



# St George's Primary School

Full Governor Body Meeting

Thursday 16 March 2023

Lower Site Main Hall 5:30pm

## Present

### Community Governors

A. Lee  
J. Marshall  
B. Clark

### Parent Governors

C. Scott  
J. King  
P. Dunning  
T. Freeman

FGB Chair

### Staff Governors

B. Cassidy  
H. Rice

Head Teacher

### Also Present

K. Choudhary  
S. Jones

Clerk

### Apologies

A. Ward  
C. Lucking  
W. Alderton  
M. Wiggins

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## Item 1      Welcome, Apologies and declarations of AoB

1.1      Apologies noted and received as above.

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## Item 2      Declaration of any business or pecuniary interests

2.1      There was no declaration of any business or pecuniary interests.

### Item 3            Minutes of previous meeting and action points

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- 3.1     Minutes accepted as a true and accurate record.

### Item 4            Clerking Matters

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- 4.1     Circulated as part of the papers.
- 4.2     K. Choudhary highlighted the following;
- 4.3     **Wirral Governor Forum:** FGB reminded that these took place on 13 December 2023 and 1 March 2023.
- 4.4     **Training Needs:** FGB discussed governor training needs, following on from various committee discussions. The following was agreed;
- 4.4.1   **ACTION 1(03/23):** K. Choudhary to work with school office to conduct an audit of Governors safeguarding training certification. Following this, any governor without an up-to-date Level 1 certificate, will be required to commit to completing the training course as soon as reasonably possible.
- 4.4.2   **ACTION 2(03/23):** K. Choudhary to work with school office to ensure that B. Clark (in capacity of Safeguarding Lead Governor) and x2 other governors to complete Level 2 Safeguarding training course as soon as reasonably possible.
- 4.4.3   **ACTION 3(03/23):** K. Choudhary and B. Cassidy further explore dates for previously mooted Complaints Training.
- 4.4.4   **ACTION 4(03/23):** School Office to circulate The National College log in details to all governors.
- 4.4.5   **ACTION 5(03/23):** S. Jones to explore Finance training options with those Governors that are keen to further expand their knowledge in this area.
- 4.4.6   **ACTION 6(03/23):** K. Choudhary to signpost FGB to online E&D Training.
- 4.5     **Record of Governor Visits:** K. Choudhary suggested that the sterling work (and frequency of visits) is not being recorded due to visit paperwork not being completed.
- 4.5.1   FGB discussed ways of streaming the paperwork so that it is less onerous. It was suggested that Google documents might be a way forward.
- 4.5.2   **ACTION 7(03/23):** K. Choudhary, B. Cassidy and C. Scott to meet F2F to explore visit paperwork options moving forward.
- 4.6     **Governing Body Pecuniary Interest Forms:** K. Choudhary thanked those governors that have already completed their Pecuniary Interest Forms and reminded those that have not that a 'nil return' is required.
- 4.6.1   **ACTION 8(03/23):** K. Choudhary to send reminder to those that have not yet completed their Pecuniary Interest Forms, to do so as a matter of urgency.

- 4.7 **Minutes of committee meetings:** K. Choudhary reminded FGB that minutes of previous committee meeting can be found in the governor google drive – and are always uploaded to the school website in a reasonable timeframe.

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#### Item 5            OFSTED Feedback

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- 5.1     SLT and FGB shared their reflections on the recent OFSTED visit. Hoping to have the report published before Easter but it could take up to 6 weeks.

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#### Item 6            School Development Plan

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- 6.1     Circulated as part of the papers.
- 6.2     FGB reminded that this has been shared at previous meetings but has been updated/ amended.
- 6.3     SLT signposted FGB to updated section 4 of SDP 2022/25.
- 6.4     SLT suggested that this document is the school template/ working document for the next 3 years.
- 6.5     SLT reminded FGB that there is always an open invite to come to school and see the 'plan in action'.
- 6.6     FGB asked if this document will be continually updated and revised?
- 6.7     **RESOLUTION:** No. The school very much see this as a 3-year plan that can be reviewed in the last year of the plan

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#### Item 7            Actions relating to Industrial Action

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- 7.1     Circulated as part of the papers.
- 7.2     SLT stated that the school has produced an action plan with regards Industrial Action.
- 7.3     FGB reminded full DfE guidance and aware of tensions in application of different national and local guidance has been previously shared - [Handling Strike Action in Schools](#).
- 7.4     FGB informed that the school has been affected, as follows;

Strike Day 1	01/02/23	10 classes closed	14 striking staff
Strike Day 2	28/02/23	9 classes closed	12 striking staff
Strike Days 3 & 4	15&16/03/23	Anticipate 10 classes closed	Anticipate 13 striking staff

- 7.5 SLT suggested that there is a nervousness around this issue been resolved quickly as it is a challenging landscape moving forward and it is likely NEU and other national associations will re-ballot.
- 7.6 STPCD Evidence suggests challenges ahead. [DfE offered initial 3% with some room for negotiation.](#)
- 7.7 FGB reminded that the Secretary of State [wrote to all school leaders.](#)

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**Item 8                      Finance and Budget Development**

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- 8.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 8.2 FGB informed that that the school's Finance Manual has been updated as requested, but due to administrative error, has been omitted from the papers.
- 8.3 **ACTION 9(03/23):** S. Jones to add school's Finance Manual to the FGB papers.
- 8.4 SLT stated that the school is happy with financial forecasting endeavours as the actual budget was only £8,000 below period 9 forecast (0.2%)
- 8.5 FGB informed that the 2023-24 budget allocation uploaded.
- 8.6 SLT stated that the school has sought three quotes for Staff Insurance. The school is reengaging the existing provider (School Advisory Service) and this quote represents best VFM. This service costs the school c.£27k/ year.
- 8.7 SLT highlighted the following funding challenges for the school, moving forward;
- Teacher pay awards from existing budgets.
  - Fuel and food inflation increase.
  - 1.25% National Insurance Levy
  - Kingsbridge Funding 2023/24 (0.4 secondment for L. Binks)
  - Maths Hub Funding 2023/24 (0.54 funding for M. Chambers)
- 8.8 S. Jones suggested that the upcoming financial year will be challenging due rationalising staff funding considerations.
- 8.9 FGB asked, given 3% pay award offer was rejected, how much has the school forecasted?
- 8.10 **RESOLUTION:** The school has budgeted for 5%.
- 8.11 SLT suggested that, in the increasingly challenging landscape, c.50% could be in deficit budget, moving forward.
- 8.12 FGB asked is Wirral LA likely to step in to save those schools?
- 8.13 **RESOLUTION:** No

- 9.1      Circulated as part of the papers.
- 9.2      SLT stated that there has been a lot of work surrounding changes to charges for services.
- 9.3      SLT suggested that the schools biggest concern is staffing costs. Pay settlement of 6.5% for non-teaching staff and informed FGB that that is year on year so, the school has had to budget for minimum c.13% increase over two years.
- 9.4      FGB expressed concerned around the optics of a 6.5% increase for non-teaching staff, in the current industrial action landscape for teaching staff.
- 9.5      SLT submitted the following recommendations for FGB approval;
- The school needs to make immediate changes to Dragon Club. Proposal would be over 10%.
  - Suggesting 20p increase in school meals from September to £2.50 (9%). Matches most other schools.
  - Suggesting that nursery meals move to £1.50 (33% increase from £1.00)
  - Suggesting that staff meals increase to £1.65 from September (10% increase).
  - Nursey private sessions increase from £10 to £12 per session from September (20% increase).
- 9.6      SLT stated that the school has managed costs as best it can, but the school has not control over increasing staffing and fuel cost.
- 9.7      FGB asked if all changes would take place from September 2023?
- 9.8      **RESOLUTION:** Dragon Club charge change would take place from Easter 2023. All other services from September 2023.
- 9.9      FGB asked in the school will monitor if there is a drop off in numbers engaging with the service if a price increase is ratified?
- 9.10     **RESOLUTION:** Yes.
- 9.11     FGB reminded that the school has not seen an increase in any charges since pre pandemic.
- 9.12     SLT stated that the only other alternative is to run these services at a loss however in the current climate, this is not a realistic alternative.
- 9.13     FGB reminded that the school is not running any of these services to generate income for the school – these services are strictly not for profit.
- 9.14     FGB asked is cost comparison with our providers is locally or nationally?
- 9.15     **RESOLUTION:** Locally.
- 9.16     **DECISION TAKEN:** Charges changes accepted. **RATIFIED.**

## Item 10 SVFS Report

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- 10.1.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 10.2 FGB informed that J. King met S. Jones on 6 March 2023 for 'deep dive' review of SVFS.
- 10.3 FGB reminded that the overview of school's financial controls audit as per DfE requirements is reviewed by R&PC.
- 10.4 **DECISION TAKEN:** SVFS accepted. **RATIFIED**

## Item 11 DPO report on GDPR

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- 11.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 11.2 SLT highlighted the following;
- There have been no issues related to data protection.
  - The school has had 2 subject access requests.
  - No reported breaches.
  - The schools website host's company was subject to a hack (21 days of updates lost but no data breach)
  - The school continues to commission Judicum as DPO for UK GDPR expectations.
- 11.3 **ACTION 10(03/23):** SLT to highlight to parent/ carers that the school privacy statements are available on the school's site.

## Item 12 IT Audit and Google Platform Proposal

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- 12.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 12.2 FGB informed that the school's strategic proposal is to move to Google managed platform away from Microsoft platform.
- 12.3 SLT highlighted the advantages as;
- Reduce costs by over £8,000 per annum in 3 key ways:
    1. No Microsoft Licensing
    2. Machines 'shelf-life' extended. Not reliant on Microsoft updates and limits.
    3. No additional server running or replacement costs.
  - Improves collaborative working
  - More secure as no server reliance

## Item 13 Developing Mission Statement

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- 13.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 13.2 FGB informed that the new school mission statement has been adopted and is working smoothly after the initial hesitation:

*“Nurturing our community through opportunities, innovation and love’.*

- 13.3 SLT suggested that this has been a guiding statement in some challenging times.
- 13.4 FGB informed that this is already being used to inform decisions on budget, priorities etc.
- 13.5 FGB asked what the feedback from parents/ carers, staff and children has been like?
- 13.6 **RESOLUTION:** Very positive.
- 13.7 FGB suggested that the accompanying/ supporting document explaining the mission statement aims is a useful tool to clearly articulate the message.
- 13.8 SLT suggested that the school needs to move to a corporate model if FGB is happy?
- 13.9 **DECISION TAKEN:** FGB happy with statement. **RATIFIED.**

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**Item 14          Parental Engagement Strategy**

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- 14.1.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 14.2 SLT shared work written with E. Noakes, stating that this document is very much a first draft and will be looking to engage W. Alderton (in capacity of Communication Governor Lead) to review.
- 14.3 K. Choudhary informed FGB that W. Alderton had forwarded a series a question relating to this document and suggested that, as it is a first draft, E. Noakes and W. Alderton meet to discuss and review.
- 14.4 **ACTION 11(03/23):** E. Noakes and W. Alderton to meet and review Parental Engagement Strategy.
- 14.5 FGB asked is the school has any feedback from parents/ carers regarding the new format of newsletter?
- 14.6 **RESOLUTION:** Excellent feedback and ‘viewing’ numbers are up. E. Noakes is also going to circulate a survey directly about communication.

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**Item 15          DfE SEND Review Strategy**

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- 15.1 Circulated as part of the papers.
- 15.2 FGB reminded that they asked for sight of this for awareness of [proposed changes](#) and to have a chance to explore implications for the school.
- 15.3 SLT highlighted the following DfE publications;
- [SEND review: right support, right place, right time](#)  
Added ‘Independent analysis of the consultation responses to the SEND review: right

support, right place, right time' and a link to the SEND and alternative provision improvement plan.

- [SEND and alternative provision improvement plan](#)

Sets out DfE plans to change the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and alternative provision system in England.

- 15.4 FGB expressed frustration around the use of language, specifically around the use of the word 'special' needs rather than 'additional' needs.

## Item 16 Policy Updates

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- 16.1 Circulated as part of the papers.

- 16.2 SLT submitted the following for probity and ratification;

- Behaviour Policy (revised)
- Safeguarding (updated)
- Managing Low Level Concerns (new and externally sourced)
- IT Security Policy (new) – written by Hi Impact

- 16.3 **DECISION TAKEN:** FGB accepted all policies. **RATIFIED.**

## Item 17 Academy Development

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- 17.1 FGB informed that B. Cassidy was supposed to have meeting Headteacher meeting on 10 March, however this was cancelled due to venue cancelation (closure due to snow day). This has been reorganised for next Monday 20 March.

- 17.2 FGB informed that J. Marshall and W. Alderton recent attended a meeting with governors from other Founder Schools.

- 17.3 J. Marshall suggested that;

- Schools involved are generally supporting the process and direction of travel.
- The issue of CEO needs discussing further.
- The benefits to the school need to be more clearly articulated.
- There is a lot of discussion about the name and whom the preferred commissioned partner should be to engage to drive moving forward.

- 17.4 B. Cassidy reminded FGB that this process needs to be 'owned' by governors.

- 17.5 FGB informed that B. Cassidy met with DfE and they suggested that to move ahead, the school needs to:

1. Engage in cost benefit evaluation.
2. Have a name, strategy document and nominated CEO.
3. Growth Strategy
4. Initial audit (premises, finance etc)

- 17.6 B. Cassidy suggested that DfE articulated that there are two stages to this process;



- Initial assessment i.e. is this something the school really wants to do?
  - If yes, the school would apply to DfE which would take circa 3 to 4 months to be assessed. Then there is at least 6 months where DfE will deal directly with stakeholders.
- 17.7 B. Cassidy suggested that when the school submits its application, the school receives a £25k grant to support conducting a risk/ benefit analysis.
- 17.8 B. Cassidy highlighted that at any point before the academy starts, any school can 'pull out' but 'once it's done, it's done'. As such, due diligence is incredibly important.
- 17.9 With specific reference to due diligence, B. Cassidy recommended that the school needs a minimum of 3 governors involved in this process.
- 17.10 FGB stated that there needs to be a clear, transparent, equitable and measured appointment process around the CEO position.

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#### **Item 18          Good News**

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- 18.1 FGB informed that;
- Daisy Scamp Fundraiser raised £6.5k
  - Big Vote Election campaign took place and the school is looking to fund both initiatives.
  - EYFS growth is not only full, but there is also a waiting list.
  - Top site library mural will go up in March, with painting/ decorating to commence in April 2023 and should be fully functional by Summer 2023.
- 18.2 FGB noted the outstanding transformation in the EYFS and thanked all staff members for their endeavours.

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#### **Item 19          AOB**

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- 19.1 None

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#### **Item 20          Date of next meeting**

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- 19.1 Meeting finished at 7:45pm
- 19.2 **Next meeting:** Thursday 15 June 2023

Item	Summary of actions from meeting	Whom	Date to be completed
4.4.1	<b><u>ACTION 1(03/23):</u></b> K. Choudhary to work with school office to conduct an audit of Governors safeguarding training certification. Following this, any governor without an up-to-date Level 1 certificate, will be required to commit to completing the training course as soon as reasonably possible.	K. Choudhary School Office	April '23
4.4.2	<b><u>ACTION 2(03/23):</u></b> K. Choudhary to work with school office to ensure that B. Clark (in capacity of Safeguarding Lead Governor) and x2 other governors to complete Level 2 Safeguarding training course as soon as reasonably possible.	K. Choudhary School Office	April '23
4.4.3	<b><u>ACTION 3(03/23):</u></b> K. Choudhary and B. Cassidy further explore dates for previously mooted Complaints Training.	K. Choudhary B. Cassidy	April '23
4.4.4	<b><u>ACTION 4(03/23):</u></b> School Office to circulate The National College log in details to all governors.	School Office	April '23
4.4.5	<b><u>ACTION 5(03/23):</u></b> S. Jones to explore Finance training options with those Governors that are keen to further expand their knowledge in this area.	S. Jones	April '23
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8.3	<b><u>ACTION 9(03/23):</u></b> S. Jones to add school's Finance Manual to the FGB papers.	S. Jones	April '23
11.3	<b><u>ACTION 10(03/23):</u></b> SLT to highlight to parent/ carers that the school privacy statements are available on the school's site.	SLT	April '23
14.4	<b><u>ACTION 11(03/23):</u></b> E. Noakes and W. Alderton to meet and review Parental Engagement Strategy	E. Noakes W. Alderton	April '23