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FGB MEETING MINUTES – AUTUMN TERM 2016

Minutes of the Autumn Term Meeting of the Governors of St Margaret's Church of England Primary School Full Governing Body Meeting

Held on Wednesday 16 November 2016 at the School

On Wednesday 16 November 2016

(6.30pm – 8.50pm)

*All governors received an agenda for this meeting via email. Handouts also received:
Head teacher's report, Pupil Premium strategy, attainment data analysis.*

Governors Present:

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| Chair | A Fenn |
| Ex officio | R Ejvet |
| | T Coady |
| Vice Chair | D Hodge |
| | T Coady |
| | D Hodge |
| | J Rayner |
| | H Idahosa |
| | C Ifeagwu |
| | T Harris |

In attendance S Moey

Clerk D Jung

1. Opening prayer and bible verse: GENESIS 1

The meeting opened with a prayer and Bible passage taken from the book of Genesis chapter 1.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Rev Y Lee, B Larbie and H Princewell.

3. Declaration of interests

It was agreed that annual declaration of interest forms would be completed by governors on the forthcoming governor day on 21 November.

ACTION: All governors to complete annual declaration of interest forms. T Harris to collect and retain them.

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4. Membership of the governing body

The Chair advised that Rev Graham Dowling has resigned as ex officio member of the governing body. The diocese will advise who his successor will be.

Olufonso Martin's term of office has ended.

There are currently two Diocesan Board of Education vacancies. These will not be filled until the governance structure of the proposed academy trust has been finalised.

5. Minutes of meetings held in July, September 2016 and November 2016

5.1. Minutes of meeting held on 5 July 2016

The Chair advised that the stand-in clerk at that meeting had failed to produce the minutes. It was, therefore, decided, that minutes of actions agreed would be constructed from notes taken at the meeting by governors:

- 5.1.1. Target date of 31 October for academy conversion to be moved to a later date.
- 5.1.2. Anita Fenn and David Hodge were re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair respectively until December 2017.
- 5.1.3. GEE incorporation date was being considered.
- 5.1.4. The school's budget for the financial year 2016/17 was approved.
- 5.1.5. There was a query from governors regarding class sizes. The Head teacher had confirmed that, legally, the class size must not exceed 30 children in Key Stage 1. However, there is no such requirement for Key Stage 2.
- 5.1.6. The director's report was delegated to the Leadership and Management Committee.
- 5.1.7. It was agreed that governors' details, such as declaration of interests, would be published on the web site, in line with government requirements.

5.2. Minutes of extraordinary meeting held on 12 September 2016

The Chair advised minutes had been agreed in principle and were going to be circulated.

5.3. Minutes of extraordinary meeting held on 1 November 2016

The Chair advised that at that meeting governors had approved in principle for the school to become a sponsoring academy. The final decision would be made at another extraordinary meeting on 15 December. The Chair advised that she had retained notes from the meeting but due to the sensitive nature of the topic, these would not be circulated at this time.

6. Data presentation by Sandra Moey, Deputy Head teacher

The deputy head teacher presented an analysis of data concerning pupil attainment drawn from RAISEonline and the Fisher Family Trust.

EYFS (early years foundation stage)

Attainment is consistently above national and local authority average across all measurements.

Governors asked what the percentage of EAL (English as an additional language) children was. The deputy head teacher advised that from September 2016 the Department of Education requires all children to be assessed according to new a set of descriptors (A = new to English to E = fluent). The school has purchased Speechlink, a programme that provides additional support for children with speech and language needs. It will be used to assess all reception children in order to identify areas for development and apply intervention techniques.

The head teacher explained that the lack of real life experiences has an adverse effect of their speech and language development. The school is addressing this need through extending role play areas and by providing experiences outside the school and by working more closely with parents.

Governors asked how they could monitor progress and effectiveness of these actions. It was agreed that monitoring could most effectively be carried out by monitoring role play areas and their use on learning walks and establishing links with parents.

ACTION: Governors to monitor the use and effectiveness of role play areas.

KS2

Attainment in reading has dipped nationwide.

Governors requested details about the teaching strategy in year 6.

The chair advised that she had met with the literacy co-ordinator Mrs Hollingsworth. She learned that KS2 objectives have been fully defined, but a more consistent approach to teaching literacy across the year group is needed. Reading groups (DEAR – drop everything and read) have been introduced in KS2. Evidence shows that punctuation and spelling improves through reading and it is therefore important that children are encouraged at every opportunity to read more. The literacy co-ordinator is planning to set up reading partners with Valence primary school.

ACTION: Governors to continue to monitor the embedding of literacy interventions.

There followed a discussion about the actions taken by the school to improve reading. A variety of texts is used and the school ensures that there is a progression in difficulty. The school has invested in guided reading books. Children are encouraged to read a book until they fully understand it, before

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they can move on to the next level. There is a package of strategies which includes the appointment of a KS2 lead starting January 2017. She will be non-class based for two terms to enable her to fully focus on the curriculum and teaching strategies for years 3, 4 and 5. Literacy and maths will be prioritised.

7. Head teacher report and School Development Plan

7.1. Nursery provision

Governors enquired as to why nursery places have dropped from 52 to 47 places. The head teacher advised that nursery vacancies are not filled at present, as schools are still awaiting the final decision from the government concerning the increase of funded nursery hours from 15 to 30 per week. The 30-hour provision is expected to start in September 2017.

Governors questioned as to whether not filling vacancies had an impact on funding. The head teacher explained that the school currently did not have the capacity to admit children who are not yet three at admission ("rising threes"), but that the issue of free school meals does affect the school's funding. The local authority maintains a database of families accessing state benefits; however, this database is not available to schools in Barking and Dagenham.

7.2. Persistent absenteeism

The head teacher explained that this is now measured in percentage terms, rather than absolute figures. The school is required to report on absenteeism greater than 10 per cent. There were 14 children who fell into this category, however, the absenteeism was due to leave during term time rather than persistent absence. There was only one child being persistently absent and this was due to known health problems.

7.3. Exclusion

Governors asked if the current exclusion rate of 12% presented a challenge. The head teacher explained that the current SENCO's capacity is stretched as she only works one day per week. However, she is due to leave the school at the end of the autumn term and it was being considered to replace her with a full-time SENCO.

7.4. Staffing

Governors questioned what was being done to ensure more consistency in staffing in year 5. The head teacher explained that the recruitment and retention of quality teaching staff presented a serious challenge to the school. This is a nationwide problem, particularly at Key Stage 2. However, the leadership team were doing their utmost to attract agency teachers who meet the required standards and are willing to commit to the end of the school year. The head teacher further informed governors that the school has been successful in recruiting two long-term supply teachers until July 2017 to staff

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year 5. She confirmed that recruitment and retention for teaching assistants was stable.

A new Key Stage 2 leader was due to start in the spring term.

The performance management cycle has now been completed. Only the head teacher's performance review was outstanding. This was scheduled for 21 November.

8. Committee reports

8.1. Leadership and Management

8.1.1. The committee had approved in principle the purchase of a minibus as this would help with enriching pupils' experience, including sports opportunities. Governors were informed that the school office is in the process of obtaining quotes. The minibus will be funded from the Pupil Premium. This proposal was approved by all governors.

8.1.2. The terms of reference had been amended to state that the quorum would be any three governors.

8.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

8.2.1 Recruitment and retention had been raised by the head teacher as a significant challenge to the school. The head teacher is in the process of engaging an in-house counsellor.

8.2.2. The tradition of having an annual church day will be revived. This will be organised by RE and AF.

8.3. Personal development, Behaviour and Welfare

8.3.1. The committee considered the implications of not having a dedicated PSHE co-ordinator, but were satisfied that this function was well covered by various members of staff, including the head teacher.

8.3.2. The uniform policy had been reviewed with no changes being made.

8.3.3. The committee's terms of reference had been amended to clarify that "behaviour" also includes attitude towards learning.

8.4. The chair requested that governors email the committee chairs any apologies for non-attendance.

8.5. It was agreed that committee membership and subject links would remain unchanged until the MAT has been established.

9. Update on Genesis Extended Education (GEE)

9.1. The company is now incorporated. Governors agreed to the proposal to transfer £20,000 from the school's delegated budget to GEE. This sum of money will represent "capital introduced" on the company's balance sheet.

Action: transfer £20,000 to GEE bank account from the school's delegated budget.

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Update on Genesis Education Trust (GET)

- 9.2.** The Chair and the head teacher provided an update on the proposed academy conversion. Consultation with staff and trade unions is scheduled to commence on 22 November; the final decision on whether St Margaret's should become a sponsoring academy must be made by 13 December. The proposed structure of the trust includes the head teacher as the deputy Chief Executive Officer. The Diocesan Board of Education require Christian representatives on the Board of the Education Trust. There are still some barriers to a smooth conversion, in particular with the land transfer of St Mary's.

Prior to the conversion on 1 April, there will be an interim arrangement from 1 January to 31 March, during which GET will be established as a sponsoring trust.

10. Director's briefing (email 24 October)

The chair gave an overview of the items in the director's briefing. A school led improvement service was being developed by the Local Authority. However, a similar service is also being offered elsewhere.

11. Year planner update

The year planner was being reviewed; there were no updates.

12. Finance

12.1. Best Value

Governors reviewed the school's Best Value statement. There were no changes.

12.2. Scheme of financial delegation

Governors reviewed the school's Scheme of Financial Delegation. There were no changes.

12.3. Governors' account

Tracy Harris presented the annual account of the Governors' Fund. The balance as at end of October 2016 was £22,505.51

13. Pupil premium strategy

The school's pupil premium strategy was distributed at the meeting. The head teacher confirmed that it had been published on the web site.

14. Any other business

Extraordinary meeting:

15 December 2016

Next meeting of the full governing body:

21 March 2017 at 5pm/5.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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