

**ST. KATHARINE'S CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL
GOVERNING BODY**

**The minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body
held on 12 October 2011 at 6.30pm at the School**

PRESENT: Peter Holland (Chair), Sharon Cross (Headteacher), Kevin Sandall, Gill de Berry, Sara Clemence (SCIm), Colin Langdon, Jason Lewis, Peter Sewell, Vanya Body (from item 5), Linda Scott (Associate Member) and Dorothy Riley (Clerk).

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new academic year and introduced Linda Scott, Associate Member. Governors introduced themselves.

Apologies were accepted from Julianne Smith and Chris Hoggarth. Apologies were also received from Vanya Body for her late arrival.

2 Declarations of Interest

2.1 Pecuniary interests - register 2011-12

Conflicts of Interests forms for the 2011-12 Register will be emailed to Governors and Associate Members. Completed forms should be returned to the School office.

Action: Clerk/Governors/Associate Members

2.2 Conflicts of interest with items on agenda

None.

2.3 Interests of immediate family

None.

2.4 Subsequently declared interests

None.

3 Minutes of previous meetings

3.1 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2011

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2011 were approved as a true and correct record. A signed copy was given to SC for filing. KS will arrange for publication on the website.

Action: Headteacher, KS

3.1.1 Matters arising (not covered by later agenda items)

Gritting of roads: The PTA is also concerned about the number of road traffic accidents on the Durley Road. The Chair will liaise with the Chair of the PTA before writing to Wiltshire Council with a Freedom of Information Act request.

Action: Chair

Governor visits with Subject Leaders: KS will remind Subject Leaders that they need to email Governors this term with suggested dates and times for visits before Christmas.

Action: KS

Evaluation of School Fete: The Headteacher will check if CH has written up an evaluation of this event on the new one page Governor Visit form.

Action: Headteacher

Domain name: www.stkatharinesprimary.org: KS will check progress with the Bursar regarding purchasing the domain name.

Action: KS

3.2 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2011

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2011 were approved as a true and correct record. A signed copy was given to SC for filing. KS will arrange for publication on the website.

Action: Headteacher/KS

3.2.1 Matters arising (not covered by later agenda items)

None.

4 Headteacher's Report

4.1 To note report

Governors noted the Headteacher's Report circulated with the Agenda. Additional points:

Key Stage 1 Results: Baseline assessments of Reception pupils have been undertaken earlier this year and, therefore, should demonstrate greater progress for these pupils. New data will be available at the end of November and will be considered in the Curriculum and Assessment Committee.

Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) for reading, writing and science was discussed. The Tracking Grids show progress for each child in all subject areas and feeds in to the Wiltshire Tracker. The School is strong in this area of tracking with high levels for accelerated progress being set. All staff use Raiseonline and they will receive training from Wiltshire Council's Assessment Adviser on using such data. Interested governors, as well as other Cluster schools, will be invited to such training; the Headteacher will circulate date when set.

Action: Headteacher

Key Stage 2 English results in the summer: these fell below expectations. The Headteacher reported her views on why the pupils had not performed as well as expected. A letter is going out to all parents forewarning them that the results will show the School lower down the league tables than desired and re-assuring them that steps are being taken to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence of such results. The importance of all pupils developing their organisational skills was discussed and emphasised together with the five learning skills (risk taking, resilience, resourcefulness, relationships, and reflectiveness). These learning skills have been

communicated to parents, are on the website and are in each of the classrooms, as are the School's "Golden Rules". Pupil progress is being monitored closely.

The system for morning starts (with children coming in to the classrooms as they arrive (rather than altogether from the playground) is working very well in facilitating a quick start to the day's learning.

Liz Hopkins, formerly a Wiltshire Council Maths Adviser, is coming in to school to run a maths workshop for parents. The Headteacher will advise Governors of the date. The PTA will be asked to provide refreshments.

Action: Headteacher

Attendance figures: Data is now available to complete the attendance figures. Current Absence levels is 4.9% Actual, which is on target, made up of Authorised Absence 4.8% and Unauthorised Absence 0.1%.

Questionnaires: The Headteacher reported that responses to the parental questionnaire in the summer had been received in respect of 29 out of 77 pupils (38%). The main concerns disclosed (with the Headteacher's response) were:

Parking difficulties: These difficulties have been acknowledged by the School for some time but there appears to be no easy solution. The Headteacher reported that the dropping off system has appeared to work without incident whenever she has been out to observe. Following comments from Governors who are parents, the Headteacher agreed to remind parents to get their children ready to disembark on arrival and to drive forward to allow others behind to stop without blocking the road. Also, there will be a new travel survey and parents and pupils will be invited to be involved. The old Travel Plan will be updated.

Action: Headteacher

The cleanliness of school: This has now been addressed and it is anticipated that a deep clean will be undertaken over half term, following completion of the building works.

Size of school: Responses to the questionnaire were made at the time when East Grafton pupils visited as part of their integration into the School. It would be interesting to see whether the same concerns expressed now that the pupils have settled in.

Insufficient after school clubs: The position has improved since the questionnaire. New after school activities had been started as shown in the Headteacher's report which demonstrates how popular many of such activities are. A St John's teacher has expressed an interest in providing a dance club. Parents have also requested a homework club that they can run and supervise; the School will offer the room and facilities. This will be reported on in this week's newsletter.

Action: Headteacher

A paper summarising the responses to the questionnaires will be circulated shortly to Governors and, in due course, to the parents.

Action: Headteacher

Community cohesion: Governors welcomed the news that St Katharine's has established links with the Gorsehill School, a multi-cultural primary school in Swindon, and, through the Marlborough Brandt Group link, with a partner school in Bangladesh. The whole school topic for Term 3 is Bangladesh with an end of term celebration being planned to show what has been learned. KS is the lead teacher on community cohesion. It is hoped that two teachers from St.Katharine's School will be able to visit Bangladesh next year, if a visitation grant application is successful.

Forest Schools: A level 3Btec qualification is required to achieve Forest School status. There is no provision in the School's budget for the costs of the necessary five days' training but every effort will be made to cover this when planning next year's budget.

Public Sector Strike Action: The Chair reported that strike action is planned for public sector workers on 30 November. There was considerable discussion about the possibility of the School staying open. Advice from Governor Services will be sought and the Governing Body will discuss this further at the next meeting on 15 November.

Action: Chair

Abbreviations: The Headteacher will forward a list of abbreviations to the Clerk to circulate with the draft minutes. The list will be updated as necessary.

Action: Headteacher/Clerk

VB joined the meeting.

5 To approve revised Scheme of Delegation

The Scheme of Delegation has been reviewed and the small changes were highlighted on the document before the meeting. These were reviewed and Governors adopted the Scheme for 2011-12.

GdB will join the Human Resources Committee.

6 To approve revised Code of Conduct for Governors

Governor Services, Wiltshire Council, has updated their suggested Governors Code of Conduct to include a section on safeguarding and online participation. This has been reflected in a new paragraph on page 3 of the School's Code of Conduct stating that Governors may not be friends with pupils, as this may be viewed as grooming. Following discussion it was agreed to allow parents only to be friends of their own children. The Governing Body approved the revised Code and Conduct and will be asked to sign it and return it to the School office.

Action: All Governors

7 Committee updates

7.1 Curriculum and Assessment Committee

A meeting is proposed for Wednesday, 02 November at 3.30pm in School. VB and CL confirmed attendance with JS. GdB forwards her apologies.

7.2 Human Resources Committee

VB reported that the new teacher has settled in well; positive feedback has been received from Michael Parks, the Wilts Every Child Counts Advisor. The teacher's one year contract for 2.5 days will be reviewed in January 2012.

7.3 PR Committee

VB reported that, due to the number of pupils on roll, an open day will not be held this year. The School Prospectus has been updated; only the photos remain to be updated. VB is updating St Katharine's Guide, Parts 1 and 2.

Action: VB

The staff section will be updated on the School website.

Action: KS

A copy of the updated Media Policy will be passed to the PTA.

Action: VB

7.4 Finance and Premises Committee

7.4.1 To receive Report/Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2011

Governors noted the previously circulated draft Committee Minutes.

Areas discussed:

SFVS: The Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS) has been replaced with the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS). Although the standard has been reduced to 23 issues, each issue is backed by significant detail and compliance, required by March 2013, will be time consuming. For best practice the F&P Committee has agreed that the School will seek to comply during early 2012.

Cluster Business Manager: This financial year, the Marlborough Schools cluster secured a grant which has kept the cost of buying in the Business Manager's services to £500 for each participating school. Next year, without the benefit of such a grant, the cost of the Business Manager could increase to £3,000 per cluster school. Some schools appear to be using this service more than others and it was agreed to use the Business Manager as much as possible this year. It was also agreed to delay taking a decision on continuing the service next year until the benefits or otherwise of doing so become clearer in the light of further experience/information.

Extension: Governors welcomed the news that the building project is on time and on budget. Contingencies have been used to claw back some of the work that had been removed when paring down the quoted cost. This

will be used towards redecoration. There is also a need for more than one staff W.C. and a price is being obtained to convert the cleaning cupboard for this purpose.

Pond: It was confirmed that the Savernake Estate has declined permission for a pond. Alternatives are being considered.

7.4.2 To authorise the F&P Committee to approve the I & E return to 30.09.11

The Chair explained that the F&P committee's proposed meeting to consider the Income and Expenditure Return for the half year to 30 Sept 2011 would not now be held before the return date. Accordingly, the GB meeting was being asked to approve it. The Chair led Governors through his previously circulated email explaining the Return and seeking the Governing Body's approval. The Return had been prepared by Wiltshire Council's Accounting Technician in conjunction with the Bursar. The Governing Body approved the Return. The Chair and Responsible Officer (Headteacher) will sign the Return prior to forwarding it to Wiltshire Council.

7.4.3 To authorise opening of a new bank account for Pupil Savings and approve associated documentation

Governors considered the previously circulated paper on a proposed new Bank Account for the Pupil Savings Scheme. The Governing Body welcomed the initiative and approved the opening of a new bank account with the HSBC for this purpose. The signatories are Sharon Cross, Jan Stagg and Kevin Sandal with all payments requiring any two of the three signatories; this is the same arrangement as applies to the other School bank accounts. The meeting agreed to pass the resolutions set out the bank's mandate form. The account will be opened in Term 2.

Action: Headteacher

8 Policies and other Documents

To consider and approve:

8.1 Code of Conduct for staff

The Governing Body approved the Code of Conduct for staff with the proviso that a statement forbidding social networking with pupils and a reference to E-safety will be added. KS will review and update the E-Safety policy, to include a section on social networking sites and Skype, and bring it to the next meeting.

Action: KS

8.2 Code of Conduct for volunteers

The Governing Body approved the Code of Conduct for volunteers with the proviso that a statement is added that volunteers should not be friends with School pupils on social networking sites.

Previously held E-safety parent evenings have been poorly attended. It was agreed to offer a further session with an incentive. The Headteacher will invite Cluster Heads and Governors to join the session.

Action Headteacher

8.3 Child Protection Policy

The Child Protection Policy, which has been reviewed without amendment, was approved. Volunteers will be required to sign the policy as well as governors and staff. There are to be 2 safeguarding audits each year and a Safeguarding Report will be presented to the next Governing Body meeting.

Action: Headteacher

8.4 Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

There are no major changes to this policy. Subject to changing the statement para 3.1 of the location of documentation, the policy was adopted by the Governing Body.

8.5 Educational Visits and Activities Policy

The Educational Visits and separate Charging policies have been combined and reflect the national guidelines for charging. The policy now contains a statement of the requirement to inform parents in advance if an activity will be withdrawn if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised. Subject to a change in clause 3.5 concerning which year groups go on residential visits, the policy was approved.

8.6 Sex and Relationships Education Policy

This is the same as the policy adopted last May. It was adopted by the Governing Body. SClm and GdB will meet the School Nurse when she visits on 9 Nov. and will also review the Sex and Relationships materials. SC confirmed that the materials were the standard Wiltshire Council models.

8.7 Security plan

Key control has been changed to 2 Governors. Governors were reminded that they are required to sign in when visiting School. Ofsted will look for this evidence. The Governing Body adopted the Security plan.

9 Governor Matters/Courses

Health & Safety course 08 November: CL attending.

Safeguarding course 08 November: JS, VB and SCl attending.

Academy Status: Jo Tubbs, Salisbury Diocese, is giving a presentation on Academy Status to the Cluster Headteachers and Governors are invited. Date and venue will be circulated.

Action: Headteacher/Clerk

10 Late Arising Business

None.

Meeting finished at 8.45pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 15 November 2011