

# St GILES C of E (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting

Held at school on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 8:00 pm

- Present:** Mrs Marion Lott (Chair), Mrs Myra Boyce, Ms Katherine Brooke-Webb, Mrs Amanda Clarke, Mrs Joanna Francis, Mr Paul French (*arrived 8.50pm*), Mrs Lynne Mulcare, Mrs Alison Nicholson (*arrived 8.15pm*), Ms Fiona Price and Mr Peter Whatling
- In attendance:** Mrs Kathy Jerbi (Clerk)
- Apologies:** Canon John Twisleton and Mr Scott Reece (Deputy Head Teacher)

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Mrs Lott.

### 1 APOLOGIES for ABSENCE

Apologies received as above – reasons accepted by the Governing Body.

### 2 URGENT MATTERS

None

### 3 DECLARATION of INTEREST (agenda items only)

None

### 4 MINUTES of the MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Were agreed as being a true record & signed by the Chair.

### 5 MATTERS ARISING from the MINUTES not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

- Mrs Jerbi has provided Mrs Francis with details of governor appointment dates etc. & register of pecuniary interests for publication.
  - Review of Acceptable Use Policy yet to be carried out **Action: ICT Committee**
  - Review of Educational Visits Policy yet to be carried out **Action: Premises and H&S Committee**
  - No-one has yet signed up for Child Protection training or Safer Recruiting training; Mrs Francis invited Mrs Clarke & Mrs Price to undertake the Safer Recruiting training on-line. **Action: AC/FP**
  - The Communication Policy is still under further review **Action: PPC Committee**
  - Finance Committee terms of reference to be circulated to governors **Action: LM**
- (Mrs Nicholson arrived at this point, 8.15pm)
- Governors visited school on 26<sup>th</sup> November, when Mrs Francis updated them on 'assessment without levels'. Mrs Francis will provide more feedback at the next GB meeting with updated data. **Action: JF**

### 6 POLICY RATIFICATION

**SEN Information Report January 2016** (*circulated prior to the meeting*). This is a statutory document required to be on the school website, which should answer any questions parents might have about SEN provision. Mrs Self, SENCo, spent a long time preparing this long & detailed report – the GB noted it is a very good document & especially commended the inclusion of methods of assessment. Governors noted as well that St Giles is getting a good reputation for SEN provision. **The GB ratified the SEN Information Report.**

**Health & Safety Policy November 2015** (*circulated prior to the meeting*). Review completed by the Premises and Health & Safety Committee. **The GB adopted the policy as presented.**

**Prevent Policy January 2016** (*circulated prior to the meeting*). Another statutory policy, even though we are considered to be low risk. Mrs Francis looked at other schools' policies & used relevant strands. Mrs Lott attended training with the school staff led by a Gatwick police officer, which was interesting & practical, & made the policy more relevant. **The GB adopted the policy as presented.**

**Complaints Policy January 2016** (*circulated prior to the meeting*). Needs further review – being taken back to the PPC Committee. **Action: PPC Committee**

### 7 GOVERNOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

(A document entitled 'Governor Strategic Assessment Framework 2014' was circulated prior to the meeting.)  
The main item for this meeting is for the GB to perform a self-review of skills.

Governors considered some of the NGA “20 questions every governing board should ask itself”, which were considered when the above document was put together in December 2014. Governors felt we do not cover all the 20 points. Mrs Lott stated that it is important to have a wide skillset, but more so to have governors who are committed, have the necessary time & are willing to learn. Governors recognise the importance of identifying gaps in the GB skillset in order to try to recruit to fill the gaps & to look for specific expertise when we need it. Also to identify weaknesses & where we need training. Foundation governor criteria are becoming more stringent, which confounds the problem of recruiting governors as it restricts the pool. The Clerk reminded governors that we have a vacancy for a co-opted governor, a role which was created specifically so that GB’s can advertise for someone with the necessary skills that they require. She also advised that Associate Members can be appointed at Committee level to advise on specialist areas.

*(Mr French arrived at this point, 8.50pm)*

Governors also discussed the possibility of a statement from the GB being published on the school website – the Clerk advised that although this is not a statutory requirement, it is considered to be good practice. Mrs Lott to draft a statement & circulate to governors for comment. **Action: ML**

Governors agreed to complete the NGA ‘Governing board skills audit 2015’. Mrs Francis tabled a copy for each governor to complete & a matrix to compile the responses for an overall view. Discussion continued whilst governors completed this.

Governors questioned whether we are strategic enough, or discuss strategy enough. Issues are discussed in more detail at Committee level & the minutes of Committee meetings are distributed to all governors in order that they may have time to digest the contents & raise questions at GB meetings. This delegation of responsibilities to Committees should allow the GB more time for strategic discussion. It was suggested that it might be good practice to highlight at the end of each Committee meeting any issues that should be brought to the attention of the GB.

*(Mrs Nicholson left the meeting at this point, 9.40pm)*

Governors considered the combined results of the skills audit on the matrix (*attached to minutes*) and found no glaring gaps in skills. However, it was recognised that with several experienced governors due to finish their terms of office this year, taking out their scores from the matrix may leave some big gaps in skills. Therefore, succession planning is an issue to be addressed.

Governors suggested that ‘strategic planning’ should perhaps be a standing item on the agenda for GB meetings. The ‘Academies’ question was raised – governors do not know the West Sussex stand on this programme now, but the Diocese is encouraging schools to form academies now & make it a positive move, rather than something forced on them at a later date. The NEARS locality Chairs & Heads have spent a long time doing the groundwork. Whilst our pupil numbers continue to decrease we are in a dangerous position; if we joined with another small school we would be in a stronger position. But where would the economies of scale come from. There are hard decisions to be made & timing is critical. But currently we appear to be waiting for something to happen – not being strategic. We need to recruit more pupils – perhaps we should recruit an advertising specialist onto the GB.

The Chair of the Finance Committee, Mrs Mulcare, stated that the Committee has met several times to consider next year’s budget forecast. Factors they have considered:

- Autumn census (determines funding per pupil) – 3 pupils **less** than last year;
- No increase likely from WS for the formula for funding
- This means budget forecast for 2016-17 is £8,000 **less** than this year
- Expenditure will be increased due to staff pay increases & changes to NI contributions

The Committee have met with David Gwenlan, School Resources Manager at WSCC, for advice. He is going to provide longer term forecasts of pupil numbers. The Committee will have more information to report on at the next GB meeting in March.

Mrs Lott thanked all governors for their input into this useful & encouraging exercise.

#### **DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 8.00pm

The meeting closed at 10.20 p.m. with a prayer led by Mrs Lott.

**ACTION POINTS:**

<b>ACTION POINT NUMBER</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM NUMBER</b>	<b>DETAILS OF ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>
1	5	Review Acceptable Use Policy	ICT Committee	FGB mtg 9Mar
2	5	Review Educational Visits Policy	Premises and H & S Committee	FGB mtg 9Mar
3	5	Undertake on-line Safer Recruiting training	Mrs Clarke/Mrs Price	FGB mtg 9Mar
4	5	Further review of Communication Policy	PPC Committee	FGB mtg 9Mar
5	5	Amended Finance Committee terms of reference to be circulated to governors	Mrs Mulcare	immediately
6	5	Assessment feedback with updated data	Mrs Francis	FGB mtg 9Mar
7	6	Further review of Complaints Policy	PPC Committee	FGB mtg 9Mar
8	7	Draft a statement from the GB to publish on the website & circulate to governors for comment	Mrs Lott	FGB mtg 9Mar