (who were looked after by the local authority).
3. JM gave an update on EHCP applications made and supported within the last year; four children had received an EHCP, Surrey had agreed to assess three children put forward for EHCP, with two waiting to go to panel. One application made by a parent had been refused by Surrey. Three more applications were currently being worked on for submission in March or April 2023.
4. JM reported progress on implementing the School's SEND vision and MD noted the value of applying across the Schools approaches which had been developed in Meerkat. ES asked whether teachers had been receptive to applying these approaches more widely and RS and KM confirmed that the approach had been gradually introduced and was now accepted as part of teaching and learning at St Martin's. Examples were given of the strategies, such as use of Widgit visuals and supporting language.
5. JT asked whether the use of visuals had had a big impact on boys' understanding; JM said that boys often liked to know when they were moving on and this was supported through use of Widgit visuals. AK commented that she had seen evidence on visits of how the Widgits were embedded and JM said that they were also used in the zones of regulation.
6. AH thanked leaders for their explanation about responses to the questionnaire received which helped to explain the fact that significant number of staff appear not to agree to the statement in the questionnaire that the school offered sufficient guidance and training on how to support SEND children. AH asked

how the SEND Action plan and other actions would improve staff perception on this; KM and MD had clarified that initiatives to address this included sharing of the SEND vision, staff training on high quality teaching from external provider; working on the 6 areas identified in the SEND vision to clarify what success looks like in each area (taking 1 area at a time) and staff meeting time to introduce Walkthrus linked to the SEND vision. The responses might have been made by members of the office or premises team but the aim was for everyone to feel responsible for SEND.

7. AT asked whether there had been any challenges from staff about the principle that 'every teacher is a teacher of SEN'; one staff member had commented that their 'creativity' was being removed, which was perhaps related to the drive for consistency in approaches.
8. AK asked about use of Moore House for resources; JM said that resources from Moore House were not used but gave examples of other resources available for speech and language support. AK asked whether 'Literacy for All' was linked with phonics and it was confirmed that this linked with the Read Write Inc and Talk for Writing programmes. AT asked how long JM would expect it to take for this to be embedded; pupils would be re-assessed next term following a 6 – 12 week programme and based on this feedback, a decision would be made about rolling this intervention out in the autumn term. JM would inform governors of the outcome. **Action: JM/MD/KM**
9. ES asked if the resources were available to parents and if TAs had access to the training; the resources were not generally available to parents but JM had sent them to some parents on request. TAs were invited to training which took place during staff meeting and had attended the recent training on ADHD and Literacy for All.
10. Members asked about the concerns forms process; JM outlined the process which was part of the SEND Action Plan process and supported formalising concerns tracking. Completion of a concerns form might result in additional strategies to use as part of quality first teaching or for some, the consideration of whether needs met the threshold for inclusion in the SEND register or a discussion and advice. Governors asked about parent resistance to their child being put on the register and JM suggested that it could be particularly hard for parents of younger children, who were not so aware of how their child compared with others, to accept that their child had special needs. In such cases, the School continued to support the child but did not add them to the register.
11. AH asked whether there was a financial impact of being on the SEN register; the financial impact of being on the SEN register was not as great as having an EHCP.
12. On behalf of the Local Governing Body, JT thanked JM for the discussion and JM left the meeting at this point.

Chair's Actions and other Urgent Business

13. JT reported that she had not had to take any emergency actions on behalf of the Governing Body since the last FGB meeting.

Review of Curriculum development

14. MD gave an overview of curriculum development at St Martin's. Key points included:-
 - Curriculum underpinned by St Martin's mission.
 - Long term curriculum plans developed to show what needs to be accomplished during the year in a subject
 - Gateway curriculum – what a pupil needs to be able to move on to the next stage
 - Subject stories – an aide memoire for the subject showing how the values are reflected in the subject; priorities are picked up by the subject leader as well as from the SDP.
 - Topic webs being developed
 - Progression of knowledge and skills to demonstrate that the curriculum is progressive and builds on knowledge developed.
15. Governors asked whether information would be provided to parents on the curriculum work; a reading morning had been held for parents recently and consideration was being given to whether there would be an appetite for an information session on the curriculum as a whole. The information was available on the website. In addition, the 'meet the teachers' meetings were used as an opportunity to inform parents about what would be covered in the coming year. Governors felt that a session on the curriculum would be valuable.
16. NA asked about the foundations for this work; a plan, based on the National Curriculum, had always been in place but the aim of this work was to streamline the curriculum in order to reduce cognitive overload for the children and support wellbeing of staff. KM explained that pupils were not able to retain the key facts if the curriculum was overloaded, and the work was designed to support retrieval by focusing on what was needed, as provided in the National Curriculum. MD said that the more that children can be encouraged to make connections, the more successful the curriculum.

17. ES asked about links with other Trust schools on this work; consideration was being given to liaison with St Andrews.

Leadership report from the Co-Head teachers

18. Governors were thanked for submitting their questions before the meeting. Responses had been provided and are available for Governors' reference as appendix 1 to the minutes. Where not provided at the meeting, responses to the questions on finances would be given after the meeting.

Action: Co-HTs/JH

19. ES had noted that while it was good to see a varied response to the questionnaire from staff, the response rate seemed low and asked how engagement could be encouraged; 22 responses had been received from 85/90 staff members and one interpretation was that those who had not responded had no concerns. As a follow up question, ES asked if the survey was anonymous; staff could choose to add their name, and names were needed to enable leaders to respond to specific points raised, but were not always provided.
20. Governors discussed accessibility to the survey; MD said that to support engagement, staff might be asked to complete the survey at an inset day and AT suggested that providing the survey on a google form might make access even easier to respond. AH said that as there were generally good relations with staff, it was likely that staff would raise issues as they arose rather than waiting for a survey. Governors said that, nevertheless, it would be useful to capture feedback from staff. RS confirmed that the questionnaire had been accessible but agreed that other priorities had overtaken to prevent staff from responding.
21. MD reported that the Trust inset day had been well received and staff had been enthused by the event, which had given them an opportunity to hear from a speaker and share problems with colleagues from their teams in other Trust schools.
22. Governors received the January Management Accounts and commentary from ELT. In a pre-submitted question, AH had referred to the deficit reduction of £13.7k from Dec to Jan FMR as a result of staffing expenditure reduction and asked whether the agreed spend on the 2 x SCITTS was included in the outturn. The Co-Head teachers confirmed that SCITTS were included. Governors supported contingency planning and appointment to fill anticipated teacher vacancies and noted that one resignation had already been received.
23. AH had asked what the unfilled vacancies were and whether this was causing any issues; the Co-Head teachers reported the deployment of a member of staff to support active lunchtimes and the librarian to enable the library to be opened at lunchtimes with a view to addressing through these initiatives capacity issues for lunch time supervisors and related behavioural incidents.
24. Regarding the Finance commentary, AH sought clarification of the full year out turn of –£157k including revenue and capital noted on page 1 as the reserve carry forward was £157k but cap/rev outturn shown as 155,637; a response from ELT would be provided. **Action: Co-Head teachers**
25. AH had noted income line I03 "High needs top-up funding...updated based on EHCP plans" and that it would be useful to know the context for the variance, including how the original EHCP budget forecast was arrived at and the reason for the resulting lower figure (for example, due to applications not being made, applications being made which failed, children changing schools, children's needs resolving below EHCP level); discussion of EHCP applications at this meeting reflected the challenge of predicting these figures.
26. AH asked whether there were many aspects where clearance needed to be sought from the Trust; the Trust had a list of preferred suppliers, such as some selected because they met ethical criteria, but this was not dissimilar to the need to use suppliers from Surrey's preferred supplier list.

School self evaluation and Improvement Plan

27. Governors were asked to review and provide feedback on the draft self evaluation document, which would inform the School Improvement Plan for 2023-24. The School of Faith strand had been extracted and would be the basis of the SIAMS SEF. ES suggested that it would be useful to consider specific examples of where evidence could be found of the initiatives in the document. **Action: All**
28. Governors asked if the improvement plan had to be submitted and whether previously it had been submitted to Surrey; schools had not been required to submit their improvement plans to Surrey but Ofsted would use the document as part of their research to develop lines of enquiry at an inspection. The SIP had been shared with the Trust.

Quality of education

29. The Co-Head teachers would share the data over time document and reported the headline that writing was low in most year groups. Writing had been impacted by covid but a real improvement could be seen now in the difference in a piece of 'cold writing' to a 'hot write', following preparation and using

tools for writing. In response to a query, it was confirmed that children's fine motor skills had also been impacted by covid and many struggled with their handwriting, with specific support highlighted to parents for relevant children.

Action: Co-Head teachers

30. As a follow up question, AT asked whether this affected specific cohorts or was evident across the year groups; pupils in Year 2 and the middle of the school tended to have been impacted more by covid than older children whose learning before the pandemic was more embedded. The Co-Head teachers assured governors that they reviewed data from Insight for different groups within each cohort and made appropriate comparisons to identify where additional support was needed. As an example, MD said that data over time for pupil premium children could be skewed where pupils also had special needs and tracking these children over time, rather than just seeing a snapshot of their attainment, enabled progress to be seen and value added.
31. JT asked if there were any major concerns from the data over time; writing was the main issue as discussed. Maths and Spelling and grammar were very strong and Governors congratulated the current placing of St Martin's in second place in the Epsom and Ewell Times Tables Rock Stars league, which included some secondary schools. The gap between disadvantaged children and their non-disadvantaged peers was evident in data for the combined subjects (English, Writing and Reading).
32. AT asked about the comments from parents and pupils about challenge in maths; KM said that the approach was to teach maths to mastery and parents and pupils needed to be aware that this approach meant that extension questions did not lead to the introduction of new topics. The maths leads and the Co-Head teachers were confident that there was lots of challenge in maths. AH felt that it was healthy that children were looking for more challenge and ES said that the extra Thursday maths was motivating.

Report from assurance-seeking visit by Lead Governor for SEND

33. ES highlighted points from her written report from her autumn term meeting. ES would conduct a further assurance seeking visit on 10 March 2023 and noted that she had seen at her previous visit a number of the developments outlined by the Inclusion Leader at this meeting.
34. In response to the query posed in the report about how training, learning and development are shared on a regular basis, RS reported that CPD opportunities were shared with the year group leads and an invitation had been issued to all teaching staff to visit Meerkat – prioritising teachers with a child in their class attended Meerkat, new staff and all other staff over the next 18 months.

NP left at this point.

35. Governors welcomed the benefits of extending practice developed in Meerkat throughout the Schools and of enabling teachers to visit Meerkat to discuss particular children with the staff and identify strategies which could be used in classes.

Christian Distinctiveness

36. The Local Governing Body received an update on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including PSHCE (called life learning at St Martin's). Key points included:-
 - A parent information session on PSHCE and Jigsaw had been held
 - Helen Woolvet working with the Trust CEO on Trust-wide Christian Distinctiveness
 - St Martin's had been selected to trial for the Diocese changes in the curriculum, through selected year groups.
 - AK would forward a written report from the Governor monitoring visit focused on Christian Distinctiveness which took place on 7 March 2023.
37. The SIAMS action plan was being developed from the School of Faith strand in the previous version of the SIP.

Action: AK

Safeguarding

38. An update was given on training arranged for staff and parents by safeguarding consultation Ian McGraw.
39. ES welcomed the arrangement of training in the summer term on how wellbeing starts with yourself as a demonstration that leaders recognise and value the hard work of staff. The Co-Head teachers commented that members of staff who were leaving said they were doing so for personal reasons, such as re-location, rather than because of issues with the School. Governors were also invited to attend the session.
40. Governors noted that SC would conduct a safeguarding focused governor assurance visit on 16 March 2023 and a written report on the visit would be provided.

Action: SC

41. AT asked if further safeguarding courses were recommended for governors in addition to the annual update training. To support training, KM suggested she share relevant scenarios from the DSL safeguarding refresher and that governors access the updates from Andrew Hall and Ian McGraw. [Links to the safeguarding resources:-
https://www.safeguardinginschools.co.uk/e/BAh7BjoWZW1haWxfZGVsaXZlcnlfaWRsKwimQBzGAgA%3D--182e54853ed02ae6a0616e7a585c1f8d2bc3d744?skip_click_tracking=true
<https://www.safeguardinginschools.co.uk/safeguarding-briefing-joining-page>]

Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

42. The draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Governing Body held 31 January 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.

Local Governing Body matters

43. The Local Governing Body noted that PG, AT and NA would seek assurance of Personal Development through their follow up visit on using Jigsaw in Year 6 on 10 March 2023, ES would conduct a visit on SEND on 10 March 2023, and JT would undertake a visit to seek assurance of phonics and reading by the end of the spring term.
44. It was agreed to hold two full LGB meetings in the summer term in person at the School and to meet online on 3 May 2023 for a meeting focused on review and approval of the 2nd draft budget.
45. The training log had been shared with Governors and all were asked to add information about other governor training they had attended to ensure that the records were up to date. Governors were asked to feedback about their experience of different training providers and agreed unanimously their preference for the National Governance Association training platform.
46. It was agreed to introduce the committee structure from the autumn term and to plan accordingly during the summer term (including membership, chairs, dates of committee meetings and any adaptations to the lead governor model).
47. Governors had had the opportunity to respond on the summary of conclusions from the 2022 governor self-evaluation and noted that the evaluation had identified awareness of diversity and inclusion as a an area for development and governors. Governors were invited to attend the staff inset on 26 May 2023 the agenda for which would include Diversity and Inclusion and noted that many governors had also completed the Educare training module on Diversity and Inclusion. **Action: All**

Compliance, Policy and document review

48. The Local Governing Body received the minutes from the Admissions Panel meetings which took place on 6 and 28 February 2023. AK updated the meeting on the outcome of the application considered at that meeting.
ES left the meeting at this point.
49. The Local Governing Body noted the issue of trust-wide policies for Supporting Children with Medical Conditions, Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school and Exclusions. The Behaviour policy, which included the Behaviour principles, would be considered by Governors in the summer term. **Action: TJ (Agenda)**

Meeting evaluation

50. Governors reflected on the impact of their meeting on children's outcomes and agreed that the meeting had provided a particularly useful opportunity for discussion with the Inclusion Leader about SEND. A Teams recognition would be sent to JM on behalf of the LGB. **Action: JT**

Date of next meeting

51. The next meeting was confirmed as 5.00 pm on 3 May 2023 and would be held online.

Part 2 business

No confidential matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

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

ACTIONS LGB Meeting 7 March 2023

Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date/Update
8	Inform governors about results from pupil re-assessment next term following a 6 – 12 week programme of Literacy for All' and how embedded the programme is..	JM/Co-HTs	
18	Respond to governors' pre-submitted questions on finances given after the meeting.	Co-Hts	
24	Provide response to the request for clarification of the Finance commentary, (full year out turn of –157k including revenue and capital noted on page , reserve carry forward was £157k but cap/rev outturn shown as 155,637.)	Co-Hts	
27	Provide feedback on the draft self evaluation document , which would inform the School Improvement Plan for 2023-24.	All	
29	Share the data over time document	Co-Hts	
36	forward a written report from the Governor monitoring visit focused on Christian Distinctiveness which took place on 7 March 2023	AK	
40	Conduct a safeguarding focused governor assurance visit on 16 March 2023 and provide written report on visit	SC	
47	Attend the staff inset on 26 May 2023 - agenda includes Diversity and Inclusion	All	All invited
49	Summer 1 agenda – review of the Behaviour policy including the Behaviour principles.	TJ	To agenda
50	Send Teams recognition to JM on behalf of the LGB	JT	
	<i>Brought forward from previous meetings</i>		
	complete Safer Recruitment training on Educare.	AK. SC	
	Include Risk register on March 23 meeting agenda	TJ	Carried forward to summer term.
	investigate whether it is possible to start a second EHCP application while waiting for the response to an appeal to a first application	Co-Hts	
	Schedule workshop discussion of draft five-year strategy to gather feedback from Governors on longer term plans.	TJ	Summer term
	Include in agenda - Committee chairs, dates of committee meetings and any adaptations to the lead governor model	TJ	Carried forward to summer term
	Schedule session on Walkthrus before the workshop on the Five-year strategy.	Co-HTs	
29	Clarify the statistics for bullying incidents in HT report.	Co-HTs	
49	Appointed lead governors to make appointments to visit the School to undertake an assurance seeking visit for their area of the SIP and let TJ know the date and focus of planned visits	All	TJ to resend emailed booking process 04/01/23
41	Sign to confirm adoption of the ELT Governor Code of conduct.	All	
46	Governors who have not done so, to complete new declarations of interest for the Register of interests and forward them to TJ.	All	
33	Review template for governor assurance visits to ensure appropriate focus and effective governor scrutiny.	JT/TJ	Review in light of new committees
36	Conduct staff governor election in the autumn term.	TJ	To repeat spring term
Part 2	Draft a statement to clarify the role of parent governor for inclusion in the newsletter.	JT	
	Include in future agenda - question to support understanding of safeguarding information and keep the info current; Diversity and Inclusion	DSL /TJ	Ongoing – termly.