

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors of All Saints Catholic College held on Tuesday 21st May 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

PRESENT

Governors

Mike Craven (MC)	Connor Cunningham
Chantelle Doman (CD)	Joy Duval Koenig (JDK)
Hetty Fletcher (HF)	Dave Halberry (DH)
Michael Harrington (MH)	Chris Johnston (CJ)
Marsha Kutkevitch (MK)	Maureen Marlowe (MM) (18:15)
Shane O'Driscoll (SD)	Carlos Pinto (CP)
Andrew O'Neill (AON) (Head)	Amanda Sayers (AS) (Chair)

Observers

Oonagh Brett (OB), Deputy Headteacher
Paul Walton (PW), Deputy Headteacher
Sinead Nammock (SN), Associate Deputy Headteacher

Carolyn MacLeish (CM), Clerk for the Governors

1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

AS welcomed everyone and started the meeting with the prayer below.

Lord, as we seek to ensure that everyone in this community is afforded ever greater opportunities, help us to support and challenge the school's leaders in the most effective way.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer!

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following governors:
Richard Girvan (RG) and Ike Offiah (IO).

RESOLVED: that the Board noted IO and RG's absence as reported.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Any governor with a pecuniary or other interest in a particular agenda item were to declare their interest at this point. They were required to withdraw for the whole or part of the item in question.

There were no declarations of interest relating to the agenda.

4. MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 26th March 2024

AS reminded governors that the minutes had been extensively reviewed by her and the clerk. Governors had been asked to send minor corrections directly through to the clerk and to raise only factual inaccuracies.

RESOLVED: that the non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2024 be signed as a true record of the meeting. (unam)

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Reports from Committee/Group Meetings Since Last Board Meeting (draft minutes/notes had been attached):

This was governors' opportunity to ask questions of the relevant committee relating to any of the papers that had been circulated to them.

F&GP –14th May 2024

CJ highlighted key points from the committee meeting regarding the draft budget which the committee recommended to the full Board for approval:

- the School had received an unexpected bill from the caterers for which the School were currently negotiating the final amount owed. The mistake in billing had lain with the supplier and had been made despite DS having queried the amounts on multiple occasions;
- the draft budget being proposed included the figures relating to the unexpected bill so the budget was a worst case scenario as the final figure might be lower;
- the committee made suggestions on how to work with DS on undercharging as well as overcharging from suppliers, and the School was updating its processes;
- DS had set up a bank account which enabled the School to receive interest and to date it had received £5,000 in interest.

Governor raised no further questions.

RESOLVED: the ASCC Board of Governors unanimously approved the draft budget for 2024–25 as recommended by the F&GP committee.

RESOLVED: the ASCC Board of Governors unanimously approved the draft three year budget from 2024–25 as recommended by the F&GP committee.

6. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

AON referred governors to his report, and the following points were highlighted in discussion with governors:

Extended School Provision

- the School had received lots of media interest about the pilot scheme, the coverage having started with a feature from the Sunday Times - other coverage included an article on The One Show which would screen the following Monday;

- 117 pupils had signed up to the scheme with fluctuating numbers throughout the course of the week. The pilot would finish just before the Governors' Afternoon;
- the School had seen improved completion rates for homework and pupils appeared to be enjoying the provision;
- parental feedback had been positive with parents advising that the battle over getting their children to do their homework had been removed which meant home was more relaxed and fun too.

Building Project

- the site set up for the School expansion build project had begun with work starting on the following Monday;
- the contractors had made some stipulations about how the programme would work which included not being able to use the building being worked on after the end of the summer term. The contractor would not work on the building with any pupils in it and portacabins would be used instead;
- some of the building's entrance points would not be accessible after half term;
- fire assessors were coming in to review the circulation and flow of pupils and staff to ensure safety for all on site;
- the project completion date was now being advised as July 2025.

Q) Was there a risk that the School would not be able to use the building at all post the fire assessor visit?

A) AON advised that the key issue was around the circulation of pupils and staff with a reduced site which would be restricted but would be worked out.

Educatio

- GCSE exams had started and were going well, to date only one exam had been missed by one pupil;

MM arrived at 18:15

- attendance figures particularly for Y11 had been encouraging and were good compared to the national figures and above similar schools with similar profiles;
- exam evening attendance had been 60% and Parents Evenings between late 70s to early 80s percentage wise. AON stated the School was looking into the figures and how to improve them;
- **governors highlighted discrepancies in the data which showed more pupils attaining 9-5 in English and Maths as well as those not getting it. AON confirmed he would ask staff to review the data and advise governors, adding that there would be a more comprehensive review of performance data in the autumn term once the School's final results were available;**

Q) Governors asked whether changing the format of the evenings, including an online option, would be helpful. Governors commented that some parents were working more than one job or had difficulties attending in the evening.

A) AON stated the School felt strongly that seeing parents face to face was positive for relationship building between home and School. The School would look at how to encourage participation and to find out where the difficulties were in attending. There were 20-30% of parents that were hard to capture and that would be a focus.

SEND Admissions

- 23-24 admissions data showed the School was the most popular school for pupils with SEND in RBKC, Camden and Westminster;
- AON responded to governors' questions about why the School was so favoured in comparison to other local schools stating that the School fostered the approach that it could meet the needs of pupils with SEND while not all other local state schools did;
- the School had been made aware of some other schools signposting parents of pupils with SEND to the School and away from their own;
- PW was carrying out some work looking into the issue and how the School could actively challenge the practice of being signposted by other schools and how to challenge if they were not being truly inclusive and comprehensive as they should be;
- Governors concluded in discussion that the School did need to challenge other schools who needed to be made to take their fair share of pupils with SEND and meet their needs, and local authorities needed to be have responsibly when recommending schools to parents of children with SEND.

Q) What happens to pupils who have SEND needs but arrive without an EHCP and are waiting for one?

A) There had been a significant increase in recent years of pupils with clear need of an EHCP arriving at the School without one because of the lack of resources in their primary schools. The School had a team in place to deal with this issue and to try to get the application plans through as quickly as possible.

Q) Did the School expect the predicted 18 EHCPs in Y7 to increase the following year and what would be the total number across the School?

A) There would be a possible increase of two to three in Y7 and overall there would be approximately 86 pupils with an EHCP out of 900 pupils.

Formatio

- Governors noted the safeguarding figures and recognised the high level of need within the School community;
- for schools with similar numbers of pupils with SEND the School was seven percentage points above the national average;
- the School focus was on identifying and dealing with issues earlier. There had been a disconnect for those who had been in their final years of primary school during Covid;

Q) Was the School continuing with the WLZ scheme and would it increase the number of workers from the scheme to meet some of the School community's needs?

A) The School currently had one WLZ mentor and was hoping to increase it to two the following year.

Q) Governors congratulated the School on the Enhancement Day and performances highlighted in the report and asked why pupils might not be allowed to participate or go on external trips?

A) AON stated that Rebecca Fuller (with OB overseeing) had done an outstanding job of organising the Enhancement Day. All pupils had a day off curriculum and off site on a trip linked to their learning.. AON stated pupils missed the trips due to behavioural issues and that was an operational decision. The School leadership did not take the decision lightly but balanced safeguarding and making sure that the majority of pupils were not disrupted on a trip. AON added that all

children in the School got to go on trips and there were a minimum of three opportunities per pupil to go on a trip.

OB reported on the summer concerts and the School's version of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival on 13th June 2024 and advised Governors they were all welcome to attend.

- Governors noted that Education Appeals carried out the process of admissions appeals against the School and that none had been upheld. The School received a report on the process;
- the School's attendance figure currently stood at 91.69% which was 0.6% above national;
- the School had been working with another local school with a managed move and there would be a meeting to decide whether the move had been successful or not with the other school.

7. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

Governors noted that safeguarding data was reported in the Headteacher's report and the School had no further matters to raise.

8. POLICY & IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

The following were reviewed and discussed:

- a) F&GP Terms of Reference 24-25 (rec by F&GP) Approved
- b) Pay Terms of Reference 24-25 (rec by F&GP) Approved
- c) Invoices over £10,000 (audit) – Noted and no queries raised
- d) Data Policy and User agreements (to be confirmed by RG) Approved
- e) Lettings Rate card (rec by F&GP) Approved – The School advised that it was in discussion with the Metropolitan Police about the possibility of them letting part of the site during the summer holiday. AON stated that once the site was set up they would be invited in to see if the School could meet their needs without interrupting the building work as that needed to be the priority. Approved
- f) Lockdown Policy (rec by F&GP) – Approved
- g) Whistleblowing Policy (rec by F&GP) Approved
- h) Summer Works Quotes and Tenders (if available) – Astro Turf Pitch – Not available yet.

In the interests of time, it would be helpful for governors to raise any questions/concerns in the first instance ahead of the meeting with Clerk/Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the Board unanimously approved the following as recommended by the F&GP committee:

- F&GP Terms of Reference 24-25
- Pay Terms of Reference 24-25
- Invoices over £10,000
- Data Policy and User Agreements
- Lettings Rate card
- Lockdown Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

9. **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

a) **Governor appointments or ends of office since the last meeting:**

Reappointed at the last meeting

Marsha Kutkevitch, Associate Member, End of Office, 12th May 2025

Hetty Fletcher, Associate Member, End of Office, 18th May 2025

b) **Governors whose office is due to end within the next three months:**

Shane O'Driscoll, Foundation Governor, End of Office 31st August 2024

SD left the meeting and governors voted as to whether or not to approve him applying to be reappointed as a Foundation Governor post the end of his term of office.

c) **Governor Vacancies**

2 Foundation Governors – IO and MC were approved by the Board to apply for the vacant posts and their applications were in train.

d) **Governor Non-Attendance:** No issues to report.

e) **DBS and S 128 Check Update:** None outstanding

f) **Governor Training:** None reported

g) **Local Authority Information:**

Clerks Briefing

CM advised the following resources and topics had been covered in the Clerk's briefing:

- The Big Listen <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/ofsted-big-listen>
- Attendance - governor responsibilities from 19 August 2024
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- Flexible working In Schools and MATS
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flexible-working-in-schools/flexible-working-in-schools--2>
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
CM advised that the LA had asked that governors be mindful of potential benefits and challenges with the increased use of AI. Governors discussed potential issues around homework. AON advised that the School was alert to this, and teachers found it easy to spot AI produced homework. CC was leading training in this area for the rest of the staff and the message to pupils was if you are caught you would fail the homework/exam. AON added that there would be opportunities potentially to use AI as a resource to reduce workload and he would update governors as they were explored.

RESOLVED: that the Board voted unanimously to approve the application of SD to be reappointed as a Foundation Governor.

10. DIOCESEAN PROPOSAL FOR FAMILY 8 MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (MAT)

Governors were referred to the presentation and documentation from the Diocese including the correspondence between AS and the Diocese (circulated with the meetings papers) about their proposals for a Family 8 MAT.

- AON provided a chronology of the discussions that had taken place between the Diocese and schools within the designated Family 8 area, including the School, since 2017:
 - started with a broad concept discussion in 2017 with schools and the Diocese.
 - CVA and St George's Maida Vale formed their own trusts
 - reworking of the policy in 2019, at this point schools/headteachers were not consulted instructed to work together
 - 2019 meeting with CVA headteacher/Diocese and primary school headteachers.
 - change of leadership at Diocese - JP Morrison left and Peter Sweeney appointed part time Director of Education
 - 2020 the School submitted a proposal to form its own trust with the local primary schools it had been working with and supporting, the proposal was declined and the School was invited to attend a meeting with Adrian Leggett, Paul Stubbings (Headteacher CVA) and Fr Michael Dunne in which it was informed that there would only be one trust in Family 8 and that would be the CVA trust
 - no schools in Family 8 were consulted with regarding the proposal
 - following thye meeting the School had several conversations regarding its concerns about the lack of consultation with the Diocese and the interim director in post citing precedents for more than one academy trust within the Family and the inconsistencies in the policy
 - Diocese re-conveyed the decision that the CVA would be going ahead from a single to a MAT trust which would form the trust that Family 8 schools should join
 - 2023 primary headteachers in Brent, north Hammersmith & Fulham and south Brent, which crossed families 6 and 7, made an approach to the School about forming a trust as they wanted to have a strong secondary partner there being no suitable contenders in Islington, Camden or Brent
 - School submitted a proposal for a discussion with Peter Sweeney, was called to meet with Peter Sweeney and Paulo Camoletto and told it would not be possible to form a trust across family groups despite the School citing examples where it had been permitted
 - the School would like to build a group with local schools to serve the local community and protect Catholic education in the local area with smaller schools actively seeking out the School to this end
 - AON concluded that forced academisation was illegal.

Governors thanked AON for his overview of the events to date and the following points were raised in discussion:

- Governors appreciated the Diocese's predicament of seeing falling pupil numbers and trying to safeguard Catholic education within the Diocese as was the School by supporting local primary schools;
- Governors stated that they were a strong board responsible for an outstanding school and their first priority when considering any significant changes to the School's status/structure would be the impact and benefits to the School's pupils and local community;
- Governors added they did not wish to lose their autonomy to make decisions that were in the best interests of the School as they had done over the last ten years which had seen the School transform from being a single sex school with a falling roll to an oversubscribed mixed school with significant investment in its infrastructure from the local authority and an outstanding Ofsted rating;
- Governors questioned if they would be able to make decisions around schemes such as the wrap around care which had been innovative and had seen recognition in the local and national press;
- Governors agreed that they wanted to work with the Diocese but would not be forced into an academisation agreement that would not be to the School's and local community's benefit. Governors wanted to invite the Diocese in to present a more detailed plan of how they saw any potential collaborations or academisation working so they could make informed decisions. Governors did not believe that the provided documentation gave a clear picture of how the proposed CAT would work;
- Governors added that they had enjoyed an incredibly supportive relationship with the LA which had led to significant investment by the latter into the School's building and provision;
- Governors wished to continue to support the local struggling primary schools as they provided the School with its future pupils and because it was the right thing to do;
- Governors noted that by supporting the local schools and providing services at a reduced and affordable rate they were providing a much-needed service.
- Governors noted that Catholic schools were not allowed to federate which could potentially reduce costs;
- Governors agreed that they would also like to seek informal external advice on the School's position and how any change of status would affect the School in all areas including financially.

Governors concluded:

- Governors noted that there would be a change of leadership with a new Education bishop about to be appointed who might have a different view on how best to safeguard Catholic education in the area;
- Governors also noted that there could be a potential change to the national government, which might also have a different view on academisation in general which might affect the Board's decision;
- Governors asked AS and AON to invite the Diocese in to meet the Board and to pitch their proposals. Governors added that they would like to be given the opportunity to understand fully why the School's credible alternative proposal had not been accepted.

- Governors would want to take their time to consider the School's options over the following 12-18 months to decide what was the best course of action for the School alongside the building and expansion programme.

ACTIONS: AS and AON to invite the Diocese to speak to the Board in the Autumn term.

AON to seek informal legal advice on the academisation process and its impact on the School's autonomy and future

AON, AS and MC to form a subgroup to collate and propose a future strategy for the School and Board.

11. ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

Governors advised their actions were completed.

MC, CC, CD, RG, MM, HF and DH to complete declaration of interests and confirmations.

The following governors to fill in the training log (to include upcoming courses) on

GovernorHub: MC, CC, HF, RG, DH, CJ, MK, SO, IO – ongoing

12. CHAIRMAN’S ACTION REPORT

Correspondence with the Diocese on behalf of the Board as circulated to governors.

RESOLVED: that the Board approved the Chair’s Action reported unanimously.

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

SUMMER 2024

Date	Meeting	Time
Tue 11/06/24	C&CL	6:00 p.m.
Tue 02/07/24	Governors Afternoon and GB	12pm onwards Meeting 4pm

14. ITEMS FOR FUTURE ACTION OR MEETINGS

Governors

- Set Dates for Meetings
- Committee Memberships
- Governor self-evaluation
- Governor skills audit
- Governors attendance
- Governors Training and Induction Report

School

- Headteacher’s report
- Summer works quotes and tenders
- SEF
- Summer works quotes and tenders

Policies

- Behaviour Policy and Principles
- Committee Terms of Reference Curriculum and Catholic Life
- Staffing Structure
- SEND
- Academisation – standing item

15. **ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

AON advised that the School needed to make alterations to the School day for the duration of the building project which would also have the additional benefit of reducing teaching workload and offer some flexibility to the working week. AON presented a draft timetable of the changes to the day and highlighted the following points in discussion while asking governors to approve the day:

- proposal to deal with lunchtimes as there was not sufficient time to get pupils fed and through the canteen and provide them with enough time to enjoy their break;
- the School wanted to remove the morning tutor time which would claw back 15 minutes and provide the School with sufficient time to get children through the canteen and have a break, adding the lunchtime meal was a very important time for the children;
- the proposal had the additional benefit of providing an opportunity to give every single member of teaching staff two first periods a week off in the morning which would provide an element of flexible working.
- Tutor time was currently 8.30 -9:00 a.m. which was not a productive time, the afternoon tutorial being more useful and could be designed to be more focused.
- there was no change to the number of teaching hours

RESOLVED: that the Board voted unanimously to approve the changes to the School day as proposed from September 2024.

CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:/...../.....

RESOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS AGREED IN THE MEETING

RESOLVED: that the Board noted IO and RG's absence as reported.

RESOLVED: that the non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2024 be signed as a true record of the meeting. (unam)

RESOLVED: the ASCC Board of Governors unanimously approved the draft budget for 2024-25 as recommended by the F&GP committee.

RESOLVED: the ASCC Board of Governors unanimously approved the draft three year budget from 2024-25 as recommended by the F&GP committee.

RESOLVED: that the Board unanimously approved the following as recommended by the F&GP committee:

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RESOLVED: that the Board voted unanimously to approve the application of SD to be reappointed as a Foundation Governor.

RESOLVED: that the Board approved the Chair's Action reported unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the Board voted unanimously to approve the changes to the School day as proposed from September 2024.

ACTIONS: AS and AON to invite the Diocese to speak to the Board in the Autumn term.

AON to seek informal legal advice on the academisation process and its impact on the School's autonomy and future

AON, AS and MC to form a subgroup to collate and propose a future strategy for the School and Board.