



THE ST JOSEPH AND ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2020 AT 4.00PM**

Present:

Mr D Murray (Chair), Mr L Addison-Smyth, Mr M Blake, Mrs M Clark, Professor S Clark, Mrs P Conway, Mrs L E Donachie, Miss K Haggart, Mrs H Haywood, Reverend C Haydon, Ms C Lawlor, Mr P Norman (Acting Executive Headteacher), Mr C Savage, Mrs J Smith, Mr C Tate, Mrs S Walmsley

Also present:

Representatives for Bishop Wilkinson Education Trust (part of the meeting):
Mr N Hurn, Mrs D Fox, Mrs L Levy
Mrs J Lewin, School Leadership Adviser
Mrs J Nicholson, Clerk to the Governing Body

The meeting was opened with a prayer

		Action
53	<p><u>Introduction and Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Governors and guests to the meeting and shared a PowerPoint presentation to provide information on agenda items.</p>	
54	<p><u>Declaration of Interest</u></p> <p>The Clerk invited Governors to declare any personal interests in agenda items at this or any point during the meeting.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest recorded at this meeting.</p>	
55	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>	
56	<p><u>Appointment of a Reserve Vice Chair</u></p> <p>Governors were reminded that due to the Coronavirus pandemic, DfE advised that Governing Bodies had contingency plans in place should the Chair and Vice Chair be unavailable. To ensure that, in such an eventuality there was clarity regarding who would be the conduit of information for the Governing Body it was advised that a Reserve Vice Chair be appointed.</p> <p>It was agreed that Mrs S Walmsley be appointed as Reserve Vice Chair until the first meeting of the Autumn Term 2020.</p>	

Academisation

Governors were given an overview of the due diligence process which had commenced following agreement at the special meeting held on 19 May for both schools to start the process to academise. The Chair explained however that no schools would be allowed to academise with a deficit budget unless it could be resolved and as a result, it would not be possible for St Thomas More to convert.

Mrs Fox talked Governors through the two-year growth plan for each of the four trusts with the aim of all schools academising by July 2022. It was the expectation of the Diocese that all schools would have access to The Trusts even prior to academisation and support would be made available to them.

Mrs Levy provided information on how the financial position was looked at as part of the due diligence process which included the three-year plan, pupil predictions and staffing assumptions. For St Thomas More there was a lot more money going out than coming in and EFA and DfE predict that staffing costs would be around 75% and St Thomas More was 91% which was unsustainable. If pupil numbers were predicted to rise this may have been used to offset some of the deficit however this was not the case and approval would not be granted to go ahead with academisation.

Mrs Lewin advised that there were a number of schools currently in the same situation however St Thomas More's situation was further complicated by the capital works needed.

A Governor questioned how the pupil projections had been acquired as numbers were currently rising. The Chair confirmed that this had been taken into consideration but unfortunately there were not enough to reduce the growing deficit.

Another Governor asked what could be done to prevent the school from closure. Mrs Lewin highlighted the deficit which was accumulative along with the problems with the building.

The Chair outlined the recommendation which was to begin the process to close St Thomas More and Mrs Lewin explained the steps which would be taken with a view to closing the school at the end of summer 2021.

A Governor queried when the consultation for closure would start. The process would need to begin at the start of September in order to put to Cabinet in line with agreed timescales.

The decision to consult on the closure of the school had previously been agreed by Governors and the Chair recommended Governors accept the proposals as set out in the discussion paper, which had been shared with Governors, and prepare documents for public consultation in September.

Governors voted and 12 were in favour of the consultation and 2 abstained. The Chair would prepare a consultation document and would circulate it to Governors prior to meeting virtually to discuss and approve.

	<p>The Chair reiterated to Governors that The Federation had support from the Local Authority, the Diocese and The Trust and Mr Hurn advised that both schools would be offered support from The Trust who were very keen to help.</p> <p>Mrs Fox acknowledged the difficult situation Governors were being placed in and thanked them whilst also offering full support.</p> <p>Mrs Fox, Mrs Levy and Mr Hurn left the meeting.</p>	
58	<p><u>Headteacher's Update</u></p> <p>The Headteacher presented his update to Governors on the following:</p> <p>Arrangements for key workers to access care and the number of pupils in school were outlined and the Finance and Premises Committee had met with the Headteacher to receive updates.</p> <p>An update on staff in both schools was given. Staff meetings had taken place to share planning and risk assessments and they had been encouraged to contact the Headteacher with any queries or concerns.</p> <p>Other staffing issues included two requests for a reduction in working hours as well as the recruitment of a HLTA on a temporary contract for one year. The Y3/4 teacher at St Thomas More had taken up post in another school from September and the recruitment process was underway for a replacement on a temporary one-year contract.</p> <p>There had been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 within The Federation. One member of teaching staff, who was classed as clinically vulnerable, had initially been working from home but was now working in school one or two days each week completing non-classroom based tasks. One lunchtime supervisor was also classed as clinically vulnerable and was shielding.</p> <p>Welfare checks had been carried out weekly for those pupils classed as vulnerable or require additional support from school. For other pupils, staff had contacted families fortnightly with any concerns being shared with the SLT.</p> <p>Arrangements for remote/on-line learning were outlined and the home learning section, which had been created and uploaded onto the website, was highlighted. An overview of the typical lessons for each year group was included in the update along with the positive feedback from parents via their welfare check conversations. A Governor suggested that structured plans be implemented for those pupils who would not be returning to school but who would continue to be educated at home. The Chair advised that model plans were available from the DfE and the Local Authority and The Trust also had models which could be shared to effectively plan moving forward.</p> <p>Governors discussed evaluating feedback from parents and pupils to enable leaders to plan and a survey was to be sent out to obtain their views.</p> <p>Arrangements for FSM pupils not in school was shared. The voucher scheme would continue throughout the summer and a collection service for food etc. had been made available at St Joseph's.</p>	

	<p>Transition arrangements were outlined. The new Reception cohort had received information packs and staff were making videos to introduce themselves to pupils. The Y6 class were receiving transition support from St Leonard's.</p> <p>A Governor asked if there was any budget information available and the Chair advised he would contact David Shirer for an update.</p> <p>Governors formally thanked the staff across The Federation for all their hard work during this difficult and uncertain time. The Headteacher encouraged Governors to be mindful of the workload of staff when suggesting alternative ways of working and reiterated staff were doing all they could to provide the best possible learning resources. Mrs Lewin highlighted that all schools were learning throughout this time and were looking to put plans in place for September and that she would be meeting the Headteacher to go through the curriculum during the coming week.</p> <p>Mrs Lewin left the meeting.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>An update on the current budget situation to be sought from David Shirer.</p>	Chair
59	<p><u>Confirm and Review Governing Body Membership</u></p> <p>The Clerk reported that since the last termly meeting Mrs C Lawler's term of office as Foundation Governor was due to end on 17 October 2020.</p> <p>Mrs Clark, Staff Governor, was leaving at the end of the summer term to start a new position in another school</p> <p>Mrs Haywood was also resigning from her position as Foundation Governor at the end of the summer.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION</p> <p>Organise an election for a Staff Governor.</p>	Headteacher
60	<p><u>Action taken by the Chair/Vice Chair under emergency powers</u></p> <p>No action had been taken under the Chair's emergency powers since the last meeting.</p>	
61	<p><u>COVID19 Annex to Safeguarding Policy</u></p> <p>Governors considered the updated Safeguarding Policy which had been amended in line with Government guidance relating to the Coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>Governors agreed the updated policy.</p>	
62	<p><u>Virtual Meetings Policy / arrangements</u></p> <p>Governors considered and agreed the Virtual Meetings Policy.</p>	

<p>63</p>	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>Governors received and agreed the minutes of the full Governing Body meeting held on 6 February 2020 and special meetings held on 15 January and 19 May 2020, which were to be signed by the Chair as a true record.</p> <p>Minutes of the following Committee meeting was received for information:</p> <p>Appeals Committee held on 5 June 2020 was circulated by email.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
<p>64</p>	<p><u>LA Monitoring and Intervention for Improvement</u></p> <p>Both schools continued to be at Level T3 within the Local Authority's Scheme for Monitoring and Intervention for Improvement.</p> <p>AGREED ACTION:</p> <p>To monitor and review the support provided in relation to the school's monitoring level.</p>	<p>Governing Body</p>
<p>65</p>	<p><u>Governance Update</u></p> <p>Governors received the Governance Update briefing paper which included information on a range of national and local issues.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>(a) Ensure Governor details were up to date on Get Information About Schools (GIAS);</p> <p>(b) Subscribe for email alerts from gov.uk;</p> <p>(c) Adopt an Induction Policy for New Governors;</p> <p>(d) Adopt a Virtual Meetings Policy;</p> <p>(e) Circulate briefing papers electronically at the start of term to Governors;</p> <p>(f) Liaise with the Clerk during the agenda setting process to ensure a personalised agenda;</p> <p>(g) Ensure at least one Governor and your Headteacher have attended Safer Recruitment training and that this is up to date;</p> <p>(h) Ensure all Governors access Safeguarding training and that this is up to date;</p>	<p>Chair / Headteacher</p> <p>All Governors</p> <p>Training and Development Governor</p> <p>Governing Body</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Governors</p> <p>Training and Development Governor</p>

	<p>(i) Ensure you develop an Annual Governing Body Training Plan;</p> <p>(j) Chair and Vice Chair to attend the termly Chairs' Briefing.</p>	<p>Training and Development Governor</p> <p>Chair / Vice Chair</p>
66	<p><u>Report of the Schools Advice and Support</u></p> <p>Governors received a briefing paper from the Schools' HR Advice and Support Team which provided information on new and updated school policies.</p> <p>AGREED ACTIONS:</p> <p>(a) Adopt all new policies;</p> <p>(b) Ensure staff were aware of new and updated policies.</p>	<p>Headteacher</p>
67	<p><u>School Funding Update</u></p> <p>Governors received an update from the School Funding Team on a range of financial issues for information.</p>	
68	<p><u>Dates of Future Meetings</u></p> <p>The following dates for meetings of the full Governing Body were agreed:</p> <p>Autumn Term 2020: Thursday 22 October at 4.00pm</p> <p>Spring Term 2021: Thursday 6 February at 6.00pm</p> <p>Summer Term 2021: Thursday 24 June at 6.00pm</p> <p>Committee dates were to be agreed.</p>	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.00pm

Signed
Chair

Date