

SANDFORD ST. MARTIN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

3.0 Full Governing Body Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th February 2024, 17:00, via Zoom

Present: Mary Appleton (Associate Member, MA);
Paul Beveridge (Head Teacher, HT/PB);
Melanie Bolt (Foundation Governor, Chair of Governors, MB);
Vikki Britt (Local Authority Governor, VB);
Donna Eite (Foundation Governor, DE);
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);

Quorate

Attending: David Macbeth (Clerk, DM).

No.	Agenda Item	Tasks
1.	Welcome: The meeting was opened and then led in prayer by the Chair.	
2.	Apologies for Absence: Rachel Elford (Associate Member, RE); Richard Heard (Parent Governor, RH); Rik Nash (Foundation Governor, RN); Peter Gale (Staff Governor, PG). Accepted.	
3.	Absences: None.	
4.	Declarations of business and/or any other conflicting interests for this meeting: None.	
5.	Minutes of the previous FGB meeting, 2.0, of the 7th December 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
6.	Matters arising from minutes of the previous FGB meeting, unless covered below: None.	
7.	Headteacher's Report – Spring Term 1²: The HT had posted his report on GVO the previous week. Number on Roll was up two, to 358. Overall attendance for the latest period was 94.7% (National was 94.4%). Persistent Absence was still an issue within a few pockets, but overall the picture was improved, down to 14% (National was 17%).	

¹ For Minutes of the 2.0 FGB meeting, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | 2.0 FGB Final Minutes 07 12 23 \(accepted 08 02 24\) | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

² For HT Report 08 02 24, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | 07a - HT report to FGB 080224 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

PB noted that he had already replied in detail to several questions posed on GVO, related to his report. A discussion was had about whether and how these should be incorporated into the minutes of the meeting. The National Governance Association view was that boards should be getting smarter, using virtual offices to run their affairs. It was suggested that the questions and answers could simply be copied and pasted into the minutes. The Clerk cautioned against this, the minutes could end up being very long. He did try to incorporate some questions asked, especially when the answers were expanded on in a meeting. He also pointed out that the link to the report was appended at the bottom of the page, and this link also allowed those questions and answers to be view. It was agreed he would ask at the next Clerk's Briefing what Governor Services' views were on the subject.

The HT said the latest **School Improvement Action Plan**³ had been "RAG" rated as requested. The two items in red jumped out now, but most of it was either green (completed) or amber (in progress). They had certainly seen a monumental shift in the school over the last few years in good teaching practice and the consistency of delivery. He tried to be as honest and transparent in his reporting as possible, but it had to be remembered that the lesson overviews were planned, so they were seeing teachers perform at their best. They hoped to do unannounced visits later, and then adding all four strands of assessment together (unannounced and announced visits, books and data) to move them to be an outstanding school.

The Teaching and Learning summary (Jan 24)⁴ had development points that were very different from three or four years previously. There was still a mismatch sometimes though, in the understanding and detail that children were achieving, even though the teaching was really good. The best lessons they observed saw a match between teaching and learning. They had some fantastic practitioners, they just couldn't provide it all the time across the school. But the less effective had come up a lot as well; it was not a massive undertaking to move them further forward, they had a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, they had a clear and sharp focus, driving the Continual Professional Development programme, and they were keeping their foot on the gas. **A governor asked when the observations were taken.** PB replied in the last couple of weeks; they now planned to do the same with HM and Maths in school. The report would similarly focus on strengths and finer clarification points. In literacy they were working slightly differently, with teachers in trios, with lesson study models; the strongest could then give peer support to their colleagues.

The HT then turned to the three summaries that had been prepared to support a notional proposal to employ another member of support staff, as he said there was a clear need in the school at this time. The first summary showed the approved outturn November 2023 budget, the second for the new staffing position they'd adopted at the last meeting, and the last with a new TA. They had done an analysis of how these choices would affect the budget over the next three years (in the Comment section of all three proposals), but both two and three were better than the agreed budget set in November 2023. The Chair of the Finance Committee said that they

³ For latest SIAP, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | 07b - SSM SIAP 23-24 updated 310124 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

⁴ For T & L Summary, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | 07c - Teaching and Learning summary Jan 2024 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

looked to be carrying forward an extra £20K this financial year, and they knew more now about projected spending – she was happy with the actual figures, but didn't know the value of the teaching benefits. Another governor asked if this was just a sticking plaster for a short-term problem or indicative of a longer-term issue. PB said it was not just a sticking plaster; in both Years 5 & 6, they had several high-needs children, but that would obviously change over time. But they also had some children with issues in Year 4, some of whom were being currently assessed for Educational Health Care Plans, so there might be some additional funding for them later. He said the proposals were a good spend of their money, on specific and emerging needs; they had a surplus budget, the needs couldn't be ignored, nor the stress and anxieties caused, and they needed to get these children ready for secondary school. A governor said it did feel the right thing to do; were these the feelings of the entire Senior Leadership Team. PB said they had tried many options to reorganise the TA timetable, to make it fit their circumstances, but they couldn't get it to work, there were still gaps in the provision and very little in support left for the less needy pupils. They were constantly "robbing Peter to pay Paul". The DHT agreed, saying she had looked at the problem from every angle, targeting the most needful then working down, and then targeting the pupils that brought the most funding in as the starting point, but whichever way they tried, they couldn't provide the cover needed. A governor asked if other schools were experiencing this, and were there the High-Level pastoral TAs out there in the market to attract. PB replied it was difficult, but they did attract one recently, they just had to work out their notice before starting next month. However, they now had EHCP needs on their books that they didn't have the previous year, leaving them with too tall an order now to ignore. A governor asked if the additional staff would help to improve the attendance figures, and in particular if these children with high needs were the ones absent a lot. The HT said they were not always, but he hoped the new staff would help the situation regards attendance; the anxieties spread through the class leading to lots of soft absences, characterised by headaches and tummy aches. The DHT also thought it would help; the children who found things tricky might well respond to it. Another governor expressed the thought that the reason they were having the conversation was that education was currently underfunded and they simply didn't have the numbers of children they needed. They wanted to know what the impact Model 2 would have next year, and the knock-on costs after that, it could change the figures given. PB said, in his mind, they would want a resignation of a teacher to reconstruct the class structures. They had experienced unforeseen curriculum issues when mixing Yr. R and Yr. 1, he wouldn't want to try and re-sell that again. Mixing in the higher years would be easier. Looking at it crudely, or if they were in an Academy, they would be cutting classes, but that would then have other drawbacks. The natural mixes were Yrs. 1 & 2, 3 & 4 and 5 & 6; these were much more tenable. A proposal was then made to move from Model 2 to Model 3, to employ a full time, general capacity Teaching Assistant until July 2025. The vote was carried for this proposal.

8.	<p>Strategy Committee Highlights Report: MB recounted the SC had discussed the Special Educational Needs Hub, but they would be discussing that shortly. The new website was nearly ready for its soft launch, intended for Monday 19th February, then a launch party in the school hall on Friday the 23rd after school finished. A governor expressed concerns about various punctuation and spelling mistakes on it, and items missing in the Community section. MB said they intended to go through all the copy and proof read it before launch. A governor said there didn't appear to be an area to make any comments about it, they too had some corrections to add. PB thanked MB for the huge amount of work she had put into the website to get it over the line. It was then agreed that the Clerk would make a comment section prominent at the top of the menu on GVO for governors to make comments for MB to take forward to improve the website further.</p> <p>SEND Hub Proposal: The HT said he hoped that the governors had felt a part of the journey; the SLT had been to see other, similar, units in the county, and had now had two sessions with the school staff members to discuss the proposals. They'd been through all the issues with a fine-toothed comb; the proposal had felt as huge as the question of academisation, prompting a large paracetamol bill (!), and despite his initial reluctance to say yes, he had now been spun round 180'; it felt the right thing to do for the school and the wider community. The DHT agreed; she'd helped present it to staff and had initially been firmly against it, thinking it would be too much for the school to take on, but having visited the other sites she was now thoroughly converted.</p> <p>The Chair of the FRC said it would attract additional funding, doubling up on some SEN funding they already received. They were already doing a lot of the work, so it would be good to access another funding stream to assist that. The HT said the crude figures were they would receive £10K per child multiplied by fourteen places, in the first year; the beauty was that for every pupil already at SSMPS that entered the hub, that meant additional funds to spend on them. Hopefully, they would be able to flourish in a Specialist Resource Provision unit on a 1:2 basis; this was the paired model they were proposing; it was half the cost of 1:1 and hence sustainable. Added to that would be the capital investment to the site, there seemed to be more capital funding than revenue funding in Dorset. After that, the unit should be fairly neutral on their overall budget, but it would help the school with infrastructure and growth of roll.</p> <p>A governor said they should be ready with a want list to go to County with. Another said, whilst they couldn't ignore the resources it would bring, it had to be the right thing for the school to do; they'd been sold on it by the due diligence that the staff and governors visiting had put into the proposal. They would now need to sell it right to the school community; RE's comments on GVO were valued; they needed to be positive and proactive about it. The HT said it was a natural expression of what they were already doing. They had decided to stay as a maintained school, and this was the Dorset way of dealing with the issue. They needed to tell the community what they were doing, and why, but also what they were NOT doing.... they were not claiming to be the next "Special School"; they should provide a simple list of what and why, and be clear about it to the parent/carer community.</p>	<p>Clerk to add Website Comment page to GVO</p>

	<p>A governor asked where the unit would be sited; it wouldn't just be a modular unit dropped onto the field? The HT said not at all. They were blessed with plenty of room; the SLT were thinking in the area of the current Key Stage 1 adventure playground or up against the Sandmartin's fence; but it very much needed to be properly linked to the main school building. Or they could also look at moving regular classrooms out to a new building and converting an existing space to the unit. A governor asked if Diocese would have an input in the decision. PB said that Diocese owned the building and County the land, so he was sure they would be involved. It was happening in other church schools, so he was sure they'd be informed. No doubt there would be a lot of red tape! Another governor agreed plonking it on the field would not be seen as acceptable or inclusive. PB agreed, the ethos at other schools was the unit needed to be very much a part of the main school building, to help teach all the children life skills about inclusion. The proposal was then made that the school actively pursue the project, but in conversation and conjunction with Upton Juniors and Purbeck School, to provide a wider SEN solution to the area. The vote was unanimously in favour.</p> <p>Governor Training: The Chair asked any governors who had covered some training to email the details and any certificates to the Clerk for recording. The DHT said no certificates had yet been issued for those covering the Safeguarding training at school in January. It was agreed that the issue of training would be looked at in more detail at the next meeting.</p>	FGB Agenda
<p>9.</p>	<p>Finance and Resources Committee Highlights Report⁵: DS recounted the items the FRC had discussed at the recent meeting. The Voluntary Funds Audit had been signed off by the accountant, the certificate for it was in the school office if anyone wished to view it. They needed to accept the results as a Board, which was duly carried. They had looked at Benchmarking; they were already aware they had an expensive staffing model, and had also spent more than intended on supply teaching. They had now voted to spend more still, but were making these decisions on educational needs, which was as it should be. They were adhering to best practice, with contract reviews being looked at in depth this year for the next budget. RN had been voted on as Vice-Chair of the committee, which was very welcomed. She invited any other governors who wished to sit in on an FRC meeting to do so, and if anyone wanted to volunteer as a second VC, that too would be great.</p> <p>There were no questions for her.</p> <p>Pupil Premium and PE/Sports Premium⁶ updates: The Breakfast Club report had been heartening, but JJ had not yet met with MS, the PP lead, so would report back at the next meeting. The PE/Sports Premium strategy document was available to all to read (see link); DS recommended looking at it to get an up to date review of what was happening in school. PB said they had secured a new sports-coaching contract, starting after half-term, which would give them provision for a further six clubs. It cost £30 an hour, school would pay for lunchtime clubs and parents/carers could pay direct to the</p>	

⁵ For FRC Highlights report, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | FRC Chairs Report to FGB 080224 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

⁶ For PE/Sports Premium Strategy, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | Evidencing the impact of the primary pe and sport premium - Sandford St Martins July 2023 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

	coach to access the after-school clubs. It would help with leadership release time for HTLAs and Planning, Preparation and Assessment time for teachers.	
10.	<p>Standards and Assessment Committee Highlights Report⁷: MA said they had discussed the PP strategy with a new 3-year plan to come. A large part of the meeting had looked at the latest Data Report⁸ on the school and it was worth reading up on, with a really in-depth analysis of where they were at. Other usual items had also been covered. There were no questions for her.</p> <p>Discussion on amount of reading material: The question had arisen following the review of the SAC Terms of Reference responsibilities review. Link Governance was recognised as being very important for the school to progress, and the suggestion had been made that all LG reports should be listed in the meeting packs, with the expectation that governors read them. Whilst it would be great if everyone did read all the reports, it was recognised that this was an additional burden. Fortunately, CL did a great precis report for every meeting and teased out some questions from them, for the HT to answer. It was pointed out that all the reports were already there, on GVO, for people to read. Another governor said they used the Home page of GVO to see the most recent activity, to then dip into pieces of work to get a feel for what was happening in the school, and recommended this for others to try. This was also true of the weekly digest, published on Sunday mornings. They asked the new recruits to the board how they felt about it. The three all replied that they were getting used to GVO, and could find things, but there was quite a burden of items they were implored to read, and it wasn't always possible. Finally, it was agreed that the meeting highlight reports only, from the three Chairs, would be attached to the FGB meeting pack, in an effort to reduce the amount of reading necessary.</p> <p>What should the SIAP look like: Due to pressure of time it was felt this subject could not be done justice in the time available and it was already being looked at by the Strategy Committee.</p>	SC Agenda
11.	Ethos Group Report: MB said the group were meeting the week after, so had nothing to report just then.	
12.	<p>Community Update: MB had been successful in getting a great piece written in the Swanage News about the school. A governor asked if the hyperlink to it could be prominent on the new website; MB agreed. She reminded the governors of the Quiz night on Tuesday March 12th. DIK said the new, joint, vicars for Sandford were being licenced that coming Sunday; protocol had meant they couldn't visit the school beforehand, but one of them would be taking up the post of ex-officio governor with enthusiasm after half-term. The HT apologised that he couldn't respond positively to the invite to speak at the service, it was too short a notice and he had holiday plans already.</p>	

⁷ For SAC Highlights report, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | SAC Chair Report for FGB following SAC Meeting 25th Jan 2024 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

⁸ For latest Data Report, see: [Sandford St Martin's GVO | Outcomes and assessment data Autumn 23 | GVO \(thegvoffice.com\)](#)

13.	<p>Clerk's Briefing: The Clerk said he didn't have anything to report, as the termly briefing wasn't until the end of the month. He then demonstrated via the screen share how simple it was to find any meeting pack using the calendar on GVO.</p>	
14.	<p>Policies for Adoption⁹: The following policies had all been agreed on by their respective committees and were therefore ready for ratification by the FGB. A discussion took place about the fact that some of the policies were not in their final form. The HT said that he didn't have the luxury of time to amend them twice, so any comments against them should be treated by the Board as being pertinent to the policy they were agreeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegations of Abuse – Procedures and Flow Chart 2024-25 (PB/CP) • Anti- bullying Policy 2024-25 (PB/CP) • Church Local Agreement 2024-26 (KK/PB) • Educational Visits & LOtC Policy 2024-26 (PB/TD) • Freedom of Information Publication Scheme 2024-25 (PB/CP) • Health and Safety Policy 2024-25 (KK/PB) • Relationships and Positive Behaviour Policy 2024-27 (PB/CP) • Spirituality Policy 2024-25 (PB) • Support Staff Pay 2023-24 (KK/PB) <p>The governors voted unanimously to adopt the above policies.</p>	
15.	<p>Correspondence: None.</p>	
16.	<p>Items for the next agenda/Any Other Business: Only items already mentioned earlier.</p> <p><i>There being no further business, the meeting ended at 19:00hrs.</i></p>	

Date and time of next FGB meeting, 4.0: Thursday 21st March 2024 at 17:00

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