St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation

Minutes of the 2nd December 2024 FGB (Full Governing Board Meeting) at St Nic's

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

Present 1. Siân Williams SW (LA Governor) **Chaired the meeting** 2. Caroline Chichester CC (Ex officio Foundation Governor) 3. Philip Evans PE (Foundation Governor) 4. Lee-Ann Gibbons LAG (Foundation Governor) 5. Keith Harvey KH (Ex Officio Governor) 6. Rod King RK (Foundation Governor) 7. Barbara McKenzie BM (Foundation Governor) 8. Julia Ward JW (Staff Governor) 9. Magdalen Wind-Mozley MWM (Foundation Governor) **In attendance** 10. Louise Thornton-Allen LTA (Associate Member) 11. Heather Whiting HW (Associate Member) 12. Clive Loveless CL (Associate Member) Chrys Healy Clerk (ChH)	**Apologies** 13. Mike Burroughs MB (Foundation Governor) 14. Anna Burt AB (Parent Governor) 15. Aditya Keshari AK (Parent Governor) 16. Duane Turner DT (Foundation Governor) 17. Gabrielle McGarvey GM (Co opted Governor) **Absent** 18. Rev Gary Collins GC (ex-officio Foundation Governor) 19. Claire Hall CH (Co opted Governor) 17 governors currently in post, (the quorum is 8, 9 present at the start of the meeting). **The meeting was quorate** **Duration of meeting:** 7.00 – 8.10pm

1.	**Opening thoughts CC** - As we rattle down the tracks in the express train set for the Christmas terminus with over-excited children hanging out of the windows, let's pause in this Christian season of Advent, important for Christians, but relevant to us all: the time of waiting and preparing. ❖ *Advent is the hush in the theatre between the house lights going down and the curtain going up* ❖ *Advent is turning the lights off before you bring in the birthday cake* ❖ *Advent – the conductor raises his baton, the choir takes a collective breath.* As we career down the tracks over the next 3 weeks may be thinking of one of these images, catch your breath and pause, be still, and for those of us who are Christians, wait expectantly as God reaches down to us in the person of Jesus. He is on his way. **Purpose** SW advised this was a scheduled meeting of the FGB. **Apologies** SW advised that MB had sent his apologies and she, as the Vice Chair, would chair the meeting, apologies were also received and accepted from; AB, AK, GM, DT and WHS. **The meeting was quorate.** **Welcome** SW welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded all present of the need to declare any business interest and potential conflict of interest before any individual agenda item and consider whether it would be appropriate to withdraw from the meeting. They were also reminded that items discussed are confidential. All documents are for public view unless stated otherwise by this meeting. **Declarations/Conflicts of interest** ChH clerks for Victoria Park Nursery School & Family Hub. **Chair's discussion points** **Succession Planning** SW reminded the meeting that MB would be standing down as the chair of Governors in July 2025, at the end of the current academic year and would be resigning as a governor at the end of his current term of office 19.10.25. The board needed a couple of governors to come forward, if possible, by January 2025. If any governors were interested, they could stay after the meeting and discuss with SW. The role could be shared following a co-chair model and the EG (Effective Governance) group and the clerk would support anyone who put themselves forward.	

esigned: Mike Burroughs	Date: 31.3.25	Signed:	Date:	Position: Chair of Governors

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	Parents' Survey (5c Parent View Survey Results November 2024) KH thanked for passing the results on to governors, they had been included in the paperwork for this meeting and would be included in the paperwork for the 25.2.25 S&C. **Governors' involvement in school** Governors had tried various ways of managing this area, S&C had agreed to continue the current method of the Governor Signing In Book which was available at both schools. If governors visited the school they were encouraged to record in the Governor Signing In Book to help record governors involvement in the schools. The clerk had highlighted the various activities going on in both schools, recorded in KH's Staff and Parent updates including: **Friday 13th December:** Governor and staff mince pies at St Nic's at 10.45am **Monday 16th December:** 9am St John's Christmas Service. Governor and staff mince pies at St Nic's at 10.00/10.15 am **Wednesday 18th December:** 1.30pm St Nic's Christmas Service SW asked governors to contact the schools if any of them could help with walking the children to and from the church services. It was a lovely season and good if governors were able to get involved **Reduction in number of meetings** Last year had been a difficult year especially with the deficit budget situation, one area savings were trying to be made was in clerking hours, meetings had reduced from 28 to 23 meetings per academic year. SW felt this wasn't ideal and that it hopefully wouldn't continue. Governors were asked to keep a close eye on their emails and for the Link Governors to organise their meetings with the staff, not for the rest of this term, it was also better to avoid meetings at the end of term. SW was mindful there was a big gap between meetings. (FC 20.1.25, AC 3.2.25, S&C 25.2.25, FC 10.3.25, FGB 31.3.25) Governors had no questions.	
2.	**Minutes of previous meetings held on 21st October 2024** (2 D3 FGB minutes 21 10 24) CC highlighted a typo in item 5d, ChH to correct. **Approved** subject to the correction being made. **Action Points** **Academisation Working Party: Action:** MB to check with if other governors wanted to be involved with Academisation Working Party **Ongoing** KH advised that currently there was not much incentive for schools to become Academies, the government was stepping back from this area and the LA would charge schools £10k to academise. **Federation Governance Plan 2024 - 25 Action:** SW to check if the Federation Governance Plan was aligned with the Federation Development Plan **Ongoing** SW said that now governors had the latest SEF (School Self-Evaluation Form) she would review the Federation Governance Plan. **Worship Roses Action:** Governors thanked for going and filling in the Worship Roses and reminded that when they did to send them to CC. **Action:** Clerk to signpost put Worship Rose document onto Governor Hub and signpost for governors. **Federation Development Plan Action:** KH to look at included some of the SIAMS areas in the FDP. **Action:** KH to check latest version and send to clerk to signpost for governors. **Governor Safeguarding Training Action:** Governors to ensure they had done their safeguarding training by December. Clerk reminded governors that they could log onto the Governing Board area on Governor Hub, go to their name and click the arrow on the left and go to View Full Profile and update their training records, this would then be listed in a combined governor training document. Governors were asked to update information on any training done in their training records on Governor Hub.	**ChH** asap **KH/ChH** asap **All govs** asap
3.	**Governance** **3a: Annual Governance Statement 23/24** (3a D3 Annual Governance Statement 2023-24) **Approved** **3b: Committee membership** (D5 V3 StJStN Governors Details 2024-25 inc last Ac Yr attendance 26.11.24) The clerk informed governors of the situation regarding AK's membership, governors agreed with MB's	

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	decision regarding the need for extra police checks required from AK's London embassy. AK had advised he was unable to do this and offered his resignation which was accepted [emailed CH MB MWM to check this is accurate]. SW noted that S&C was a big committee and FC was a small committee, the meeting discussed the need for more governors to serve on the FC, governors didn't have to be financial experts. Governors agreed that both committees' membership needed to be reviewed. Development to be removed from the Governors Rolls and Responsibilities section. **C** RK noted that there was a clear case for smaller committees taking responsibilities. The governors should also consider gender balance, the FC only had the SBM and the clerk as female members, which was possibly uncomfortable for the SBM, he felt women bought a different perspective and drew back to what effect this was having on the school. SW agreed and governors were asked to think about committee membership and would review at the 20.1.25 FC. After the end of the meeting L-AG agreed to leave S&C to return to FC. **3c: Governors Activity Reports** (3c.1 GAR SW Leadership Forum 5.11.24) SW had attended the Leadership Forum on 5.11.24, the documents were on Governor Hub, including the Powerpoint presentation, an update on OfSted was also included. **3d: Governor Hub Action:** Clerk to chase the 2 governors who needed to complete esigning their Annual Declaration forms and complete their DBS check info.	**ChH** asap
4.	**Committee/Working Party** **4a: AC** (Admissions Committee) (D1 AC Mins 30 9 24) **Year 3 Admissions (St Nicolas) Policy SJN079 V1.2 2026 - 2027** (5a.3 D1 Year 3 Admissions (St Nicolas) Policy SJN079 V1.2) KH's advised that when this had gone to the AC committee the school was waiting for the Admissions Adjudicator's response, they had said it would only be an issue for mid term admissions, which KH said was quite rare. It had gone out for consultation with to parents in July 2024 and the school had received 1 response which was negative. **C** Governors were glad that KH had successfully navigated the process with the adjudicator. **Approved** KH advised the only changes to these policies had been the dates and version number. **Nursery St John's Admissions V1.2 2026 - 2027** (5a.1 D1 Nursery St John's Admissions Policy SJN077 V1.2) **Approved** **Reception St John's Admissions Policy SJN079 V1.2 2026 - 2027** (5a.2 D2 Reception St John's Admissions Policy SJN078 V1.2) **Approved** **4b: FC** (Finance Committee) (D3 FC Mins 18.11.24) (4b P7 - BMF review FY 24 25 - November 24 - 11.11.2024) PE noted that the draft 18.11.24 FC minutes were included in the paperwork for this meeting and highlighted the following: • The deficit had decreased from £34k to £11k • There was an extra SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) grant for £24k • There was an extra grant to cover the teachers' pay awards **Risk areas** The October 2024 census figures, there was a lower birth rate and the prediction was that there would be fewer children in school which would affect school funding, there were also other variables which were highlighted in the 18.11.24 FC minutes. KH explained that the school's still didn't have the LA funding information yet, fewer children going to school affected a lot of the local schools so they were in the same situation and pitted them against each other. **Capital Projects** • St Nic's toilets improvement projected to be £90k, CB was applying for a Diocesan grant for this work. • Fire remedial work for St John's would be approximately £3k. • Boiler there was a £240k grant from the Diocese, that schools could apply for, the current boiler was 34 years old so hopefully the Diocese would find the funds. FC had agreed to changing the IT provider to Ask4Support. They had also agreed the purchase of new Chromebooks for St John's but KH had decided to wait until the new IT provider was on board. **Governors approved the change of IT provider to Ask4Support.**	

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	The PC had approved all KH's pay award recommendations and the HTPM's recommendations. **4c: S&C** (Standards & Curriculum Committee) (D2 S&C mins 26.11.24) SW advised that S&C had met on 26.11.24 and discussed; the mock SATs results; Phonics testing; the gap between attainment levels between Disadvantaged and Advantaged children; review Governor Monitoring; Feedback from learning Walks; KB's case studies for vulnerable children. The minutes were included in the paperwork for this meeting. **d: SIAMS** CC explained they had not meant since the last FGB, there was a visit planned for 16th January 2025. CC had done a Link Visit with the RE lead at St Nic's and was waiting for the comments on her report, once she had she would send to SW (completed and in the folder for next S&C). The RE lead was looking at deeper understanding in some areas. CC and BM had attended the Diocesan training on 29.11.24 on Developing an Approach to Spirituality and there was also a session on 3.12.24 on The Governors' Guide to Collective Worship and Spiritual Flourishing. Both had found the 29.11.24 Developing an Approach to Spirituality training both exciting and sobering. The aim was to look at having a sense of spirituality embedded across everything and everyone. The Diocese was happy to come and do training in this area and shared emphasised that you didn't have to have faith to follow. They suggested that the school had an RE statement but they didn't have to have a policy. Once CC received the training paperwork, including the Powerpoint presentation it would be put onto Governor Hub and signposted for governors. St Nic's was due a SIAMS next year and it was great that all the governors were on board. **C** BM agreed it had been very good training, lost of questions about spirituality and how to embed it in everything the school did. A quarter of church schools didn't understand spirituality and it would be good to work towards a shared understanding of what this would look like across all areas nurturing spirituality focusing on human doing rather than being. The case studies reported in KB's report for the 26.11.24 S&C had been very interesting and highlighted the challenge of addressing this area for all. SW thanked CC and BM for doing the training. **Q** CC said there were 2 spaces for the 3.12.24 on The Governors' Guide to Collective Worship and Spiritual Flourishing, would it be possible for the RE Lead to do ? **R** Unfortunately she wasn't in tomorrow and KH wasn't in either. CC said she would produce a report on the training alongside the Powerpoint presentation for the next SIAMS meeting to be held, before the 31.3.25 FGB if possible.	
5.	**School Reports/Updates/Training** **5a: EHTR** (Executive Headteachers Report) (5a HT Report Autumn 2024) KH highlighted the following: **Numbers:** The prediction of lower numbers in the future was a worry and the school needed to keep the numbers up. **Pupil Mobility:** There was more pupil mobility and more EAL (English as an Additional Language) children at St John's. **Attendance**: Was generally better at St Nic's and on par at St John's, the younger children seemed to be more susceptible to contracting illnesses and parents were also more cautious about sending them into school. **Exclusions:** There had been 3 from each school, one of the St Nic's exclusions had been permanent. The GDM (Governors Disciplinary Panel) had met on 22.11.24 and discussed the parents appeal and agreed with KH's decision. The parent had the right to appeal the GDM decision, if they didn't within the 15 day response period, the child would be removed for the schools register. **Bullying Incidents:** Overall, to date there had been 2 at St John's and 28 at St Nic's, all the incidents had been recorded on the system. **Racist/Radicalisation/Prevent Incidents:** There had been none at St John's and 4 separate incidents at St Nic's, what was concerning was that they were directed at the staff, non white British staff were seen by these children as not being as important as the white British staff. It was hoped that the introduction of the No Outsider scheme would help in this area.	

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	Personal Development: St Nic's was judged as 'Good' by Ofsted this term and St John's self-assessed as 'Good'. KH felt St John's should be judged as 'Outstanding' SW agreed having visited the school recently. KH noted that a lot of the HTR was based on Ofsted's criteria, the schools had also done Trauma Informed Training, this wasn't paid for as it was a pilot scheme as part of the LA's working towards delivering better value to avoid higher costs from having to use the Alternative Provision service. Governors had no questions. **5b: FDP** (Federation Development Plan) **24/27** KH would update in line with the last S&C meeting and send to SW to take to the next SIAMS working party.	
6.	**6a: Ofsted** (6a 10341259 - St Nicolas C.E.Junior Sch - 110013 Final.pdf) Governors were very happy with the report and some of the areas for discussion had been included in the HTR. **6b: SEF** (6b SEF Nov 2024 v2.3) This was largely the same as when the school was inspected, there was more info in the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) section. **Action:** SW to check that the Governance Plan aligned with the SEF and the FDP. Governors had no questions.	**SW** 31.3.25
7.	**Vulnerable Groups** This was discussed at the 26.11.24 S&C and recorded in the draft minutes which were included in the paperwork for this meeting. There were no further updates.	
8.	**Safeguarding in Education Action Plan 21.11.24** children (8a Safeguarding in education Action Plan 21-11-2024.pdf) JW had attended the Safeguarding Governor networking meeting, which covered what information was needed for this document and noted this needed to be a living document. KH felt that the schools were providing the relevant support in all the areas except, item 19, regarding having appropriate measures in place to identify, support and protect unaccompanied children seeking asylum. This was not an area the school had experience in. PREVENT training MWM advised all governors ought to do this training, she had signposted the online training courses available for all governors on the 24.11.24 on Governor Hub, it was easy to do and didn't take too long. If anyone had any issues they should contact MWM. **Action:** All governors to do the PREVENT training. The Safeguarding in Education Action Plan 21.11.24 was **Approved**	**All govs** 31.3.24
9.	**H&S** (Health & Safety) **H&S assessment** St John's H&S assessment had been done in October 2024 and now both schools had been judged as 'Good'. AK, KH and CB would be having a H&S meeting on 11.12.24.	
10.	**All Approved/Ratified** **10a: D2 Financial Management Policy & Procedures SNG084 V1.1 2024 25** (10a D2 Financial Management Policy & Procedures SNG084 V1.1) This had been approved at the 18.11.24 FC. **Ratified.** **10b.1: D3 Admissions (St Nicolas Year 3) Policy 2026 - 27** (10b.1 D3 Admissions (St Nicolas Year 3) Policy 2026&2027 v1.2) **Approved** see item 4a. **10b.2: KH Admission Note** (10b.2 Admission Note for Governors Nov 2024.docx) **Approved** see item 4a.	
11.	**AOB** (Any Other Business) - There were no AOB items. SW thanked everyone for attending the meeting and wished everyone an enjoyable Christmas. The meeting closed at 8.10pm	
	Date of next FGB: Monday 31st March 2025 7pm at St Nic's	

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