

# RODE AND NORTON ST PHILIP SCHOOL FEDERATION

Headteacher: Mrs George Muxworthy

Minutes of a Governors' meeting held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021  
Virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams

## MINUTES

*Confidential agenda items are identified and highlighted in red.*

In attendance:

Georgina Muxworthy	Headteacher
Caroline Whitehead	Chair & Foundation Governor
Rev. Caroline Walker	Foundation Governor
Kirstie Tozer	Co-opted Governor
Richard Clayphan	Co-opted Governor
Andrew Carr	Co-opted Governor
Siobhan Thompson	Co-opted Governor
Philip Miller	Co-opted Governor, Chair of Finance and Buildings Committee
Kim Slade	Staff Governor
Bill Jackson	Co-opted Governor
Iestyn Lewis	Vice Chair & Parent Governor
Bethany Jarroussie	Parent Governor
Valerie Parker	Foundation Governor
Sam Nicol	Minutes

Item No.	Item	ACTION
1.	<b>Prayers, Welcome and Introductions, Apologies, Pecuniary Interests and Urgent Items</b> The meeting was opened in prayer by Caroline Whitehead No additional pecuniary interests were declared. Absent Graham Slingo	
2.	<b>Minutes of meeting held on <a href="#">14<sup>th</sup> January 2021</a></b> Signed as a true and accurate record.	
3.	<b>Matters arising:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continuity of Learning now published on the website</li><li>Circulation of Governor monitor and contact plan</li></ul> The Chair confirmed circulation of the monitoring and contact plans to all governors. Each governor now has one teacher to make contact with, to discuss how school is going from the teacher's perspective and to establish a focus for governor monitoring to support each governors' area of responsibility. Staff are aware and expecting governors to make contact. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Methodist Funding: Financial support has from both the Methodist Circuit and District has been agreed.</li><li>Batten Pool Fund: This fund was established to help former pupils of Rode School with support when they enter further education or the world of work. Full details of the fund can be found <a href="#">here</a>. The Trust Fund set up to manage the interest from the capital investment, known as the Rode Methodist End Fund is currently administered by a former Governor, Roly Simms. Nationwide Building Society have</li></ul>	

	<p>written to Rev. Simms informing him that the account will be closed. BJ has written to Nationwide Building Society to explain the current position with the fund administrators and to ask for their advice on an appropriate way forward.</p> <p>Q. How much capital is invested? A. £2000.</p> <p>Q. Can governors decide to close the investment fund and pay the capital funds into the school budget? A. This will have to be a decision by governors at a future meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Governor Appointments</b></p> <p>1. Election of Vice Chair 1.1 Iestyn Lewis</p> <p>IL addressed the meeting highlighting his reasons for supporting the Federation as a governor, his previous 21 years' governor experience and the relevance of his work within the education sector over the last 32 years.</p> <p>Iestyn Lewis left the meeting</p> <p>Q. how sympathetic is IL to the ethos of Church Schools? Following the Chair's recent discussion with IL, he is very in tune with our Christian Schools philosophy. The Vice Chair is a supportive role, and his appointment would put the Board in a very strong position. Iestyn Lewis' appointment as Vice Chair was proposed by Rev. Caroline Walker and seconded by Caroline Whitehead. Governors voted by a show of hands to elect Iestyn Lewis as Vice Chair of Governors. The vote was unanimous, no votes against and no abstentions.</p> <p>Iestyn Lewis re-joined the meeting.</p> <p>2. Election of Co-opted Governor – 2.1 Richard Clayphan</p> <p>RC's re-election as a Co-opted Governor was proposed by Caroline Whitehead and seconded by Siobhan Thompson. Governors voted by a show of hands to elect Richard Clayphan as a Co-opted Governor. The vote was unanimous, no votes against and no abstentions.</p> <p>3. Process for the election of staff governor The Clerk confirmed the deadline for nominations was Monday 22 February. Further appointment information will be reported at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chair wished to <b>thank all Governors</b> for their support during a tough year. The Chair considered the Board to be effective and 'doing well' compared to other schools.</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> Clerk to determine RC's term of Office.</p> <p>Clerk to add staff governor appointment to the next agenda.</p>
5.	<p><b>Committee Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance &amp; Building Committee</li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Finance Committee reported that following the Month 9 report the school finances showed a healthy balance to carry forward to the new finance year. However, the number on roll continues to be of concern; low pupil numbers have a negative impact on the school budget. Any further decline in pupil numbers may affect class organisation in the future.</p> <p><b>Q. Do we know the Reception intake numbers for September 2021?</b> <b>A. First preferences = 20/21 pupils. There may be one or two 'out of County' applications not included in these numbers.</b></p> <p><b>Q. What impact would a class reorganisation have on the school?</b> <b>A. Classes would become mixed age classes, with more than 1 year group in each class. A reorganisation to 4 classes would be an absolute last resort</b></p>	

	<p><b>however it is anticipated that there will be sufficient carry forward to financially support the continuation of 5 classes in the immediate future.</b></p> <p>A parent governor commented that a move to 4 classes may affect admission numbers as the single year group model is attractive to parents. It is important to keep marketing the unique educational offer of the Federation. The Chair of Finance confirmed that staffing would be a priority in the new budget.</p> <p>The Committee agreed a quote for the repair and maintenance of the Hall floor at Rode by an established contractor recommended by the Area Building Surveyor. A member of the F&amp;B Committee will conduct a Health and Safety visit by Easter. The Chair also noted that he had pruned the Willow Tunnels, for which he was thanked by the Board.</p> <p>The current SBM will be stepping down on 5<sup>th</sup> March and the new SBM will attend the next F&amp;B meeting.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Parent Survey</b></p> <p>The Headteacher <b>thanked</b> the new Co-opted Governor, Bethany Jarroussie for her help in creating the parent survey. The responses received were an opportunity for an outpouring of feelings from parents! 80% of parents who responded considered our remote learning offer to be good and appropriate. Class survey results and parents' suggestions have been fed back to class teacher who have developed improvement targets in response to the survey results. In Year 4 parents requested the option to upload work on-line. To achieve this, further training on Teams has been organised for staff but the poor Broadband connection at Rode School meant the on-line training could not take place. A Co-opted Governor noted that with more people and students working from home connectivity had been a village wide problem. Soft Egg are now investigating the school's upload and download speeds.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Chair's Briefing</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that she had recently attended a number of Chairs briefing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAST * - The Chair was reassured that RNSF Board was not experiencing the problem of governor dis-engagement experienced by many other schools. A useful set of Ofsted questions were discussed, and the Chair will distribute these to all governors, in readiness for a future inspection.</li> <li>• Bath &amp; Wells Diocese – the meeting explored the challenges of; maintaining the Christian life of the school during the pandemic, active governor monitoring and monitoring pupil progress and the impact of living in a rural community.</li> <li>• SSE Governor Services – Staff well-being should be a focus for governors. Teachers are managing both in class and home learning. Link governors were asked to have a proactive approach to their area of reasonability and to keep records of their monitoring activity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> Chair to distribute Ofsted questions</p>
8.	<p><b>Head's Up-date</b></p> <p>The new Headteacher will be including a Head's update at every governors meeting. All the children attending school are happy and teaching staff are looking forward to all children returning to school in March. The headteacher has attended a range of SSE and MAST courses as part of her induction. The MAST support has been very useful, governors were informed of an initiative to link the new Headteacher standards to the SIAMs objectives. The Headteacher also attended an inspirational briefing on the curriculum led by Mary Myatt.</p> <p>The new Business Manager has been appointed and has met with the Admin Team. Recruitment of a new Reception Class Teacher will be made for September.</p>	

	<p>The Headteacher has made contact with the new Headteacher of Selwood Academy to develop a collaborative Humanities link between the schools.</p> <p>Virtual assemblies are taking place with Caroline Walker, Jo Robinson and Graham Slingo.</p> <p>Books of hope are being compiled by the children to give testament to this time in history for future generations.</p> <p>Plans for 8<sup>th</sup> March  Staff are more confident and positive about all children returning to school in March and staff are looking forward to teaching all children in class again. With the continued message from the Government to stay at home until 29 March, it has been decided, to keep the minibus drivers safe and to limit mixing of bubbles, there will be no minibus service until after the Easter break. I G Sports wrap around care will re-commence at Rode School and staff led wrap around care will continue at Norton St Philip.</p> <p><b>Q. If children are self-isolating will they be offered remote learning support?</b></p> <p><b>A. The message from the Government is that attendance for pupils will be compulsory from 8<sup>th</sup> March. If a child is required to self-isolating home learning will be provided by the class teacher. If a class bubble is required to self-isolate remote learning will also be provided.</b></p> <p><b>Q. Prior to September opening, did Somerset County Council provided guidance on how government policy would be implemented in a more localised context and will we expect the same for re-opening in March?</b></p> <p><b>A. The Headteacher is not aware of any additional advice from SCC. However, support and collaboration between the FLP Head's has been invaluable.</b></p> <p><b>Q. Will lateral Flow Tests continue for staff?</b></p> <p><b>A. Voluntary Lateral Flow Tests started in mid-January. Staff have the option to take the test twice a week. 5 out of 20 staff are taking the tests.</b></p> <p><b>Q. What are the current teaching arrangements in the Reception Class?</b></p> <p><b>A. To save money, the Headteacher will continue to teacher two days per week in Reception with Jan George (current reception teacher one day per week) increasing her hours to 2.5 days per week. The remaining half day will be covered by PPA arrangements. A new full time Reception teacher will be appointed from September 2021.</b></p>	
9.	<p><b>Equality Monitoring</b></p> <p>The Equality Policy needs to be updated to reflect new legislation and current equality practice. Staff need to be involved it its review to make it relevant and for equality it to become embedded in school life. Any Governor comments can be sent to the Chair. Governors requested the following items for inclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. equality of access to learning in a digital environment particularly for children with visual impairment.</li> <li>2. the policy must echo the school's Christian values and ethos</li> <li>3. the Christian vision document should be referenced</li> </ol>	
10.	<p><b>Plan for re-opening on 8<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p>Item covered in in Head's up-date – agenda item 8</p>	
11.	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p>	

	None	
12.	<b>Urgent items</b> – <i>must be declared before the meeting starts</i> None	
13.	<b>Dates of future meetings</b> : 24 <sup>th</sup> March, 22 April 7 <sup>th</sup> June and 15 <sup>th</sup> July.	

MAST - Methodist Academies and School Trust

SSE – Support Services for Education

PPA – Planning and Preparation Arrangements

SCC – Somerset County Council