

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

Local Governing Body – Approved Minutes of Meeting held on 29th November 2022 at 5.00 pm at the School

Governors present:

Mrs S Chorley (from 5.40 pm)	SC	Y Mrs A Keith	AK	Y
*Mrs M Down (MD)	MD	Y Revd N Parish	NP	Y
/Mrs K Marchesi (KM)	KM	Y		
Ms P Gadsby	PG	Y Ms E Smit	ES	Y
Mr A Holliman	AH	N Mrs J Taylor (Chair of Governors)	JT	Y
Mrs S Jeffery	SJ	N Mrs A Todd (Vice Chair)	AT	Y
Vacancy				

In attendance:

Mrs N Ahronson (NA) PCC appointed Governor
Mrs T Jones (TJ) Clerk to the Governors

* The Co-Headteachers Mrs M Down and Mrs K Marchesi share the role of Headteacher governor but count once towards a quorum and have a single vote where the Local Governing Body needs to vote on a matter.

Observers to Part 1: None

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence from this meeting had been received from Mr Holliman and Mrs Jeffery and were accepted. The meeting was in quorum. JT welcomed attendees to the meeting and particularly incoming PCC appointed Foundation governor, Mrs N Ahronson. Introductions were made.

Declarations of Interest and confidentiality

1. There were no interests declared in the agenda items for this meeting. Governors noted the confidentiality statement and the St Martin's Vision Statement provided in the agenda which underpinned all that was done at the Schools.

Constitution update

2. TJ reported that the PCC had appointed Mrs N Ahronson as a Foundation Governor and confirmation of the appointment from the Diocese was awaited.
3. No nominations had been received for the position of Staff governor and the Co-Head teachers would continue to encourage staff members to put themselves forward for the role.

Chair's Action

4. JT reported that given the late provision of documentation by the Trust, she had agreed delegation to the appointed lead Governors for Finance and Resources of the review and challenge of the finance and resources information required for the Trust Finance Board. All Governors had been provided with the information and some governors had taken up the invitation to raise their questions in writing before the meeting enabling their challenge to be recorded. The Local Governing Body ratified this decision.
5. JT reported that the Co-Headteachers had informed JT that due to an oversight on an admissions appeal, which should have gone to Governors to agree entry under criteria 2, it was proposed not to continue with the appeal. JT had agreed this as a chair's action. The child concerned was placed first on the waiting list and has since started at St Martin's Schools. The Local Governing Body ratified this decision.
6. No other Chair's emergency or urgent actions had been undertaken since the last meeting on behalf of the Local Governing Body.

Finance and Resources agenda

7. JT welcomed the commentaries on the current management accounts and the budget paper, showing funding estimates for 2023-24 and forecast year end balances for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25,

provided by the ELT Chief Operating Officer following the recent Finance Board meeting. The Co-Head teachers were invited to comment. MD said that the Trust and Schools recognised that the next years would be financially challenging and that leaders needed to be very careful with their decision-making. The larger cost centres were salaries and building costs.

8. MD outlined a number of flexibilities built into the budget at St Martin's, and said that some elements could be released to support budget constraints if needed, such as provision for the early appointment of a SCITT. Governors noted that this policy had protected the Schools in the past from the effects of teacher resignations and recruitment challenges. There was also scope to focus Pupil Premium funding more closely on outcomes, rather than on other support, which would contribute to staffing.
9. ES asked how much influence the schools could have to progress EHCPs; a number of applications were in the system already and JT commented that once lodged, the statutory framework had to be followed. AK said that it could be useful for parents to prompt to encourage the progression of EHCP applications. MD clarified that the granting of an EHCP would not change the provision at St Martin's but would help to resource it.
10. PG queried the deficit of £265k shown for 2024-25 in the budget paper; it was noted that the three-year budget was largely indicative, and the figures could be impacted by a number of key assumptions which were as yet uncertain. The figures were based on anticipated decline in pupil numbers in Epsom and Ewell. Decisions from staff, such as the return of an Assistant Head teacher to work part time, would impact the figures.
11. AT commented that it was not unusual for the three-year budget at this time of year to highlight future financial challenges, which could be resolved as more certainty emerged about the financial information and assumptions.
12. The LGB noted the budget paper and rationale presented and that the 2023-24 budget was required to be submitted to the ESFA in July 2023.
13. Governors noted that further information about anticipated bids for premises CIF funding would be provided.
14. JT gave a verbal report on the ELT Pay Committee and noted:-
 - ELT Pay Committee consisted of chairs of LGBs and Finance Committees from each school
 - New comprehensive Pay Policy covering all staff across the Trust and aligning treatment of, for example, TLRs;
 - Policy closely linked to the appraisal system; much of the approach reflected practice already at St Martin's.
 - Report from ELT CEO and HR about their challenge to verify that the appraisal process at each school had been conducted robustly.
15. AK asked how staff were feeling; the Co-Head teachers said that at this time of the autumn term, they were tired but generally positive. A staff survey was being conducted. NP asked if the survey was conducted using a trust-wide questionnaire; St Martin's had been able to adjust the document for its needs and it was confirmed that the Trust would review the results from the trust-wide survey.
16. The LGB noted the St Martin's Gifts and Hospitality Register provided.
17. The LGB noted the GDPR Report for 2021-22.

Leadership Report

18. The LGB received the termly written Leadership report for autumn 2022. MD highlighted implementation of the Walkthru approach. An outline was given on this approach, based on Rosenshine Principles, to support teachers to focus on the detail of teaching and professional development through learning conversations with teachers.
19. The LGB noted the reports on Quality of education, including Pupil Performance, Personal Development, Behaviour & Attitudes, Leadership & Management and School of Faith. The 2022 IDSRs for both schools were provided in support of the report on Pupil Outcomes. In respect of personal development, a positive response was noted to the use of the Jigsaw Programme to deliver Life Learning Curriculum. AT and PG planned to conduct an assurance seeking visit on Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes on 9 December 2022 which would include the opportunity to see Jigsaw. **Action: PG/AT**
20. The Co-Head teachers reported on the security incident at the neighbouring Atkins building and highlighted that the calm evacuation of the children, parent communication and deployment of ELSAs to support any child needing support. Members asked about learning from the incident; the Emergency plan had been followed successfully, with appropriate communication to the Trust, Diocese and LA and parents had been happy with how the event had been handled.

SC arrived at this point.

21. AK asked why leaders had chosen to engage whole school training focused on ADHD and whether this would open up training in other areas of SEN; the Co-Head teachers said that lots of the strategies were applicable for other children and the training had been received positively, with comments including that staff felt empowered from their training in their understanding of children with ADHD. As a follow up question, ES asked how this learning would be shared with parents; there had not been good uptake from parents on the recent parent information evening, but consideration would be given to sharing resources via the website and inviting the parents of pupils with SEND and ADHD to a coffee morning at which questions could be asked.

22-23 School Improvement Plan (SIP)

22. The LGB received the 22-23 School Improvement Plan (SIP) and an overview from MD of the ELT SIP cycle which included quality assurance from the Trust and help with setting targets. The report from the SIP had been provided to governors with papers for the meeting. The priorities highlighted with * were priorities with a Trust focus which had been adopted by St Martin's. It was noted that responses had been provided to the pre-submitted questions from AT on the report from the School Improvement visit. AT had asked about the reference to a lack of consistency in approaches to marking and what recommendations were made and what worked well in other schools within the Trust; the Co-Head teachers had responded that the focus on Talk 4 Writing (T4W) would support this, with 'toolkits' supporting greater consistency.
23. Noting the report on Behaviour and attitudes which had highlighted differences between KS2 and KS1, AT had asked about further detail on these differences and sought feedback on the comment on exploring how actively pupils are engaged in learning in KS1; the Co-Head teachers had responded that whilst the children were very well behaved across the school, in some lessons it had been noted that children were quite passive and although the visit was a 'snap shot' there had since been focus on further developing children's active engagement in their learning, particularly in Key Stage 1. Leaders felt that this was partly a 'Covid hangover' (similar to identified in other schools, including those in the Trust) and that teachers' response related to their planning of more 'hands on' interactive and group activities necessitating active engagement. This issue was being addressed through the SIP with a focus on Walkthrus and Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP).
24. AT had asked whether the visit had identified any best practice which could be implemented in respect of the development point *to develop parental engagement with reading*; it appeared that some of the pre-Covid approaches had not continued and it was suggested that the School re-instate parent workshops and other previously offered parental opportunities to support children's reading, in particular vulnerable children and their families. Consideration would be given to the initiative from some year groups to create parent videos and encouraging adult helpers into school to support reading.
25. Governors discussed the query raised by ES about how far all staff felt they were represented within the Leadership and Management stream; MD and KM clarified that there were more detailed plans sitting below the priorities of the SIP. ES suggested that it would be appropriate to recognise staff in the SIP in light particularly of the initiatives at St Martin's to support staff, such as their development and training. The Co-Head teachers would discuss this suggestion further with ES and report further on the 'mock Ofsted' conversations conducted by the ELT CEO for all subject leaders to the next meeting of the LGB.
- Action: MD/KM/ES**
26. AK sought assurance that staff did not feel overburdened by the current level of Trust input; subject leaders had welcomed the 'mock Ofsted' and it was felt that while they could be a pressure, they represented an opportunity for validation and celebration. Governors asked whether the findings from such visits were aggregated for the Trust and shared with schools; feedback channels included through the Head teacher board meetings and KM reported as an example that participation in the SIP visits to other schools supporting sharing of practice – for example, the Walkthru approach.
27. AK asked whether St Martin's had developed links with secondaries as well as local primaries; this was confirmed. As an example, links were in place to seek assurance regarding provision of MFL. AT suggested that it could be useful to share practice with the governors of other Trust schools.
28. In response to ES's suggestion, it was agreed to schedule a review of curriculum development for next LGB meeting.
- Action: TJ/Co-Head teachers**

Prior year data provided on attendance, Behavioural incidents

29. Governors noted the prior year data provided on attendance, Behavioural incidents and queried the statistics for bullying incidents; this would be clarified.
- Action: Co-Head teachers**
30. NP asked what was meant by 'unlikely' in the commentary under Children's Behaviour about bullying incidents in 2021-22; it was clarified that every allegation was investigated and documented but in some cases, investigation had not conclusively confirmed that an incident was bullying behaviour which had taken place over a period of time.

31. NP asked whether there was an increase in incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour and racist incidents recorded in this section; KM reported that all incidents were recorded, and categorised on CPOMS and reviewed by the DSL team for appropriate follow up. As a follow up question, NP asked whether there was any independent involvement into these investigations and about governor involvement; the School could seek support from the Trust safeguarding lead and governors could be involved in parental complaints.
32. NP asked whether this data was analysed by year group, class etc; it was confirmed that the data was analysed and reviewed by leaders to understand patterns. AT asked whether the School had identified any changes in trends from previous years' data; no spikes had come to light, although use of CPOMS to record incidents was enabling clearer categorisation of categories of behaviour from which trends could be identified in future. The Co-Head teachers said that racist incidents had not previously been identified and assured governors about the open approach to following up incidents, with all allegations investigated, and use of Jigsaw to explore and teach children about the issues.
33. ES asked who would decide how an incident of aggression would be dealt with; the teacher would initially follow up the incident and record it on CPOMS, and the matter would be investigated as needed with parents involved and restorative approaches used to resolve the matter.

Vulnerable Pupils including L20s and Feedback from PP and SEND Reviews and action plans

34. In response to a governor's query, the LGB discussed factors related to the proportion of pupils with SEND and EHCPs being lower at St Martin's than the Surrey average (eg 2% of children at St Martin's had EHCPs while the Surrey average was 5%); the Co-Head teachers did not think that this data was representative and the School was trying to get relevant applications through the system. JT commented that parents tended not to fight for an EHCP when they felt that a school was meeting needs without one, and higher numbers of EHCPs could result if schools were not otherwise meeting need and where there were related behavioural issues.
35. In response to query, the Co-Head teachers clarified that the percentage of children entering the school with an EHCP depended on the cohort. Background was given on the challenges of diagnosing issues early.
36. NA asked where funding was derived from prior to getting an EHCP; the School had to absorb the costs of support, which historically had been through the deployment of TAs, although the approach was now to provide SEND support through quality first teaching by class teachers.
37. AT asked about the proportion of children with English as an additional language, which was twice that of the Surrey average, and about the impact of covid on these children; the proportion varied according to cohort, leaders had identified the need to be more rigorous in vocabulary development and were tracking the lowest 20% of learners to ensure that appropriate support was provided. This group could include children with English as an additional language, children eligible for Pupil Premium etc.
38. AK asked about support for EAL children; some EAL children performed very well, for example where English was used at home, but support was provided as needed and included linking families with other native speakers, buying in REMA support and focusing on ensuring that the School's communications were inclusive by avoiding or explaining jargon etc.
39. The LGB noted the termly GDPR report from Trust GDPR manager.
40. Governors welcomed the new format for the Head teacher report.

Safeguarding

41. Governors received Safeguarding data within the Leadership Report and noted that the Safeguarding audit completed on 25 November 2022 had been a thorough review led by the ELT Director of Primary, Anthony Marsh. Members welcomed plans for the Trust to receive consolidated feedback from the safeguarding audits of all the schools. SC reported that although she had not been able to attend the audit, she had reviewed the template of questions to be answered at the audit and was impressed by the range of questions.
42. Governors noted that the Trust would advise whether schools needed to continue to complete Surrey's safeguarding audit.

Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

43. The draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Governing Body held 12 September 2022 and the draft minutes of the Finance and Resources focused meeting held 14 November 2022 were approved as an accurate record for signature by the Chair.

Other Local Governing Body matters

44. JT reported from the ELT Governance Conference held Wednesday 5 October 2022 and highlighted for discussion consideration of the governance structure at St Martin's for the rest of 2022-23. Members

noted the preference at the Trust for schools to hold a main LGB meeting in the first half of the term and two committees, covering Curriculum and quality of education and Resources, including finance, premises etc, in the second half of the term. JT suggested that an alternative to this model could be for the agenda for the second LGB meeting of the term to be split, with the first half of the meeting spent on items on the curriculum and education terms of reference and the second on resources matters.

[Post meeting note; subsequently clarified that the preference is for the committees to meet in the first half of the term and the LGB to meet in the second half of the term.]

45. Governors discussed the two options. Following discussion, it was agreed to reinstate the committee approach and to establish committees for Education and Wellbeing and for Finance and Resources with effect from the spring term.
 46. Members noted that to maintain oversight, they would need to read the minutes from the committee they did not sit on and key matters would be drawn to their attention at LGB meetings. Members would be able to access the papers provided to both committees and welcome to contribute their written questions before the meetings. NP asked which committee the SIP stream, School of Faith, would be monitored through; this would be a matter for the whole Local Governing Body.
 47. The LGB agreed an initial allocation of Governors to the committees (Curriculum and Education to include PG, SC, ES, NA, and Resources to include AT, NP). AK and JT said that they would sit on whichever committee needed support and JT would email absent governors, AH and SJ, to seek their preference for committee.
Action: JT
 48. Meeting dates for the Committees would be circulated.
Action: TJ
 49. Regarding the development of a Governor monitoring schedule. it was agreed to consider at the next meeting any adaptations to the Lead Governor roles with this model of governance and in the meantime appointed lead governors were encouraged to make appointments to visit the School to undertake an assurance seeking visit for their area of the SIP and to let TJ know the date and focus of planned visits.
Action: All/TJ
- For reference, the appointed leads are Quality of Education (including Early Years) – ES (SEND, Pupil Premium and LAC) and AH; Personal Development – PG and AT; Behaviour and Attitudes – PG and AT; Leadership and Management – SC (safeguarding) and JT; SJ and AT (finance and resources focus); School of Faith – AK and NP
50. The LGB confirmed membership of the Admissions Panel as
 - two at least of AK, SJ and NP (Elzanne Smit stepped down from this committee)
 - plus the Chair of Governors (as provided in the Terms of Reference which had been noted at the summer 1 LGB meeting).
 51. The LGB delegated review of the Admissions policies for 2024-25 to the Admissions Panel.

Compliance, Policy and document review

52. The Local Governing Body had sight of the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for 2022-23 which is now owned by ELT. Governors noted that the Behaviour principles for this year had been agreed during 2022, and would be reviewed for 2023-24 during the current academic year.

Annual review of governance

53. The Local Governing Body deferred review of the consolidated summary of input from governors on the NGA's 'Twenty key questions for a board to ask itself'.

Date of next meeting

54. The Trust had advised that finance papers were unlikely to be available for the scheduled spring 1 date, and the LGB agreed to reschedule its spring LGB meeting to 31 January 2023. Governors noted that although beyond the Trust's control, delays to the issue of papers may compromise the LGB's meeting schedule and as a consequence there was a need for flexibility regarding provision of meeting minutes to meet Trust reporting requirements.

Part 2 business

No confidential matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Signed.....Chair Date.....

ACTIONS LGB Meeting 29 November 2022

Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date/Update
19	Conduct an assurance seeking visit on Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes including the opportunity to see Jigsaw.	PG/AT	9/12/22
25	Discuss with ES suggestion that it would be appropriate to recognise staff in the SIP.	Co-HTs	
25	Report further on the 'mock Ofsted' conversations conducted by the ELT CEO for all subject leaders to the next meeting of the LGB.	Co-HTs	On agenda 07/03/23
28	Schedule a review of curriculum development for next LGB meeting.	TJ	
29	Clarify the statistics for bullying incidents in HT report.	Co-HTs	
47	Email absent governors AH and SJ to seek their preference for committee.	JT	
48	Circulate meeting dates for the Committees.	TJ	Spring term LGB meetings - 31/01/23 and 07/03/23 (or 15/03/23)
49	Appointed lead governors to make appointments to visit the School to undertake an assurance seeking visit for their area of the SIP and let TJ know the date and focus of planned visits	All	See emailed booking process 04/01/23
	<i>Brought forward from previous meetings</i>		
41	Sign to confirm adoption of the ELT Governor Code of conduct.	All	
46	Governors who have not done so, to complete new declarations of interest for the Register of interests and forward them to TJ.	All	
33	Review template for governor assurance visits to ensure appropriate focus and effective governor scrutiny.	JT/TJ	
36	Conduct staff governor election in the autumn term.	TJ	In process.
Part 2	Draft a statement to clarify the role of parent governor for inclusion in the newsletter.	JT	
	Include in future agenda - question to support understanding of safeguarding information and keep the info current; Diversity and Inclusion	DSL /TJ	Ongoing – termly.