St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation

Minutes of the 21st October 2024 FGB (Full Governing Board Meeting) at St Nics

Key: Action **Q/C** - Question/Comment **R** - Response For info document reference on Governor Hub

Present:	**In attendance**
1. Mike Burroughs MB (Chair) (Foundation Governor) 2. Anna Burt AB (Parent Governor) 3. Caroline Chichester CC (Foundation Governor) 4. Rev Gary Collins GC (Ex-officio Foundation Governor) 5. Lee-Ann Gibbons LAG (Foundation Governor) 6. Claire Hall CH (Co opted Governor) 7. Keith Harvey (Ex Officio Governor) 8. Will Hunter Smart WHS (Ex-officio Foundation Governor) 9. Aditya Keshari AK (Parent Governor) 10. Rod King RK (Foundation Governor) 11. Gabrielle McGarvey (Co opted Governor) 12. Barbara McKenzie BM (Foundation Governor) 13. Duane Turner DT (Foundation Governor) 14. Julia Ward JW (Staff Governor) 15. Siân Williams SW (Vice-Chair) (LA Governor) 16. Magdalen Wind-Mozley MWM (Foundation Governor)	17. Louise Turner-Allen LTA (Associate Member) 18. Heather Whiting HW (Associate Member) 19. Clive Loveless (Associate Member) **Apologies:** Philip Evans PE (Foundation Governor) Chrys Healy (Clerk)ChH 17 governors currently in post, (the quorum is 8). **The meeting was quorate** **Duration of meeting:** 7.00 – 8.40pm

1.	**Opening thoughts** – Thinking is good. **Apologies:** were received and accepted from PE. **Declarations/Conflicts of interests:** AK is the H&S (Health & Safety) governor for Victoria Park Nursery School & Family Hub and ChH clerks for them. **Welcome -** MB welcomed everyone back and thanked them for embarking on another school year. He alos passed on governors thanks and appreciation to KH, the school staff and governors for the wonderful outcome of the Ofsted inspection which showed the dedication of staff and governors to the school. **Chairs discussion points** **Policy Management** – MB had sent an email to all governors regarding this area and succession planning and thanked governors for their responses. **Q** – Governors asked what the Policy Management role would involve ? **R** - There were 33 statutory policies, 52 other policies, which the governors needed to approve and the curriculum policies which the school managed. The review process involved supplying the draft to governors either to the committees or the FGB and once approved uploading onto Governor Hub. There was a spreadsheet which listed all the polices, who was responsible for their management and approval and when they needed to be reviewed, some policies were based on the WBC model policies and others on government guidance. This area was currently managed by the clerk. RK to discuss this area with the clerk. **New governors** - As there were new governors at the meeting everyone introduced themselves and explained their committee membership and roles. **AOB** (Any Other Business) – KH wanted to discuss; IT provider, laptops and computers. MB reminded all present that items discussed were confidential.	
2.	**Minutes of 15th July 2024 FGB** (2 D2 FGB minutes 15 7 24) **Approved,** subject to including GM was In Attendance. **Matters Arising/Outstanding Actions –** None	
3.	**Committee membership** (3 V3 StJStN Governors Details 2024-25 inc last Ac Yr attendance 17.10.24) update. **Action:** Clerk to send out latest version of the Governing Board Membership 2024 – 25 to all governors for them to check their details were up to date and advise the clerk of any changes.	**ChH** asap

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	Action: MB to review this area and report back to governors for the 2.12.24 FGB.	**MB** 2.12.24
4.	**Governance - Monitoring & Training** **4a.1 – Governor Activity Report** (4a.1 D3 Governor Activity Report Template) SW explained that the S&C had discussed governors monitoring reports and had agreed to combine the Link Governor report and the Governor Activity Report. **Q** – Governors asked if it was possible to move item 5 FOCUS/area of enquiry/reason this activity is taking place up under item 2 Type of activity: Training/Visit to school, attending school event - St John's or St Nic's/other ? **R** – SW said she would review the document and take to the next S&C. **Action:** ChH to update the Governor Report Template document as suggested and send to SW to review and take to the 26.11.24 S&C **4a.2 Governor Activity Schedule V25** (4a.2 Governor Activity Schedule V25) SW advised in the Autumn Term 2024 governors were mainly looking at Subject Leadership - Curriculum and refining the Link Governors role. EAL (English as an Additional Language) would be the Spring Term 2025 focus and EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) and MAGT (More Able Gifted and Talented) would be the Summer Term 2025 focus. SW was looking for governors to support the Governor Activity Schedule area. CC (mornings only), MWM, GB and RK all volunteered, SW would contact them. **4a.3 Link Governors Roles** (4a.3 Link Governors Curriculum Leads 2024 25 V1) SW advised governors that the best thing to do when doing their Link Governor visits was to repeat what they did for last academic years' visits and aim to spread the visits out over Autumn Term 2 2024. If they were new to their link role SW suggested they consider doing their visits in the Spring Term 2025. The visits should include a meeting of about 20 minutes with the Subject Lead and include examples of books used if relevant. **Q** – Governors asked if to get the most out of the visit was it worth highlighting on the governors report ? **R** – SW explained that part of the reason for combining the Link Governor and the Governor Activity reports was to record possible actions/suggestions which could then be raised at the S&C and was a way of recording what may be needed. **4b: Academisation –** KH advised there was not much in the way of updates. The clerk had sent an email to governors on 27.9.24 advising that the Diocese had organised an event for schools in West Berkshire for all their MATs (Multi Academy Trusts) who may be interested in expanding in the county to put up a stand and talk to attendees. The event was taking place on Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 6.00pm at Theale Primary School and KH would be attending. **4c: Annual Governance Statement 2023 - 24** (4c D2 Annual Governance Statement 2023-24(2)) MB explained he had updated to reflect the last academic year. **C** – Governors noted that second Governance objectives for academic year 2024 – 25 number should be "To support raising attainment in the key skills of Writing whilst continuing to maintain the good attainment in Reading and Maths." Governors agreed. If governors had any further comments/suggestions they should contact MB or the clerk. **4d: Succession Planning** – MB, SW and MWM had a lot of knowledge about the schools and governors needed to look at the future. MB would be stepping down as Chair of Governors at the end of the Summer Term 2025, he had sent an email to governors to ask governors to think about how they would move forward and felt it would be better to do sooner rather than later and asked the governors to consider taking on new roles on the governing board. **4e: D1 Federation Governance Plan 2024 – 25** (4e D1 StJStN Federation Governance Plan 2024-25 V1 28.9.24) – This had been discussed at the 15.7.24 FGB and the 26.9.24 S&C. Governors noted that the Federation Development Plan (FDP) was for 2024 – 27 and discussed whether it would be better to change the Federation Governance Plan to 2024 – 27 as well. SW had updated last academic year to reflect the situation at the time. Governors agreed that longer term goals would make a more manageable document. **Action:** SW to check if the Federation Governance Plan was aligned with the Federation Development Plan.	**ChH** asap **SW** 26.11.24 **SW** 2.12.24
5.	**Committee/Working Party Reports** – verbal update key points	

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	5a: AC (Admissions Committee) (1 D2 AC Mins 11 9 24, D1 AC Mins 30 9 24.docx) The school was still waiting for a decision regarding the St Nicolas Year 3 Admissions Policy - September 2026 it couldn't publish this until they got a decision regarding the request for the variation for this admissions policy which had gone to the Office of Schools Adjudicator.	
	5b: FC (Finance Committee) **5b.1: P6 BMF Review all funds** (5b.1 P6 - BMF review FY 24 25 - October 24) DT explained that the scheduled FC meeting hadn't taken place but CB had supplied himself, PE and MB with the relevant information to enable them to monitor the position. DT highlighted the following: • P6 was presenting a good position for Fund 01 the MSB (Main School Budget), the projected overall deficit was approximately £12K rather than approximately £40K. • The school had received extra grants and funding, approximately £44K for pay award support and some approximately £24K extra funding for supporting children. • Teaching staff costs currently an excess due to the pay award. • Supply teaching costs - currently 2 members of staff with 2 long term sickness. • Premises costs in line with the budget. • Administration and Clerking line over budget due to extra clerking hours. • Kitchen staff below budget as staff hours have been reduced but staff are struggling with the new volume of hours and are claiming some extra hours. • **Indirect employee expenses** – Redundancy fees less than advised by HR (Human Resources) by approximately £1.5K. • Energy costs in line with budget. • Fund 08 PPG (Pupil Premium Grant) in line with budget. • Fund 13 Sports Premium should stay in line with budget. • Out of hours – Fund 99 - Employee costs above budget as Monday's staff in St Johns has been increased. • Anticipated carry forward for the MSB is approximately £20K. **5b.2**: **P6 Funds overview all funds** (5b.2 P6 Funds - 10.10.2024.xlsx) – information in item 5b.1 **5b.3 Licensed Deficit Agreement** 10.10.24 (5b.3 St John and St Nics 10.10.24 Approval letter - Application to Licence Deficit) The current position was better than expected, with the potential of there being no deficit at the end of the financial year. **Approved** There was a delay in getting the figures in time for the FC meeting, but PE, DT and MB had seen and discussed the figures with CB. Governors hadn't been able to hold the PC as the year end reviews hadn't been completed in time for the meeting. The HTPM panel had met and would present the results to the 18.11.24 FC, then the 2.12.24 FGB. JW had identified someone to audit the School Federation Funds and passed on the information to KH. Governors had no further questions.	
	5c: S&C (Standards & Curriculum Committee) (D3 S&C mins 28.9.24.docx) SW advised that the committee had met on 26.9.24 and it had been an actioned packed meeting in terms of reviewing the data supplied, KH had provided a very comprehensive 29 page report and governors had been able to have a good look into the main focus areas. Pre Ofsted this had been Writing. KB had given a very useful report on the vulnerable children and the continuing focus on the school's disadvantaged children. The specific focus on Year 5 continued. A governor had suggested that KB provide anonymised case studies of vulnerable children to help governors to look at the situation in closer detail. It was felt that this could be an alternative to logging into Insight and looking at the data. The Governance Plan had also been looked at. Governors had no questions.	

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	5d: SIAMS (5d.2 1 SIAMS Working Party Notes Sept 2024) **–** CC advised that the working party was meeting every term. This term they had focussed on the St Johns report, especially how the children were responding spiritually to learning and monitoring Collective Worship an area that BM was very good at doing. SIAMS report areas of development "Embed the use of key resources across all classes to deepen children's knowledge and understanding in RE and evaluate the impact on standards." Was a difficult area to judge objectively. **5d.1 Worship Roses** (5d.1 Worship Rose.pdf) Governors discussed the Worship Rose and thought KH was delivering very well in school. **Action:** All governors to fill in their own Worship rose and send to CC. KH advised governors that they needed to remember that they were objective judgements. **Q** – It was a real challenge to evaluate the impact in this area, how did the school do this ? **R –** BM said talking to the children worked well and JW noted that watching their involvement was also good and it was best not to overthink and go with your gut reaction. CL said it also depended on what type of service it was and making the judgement on your personal experience. **C** – WHS advised St Nics would not be having a SIAMS in the next round of inspections as they were not on the list and St Johns was done last December. The verbal feedback from the Ofsted inspectors on the 9th October did note that 'There is strong evidence of the faith ethos throughout the school.' Governors felt that governors needed to have hard evidence of things being done; reports, photos etc. There had been a lot of physical evidence of this for St Johns when they had their inspection. The RE subject lead had been putting together a picture of what was happening at St Nics. **5d.2: Working Party report** (5d.2 1 SIAMS Working Party Notes Sept 2024)	**All govs** asap
6.	**School Reports/Updates/Training** **6a: EHTR (Executive Headteachers Report) –** KH highlighted the following: **Attendance -** St Johns - 90% attendance, 0.6% unauthorised absence, 16.7% persistent absence. St Nics – 97.2% attendance, 0.6% unauthorised absence, 5.8% persistent absence. St Johns always had lower attendance rates as the younger children got more illnesses. **Alternative provision** – 1 child from St Nics was attending icollege. **Nurture Group** - was having a positive impact. **Behaviour and Attitudes** - was good in both schools and the schools were focusing on teaching Behaviour for Learning and would be reviewing the Behaviour Policy. St Johns had 3 suspensions, for the same child, for physical assault on staff. St Nics had suspended 3 different children. **Quality of Education** - Both schools continued to work on improving and embedding phonics and reading provision. **Ofsted** – Did a deep dive into English, Maths and Science and noted that school needed to ensure that the there was more focus on the task set to appropriately build pupil's knowledge. **Trips** – The children had gone on a number of trips. **Staff** – A new TA (Teaching Assistant) had been appointed and some more hours for St Johns needed to be allocated to staff. The new staff had settled in well. The SLT (Senior Leadership Team) had to cover a lot of staff absence this term, HW and LTA were covering 3 days a week and KH was covering 1 ½ days a week. This wasn't sustainable so the school would need to look at appointing another member of staff to cover absences. Governors discussed this including financial costs and the possibility of being out of deficit by the end of the financial year so this area could be reviewed in April 2025. Safeguarding – had been judged as Effective at St Nics by Ofsted. There was 1 open CP (Child Protection) case and 1 CIN (Children In Need) case. **Q** – Governors asked if the icollege provision for one of the children was permanent ? **R** – icollege provision wasn't permanent but the school expected the child to remain there. **Q** – Were the school funding this ? **R** – They were and governors needed to ensure the child was getting the best provision for them.	

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	6b: FDP Federation Development Plan (6b Federation Development Plan 2024 v1.4 (1) **Q** – Should some of the SIAMS proposed actions be included in this document ? **R** – This plan included the major priorities. Governors discussed this area and agreed it may be possible to include something despite it being a difficult area to record. **C** – Should the outcome of the Ofsted inspection be included ? **R** – It was possibly in there already. **Action:** KH to look at included some of the SIAMS areas in the FDP. **Staff Wellbeing** - Target 6 in the FDP - Develop a focus on staff wellbeing across both schools so that: Staff enjoy their jobs and stress levels are within manageable limits. Outcomes from governor surveys indicate improved feelings about staff wellbeing. SW explained this had been discussed at the EG (Effective Governance) meetings and governors had agreed to look at doing the staff surveys more than once a year, possibly termly, they would be guided by the SLT. They had been done at the end of the academic year, another option could be to do them together at staff meetings. HW explained that it wasn't just the teaching staff that were affected by staff absences, timing for TA's was tight and they may not have time to attend TA meetings and it would be dependent on what else was happening at the time. TA's were not in for INSET (In-Service Education and Training) days as they were not contracted to do so, if they did they would have to be paid or given time off in lieu. Providing training in the school day was also difficult as the TA's were supporting the children. **Q** - Governors asked if there was a reward scheme in school ? In the civil services there were in year rewards that were given out during the year, a Thank You scheme to recognise peoples work, may this be possible now that the finances were looking better ? **R** – Currently there was a system that someone, who had gone above and beyond, could be nominated to HW and they would be given a certificate in recognition of work done. **Q** – Could this be potentially divisive ? **R** – It was possible to display something that recognised staff's efforts. **FDP Approved subject to the suggested changes being made.**	**KH** asap
	6c: Sports Premium Reports St Johns (6c.1 St John the Evangelist School Sports Premium Report 2023 2024) **and St Nics** (6c.2 St Nicolas Sports Premium Report September 2024) Governors had no questions on these reports.	
7.	**7a: Ofsted 8 – 9th October 2025** KH had distributed the confidential draft report (7a.3 10341259 - St Nicolas C.E. Juni - 110013 Draft for FAC.pdf) today, governors had also had the notes of the 9th October feedback meeting (7a.2 4 D3 Ofsted feedback meeting 9.10.24 copy). **C** – GM had attended the feedback meeting and felt the inspector passionately believed what she said, the inspectors were lovely. KH said it felt like a good 'Good' judgement. Governors asked KH to pass on their appreciation of all the work the staff had done to get such a good result. **Action:** MB to put something together to pass on to staff from the governors. **C** – WHS said in terms of a positive an experience it was full on, the school got the call on Monday which was stressful, but as soon as the inspectors were on site and the school had the programme of events it was fine, the inspectors were very obliging and looking for the positives and everything they asked was positive, even the parents interviewed enjoyed the experience. KH explained that the Lead Inspector had been changed at the last minutes, the school could give feedback once there is a link to the published online report.	**MB** asap
	7b: SEF (7b SEF Oct 2024 v2.2) KH advised this will need some updating	
8.	**Vulnerable Groups –** KH explained there was nothing extra to add as this had been covered in the EHTR.	
9.	**Safeguarding** **9a: Safeguarding Governor Report** MWM noted that AJ had been brilliant and was on top of the SCR (Single Central Record) requirements and thanked everyone for supplying the relevant information. **9b: Governor Safeguarding Training** Governors asked to ensure they did the relevant training and kept their records up to date on Governor Hub. The nga (National Governance Association) also did an online Safeguarding training for governors and supplied a certificate when completed. **Action:** Governors to ensure they had done their safeguarding training by December.	**All govs** 2.12.24

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	9c: Safeguarding in education Action Plan (last version 17-11-2023) (9c Safeguarding in education Action Plan 17-11-2023 copy.pdf) KH advised that the LA had postponed this until January 2025 so it could go to the 25.2.25 S&C	
10.	**H&S** AK had done his H&S walk round today with CB, his reports were on Governor Hub (10a.1 6.1 Health & Safety Inspection checkist SJ_v0.2_21Oct2024_AK) (10a.2 6.2 Health and Safety Governors paperwork check list SJ_v0.2_21Oct2024 AK) and he highlighted the following; • 98% of the staff had done the relevant training • COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health registrations were up to date • A few further Risk Assessments needed to be completed, the details were included in AK's reports • AK could see that they were on the right path, well done to all.	
11.	**All Approved/Ratified –** ChH explained that the majority of the changes were dates and version numbers and had been highlighted in red, they had all been approved by the relevant committees. **11a: D1 Attendance Policy V1.1 2024/26** (11a D1 Attendance Policy V1.1 2024/26) – This had been updated to reflect the changes in the law - **Ratified** **11b: D3 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Sept 2024** (11b D3 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Sept 2024). This was based on the WBC model policy. **Ratified** **11c: CME Policy West Berks 2023** (11c CME Policy West Berks 2023 copy). This was based on the WBC model policy and couldn't include the vision statement as it affected the page numbering and index. **Ratified** **11d:** (11d 8a D1 Financial Management Policy & Procedures SNG084 V1.1) This was based on the WBC model policy. **Ratified** **11e.1: D2 Nursery St Johns Admissions Policy SJN077 V1.2** (11e.1 D2 Nursery St Johns Admissions Policy SJN077 V1.2) **Ratified** **11e.1: D4 Reception St Johns Admissions Policy SJN078 V1.2** (11e.2 D4 Reception St Johns Admissions Policy SJN078 V1.2) **Ratified**	
12.	**AOB** (Any Other Business) - **IT provider** – KH explained that the school had looked at this area last academic year but it was not in time to allow the required 3 month notice period, this would now need to be made by November 2024. AK offered to help scrutinise the options. **Laptops** – The laptops at St Johns were beginning to fail and not working, KH proposed they purchase Chromebooks using the Capital Funding, which was separate from the other funds it would be approximately £300/Chromebook a total of approximately £6k. **Action:** KH to take quotes for purchasing Chromebooks to the 18.11.24 FC. **Q** – Governors asked if Chromebooks were on the Amazon wish list distributed to parents ? **R** – This was possibly too big a cost. The current IT provider could set up the new Chromebooks remotely. **Q** – WHS asked who normally approved this expenditure ? **R** – This was usually done by the FC, then went to the FGB for information. Governors agreed this could happen for the Chromebooks but would need to go to the FGB if the cost was greater than £6k. **Q** – Governors suggested that the Amazon wish list be shared with governors as well as the parents and it could also go on the St Nics church newsletter ? ChH to share this information as soon as possible. **PC** – KH explained that they hadn't managed to have the PC and the decision regarding the teachers pay awards needed to be done before the end of October 2024. Most of the school staff were at the top of their pay scale, he wasn't proposing that relevant staff didn't move up a pay point. The FGB **Approved** in principal. **Academisation Working Party** – Governors to look at possible membership after this meeting. Everyone thanked for attending the meeting which ended at 8.40pm	**KH** 18.11.24
	Date of next FGB: Monday 2nd December 2024 7pm at St Johns	

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