

# St Alban's Catholic Primary School

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held in the school  
at 6.30 p.m. on Thursday 27 November 2014

## No. 2014-2015-2

**Present:** Mark Broadbent (MB, chair), Jo Coward (JC), Mgr Peter Leeming (PL), Sally Livesey (SL), Joseph McCrossan (JMcC), John Moore (JMo), Janet Muir (JMu), Julie O'Connor (JOC), Jo Wager (JW), Rachael Beale (RB, clerk)

**Apologies:** Sarah Slattery, William Merrick, Janet Muir

### 1. Minutes of meeting of Wednesday 10 September 2014

Confirmed. There were no matters arising.

### 2. Ofsted Inspection

St Alban's was judged outstanding in all respects at the Ofsted inspection conducted during November; the ICT teaching was reported as the best the inspector had ever seen. MB congratulated JMcC, but also the GB for their efforts and contributions. JOC commented that it is much harder than it used to be to achieve this status, and it is a delight for the Diocese.

### 3. Multi-Academy Trusts

JOC delivered the presentation shown to the Diocesan headteachers' assembly earlier in the autumn, summing up the pressures on schools and the desire from the DfE for schools to "work together", and outlining potential structures.

The Diocese would like schools to start thinking about what would be the best fit for local needs. The situation in Cambridge would make it legally very difficult if not impossible to become a MAT; a charitable trust of some kind might be a possibility. If set up properly, partnerships should enhance opportunities for all schools involved. Schools could pool funding into the trust in order to release staff time to train across the trust. The Diocese will not seek to impose a particular model, but does want all schools to form some kind of partnership. It is unlikely, however, that a partnership would attract any extra funding. SL commented that there are many questions to be asked, and more information required. JOC acknowledged that there are likely to be many views as to the best structure. The Diocese will aim to facilitate opportunities for governors to get together and discuss plans over the next two terms. JC asked about timescale; JOC said that by the autumn term of 2015, the Diocese would like a view from each cluster as to what point each has reached.

JMcC asked about next steps. JOC said that at cluster level, the situation is already being explored; at governor level, the Diocese would like a free discussion, with potentially a working party formed from two or three interested schools to get together and begin thrashing out ideas and a vision.

PL suggested that it might be possible to get some paid advice (from e.g. Andrea Squires). JC suggested that all governors could bring back ideas and information to the next GB meeting, and have a one-item agenda. JMcC commented that the carrot for St Alban's was the possibility of creating more Catholic places, and developing headteachers in Cambridgeshire.

#### **4. Feedback from Subcommittees and Training**

##### *Performance and Standards*

The subcommittee discussed the outcome of the Vision Evening. A number of objectives had been set out in five categories: teaching and learning, community, leadership and management, spirituality, and curriculum. The subcommittee looked at the Fischer Family Trust governors' dashboard; JMcC was asked to look at the Early Years curriculum to review progress and attainment in KS1, continuing the policy of incisive tracking of pupil performance and attainment. The subcommittee felt it was satisfied that the interventions that had taken place were both appropriate and effective. Science is a priority; a previous dip in science achievement has now been recovered thanks to a planned intervention. WM met with Mr Gawthorpe, the new subject lead for science. All children are expected to make 12 points of progress, but St Alban's is aiming for 16; pupils are currently averaging around 15 points of progress, but the school knows what needs to be done to achieve that last point. A target has been set to improve performance by 5% at KS2 in order to be in the top 5% of all schools for writing. Work with entitlements is ongoing. There was an update on the Raising Achievement Plan, examining in detail the points of progress.

##### *Resources*

The school's current financial position is healthy, with a surplus of £40-50k forecast for this year (a little less than usual, but this was anticipated). Spending priorities: the woodland areas (JMcC is following up quotes); the extractor fan in the kitchen (JMcC also following up quotes); and IT, especially the replacement of screens (it was decided to delay this for the meantime). The school is moving away from interactive whiteboards to using very large monitors. Salaries were not discussed, but there are currently no proposed points changes.

#### **5. Head Teacher's Report**

This was circulated via email. The school's attendance rate is at 97.5%. St Alban's has received a Sainsbury's Award for sport. The KIT report from the local authority was also circulated.

One teacher's contract has been increased by 0.5 of a day, and additional TA hours taken on, to specifically support a class with intense need.

Keeping Children Safe, the new child protection document from the DfES, was also circulated.

#### **6. Regular Cycle of Review of School Policies**

All statutory policies are up to date; JMcC has circulated a list of what should be on the website.

#### **7. New School Governance Constitution Regulations: Skills Audit**

JMo, GH and SL have already returned their skills audits; JC and PL provided theirs at the meeting. Others still need to be completed.

#### **8. Feedback from Diocesan Meeting**

Communications with the Diocese have improved since the meeting in October, at which JOC explained that the Diocese would have liked more engagement from the

governing body over the construction of the wall, as it was considered to be a safeguarding issue.

#### **9. Review of Pupil Premium Expenditure**

This was circulated by JMcC and also discussed by the Resources committee.

#### **10. Internet AUP**

This was circulated at the meeting and signed by all present. PL, SS, WM and JW still need to sign this.

#### **11. Oxford Schools Visit**

JMcC, MB and WM visited two schools in Oxford, in search of a benchmark for comparison outside the county. MB felt it was a very useful day and said that some kind of collaboration will continue. JMcC commented that it was interesting to understand their relationships with the LA, the Diocese and other cluster schools. The Diocese of Birmingham in particular is long and thin, and communication can be difficult. Both schools were very welcoming.

#### **12. AOB**

Christine Head would like to leave a painting of St Alban's, formerly owned by Dorothy Head (a previous St Alban's head teacher) to the school. SL is happy to pick it up.

JW said that a couple of parents had raised concerns with her about the notification in the school newsletter regarding photographs being taken of the children, and were very concerned that nothing more seemed to be being done about it. Is there a school liaison officer or a policy to be able to refer to? JMcC said that he followed the LA policy: as soon as the school was notified, he circulated it to all headteachers in the city and informed the LA, who intended to contact the police. There is a special constable in charge of school liaison. JW said the parents in question felt there should have been an additional notification specifically to the parents concerned. JMcC said that St Alban's has access to a text system that could potentially be used. JW thought this might be a good opportunity to reinforce the gate policy at the end of the school day, and to remind parents not to talk to children over the fence, in order to ensure that children do not think this is usual.

**ACTION:** JMcC to look at communication channels, and to come to a decision over the best way to bring parents and pupils together sensitively while ensuring the safety of the children.