

ST OLAVE'S AND ST SAVIOUR'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Minutes of the *Meeting of the Governing Body* held in
the Main School Library at

St Olave's & St Saviour's Grammar School, Goddington Lane, Orpington, Kent, on
Wednesday 4th March 2020 at 4.30pm

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| Present | The Ven. Dr P Wright (<i>Chairman</i>) | Mrs A Fabian |
| | Mr A Rees (<i>Headteacher</i>) | Mr H McAleer |
| | Mr S Bandi | Mrs B Nunn (<i>to item 23</i>) |
| | Mr A Boyd | Rev'd N Poole |
| | Mrs S Chaudhary | Ms M Sullivan |
| In attendance | Mr D Budds (<i>Deputy Headteacher</i>) | |
| | Ms R Maxwell (<i>Assistant Headteacher</i>) | |
| | Mr R Walters (<i>Clerk</i>) | |

ACTION

1. FOUNDATION PRAYER

The Foundation Prayer was read by The Ven. Dr P Wright.

2. NEW GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT

The Chair noted that the Rev'd Sharon Smith was due to join the GB, however she was finding the work necessary in her new parish to be greater than she anticipated and therefore would not be in a position to commit to the school appropriately; she would not therefore be joining. This left one vacancy which he would be pursuing in conjunction with the RDBE.

3. FAREWELL TO GOVERNOR

Governors noted that the Rev'd Hugh Broadbent had come off the Governing Body since the last meeting due to ill health.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Chair invited those present to declare any interests in the items on the agenda. Ms Sullivan noted that she was a teacher at the school and Mr Boyd that his children attended the local Scout Group. No other interests were declared.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs C Benham, Cllr R Evans, Mr S Ganatra, Ms S Rose and Dr D Ryall, which were accepted. The meeting was quorate.

PART A

6. STRATEGY INITIATIVE

Mr McAleer introduced the previously circulated report. He noted that the sub-group of the committee chairs had met either in person or electronically and had come up with two options, with the second option calling out the pastoral care at a higher level. He noted that those on the sub-group had split between the two options. A governor noted the regular discussions of pastoral care elsewhere and the proposal for the well-being centre and said that they favoured the second option with pastoral care highlighted. They asked how the high level components would be moved forwards. Mr McAleer explained that a second level of quantifiable targets would be developed as part of the next phase and then these would be integrated into the

School Development Plan.

Another governor noted their preference for option 2 however further governor noted their concern that delivering either teaching and learning or pastoral care was not an option and therefore they felt that they should be integrated, as in option 1. A governor asked if highlighting pastoral care might encourage a greater need for the care. Mrs Maxwell explained that the nature of educational care is such that it was likely to increase regardless. The Headteacher noted a personal concern that the first option might be seen as too close to the previous ethos of the school.

The Chair summarised noting that the general view seemed to be that option 2 was the preferred way forwards and asked what the next steps were. Mr McAleer explained that the sub-group would engage with the various stakeholder groups over the coming month and then spend some time agreeing the final proposal and the actions that go with it. The aim would be for a final strategy and SDP to be presented to governors at the June meeting. He invited anyone else on the GB who was interested in being involved, to join the group. It was agreed that with one of the three main areas being pastoral care, Mrs Maxwell should join the group as well.

It was noted that Mrs Nunn and Mr Boyd would be attending the PA meeting on the following day and with Mrs Sullivan who attended regularly, would introduce the strategy, without asking for feedback at this stage. Governors recognised that engagement with parents needed to be much wider than the PA.

Decision: governors agreed option 2 as the proposal for consultation and development

Action: Mr McAleer and the sub-group to undertake the consultation process for the strategy and to work with the SLT on developing the underlying action plan to ensure its delivery

HMCA

7. MINUTES (PART A) OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING OF 6TH NOVEMBER 2019

The minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 6th November 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

Decision: Governors approved the minutes of the Governing Body meeting of 6th November 2019

All actions had been completed. The Headteacher noted that he and Clare Slyfield had met with eight web designers who had quoted costs of £9-£36k for the web site. Three were being pursued at costs of £9k-£12k. He confirmed that they had contacted other schools using each of the three and received positive feedback (referring governors to the websites for Eton College, Rugby School and the Harris Federation). To include the Year 7 exam entry form, the cost would be £10-£14k plus £1,300 annual maintenance. A governor asked how long it would take to implement. The Headteacher said 12-18 weeks, with a view to launching either at the summer open day or for September.

A governor asked who would lead on the project. The Headteacher said that it would be Clare Slyfield in conjunction with the SLT. A governor asked that some people under 20 be engaged and that it be designed to be as future proof as possible. A governor asked that the roles and responsibilities in relation to web vulnerabilities be reviewed prior to a contract being signed. Governors asked that styling be kept within that available from the package and that it be made relatively simple to avoid additional upfront and ongoing cost.

Decision: governors approved the upgrading of the school website, noting that it was within

*the Headteacher's delegation***8. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

The Headteacher introduced his previously circulated report and invited questions. A governor asked whether classroom behaviour changed when other staff dropped into a lesson and whether this impacted on the assessment of overall low level behaviour disruption. The Headteacher said that it did affect classroom behaviour, however that was triangulated with staff feedback, levels of detentions etc. He said that Mrs Maxwell and Mr Budds had spoken to Years 7 & 8 regarding low level behavioural issues in corridors and that where specific students were identified, they were spoken to individually.

A governor noted fewer female students in the sixth form this year. The Headteacher explained that the take up of offers by external students was down in Year 12, which meant that there were inevitably fewer girls in the school. He said that they were investigating this and noted that other schools were working hard to retain students. For non-STEM subjects, other schools found it easier to persuade their students to remain even though St Olave's got just as good, and in some cases better, results in non-STEM than in STEM subjects. He noted it related to perception, which the school was working on. He also noted that the school worked hard from the time of offers to joining the school in Year 12 to engage with students and encourage them to come to the school. A governor noted that other schools found recruiting science teachers hard, hence may be less inclined to seek to retain STEM students, knowing of the St Olave's offer.

Governors thanked the Headteacher for his report.

9. CURRICULUM SURVEY AND SPANISH

The Deputy Headteacher introduced the Curriculum Survey noting that it had been considered in detail at the Curriculum Committee and then at the Finance Committee in relation to costs. That committee proposed two of the recommendations for implementation. There was a strong appetite for the reintroduction of Spanish to expand the MFL offer. He noted it was formerly on the Curriculum and that the Heads of French and German were both on board with its reintroduction, feeling that it would improve the take up of MFL in the future. The financial impact at GCSE would be minor as it would be an offer alongside French and German with substituted teaching time, but there would be a cost for A level. A part-time French/Spanish teacher would be recruited. From 2025/26, allowing for the A level offer, the additional cost would be around £30k pa.

A governor noted that they felt that Spanish would be a welcome addition. Mrs Chaudhary confirmed that the Curriculum Committee had considered it at some length and were supportive and Mr Boyd confirmed that the Finance Committee were content.

Decision: governors approved the reintroduction of Spanish into the MFL offer

Action: Headteacher to arrange for the reintroduction of Spanish into the MFL offer

AR

The Deputy Headteacher noted that there had also been a discussion regarding whether to make Further Maths a full subject choice or to leave as is and increase the teaching provision in Year 12. The latter had been agreed at Curriculum Committee, with minimal cost implications.

Decision: governors approved the increase in teaching provision for Further Maths in Year 12

Action: Headteacher to arrange for additional teaching time for Year 12 Further Maths

AR

10. WELL-BEING CENTRE

The Headteacher introduced the previously circulated paper, noting that Mrs Maxwell had been involved in its development. He explained that the intention was to create a safe space outside the Chapel area, a modification to the Head's garden area and the recruitment of a member of staff to manage the area and initial engagement with students. A governor asked what the proposals for the garden were. The Headteacher explained this could include a covered seating area and a new access point. The governor noted that gardening as an activity can be a good well-being activity and the staff governor noted that this was being looked at as a possibility. A governor noted that the Curriculum Committee had considered the paper and were concerned as to whether the level of need was sufficient to justify the cost. Mrs Maxwell noted that the numbers of students on the vulnerable list were increasing and that currently, she was the main resource to manage the need, coming out of teaching if necessary. It was recognised that this was not a management or cost-effective option. Governors asked if there were options for a safe space without the refurbishment costs. This was recognised as possible.

Governors recognised the level of reports coming through over the last couple of years and the level of support required. They acknowledged the need for a person but questioned the level of capital cost. A governor suggested that it might be considered in more detail as part of the strategy review and it was noted that there might be grant funding available should any capital works be agreed in future. Governors agreed to the recruitment of a person, who would be referred to as a Pastoral Support Worker, but asked that the strategy review and that person be asked to consider what might be the appropriate options for the physical environment.

Decision: governors approved the appointment of a well-being Pastoral Support Worker

Action: Headteacher to enable the recruitment of a well-being Pastoral Support Worker

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11. POLICIES

i) Staff Grievance Procedures: governors approved the Staff Grievance Procedures.

Decision: governors approved the Staff Grievance Procedures

ii) School Values: governors noted that there had been no changes and approved the School Values.

Decision: governors approved the School Values

iii) Complaints: governors approved the Complaints Policy.

Decision: governors approved the Complaints Policy

12. FINANCE ISSUES

Mr Boyd, as Chair of the Finance Committee, introduced the finance issues.

i) Internal Audit Report: with the Business Manager off since the beginning of January, there had been challenges in addressing the report. It noted limited assurance, which was not sufficient, however he said that the Finance Committee felt that it was a fair report overall. A governor said that the committee had considered why the issues had not been identified in the external audit, but recognised that it focussed on the financial accounts and the internal report

on process and procedures. Mr Boyd confirmed that there was work to do on the outcomes.

ii) Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS): he explained that this was a return the school made to LB Bromley on the way the school finances were managed. It had been prepared as an update to last year, however he was of the view that it was not ready for approval by the board, needing additional work to reflect the internal audit report findings. A governor asked what LB Bromley would do if they received a return that identified a number of issues. The Headteacher explained that they were already aware from the internal audit report and would therefore be more concerned if it contradicted that and showed that the school felt that it was satisfactory. Governors agreed that Mr Boyd should work with the Headteacher and Finance department to review the return and then circulate an updated version for electronic approval.

Decision: governors agreed that Mr Boyd should review the SFVS return and that it should then be recirculated and approved electronically for submission to LB Bromley

Action: Mr Boyd to review the SFVS return for recirculation

AB

iii) Summary Financial Position: he said that he was comfortable with the overall figures, recognising that the bank position was known, but he was concerned by the line by line figures. The operational position presented was intended to be a summary position, indicating a net expenditure of £233k by the end of the year, covered by the Foundation funding. Enough was being transferred to leave the school with some reserves of its own at the year end. He confirmed that the school was solvent.

In relation to the funding position, he highlighted that at the end of the year, the school would have around £1.6m in reserves with projects underway or under consideration, costing around a further £2.25m. A governor highlighted the gap of over £600k and Mr Boyd said that in addition, around £250k should be kept as a reserve at all times, so the shortfall was greater, nearer £850k. 2020/21 would see further funding from the LCVAP and the Voluntary Fund, however this was an initial indication of the position. The next version would include more scenario planning, including PA funding, a more detailed review of the five courts funding and the need for a clearer view on the cost of the all-weather facility and roofs. He also noted that a number of projects might go across more than one further year, when additional funding might become available. He said that the view seemed to be that the next most important project to fund was the all-weather sports facility. Governors noted that they were pleased to see a simplified but useful indication of the financial position, which would help with future choices.

iv) Financial Delegations: the previously circulated paper was referenced with a note that a clarification on the delegations for signing invoices would be made. This would then be circulated electronically for final approval.

Action: Mr Boyd to review the financial delegations for invoice approval, for electronic circulation and approval

AB

v) Best Value Statement: governors approved the Best Value Statement.

Decision: governors approved the Best Value Statement

13. PREMISES ISSUES

The Rev'd Nigel Poole, as Chair of the Premises Committee, introduced the premises issues. He noted that there were a number of major repairs which were coming up, including the roofs and heating system. He said that the costs and timing would need to be looked at and that condition surveys were being investigated. He confirmed that the Great Hall toilets would be

completed over the Easter holidays and that that the new Fives Courts were underway, although the contingency had been utilised due to additional ground works being necessary.

The Chair noted that there were concerns over the cladding for the Fives Courts. A governor explained that four more courts were being built, two on each end of the current building. They had been approved originally with brick cladding, but a proposal had been submitted to LBB for an alternative cladding. They said that the Premises Committee had not reviewed this proposal prior to its being submitted. Remaining with the brick cladding would add £6k to the cost and their view was that it would look better with the brick finish. The Chair said that the school was waiting on permissions and once known, would see what options remained at which point a decision could be taken. A governor noted that £6k was only 1% of the project cost and that it was imperative that the building was finished. The Chair asked that the final decision be delegated to the Premises Committee, which was approved.

Decision: governors delegated the final decision on the fives courts cladding to the Premises Committee

A governor asked for the timing of installing the all-weather sports facility. The Headteacher said that Barkers had been tasked with providing the next Premises Committee meeting with the final costs, for subsequent review by the Finance Committee and formal approval by the Governing Body. Assuming it could be approved in time, it would be completed over the summer.

Action: Headteacher to ensure the final costs for the all-weather sports facility are available for the summer term committees

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Decision: governors agreed that the Premises and Finance Committees be delegated approval of the all-weather sports facility

i) Health & Safety: there were no Health & Safety issues to report. A governor asked that the Premises Committee arrange for a termly Health & Safety walk around the school by someone who is not on the staff. This was agreed.

Action: Premises Committee to ensure a termly Health & Safety walk is undertaken

NP

A governor asked what the school's Coronavirus planning was. The Headteacher explained that parents, staff and students were all being updated regularly and that it had been raised in a whole school assembly to highlight the need for personal hygiene. Additional cleaning of handles, door plates etc was being undertaken. He said that the school already had a closure process in place (for snow), hence was prepared in the event that it had to close. A governor asked if remote teaching was possible. The Headteacher said that work would be set via Moodle although staff were looking at other options, including Microsoft teams. He said that GCSE and A level year classes would be prioritised if that was necessary.

A governor asked about the potential impact on external exams and school trips. The Headteacher said that the school used the Local Authority advice. Governors noted that the school appeared to be well prepared.

14. LINK GOVERNOR TO THE WOODARD FOUNDATION

It was agreed to carry this forward to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to include the Link Governor to the Woodard Foundation on the next GB agenda

RW

