

SANDFORD ST. MARTIN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

6.0 Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13th July 2023, 17:00, in the Studio

Present: Mary Appleton (Associate Member, MA);
Paul Beveridge (Head Teacher, HT/PB);
Melanie Bolt (Foundation Governor, Chair of Governors, MB);
Rachel Cocksedge (Foundation Governor, RC);
Rev. Stuart Cocksedge (Foundation Governor, ex-officio, SC) (from 17:42);
Rachel Elford (Associate Member, RE);
Peter Gale (Staff Governor, PG);
Richard Heard (Parent Governor, RH);
Tim Hoare (Co-Opted Governor, TH);
Mick Holloway (Parent Governor, Vice-Chair, MH);
Jackie Jeanes (Foundation Governor, JJ);
David Kimble (Foundation Governor, DAK);
Diane Kimble (Foundation Governor, DIK);
Colin Logan (Associate Member, CL);
Fiona Okai (Foundation Governor, FO);
Clare Pampin (Deputy Head Teacher, Associate Member, DHT/CP);
Deborah Smith (Associate Member, DS);
Vikki Britt (Local Authority Governor, VB);

Quorate

Attending: Alan Edwards (Prospective Foundation Governor);
David Macbeth (Clerk, DM).

No.	Agenda Item	Tasks
1.	Welcome: The meeting was opened by MB, and then led in prayer by DAK.	
2.	Welcome to new members: MB also welcomed Vikki Britt to the Board, as their latest recruit as Local Authority Governor, and Alan Edwards, as a prospective Foundation Governor. It had been hoped that another candidate, Ricky Nash, was also going to join the meeting, but he was unable to.	
3.	Apologies for Absence: None.	
4.	Absences: None.	
5.	Declarations of business and/or any other conflicting interests for this meeting: None.	

6.	Minutes of the previous FGB meeting, 5.0, of the 25th May 2023¹: These were accepted as true and accurate record of that meeting.	CoG to approve electronically, Clerk to load to website and send copy to DC
7.	<p>Matters arising from minutes of the previous FGB meeting:</p> <p>SEND Hub update: PB said several of them had recently been to visit the "base", as Damers School in Dorchester called it. They had found the visit really useful and been told about what worked for Damers and what didn't. PB said, as ever, he probably came away with more questions than answers. Damers' Inclusion Lead was about to leave and he wondered what impact that would have on the school. The influence of the base on the rest of the school was significant; they now had forty pupils on Educational Health Care Plans; ten were in the base but thirty weren't. Becoming known for dealing well with EHCP pupils attracted more. One thing they had learnt was that the hub would need to be part of the school building, not just an additional building dropped onto the site. They had witnessed that after the SEND pupils had settled in the base after lunch, they then took themselves off to their mainstream lessons. Another recommendation was to remain sceptical about many of the funding promises. And not to start too many children at any one time, they needed to be drip fed into the base to not upset the equilibrium. They were advised to start with their own children before adding new ones in, slowly.</p> <p>PB said they planned to visit Parley and St. Mary's in Bridport, as well as Bincombe Primary who were about to open their own hub. He'd also already visited Upton.</p> <p>A governor asked if the school staff had much of a voice in which pupils were chosen. The HT said yes, maybe too much. CP agreed; staff said they could make justifications for one or other child, and often the staff outnumbered the "professionals" on the panels, so they were often left with hard choices to make themselves.</p> <p>MB said it had been great to see a model in action. The staff were very open and honest about the problems but said they would do it all over again because of the reward of seeing it work for the pupils.</p> <p>A governor asked about the impact it had on the other "mainstream" pupils. PB said the impact seemed to be more on the staff, but they all talked of their school as a "whole". But the staffing was crucial, it had to be SEND focussed. The governor asked if some of the staff were therefore not comfortable with the direction. PB said that apparently some staff did walk during the training to get set up, they were described as "old school" in their attitudes. Staff needed to take ownership of the EHCPs, and work with the dedicated SEND staff, and be led by the curriculum specialist teachers who were driving it and tracking the progress. The governor asked if it therefore felt like an "SEND-lite" school. PB said no, it felt like a mainstream school, the kids were attached to their mainstream classes, but also had somewhere to retreat to if needed.</p> <p>PB said he hadn't appreciated, until this visit, what a shift it would be in terms of the whole school culture. They would have to be autism and dyslexia friendly, and this would almost certainly attract more pupils with similar needs. Every single class would need to be set up correctly, but once they</p>	

¹ For Minutes of the 5.0 FGB meeting, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | 5.0 FGB Final Minutes 25 05 23 \(accepted 13 07 23\) | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

	<p>were, you could see how all the pupils benefitted from it. CP agreed, saying the visit had flipped her views on the project, she was less worried about it than before.</p> <p>A governor asked what the Senior Leadership Team were doing with the data generated by these visits. The HT said they had a section on the Governor's Virtual Office dedicated to the SEND Hub proposal², with a discussion zone as well, and they would deposit reports in there about their findings, and answers to questions raised. DS had been through the Dorset County contract and asked some very pertinent questions, some of which still weren't answered to his satisfaction. He said he was still on the fence about the proposal; potential it was a bigger shift than the academisation question. He felt they should make more visits in the autumn and then in spring/summer 2024 come to a decision, or put it to bed.</p> <p>The staff governor reminded the meeting that when the proposal was made the staff were worried it could swamp the school and their "Sandford Way". PB said it could also help to future-proof the school, in these uncertain times, with falling roles. They would be fully funded, there would be staff training and Continuous Professional Development; it could be a really exciting opportunity for all, but it was an enormous project and it was fundamental to get the right staff to drive it. They would also need to set the criteria, whether they were going to look after SEMH or CIN pupils (Social, Emotional and Mental Health or Communication Interaction Needs pupils). The two didn't mix well; in crude terms, extrovert, noisy children and quiet introspective children; they were recommended to be dogged about that point.</p> <p>At that point in the meeting SC arrived (17:42) and the discussion ended.</p>	
8.	<p>Headteacher's Report – Summer Term 2³, SIAP development plan⁴ and SIAP Impact Report⁵ : The HT had posted his reports on GVO the previous week.</p> <p>Contextual Update: Number on Role was up one to 365. Attendance rate was very slightly down, to 93.3% (national average 93.8%).</p> <p>Behaviour: Over the year, they'd had three racist/prejudice incidents to report and one half-day exclusion. They'd also had five behaviour incidents requiring physical intervention.</p> <p>The good news was that they were aware of fourteen additional starters arriving in September.</p> <p>He asked if they had any questions to put to him about the reports, and expanded on his answers to questions already posed on GVO.</p> <p>A governor had asked if he was aware of why they were attracting these new pupils. The HT said that there didn't seem to be any real pattern; a couple were coming from a fee-paying school, a couple of infants where the parents didn't want them entering a junior school, people just moving house and area, a few who had heard good things of the school, the marketing drive was certainly helping them.</p>	

² For SEND Hub discussions, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

³ For HT Report 08 07 23, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | HT report to FGB 080723 \(130723\) | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

⁴ For SIAP Development Plan, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | Post ofsted and SIAP development planning 160623 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

⁵ For SIAP, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | SSM SIAP 22-23 strategy FINAL impact SLT 070723.docx | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

	<p>A governor asked, in such a white and middle-class area, what was the school doing to promote anti-racism. The DHT said one area they had been working on was analysing the range of books children saw, to make sure they showed lots of inclusive pictures, whether that was people wearing glasses, having different skin tones or disabled people.</p> <p>As regards the attendance figures, CP said that ten of the families previously identified had managed 100% attendance in the last month. The others had also realised they couldn't just get away with leaving an answerphone message and would have to have a conversation with the DHT, and they had had valid reasons for keeping their child off school. She reported from September the Department for Education intended to launch a "school attendance hub" to help share best practice to improve the picture. They'd also found that talking to parents/cares about sessions missed, in terms of days and weeks of schooling lost, was much more impactful than talking percentages.</p> <p>School Improvement Action Plan – The HT said the SIAP Impact Report and Development Plans were pieces of team work by all the staff. They had been written before the early Key Stage test results were known, but they were already aware of some of the weaknesses and issues identified. However, 80-85% of the SIAP Impact Report was now green in the RAG-rating, which he felt was a good amount of progress for the year, and they would continue to focus on the remaining areas as they went forward.</p>	
9.	<p>Statutory Assessment Tests – KS1 and KS2 Data⁶: The HT said the scores showed the legacy of the Covid pandemic and its resulting reduced curriculum; they were still playing catch-up but they were getting better; some of the results were great considering what they had been through. He said they needed to get the curriculum right lower down the school so in Year 6 they could concentrate on Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar and recall, honing all the previous knowledge gained.</p> <p>The Staff Governor said although the Yr. 5 Maths figures were down, he was not overly concerned for the majority, they were getting the concepts. It was the Persistent Absences that were dragging the figures down, and this was cohort specific.</p> <p>The HT said they were doing self-testing in Autumn and Summer, and teachers also made assessments three times a year, so that meant they kept a focus on where the pupils were at.</p> <p>As regards the Yr. 6 figures which were a disappointment against the national figures, their SATs papers just had too many little mistakes. Some were within a whisker of being there, but as ever, they didn't feel it right to fudge the figures, it didn't help the individual children going forward.</p> <p>A governor wanted to know why in reading there was so much discrepancy, with some way above and others way below. The HT said it didn't appear to be a teaching problem so much, with that many at Greater Depth, but agreed they needed to get those below the mark up higher. They were looking for ways to overcome the barriers. Their relentless focus on the bottom 20% had worked in phonics. He felt the data was harsher than the reality.</p>	

⁶ For Equality Objectives Review, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | SSM Equality objectives review May '23 MA.PB | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

	<p>A Governor asked if a deep dive could be conducted on the current Yr. 6; did the school have the data to show their journey through the school and work out what went wrong, to then help the current Yr. 1s in the future.</p> <p>The HT said that they could, and, in honesty, some of their previous curriculum provision clearly had not fulfilled the learning needs of some of the children. He hoped that the SIAP headlines would address these issues. Also, it was clear that writing had really suffered through the pandemic and this had had a dramatic effect on the Yr. 6's combined scores.</p>	
10.	<p>Standards and Assessment Committee Highlights Report⁷: As RH had chaired the meeting, he had produced a short report of the highlights. Apart from the regular agenda items and updates, they'd had an in-person report on Religious Education from the joint Subject Leads and had felt confidence in their progress with the subject. There had been a question as to whether the shared role was the best model. PB said they had talked further on this at the recent Ethos Group meeting, and had decided that now was not the time to change horses; as Head, he needed to devote more energy into making sure the current arrangements worked for the staff involved.</p>	
11.	<p>Finance and Resources Committee Highlights Report⁸: DS informed the meeting that Dorset County had approved their recent budget submission but it still hadn't been uploaded to the DES system so they couldn't see exactly where they were, but there were no surprises expected. As usual each year, the Service Level Agreements would be front loaded, skewing the outturn figures through the year, so they were going to run their own version as well to make better sense of the monthly position. They had discussed two versions of the June 2023 Outturn, plumping for accepting the second version that was more needs-led. This would help sustain the current staffing to support the children in the new school year. Their carry-forward figure was six figures so they were in a reasonable position compared to others; there was also a positive carry forward in 2023-24, if they continued to not spend their contingency funds. By 2024-25 they were into a deficit figured and by 2025-26 that deficit would be over £200K; as ever the projections took no account of increases to school funding from central government over the same period, so the figures always looked pessimistic. They could help themselves if they could keep attracting more pupils as that equalled funding at £3K a child. Everyone needed to keep promoting the school and keeping the buzz going.</p> <p>The budget document had been agreed by the Finance Committee, but still needed ratification by the Full Governing Board. A vote was taken and passed by a majority.</p> <p>In answer to the question, MH said the letter to the local MP, about the shortfall in funding and its affect on the school, was now written. Another governor asked, considering that week's pay award news nationally, wasn't the letter already out of date. PB disagreed, saying the latest offer</p>	

⁷ For SAC Highlights report, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | SAC Chair Report for FGB following SAC Meeting 22nd June | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

⁸ For FRC Highlights Report, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | FRC Chairs Report to FGB 130723 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

	<p>still wasn't fully funded and it certainly didn't reverse the erosion to the school budget they'd already suffered. Another governor reflected that the proportion of the school's budget that was spent on staffing was a good indicator, and it was elevated. MH said it told the right story, with the data to back-up their claims; it had already been circulated to the other chairs but he would now put it on GVO for all to read and he hoped they would all be happy to sign their name to it prior to sending it.</p> <p>The School Business Manager had completed the Asset Register with the assistance of Soft Egg, so they now had a definitive list of all their equipment, should they ever need it in an insurance claim. There were some items of old kit they needed disposal; again, the FRC had agreed this but the decision needed to be ratified by the FGB, and again, the vote was passed by a majority.</p> <p>A governor asked if the issues with the new printer had been resolved – staff had been losing work because of it. The DHT said they had been in communication with Soft Egg about it, it was caused by a software interface issue around images, and they were trying to resolve it. Training to get the best out of the system and the printer was going to be a slot in the September Inset Day to upskill staff.</p>	
12.	<p>Ethos Group Highlights: SC said they had met the previous Friday; there would be a written report to follow. They had looked at the teaching of Religious Education, particularly with reference to the Church of England Statement of Entitlement which gave them a new scope and direction for improvements. The document recognised the cultural changes that Britain had been through and how that needed to be reflected in how RE was taught as a core subject in a Church School. Good work by the staff meant improvements were being made at Sandford. They had looked through some books across the year groups and could see lots of good things happening, with discussion and debate amongst the children. They'd agreed with the HT and his wise decision to keep on the direction of travel and not to disturb the current Subject Lead arrangements.</p> <p>PB said that the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools format was now changed and they needed to consider how that reflected on the school; their teaching of RE, the school's world view, teaching about other faiths, debates, discussions and inclusivity. A governor thought they needed to do more to develop their global links; they had the parish link with St. Stephen's School in Terekeka, South Sudan, but had not driven this forward. Another governor said that the charity Child of Hope was looking for development links and schools willing to get involved.</p> <p>PB asked if PG and FO would move the issues forward. One idea was to get Mike Quinlan to come to the school after his visit to Terekeka planned for November and speak to the children, to see where they then wanted to take the project. Following that they could explore ways to deepen the connections.</p>	

13.	<p>Meeting dates for 2023-24: The calendar for the following year's meetings had been up for debate for a while and some tweaks made to try and improve the timing of Finance meetings versus the deadlines. The Clerk reported that at the recent Clerk's Briefing the County's School Finance Officer, Vanessa Eddy, had been asked about the mismatches in term dates and finance deadlines. She had replied that they were flexible, and also that finance committees could look at recent data to see trends, but it didn't have to be "bang up to date" figures. DS was sceptical about that approach but welcomed the news that the date of returns was given some leeway, that could make life a bit easier in future years.</p> <p>The meeting agreed to accept the dates as set.</p>	
14.	<p>Community Update: MB asked for volunteers for the coming preparation of the school's carnival float on Saturday the 22nd (for procession Sunday 23rd). SC and RC spoke about the plans to keep the Friday Youth Group and Toddler's Group going after their move to Poole happened that summer. Sarah Levett and PG planned to take over running of the Youth Group with the help of the team they'd assembled, and there were some mothers who also intended to keep the Toddler's Group going forward.</p> <p>PB asked if they could clarify the boundaries regards the youth club, in that PG would be there but NOT as a member of SSMPs staff, and although it was partly held on school grounds, with Sandford Primary children attending, the safeguarding and risk assessments were down to the church, not the school. This was agreed; Disclosure and Barring Service searches were conducted by the church and consent forms that parents/carers signed were church ones. They usually had six adults to the forty or fifty children who attended, so this was almost double the legal requirement of 1 to 15.</p>	
17.	<p>Clerk's Briefing and GVO Learning Point: The Clerk reported back from the recent Clerk's Briefing. Publishing board diversity had been a topic of discussion; it was recommended that board's declared age make-up, gender and ethnicity as a minimum. Succession planning was also raised and the Clerk reminded the meeting their intention had been to have two Vice-Chairs, if someone would like to think about volunteering come September. Lastly, reviewing Link Governor roles was recommended, not only to get new governors to fill in positions, but to switch more established governors around the subjects, as a way of having fresh eyes on things, promoting new questions and solutions. It was agreed this would be an agenda item for both the Strategy Committee and FGB meetings in the new term.</p> <p>The GVO learning point for the meeting was that, if you had multiple tabs open in GVO, to be aware that the time-out function (one hour) was running from the first tab opened, and not the later one that a person may be working on. As a governor had recently discovered, it was very annoying to lose the long comment they had just then been writing!</p>	<p>SC and FGB agenda</p>

18.	<p>Policies for Adoption⁹: The following policies had been agreed by their owning committees, ready for ratification by the FGB. All the policies had been approved electronically by governors prior to the meeting, but some more than others. The Clerk reminded them that the idea was to approve them early on, once the meeting pack was published on GVO, unless they had an issue or question, in which case they should put that up as a comment to be answered by the policy holder. That way the policy could potentially be further improved, or discussion developed, before they got to the meeting. Then, hopefully, dealing with policies would take up very little time, other than the ratification vote.</p> <p>A short discussion took place about the process of staff reviewing and updating the policies, as some were not in a publishable format yet. They were held on a system most staff, other than the Senior Leadership Team, didn't have access to. PB said they needed to appoint someone within the school to deal with that, to make the process flow better.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging and Remissions Policy 2023-24 (KK) • Collective Worship Policy 2023-25 (PB) • Complaints Policy & Procedure 2023-25 (CP) • Financial Procedures Policy 2023-24 (KK) • Induction of New Governors Policy 2023-24 (PB/MB) • Safer Recruitment & Induction Policy 2023-25 (CP) • SEND Policy 2023-24 (HC/TD/PB/DIK) • SEND Provision 2023-24 A Guide for Parents (HC/TD/PB/DIK) • Staff Disciplinary Policy 2023-24 (PB/CP) • Staff Disciplinary Procedure 2023-24 (PB/CP) <p>The governors voted unanimously to adopt the above policies.</p>	Clerk to update Policies to Current Folder
18.	Correspondence: None received	
19.	<p>Items for the next agenda/Any Other Business:</p> <p>MB paid thanks to Stuart and Rachel Cocksedge for their huge contribution to the school and the community of Sandford; they would be very much missed but it was hoped that, as their new location was only a few miles away, they would still be able to keep in regular contact. They were given cards and a present and everyone wished them well in their new post. Governors were reminded of the Celebration Award Ceremony being held the following Friday (21st) at 9.00am, where the whole school would be saying their goodbyes and thanks to the Reverend and his wife, if they would also like to attend.</p> <p><i>There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:15hrs.</i></p>	

Date and time of next FGB meeting, 1.0: Thursday 19th Oct 2023 at 17:00

⁹ For Policies, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | GVO \(thegvooffice.com\)](https://www.thegvooffice.com/)