



**An Daras Trust**  
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

## St Stephens Community Academy

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Head Teacher – Maura Furber  
Chair of Governors – Joan Heaton

12/3/24

### MINUTES

#### Spring Term Meeting 2024

Local Governing Board: St Stephen's Community Academy

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 / 10am at the School

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

**Present:** Joan Heaton (Chair), Maura Furber (HT), Bonnie Soanes, Kathy Walsh, Gary Jeffery, Cate Harvey

**Apologies:** Paul Dickens

**In Attendance:** Ann Cullum (Local Governance Officer).

2. **Declarations of Interest relevant to this agenda**

None declared.

3. **Governors**

JH's term of office ends on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and she has agreed to continue as a governor for a further 4-year term ending 8<sup>th</sup> March 2028. The governors were very happy to agree this.

4. **Confirm Minutes of LGB Autumn Meeting (1<sup>st</sup> December 2023) and Matters Arising**

The decision was made to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the last meeting and the Chair signed a copy.

**Is there an update on the fire safety work?** The fire safety work has been signed off, although the alarm systems need some adjusting. The termly fire drill has recently taken place, as well as a power cut, and all the doors, alarms and lighting worked correctly through both. Logs are kept in the main office. **Are staff required to take Fire Safety training?** The Head Teacher, the Site Manager and the Pre-School Manager are Fire Marshalls and their training will be renewed in the Summer term. **Is there any update regarding the perimeter fence?** Kendal Kingscott (project management) have submitted their report to the Trust and once approved, a contractor will be appointed with a 4-week lead-in period and anticipated 7-weeks project duration. **Is there concern from the neighbours regarding the fencing?** Yes, a little. The school will be arranging to have the trees cut back. **Is the fence still at 1.2m?** Yes, and it is metal with 2 gates. Emergency lighting will also be installed. **What is happening with the pool?** This is too expensive and therefore not viable. Swimming lessons will take place at the local swimming pool. **Can St Joseph's help with transport?** Unfortunately not. This has been looked at in the past but it isn't possible. The Trust minibus and The Red Bus will be used. All classes will be taking swimming lessons and donations will be requested from the parents.

- **Monitoring Visits and Working Group** – to be discussed in item 12
- **Governor Training** – to be discussed in item 12.

5. **Confidential Matters**

MF shared some staff matters which are recorded in Confidential Minutes.

## 6. Head Teacher's Report

The Head's Report has been shared with all governors and key points were raised. **Are the EHCPs reviewed regularly?** Yes, they are reviewed annually with parents/carers. We discuss all provisions with parents termly. Pupil Voice frequently takes place which highlights any issues. **Is staff training up to date?** Staff CPD takes place regularly. The Trust has been very supportive to all staff, including governors. Neil Swait has met with the English and Maths Lead and will soon be meeting with other Leads. **How is the new Science scheme progressing?** Staff are trialling Plymouth Science this term and we will collate feedback in the summer term. KW has introduced this in a CPD session. Early feedback is good: it provides good resources which reduce workload. **Is the Cornish language taught at St Stephens?** Pride in our Cornish heritage is embraced but the Cornish language is not currently on our curriculum. Spanish is our Modern Foreign Language.

**Are persistent absentees a concern?** Yes, it's an on-going consideration despite a robust attendance system. The EWO will be holding meetings in the summer term after the next Parents' Meetings. We have even arranged taxis to help these children get to school. Parents are encouraged to send their children to school and the school will monitor them. Weekly Attendance reports are maintained and termly attendance is shared at Parents' Evenings with regular updates via emails, social media and newsletters. We monitor and compare termly/yearly attendance figures. We provide pastoral and family support where required and produce an ongoing list to identify needs. **Are parents fined for taking their children out of school for holidays?** No, not at the moment, even though these are unauthorised absences, although the DfE has issued new legislation regarding this.

## 7. Improvement Plan & Data Analysis

The Improvement Plan has been made available to all governors. The SEF has also been updated which all governors have read. MF highlighted the school's strengths and weaknesses. Overall the school is strong. A deep dive will be taking place in Art. The school strives to keep up to date with current trends so that we can fine-tune the curriculum. MF has produced an Ofsted crib sheet which has been shared with all governors. Our forecast looks good. The IDSR is good.

**Is EYFS strong?** Yes, everything is good with the EYFS provision/framework in practice. We are continuing to strengthen and evolve the links between pre-school and foundation class. **Is there an EYFS Governor?** CH volunteered to take this on. **Are there any gaps in learning?** There is always ongoing assessment with termly formative assessments where Leads will produce gaps analyses, targeting priority children. Tutors work with key year groups. Additional Maths provision and fast track Phonics occur every day. Social skills support key children, with Gardening Club, Lego Club, Fun Fit and after school/lunch time clubs for all to access. **Does this include the SEND/PPG children?** Yes, additional opportunities and interventions are available to all children. In-school enrichments are available to all pupils and we prioritise those who are unable to travel to extracurricular activities. Adaptive learning is in place to maximise success. **Is there a Climate Change policy?** No, but we have a Climate Change Plan. Climate Change & Sustainability is included across the curriculum. The children are very interested in Climate Change. JH attended the UNICEF Steering Group Meeting and was impressed with the children's respect and resilience; they were quietly confident and a credit to the school.

**How is the school managing staff wellbeing and workload?** We obviously try to minimise additional workload but awaiting an Ofsted inspection is a stressful position to be in. We receive excellent support from the Trust. Wellbeing relationships are key and we do support each other, directing support as needed to counselling, medical support and occupational health via staff insurance. JH had a meeting with Margaret Savage (Trust Director) where they looked at the SEF, which MS was happy with.

The governors were satisfied with this and raised no further questions.

## 8. Safeguarding

CH met with Claire Paul and looked at how safeguarding works in the school. This was a very positive meeting and there were no concerns. Provision is available to meet the needs of the whole family, especially where families are waiting to receive external funding. There is also a lot of community support as well as early-help family support. The S175 will be looked at in a peer-to-peer review which will take place at Central Office. The SCR was checked, which includes DBSs for all staff and governors, and everything is satisfactory. **When do DBS checks need to be updated?** These are a one-off. The school has access to police logs which can be instantly accessed.

**What happens with vulnerable children who are non-verbal?** The curriculum is adjusted so that these children are included with everything. **Do the staff make a point of focussing on these children?** We know these children well and know how they communicate. We are “behaviour detectors” and we communicate with the parents all the time. If we have any concerns, we will contact the parents immediately and refer to external professionals when appropriate. All elements of concern are covered by our Trauma Informed Schools status. The Mental Health Team are currently in school working with pupils. **Are there any issues which can impact on the school community?** Deprivation/poverty, drug abuse and mental health are concerns and these are constantly monitored. The school has recently produced a ‘Decider Skills’ leaflet which will be sent to all governors for information. Decider Skills help children to recognise their feelings and give them key strategies to regulate their behaviour. A Parents’ Meeting has been arranged to share the skills so that they can support at home. All children know who their “safe” person is. **How do you keep up to date with ever-changing online safety?** This is an important aspect of our Safeguarding Policy and is built into our teaching sequences. We have an Online Safety Week but it is taught regularly through the school year. Monthly newsletters are sent to parents and placed on our website. Links to webinars also sent. There is a lot of information regarding online safety on the school website. The SENSO filter tracks all equipment. An ICT4 staff member visits the school weekly and we have a regular check of laptops, iPads and computers to ensure filtering and firewalls are secure. The children are very aware of online safety and it is regularly discussed in assemblies and PSHE lessons.

## 9. Review Vision & Ethos

This is ongoing through Pupil Voice. The school looks at the 3 strands: wisdom, knowledge and skills which align to the UNICEF policy and our Capability Curriculum evolution. All Subject Leaders have reviewed their subject and identified where our vision and values fit into these, as well as the wisdom, knowledge and skills. **Do the children have much input?** Yes, definitely. Their voice is heard and this is evidenced through leaders speaking with different groups. Through our focus on vocabulary and oracy they are learning to be more confident and articulate.

## 10. Pre-School/EYFS Statutory Framework

The EYFS framework is good. The current prefab building isn’t fit for purpose so the pre-school has been using the Family Hub Centre. The school will need to pay rent for this, which is currently under negotiation.

## 11. Compliance

Everything is compliant and MH is monitoring staff CPD. Ray Clarke (Health & Safety Inspector) has recently visited the school for a health & safety check and will send in a report. **How often does RC inspect the school?** Every term. Staff complete a form termly, highlighting any defects in their classroom.

## 12. Governor Monitoring & Training

### Monitoring Visits

- **PPG Impact and Provision for this year – GJ to meet with MF – carry forward**
- Safeguarding – JH and CH to meet with Claire Paul (Trust Safeguarding Lead) – completed, report shared with all governors

- Improvement Plan Review (JH/CH/GJ) - completed
- Online Safety (PD/BS) – completed
- Curriculum (JH/CH/GJ) – completed, report made available to all governors
- SEND (KW/CH/Debbie Bartlett) – completed, report shared with all governors.

#### Monitoring for Next Term

- **Improvement Plan review (JH/MH/CH/PD)**
- **Next likely improvement plan priorities – EYFS (JH/MH)**
- **PPG impact and provision for next year (MH/GJ)**
- **PE impact and provision for next year (GJ/Michelle Roberts (Arena Lead)/PE Lead)**
- **Safeguarding (JH/PD/CH).**

A reminder that the Trust Sustainability Working Party is on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 9.30am at Central Office.

#### Governor Training

Cyber Security – JH 6/01/24, BS 9/1/24, PD 8/1/24, CH 25/1/24, GJ 8/3/24

GDPR – KW 8/1/24, BS 29/11/23, GJ 8/3/24

Safeguarding – JH 31/12/23

Prevent – JH 1/1/24

KCSiE – JH 29/12/23

Safer Recruitment – JH 31/12/23

ACE & Trauma Informed Practice – JH 1/1/24.

GDPR training now needs to be renewed annually.

All governors confirmed that they have received and read the ADMAT Termly Safeguarding Update as part of their ongoing Safeguarding training.

#### Governor Training Overdue – to be completed as soon as possible

- **GJ, CH to complete local governance training**
- **CH to complete Prevent training.**

Governors to Email copies of training certificates to AC so that records can be updated.

**Chair's Meeting with CEO** – this will take place later this term.

#### **13. Policies for Review**

The governors agreed the reviewed Accessibility Plan.

**The Behaviour and SEND Policies are due for review at the next LGB Meeting.**

#### **14. Any Other Business**

MF praised Jodie Webster, a Learning Support Assistant who is leaving St Stephens at Easter due to relocation. Jodie has been a great asset to the school and the governors thanked her for her service, wishing her well in her new job.

#### **15. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 10am.

The meeting closed at 11.30am.

**Ann Cullum**

**Local Governance Officer**

**Distribution List:**

Joan Heaton – Co-opted Governor/Chair  
Maura Furber – Head Teacher  
Kathy Walsh – Staff Governor  
Paul Dickens – Co-opted Governor  
Bonnie Soanes – Co-opted Governor  
Gary Jeffery – Co-opted Parent Governor

Will Hermon – Trust CEO  
Steve Tavener – Chair of Trust Board