

## ST MARTIN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

### Local Governing Body (LGB) – Approved Minutes of Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 5.00 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 | N Revd N Parish                     | NP | Y |
| *Mrs M Down (MD)             | MD | Y Ms E Smit (to 7.10 pm) (online)   | ES | Y |
| /Mrs K Marchesi (KM)         | KM | Y                                   |    |   |
| Ms P Gadsby                  | PG | N Ms R Squizzoni                    | RS | Y |
| Mr A Holliman                | AH | Y Mrs J Taylor (Chair of Governors) | JT | Y |
| Mrs S Jeffery (online)       | SJ | Y Mrs A Todd (Vice Chair)           | AT | Y |

#### **In attendance:**

|                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| Mrs T Jones (TJ) | Clerk to the Governors    |
| Mrs H Smith (HS) | Writing lead (to 5.35 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**

Apologies for absence from this meeting had been received from SC and PG. SJ and ES attended online.. 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.

#### **Quality of Education – Talk for Writing (T4W)**

presentation from the writing leads, Becky Hawks & Helen Smith (HS).

2. HS presented on the introduction this year of Talk for Writing (T4W) at St Martin's, led by the two writing leads, HS and Becky Hawkes,. focused on years 1 and 3 (HS) and years 4, 5 and 6 (BH), who worked together to develop the approach and resources.The aim was to male writing more accessible and user friendly and this year to trial and embed the approach for the next academic year. Governors noted therefore that St Martin's was on a journey and the presentation at this meeting was a snapshot of the work.
3. The two leaders had been able to access support from Jamie Evans, T4W consultant, who had provided feedback from two visits so far and also taught a lesson in School, which would be shared for future training. Feedback would also come from the visit of a moderator from Surrey in the week of 15 May 2023. Key was to implement the approach slowly to ensure it was embedded.
4. HS outlined key elements of the approach to ensure that pupils could tell the story verbally. These included ensuring model texts are appropriate for the pupils, appropriately diverse and showing clear progression between the year groups. As an example, this would enable extension in year 6 to explanation.
5. Summer term focus to finalise the draft curriculum has included review and reference to the National Curriculum and statutory models to ensure that texts cover the curriculum, reworking model texts. January 2024 inset day would be based on non-fiction.

6. Next steps included ensuring consistent approach and use of resources (washing line showing vocabulary page, story map, story mountain etc) in each year group, finalising the draft curriculum map and coverage, taking into account feedback on the marking policy, addressing gaps in the data.
7. HS reported as context for the impetus to introduce T4W the decline in Infant data. Year 1 data had dipped 19% and appeared to relate to handwriting and insecure basic sentence structures. Gaps had been closed over the four weeks of focus. AK asked whether the handwriting issue related to covid; HS said that these children did not have the core strength to be able to hold themselves and therefore write and outlined interventions introduced with the guidance of the Inclusion Leader.
8. AT asked about the main reason for the dip in the Junior data; the Writing leaders were being given release time to enable them to investigate the reasons for the drop. MD said that anecdotally the drop was seen across Surrey and also was likely to relate to the disruption experienced during developmental times, but confirmed that the data did not match the usual pattern for St Martin's and needed to be addressed. MD reported increased rigour with moderation and focus on expectations for expected and greater depth.
9. AT asked whether this changed the plans for transition to years 5 and 6; KM said that the review covered all year groups and the marking policy tick list put in place by the Writing leaders was also helping to identify gaps. Noting the significant improvement made over four weeks of focus in KS1 (11% in Year 1), the Co-Head teachers hoped to see similar progress in KS2, but said that it may not be sufficient and would be taken forward with summer 2 planning. JT commented that gaps were not surprising given the disruption these Year 5 pupils would have experienced during covid lockdowns when they were in years 2 and 3.
10. HS showed resources to illustrate what T4W looked like in the classroom and recommended that Governors visit classes to see the approach in action, but noted that the resources seen would depend on how far through the unit a class was. Photos of the resources shown are on the Team chat. HS explained use of the tool kits to break down writing and make it accessible for pupils. Consideration would be given to T4W forming the focus for a Governor Learning Walk. **Action: Co-Head teachers**
11. AK asked whether HS could see the amount of work needed to introduce T4W tailing off after the initial significant input by the Writing Leaders; HS said that she was passionate about the approach and pay back was in seeing the success of their work. Having SCITTs to release HS and Becky Hawks would also be very helpful this term.
12. JT asked whether the School was seeing a difference in boys' attitude to writing as a result of T4W; HS confirmed this and said that although there were model texts, pupils had the freedom to take the story where they wanted to. An example was given. In addition, teachers used specific resources to engage pupils, such as seeing barn owls via web cam.
13. ES posed a question via the chat function on Teams about how reading linked to writing; HS reported that following challenge by the consultant about how the current reading book would impact learning, she had sourced a book list from Network training and it was hoped to be able to invest in new books to support T4W and make what was being read really relevant. Governors suggested that the PTA might be encouraged to support this initiative through their fundraising.
14. Responding on Teams to the question, leaders had said that the School was arranging the class texts so they support future learning including writing. In addition, all writing is based on reading. Usually this is a simple text allowing side a class story. For example, the text Year 2 are working on is just 1 page but is a simple version of the *Owl Who Was afraid of the Dark* which they are reading as a class book.
15. On behalf of the Governing Body, JT thanked HS for her presentation and in particular for her enthusiasm and passion for T4W. Governors were keen now to see T4W in action.

HS left at this point.

#### **Chair's Actions and other Urgent Business**

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

#### **Leadership report from the Co-Head teachers**

17. MD highlighted the report on the Deep Dive on T4W and that the presentation had illustrated further progress since this review. No further questions were raised.
18. MD reported that there had been no changes since the School self-evaluation had last been shared with governors in the spring term and reports on GDRP and the Risk Register were awaited.

#### *Quality of education*

19. Point in time spring term data was shown on the screen and MD highlighted that reading and maths were closer to predictions than writing and as highlighted above, big improvements had been made to close gaps.
20. AH asked why moderators did not like T4W; MD said that this related to the amount of scaffolding used in T4W and an anxiety that pupils were not, therefore, writing independently. Teachers were being supported to assess appropriately in recognition of this. The difference between hot and cold writing was clarified, with the final assessed piece completed as hot writing (supported by the work previously completed in the unit). The term 'cold writing' indicated that the work was undertaken at the beginning of the unit. AH sought clarification that the view from moderators was that hot writing used for assessment was a coached piece rather than a reflection of pupils' progress; HS said that every staff meeting both external and internal that she attended currently included discussion of independent writing; the issue was not T4W but related independence.
21. JT commented that moderators historically took some time to catch up with new approaches and MD said that time was needed for the full impact to be seen.
22. AT commented on the challenge this year to achieve all that the School wished to achieve; KM reported comment from Rosebery staff that some handwriting was better than that of Year 9 students. The new focus was on ensuring a higher percentage of children reached expected levels rather than greater depth. MD referred to the point by HS about the grid to define expected and said that most of the criteria should be in place.
23. ES asked whether there were play interventions to support handwriting; MD confirmed this as illustrated by tasks such as manipulating beads and using plasticine to build strength to support handwriting.
24. AH asked what was being missed out because of the focus on ensuring expectations are met rather than reaching greater depth; MD referred to the need for teachers to address a multitude of skills through their teaching and suggested that examples of expected and greater depth writing could be shown to governors, perhaps at a future meeting or at their learning walk. **Action: Co-HTs**
25. MD reported predictions for 2023 statutory assessments (77 of the 90 Year 1 pupils forecast to meet the phonics threshold, 9 of the 10 year 2 children taking the phonics test forecast to meet the threshold and 75 of the 90 year 4 pupils forecast to pass the maths tables check.
26. Governors discussed reasons which impacted the progress data and were assured that the School was aware of the back stories for every child who was highlighted in red as not making targeted progress. MD clarified that those highlighted blue were often SEN children who may not be at expected attainment but were making beyond expected progress and grey indicated that there was no prior year data available for these pupils. AH asked if the targets were individually set; MD explained that point in time assessment was useful to show where pupils were against where they were expected to be at this point, and pupils who were assessed as at a level below that of their year group or key stage were tracked in a very individualised way.
27. In response to the request from AT for an overview of the vulnerable pupils summary, MD explained tracking of the L20s using a similar approach and showed the spring term data for vulnerable and pupil premium pupils on the screen. MD pointed out that often these children had other barriers which impacted their learning, such as special needs and teachers needed to take into account their back stories and context when setting and monitoring targets. These children may not be attaining comparatively but could be making significant progress in terms of their context. MD clarified that key was tracking for maths and English but if a pupil was very strong in English, this would be flagged to ensure they were performing appropriately in foundation subjects.

*Personal development, Behaviour and attitudes*

28. Governors received prior term data on attendance. AT asked whether the shift was marked at St Martins and MD confirmed that the number of pupils who were categorised as Persistently Absent (PA) (less than 90% attendance in school) had not been seen previously at St Martin's and a similar trend in seriously absent pupils was reported by the Inclusion Officer. There were also differences in attendance data compared with prior to the lock down related to the pattern of absence, with more parents working from home on Mondays and Fridays and taking their children out of school accordingly. In some cases, parents did not realise the pattern and it was useful for the School to drill down and raise questions.
29. NP asked whether there was a team from Surrey to visit St Martin's and support; the Surrey Inclusion Officer team was very supportive of the School.
30. In a pre-submitted question, AT had asked what the EBSNA procedures noted in the narrative were and how they were being introduced; St Martin's staff had completed training in Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSNA) and the approach focused on working to understand the barriers to attendance faced by EBSNA pupils. Example of reasons for EBSNA included patterns of non-attendance in families, such as sibling and parent attendance data.

31. AK asked if parents were responsive to the identification of patterns; conversations with parents on this could be challenging. Some parents did not realise the pattern or the impact of their own disengagement with school on their children. The Inclusion Officer worked in partnership with the School and the School could escalate concerns to them. ES commented on the importance of tackling this issue early in pupils' careers to help avoid further issues at secondary school.
32. TJ reminded governors of the recently issued Government guidance which encouraged all parts of the school community to play their part in reducing non-attendance.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
33. AT asked about the impact of this work on disadvantaged pupils; MD said that there was increased focus on more vulnerable pupils and it was recognised that it was not sufficient to review the data of pupil premium in isolation, but when tracking progress of a cohort, the school needed to recognise that within this there could be pupils with EAL, special needs and to track their progress over time.
34. AT asked about anticipated growth in the trend and impact on resources; MD said that there were more PAs today than historically, although attendance at St Martin's was stronger than national and the work was time consuming and appropriate staffing and resources were needed to tackle the issue, which did inevitably impact the budget.

### **Christian Distinctiveness**

*SIAMS action plan Including actions related to provision.*

35. The LGB received the Every Child Spiritual Action plan showing actions in RE, Worship and spiritual development and their impact to support improvement. Governors asked how the new RE curriculum differed from the previous curriculum and were informed that the new curriculum included more on world religions. As a follow up question, NA asked about the relative proportion of coverage of Christianity and world religions in the new and the previous curriculum. The Co-Head teachers would seek feedback from the subject lead and respond. **Action: Co-Head teachers**

[**Post meeting note:** There is now 3 Christianity, 2 world religion and 1 thematic (philosophy based with Christian emphasis through it). Previously it was a varied amount of Christian units per year group as it was based on length of unit (average about 7-8 units) and 1 world religion per year for Yr 1 - 4. Yr 5 & 6 did 2 per year. Although there appears to be less Christianity units, they are more thorough and detailed as it is now 1 full unit per half term and the addition of an extra world religion to support children's world knowledge].

36. AK reported that St Martin's had helped to trial the new curriculum and provided feedback to shape it which would be of benefit to the Schools. AT asked how much notice of the new curriculum teaching team would have and time to prepare before it needed to be introduced; it was expected that implementation would follow quickly once the curriculum was released and it was useful to be able to drip feed the changes already.
37. Governors welcomed the report that the Every Child Spiritual Lead (Helen Woolvet) was working with the ELT Chief Executive to support schools in other trusts and recorded thanks to Helen Woolvet and the Every Child Spiritual Team.
38. AK and NP would support Helen Woovet with the drafting the new school prayer for inclusion in the 2023-24 learning diaries. **Action: AK/NP**
39. The written report on RSE provided within the RSHE update was noted.

### **Safeguarding**

40. The LGB recorded thanks to SC, Safeguarding Governor, for the written report on her safeguarding focused governor assurance visit on 16 March 2023 and noted that the visit had included assurance seeking of trips.
41. KM reported attendance at the half termly Trust DSL meetings and that consistent use of CPOMs to record safeguarding and other incidents from September 2023 would support comparison across the Trust.
42. The Co-Head teachers had checked the RR Tenancy Agreement and confirmed that there were no gun licenses held by current tenants of the St Martin's site.
43. TJ would follow up the new process to seek confirmation that there had been no changes to DBS clearance with the new academic year procedures. **Action: TJ**

### Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

44. The draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Governing Body held 3 May 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

#### *Report from assurance-seeking visits by Lead Governors and planning for summer 2 visits*

45. The LGB received the written report from the assurance seeking visit on SEND conducted 10 March 2023 and assurance seeking of PDBA Life Learning/Jigsaw in Year 6.
46. AK asked whether the School signposted parents to alternative providers of speech and language support if issues were identified but could not be resourced; JT confirmed from experience of her family that this was the case and the parents had been signposted to a local clinic.
47. AK asked when the School would be back on track following delay to the statutory annual EHCP reviews. The Co-Head teachers would seek an update from the Inclusion Leader. **Action; Co-Heads**  
**[Post meeting response:** There are occasions when there is slightly longer than 12 months between reviews for children with EHCPs that are not in Year 1 and Year 5. This does not affect the pupil or the provision and funding in place for the pupil. Year 1 and Year 5 reviews are always during the Spring Term because of the transition to the next Key Stage. This year there was some unavoidable absence within the Inclusion team and this was explained to the families it affected. This affected 5 families total.]
48. AK asked which category of vulnerable pupils young carers were included in; if they did not fit into a different category, young carers were included under 'Any other vulnerabilities' and were not tracked as a group, but relevant pupils were individually tracked and support put in place as needed.
49. Governors heard about provision for Previously Looked after Children, who were monitored and extra support offered later should issues emerge. It was confirmed that for all categories of vulnerable pupils, a holistic approach was taken to ensure that all relevant barriers were taken into account and support provided as needed
50. AK asked whether St Martin's was aware of an increase in families struggling because of the current cost of living crisis; the Co-Head teachers reported that some eligible families did not take up free school meals but the School supported them through offering breakfasts and uniform. Where needed, trips could be funded through a fund donated for this purpose. In response to query, it was estimated that approximately 5% of pupils were being provided with breakfast and where they had said they were hungry, parents were informed.
51. AH asked why families chose not to take up the offer of free school meals; in some cases parents had not enjoyed school meals or their children did not like the choices pre-ordered by parents. Parents were encouraged through the regular tasting menu provided by the kitchen and it was important that uptake met the targets for the catering service. Governors discussed feedback about the size of portions and MD reported that the caterer was providing the Government specified portions but there was negative feedback from families. The Trust was liaising with the caterer about provision to St Martin's.
52. JT would provide a written report of her assurance seeking of leadership and management and NP and AK would provide a written report of their regular visits to support Christian distinctiveness, including leading and participating in assemblies. **Action: JT; AK/NP**
53. Details of the Governor Learning Walk to be scheduled early in summer 2 would be forwarded.

**Action: Co-Heads**

#### *Planning for committees – membership, leadership distribution/chairs*

54. TJ showed the results from the survey of governors on preferences for committee, chairing role and days they could not attend meetings. NA would respond to the survey after the meeting. **Action: NA**
55. In light of the feedback, the Resources and Finance Committee would comprise of SJ, AK, BS, JT, AT and the Education and Wellbeing Committee would comprise SC, AH, PG, ES, NP. MD and KM would be members of both committees but they might not each attend all meetings. JT said that governors had welcomed their attendance at all meetings this year, which had given assurance regarding the cohesive operation of the co-headship.
56. The Governing Body appointed NP as chair of the Education and Wellbeing Committee and AT as chair of the Finance Committee.
57. Governors noted that from the expressions of preference, Tuesday and Wednesday were the preferred days for meetings. Governors were welcome to attend meetings of the committee they were not a member of in an observer (non-voting) capacity.

- 58. MD reported the response from the Trust to feedback from the May Finance LGB meeting and planning for 2023-24 to support clarity of reporting and decision taking and ensure that the education and wellbeing data meets the needs of governors.
- 59. Governors noted the updated Scheme of Delegation (SoD) which had been provided with papers for the meeting and cross-referencing in the agenda between the SoD and agenda items. In response to query, JT clarified that 'support' meant that governors reading the documentation, their challenge and questions which support school leaders and the Trust to perform their roles. The Local Governing Body was not accountable or responsible for these decisions and actions, but if local governance was not effective, the Trust could not be effective.
- 60. As a follow up question, governors asked about tools the local Governing Body would have to enable them to support the Trust in its role and whether responses from the Local Governing Bodies were pooled for consideration by trustees and noted that they wanted to give broad support to the Co-Head teachers. JT said that it was important to reflect in the minutes of Local Governing Body meetings any specific views and comments that governors wanted to highlight. AT asked whether there had been a response from the Trust to the feedback from St Martin's Local Governing Body at its budget meeting and said she would be interested to know whether St Martin's LGB had been able to influence. JT felt that the Chief Financial Officer had listened to the concerns expressed by the Local Governing Body and appeared to be taking them seriously.
- 61. The opportunities for governor training listed below the agenda were noted.

**Compliance, Policy and document review**

- 62. The Local Governing Body received the revised Positive Behaviour policy. The Co-head teachers gave background on the substantive change, to add a paragraph on 'Dealing with behaviour on the School grounds when children are not under the charge of a member of staff' to take account of learning from a recent incident. Governors supported the principle that parents should be role models for the pupils and uphold the School's values.
- 63. Governors asked whether the parents involved had acknowledged their role in the incident; this had not been evident in all parents involved. NP asked whether the School had Parent Code of Conduct; the code was published in the pupils' learning diaries issued in September. Governors suggested that the Co-Head teachers consider ensuring that there is specific reference to upholding St Martin's values and standards while on school premises and having a to highlight this in the School reception.  
**Action: Co-HTs**
- 64. ES had provided a number of questions which would be considered and the revised policy would be provided to the summer 2 meeting of the LGB for confirmation.  
**Action: TJ (agenda)**  
ES left at this point.

**Meeting evaluation**

- 65. Governors reflected on the impact of their meeting on children's outcomes and agreed that the presentation on Talk for Writing had supported their understanding of this important approach and their focus at this meeting on vulnerable pupils would contribute to outcomes.
- 66. Governors asked whether the School signed off PTFA events and suggested that the name of a forthcoming event could be controversial. MD clarified that that the event in question was the initiative of Year 6 and the Co-Head teachers would consider how to mitigate against any misconceptions related to the current title.  
**Action: Co-HTs**

**Date of next meeting**

- 67. The next meeting was confirmed as 5.00 pm on 22 June 2023 and would be held at school.

**Part 2 business**

No confidential matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

Signed.....Chair      Date.....

**ACTIONS LGB Meeting 11 May 2023**

| Item | Action  | Owner       | Completion Date/Update                        |
|------|---|-------------|---|
| 10   | Consideration would be given to T4W forming the focus for a Governor Learning Walk.   | KM/MD       |   |
| 24   | Show examples of expected and greater depth writing to governors, perhaps at a future meeting or at their learning walk.  | KM/MD       |   |
| 35   | Respond to question about the relative proportion of coverage of Christianity and world religions in the new and the previous curriculum.   | KM/MD       |   |
| 38   | Support Helen Woolvet with the drafting the new school prayer for inclusion in the 2023-24 learning diaries   | NP/AK       |   |
| 43   | Clarify with new academic year procedures any change to DBS clearance requirements for governors.   | TJ          |   |
| 52   | Provide a written report of her assurance seeking of leadership and management.<br>Provide a written report of their regular visits to support Christian distinctiveness, including leading and participating in assemblies | JT<br>NP/AK |   |
| 53   | Forward details of Governor Learning Walk to be scheduled early in summer 2.  | KM/MD       |   |
| 54   | Respond to the survey on meeting day preferences after the meeting.   | NA          |   |
| 63   | Consider ensuring that there is specific reference in the school diaries to upholding St Martin's values and standards while on school premises and having a sign to highlight this in the School reception.                | KM/MD       |   |
| 64   | Revised Behaviour for Learning policy to be provided to the summer 2 meeting of the LGB for confirmation.   | TJ          | Agenda)                                       |
| 66   | Consider how to mitigate against any misconceptions related to the current title of an event suggested by Year 6 pupils.  | KM/MD       |   |
|      | <i>Brought forward from previous meetings</i>   |             |   |
|      | forward a written report from the Governor monitoring visit focused on Christian Distinctiveness which took place on 7 March 2023   | AK          |   |
|      | Attend the staff inset on 26 May 2023 - agenda includes Diversity and Inclusion   |             | All invited                                   |
|      | 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          | Part complete                                 |
|      | 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 |
| 33   | Review template for governor assurance visits to ensure appropriate focus and effective governor scrutiny.  | JT/TJ       | c/f Review in light of new committees         |
|      | Include in future agenda - question to support understanding of safeguarding information and keep the info current; Diversity and Inclusion   | DSL /TJ     | Ongoing – termly.                             |