



## THE COUNCIL OF ST. JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

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Minutes of the meeting of the Academy Council held at 6:00 pm at the school on Tuesday, 21 March 2017.

#### PRESENT:

Rev. Dr. J Cortis (Chair), Mr. Paul Booth, Mrs S. Collins, Mr G. Conroy, Mrs A. Fleetwood, Mr K. Higgins (headteacher), Mrs C. Oldroyd, Dr. C. Schwab and Mrs F. Wilson.

#### In Attendance:

Mr M A Johnson (Minute Clerk)

#### 1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting, especially the new parent governors Mr. G. Conroy and Dr. C. Schwab. He then opened the meeting with a prayer.

#### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Rev. Can. J. Aveyard and Fr E. Hegarty.

16/59 RESOLVED: That in accordance with protocol, the Governors consent to the absence of Rev. Can. J. Aveyard and Fr E. Hegarty

#### 3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No items of other business were notified at this point in the meeting.

#### 4. REPRESENTATION

The following matters of representation were noted:

##### End of Term of Office

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Mr Alan Oldroyd	Parent	17. 2. 17
Mrs Habiban Zaman	Parent	4. 3. 17

##### Appointments

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Mr G Conroy (To replace Mr A Oldroyd)	Parent	20. 2. 17

(To replace Mrs H Zaman)

16/60 RESOLVED: That the Academy Council acknowledges the end of the term of office of Mr Alan Oldroyd and Mrs Habiban Zaman as parent governors and notes that the Chair has written to both to thank them for their services to the Academy Council and the school community.

16/61 RESOLVED: That the Academy Council acknowledges the appointment of Mr Gerry Conroy (from 20 February 2017) and Dr Claudio Schwab (from 5 March 2017) as parent governors for a period of 4 years.

It was noted that the Head Teacher would take action to verify DBS clearance for Mr Conroy and Dr Schwab.

The Chair then invited the new governors to consider which committees they would wish to serve on for the remainder of this academic year, noting the previously expressed wishes by Mr Conroy in this regard.

16/62 RESOLVED: That Mr G Conroy be appointed as a member on the Resources Committee and that he and Dr C Schwab be appointed as members of the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee.

The Chair reported that the Diocesan Council for Education recently reiterated the policy that foundation governors could only serve for three consecutive periods as governors at the same school. This had an impact on the membership of this Academy Council.

The Chair had contacted the Diocesan Council for Education and the Parish priests regarding the following issues of representation:

- Rev. Dr Cortis had been in the position of Chair since September 1999 and therefore was not eligible to stay on the Academy Council, without Diocesan approval. He had already indicated last September of his intention to step down from Chair and Foundation Governor in August 2018 and would seek permission to stay and fulfil this commitment.
- Mrs Felicity Wilson had indicated her intention to step down when her current term of office expires at the end of August 2017.
- Mr Paul Booth's term of office would expire at the end of August 2017 but had indicated his wish to continue for another term. Permission is required for this to happen so the Chair would provide him with the relevant paperwork.
- Mrs Sephie Collins had another year from the current term of office, according to the Diocese, whereas the Academy appointment records showed her term of office would expire on 30 September 2017; accordingly, the Chair asked Mrs Collins to check her letter of appointment, with a view of her seeking a further term of office.
- The Academy Council has a long standing vacancy of a Foundation Governor.
- Priest governors had no specific terms of office but the Academy Council needed to be aware of possible changes in the summer as a result of the review of the current deanery provision.
- The Chair had asked for the latter item to be considered at the deanery conference which took place on 14 March just in case there were experienced governors from the primary sector who were not eligible to stay to see if they were interested in moving to the secondary sector. A response was still awaited.

The Chair further reported that the situation of membership of the Academy Council from 1 September 2017 would become more complex with Mr Higgins' decision to resign from his position of Head Teacher and governor from 31 August 2017. He had been in discussion with Mr Higgins about this issue for some time and formal written notification was received on the 16 March. The Diocesan Director of Education was informed and the Chair would inform the Trust Board at the meeting scheduled for 29 March.

The Head Teacher responded that it had been a huge privilege to serve the school and Academy Council but he considered that the time was now ripe to leave and enable the Academy to appoint a new person to meet the challenges ahead.

The Chair reported that he will be having further discussions with the Diocesan Director of Education on 23 March. There is a need to also consider the needs of the Trust as a result of this resignation and also explore different models of leadership. Including this vacancy there are a further 3 secondary headteachers vacancies in the diocese.

16/63 RESOLVED: That the Chair's update on membership of the Academy Council be received.

16/64 RESOLVED: That the Head Teacher's intention to resign from his position of Head Teacher and member of the Academy Council from 31 August 2017 be formally accepted, and that the Head Teacher emails the staff to inform them accordingly and that the Chair informs the parish priests of the deanery.

16/65 RESOLVED: That the Chair informs the Trust Board of the headteacher's resignation, where a discussion will take place for a way forward.

The Chair reminded all governors, as stated under the information items on the submitted agenda, that membership of the Academy Council would need to be published on Edubase from September 2017 and that governors should forward their information details accordingly.

## 5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2016

16/66 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2016, be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to correcting the dates of the future meetings, agreed at the time, under resolution 16/58, namely, Wednesday, 22 March 2017 and Wednesday, 28 June 2017.

## 6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

### i) Governors' Skills Audit-(min 16/29 refers)

The Chair had undertaken a further analysis of the governors skills audit forms and had re-issued an updated paper for governors.

16/67 RESOLVED: That the content of the revised consolidated Governors' Skills Audit, as at December 2016, be noted.

### ii) Publication of Approved Policies-9min 16/47 refers)

It was noted that all policies approved at the last meeting had been published on the Academy's website.

## 7. RAGed SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2019

Key highlights from each area following a discussion at the meeting:

Plan Area 1: Mission (Already reviewed by the Mission Committee)

- Plan was mostly graded green/amber.
- Red area in terms of higher percentage of high grades in RE. Further mock exams were taking place in March and outcomes would be reported to the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee in May 2017.

Plan Area 2: Learning and Success

### **English:**

- Plan had been reviewed following a Faculty Review in January and discussed with the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee this month.
- Sections which were able to be graded were judged as green.

It was noted that last year's results were not as good as expected but many interventions were now in place and the position was stabilising. The Head Teacher reported that 'Schools Direct' had proved to be a very helpful service in providing trained teachers. It was noted that there would be some mock results available in March ahead of the actual exams in May 2017. These will be reported to the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee in May.

### **Maths:**

- Most areas were judged as green/amber.
- Faculty was currently undergoing its review and the Head of Faculty would report to the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee in May 2017. Although maths was performing well, required adjustments would be made following the review.

**Q:** How many staff are needed in maths and English to have a full team?

**A:** Around 8/9 in maths and 10/11 in English.

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

- Some areas were green or amber.
- Entry had been made against each action point.
- Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee considered the outcome of the most recent review in January 2017.
- Staffing remained an issue.
- Student recruitment to take this subject at Key Stage 4 and 5 remain a challenge.

The Head Teacher reported that whilst this subject area had a Head of Faculty, with an assistant headteacher to support, the Academy was struggling to recruit staff to the vacant posts, with interviews scheduled next week for main scale teaching. This was a smaller faculty and suffered from a massive cultural issue, with the subject being seen as not valuable for all sorts of reasons. French/Spanish were the main languages taught.

**Q:** What would make students more willing to take up French/Spanish?

**A:** If the students are not obliged to study the subjects than they will not have the

inclination, especially given it is a hard subject area compared to the comparative ease of achieving better grades in 'softer' subjects. The Academy does seek to persuade pupils, emphasising the importance of an additional language(s) in the modern world and the opportunities afforded.

### **Science:**

- Most areas judged as green/amber.
- Two red areas. Attainment at Key Stage 3 linked to the system of assessment without levels. Second area is not due for review until July 2017.
- Faculty had a recent review which is due to report to the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee in May 2017.

### **Humanities:**

- Most areas are judged as green/amber.
- New Head of Faculty due to start on 5 June 2017, who would massively strengthen this area.

### **Computing and PE/Sports Qualifications**

- Most areas judged as green/amber.
- One area judged as red; time had not allowed for building of a bank of model answers and writing frameworks to use in lessons - the Head Teacher confirmed a plan was being put in place to make this happen.
- Many schools had entered their students for the 'Euro Driving Licence', which counted towards Progress 8; this opportunity would be made available for some of the Academy students.

### **Targeted interventions for Year 11**

- Most areas were judged as green/amber.
- Extra lessons are being provided in addition to the after-school provision. The targeting of 20 students most at risk of not making expected progress is no longer red as action has been taken.

### **Further improvement in quality of teaching in all subjects**

- Most areas were judged as green/amber.
- There was much ongoing work in furthering the quality of teaching, with good teachers supporting others.

### **Literacy**

- New literacy co-ordinator has been appointed on a lower TLR than advertised, on account of the level of her experience, and therefore she will be supported by the Assistant Head Teacher.
- Some green areas were recorded.
- The Academy had been unable to carry out learning walks focusing on response to marking comments in the classroom due to union response, but some were taking place, e.g. English Faculty.

### **Positive Behaviour System**

- Most areas were judged as green.

The Head Teacher highlighted some cases to demonstrate the challenges the Academy faced in determining requests for term-time holidays.

**Q:** What level of attendance is expected at the year-end?

**A:** In the high 94%. The best the school has ever managed in recent years is 95%.

**Q:** What else can be done to drive up attendance?

**A:** By maintaining our focus of discouragement of term-time holidays and taking action against offenders. Two weeks absence is almost 6% of a student's yearly education and it is proven that persistent absentees do not do as well in examinations. The set government margin for qualifying as a persistent absentee is 90% attendance, thus, just one student would really skew the attendance figures for the school as a whole.

**Q:** Are we getting more students with anxiety issues?

**A:** Yes, there is a small number, but this has a disproportionate effect on the numbers as a whole. We seek the support of the local authority in the more serious cases, but a lack of funding is affecting this type of support.

**Q:** Are schools penalised for poor attendance?

**A:** Yes, it could result in an Ofsted judgement of inadequate or requires improvement.

### **Changes to the National Curriculum and KS4 Qualifications**

- Each action has been reported on but not always colour coded.
- Good progress overall.

The Head Teacher added that the Academy was now operating a more traditional curriculum, as driven by government policy.

### **Data tracking and analysis**

- Amber areas.

The Chair reported this showed the effectiveness of the significant data collection system in use at the Academy. The Head Teacher added that some staff, e.g. in maths, were using it especially well. A key tool was the very accurate assessment which quickly and clearly identified areas where any intervention measures were needed.

### **Outcomes for the Sixth Form**

- Mixture of green and amber grading.

Last year's results were very encouraging, whilst varying across some subjects. The Head Teacher reported that the Academy was looking at stronger outcomes this year for the Sixth Form based on current assessment data. There had been a noticeable culture improvement, with most students willing to apply themselves.

### **Plan Area 3: Leadership**

- Most areas were judged as green/amber.
- Whilst Governors' skills audit was positive there was a need for more governor training.
- Governors needed to find things out for themselves more.

The Head Teacher added that student voice was proving to be a very good initiative. Within the faculties student evaluations were collected, and this was showing a culture shift. The red area indicated the drive to strengthen some of the faculties in this regard.

### **Improve quality of Self-Evaluation Forms at Faculty Level**

- Mixture of green/amber.
- One red area.

#### **Improve building and the environment**

- Mostly green.

#### **Pupil recruitment**

- Mostly green/amber.

#### **Pupil Premium Action Plan**

- Current position has been reviewed and considered by the Mission Committee this term.
- Mostly green and amber.

#### **Attendance Action Plan**

- Not been reviewed as yet.

16/68 RESOLVED: That the progress against targets set for the School Development Plan for 2016-17 be noted.

### 8. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT FOR TERM 2

The Head Teacher's report had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.

The following were the key highlights:

- School population /recruitment.
- Low numbers in the Sixth Form. The Head Teacher indicated that at least 200 pupils were required for the Sixth Form to be viable and effective and that achieving that number would be difficult without having attractive subjects to offer. Many students wish to move towards full vocational subjects at the expense of academic ones, which affect school recruitment. Thus, it was important to emphasise the attractiveness of the subjects which are provided and particularly to seek to encourage the brighter pupils to remain. In terms of the wider issue of sixth form provision in the area as a whole the Head Teacher outlined the position in other schools within the locality. By 2025 it was expected there would be an extra 1500 pupils in the sixth form for demographic reasons.
- Mission and ethos of the school.
- Local Authority review of provision. A meeting attended by the Chair and Headteacher took place on 10 March 2017 with the offer of a review which would be useful to freshen up minds in terms of what Ofsted might expect. The Local Authority indicated that support for modern foreign languages may also be offered, and it had been suggested that the Academy should look around for a senior leader in education to also offer support.
- Head Teacher's objectives for 2016-17.
- Funding for 2017-18. The Head Teacher reported that one of the biggest challenges would be having to face a standstill budget position or cuts at a time of inflationary pressures on schools, e.g. staff pay rises, increases in pension contributions, and the establishment of the apprenticeship levy. Fortunately, the Academy had been very

prudent and so would not be hit as severely. The Chair added that the Resources Committee was to look at a draft budget at its next meeting for recommendation to the Trust in July for approval.

- Options for 2017-18.
- Current assessment data had been considered by the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee this term.
- Positive letter from the Youth Sports Trust dated February 2017, congratulating the school on being one of the top 100 sport colleges in 2016 and expressing gratitude for all the school was doing to offer students the very best physical activity, PE and school sport opportunities, which would in turn impact on their well-being, leadership skills and personal achievement.

16/69 RESOLVED: That governors note and thank the Head Teacher for his term two report.

## 9. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

### i) More Able Pupils.

Minor modifications recommended by the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee were noted.

16/70 RESOLVED: That the revised Policy for More Able Pupils be approved.

### ii) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

It was reported that an oral update on changes had been given to the Mission Committee.

16/71 RESOLVED: That the revised Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures be approved.

16/72 RESOLVED: That the approved policies be published on the Academy's website.

## 10. MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS THIS TERM

### (i) Resources Committee

The Resources Committee meeting held on 31 January 2017 discussed the following issues:

- Bids/Projects submitted to the EFA for the 2017-18 cycle.
- Procuring the catering contract. Some governors were involved on the 6 March in the short-listing stage from 6 applications received. Three companies delivered a presentation and answered the panel's questions on 21 March. No decision had been made on the award of the contract pending further analysis of one of the applications on 5 April 2017 at a budget monitoring meeting.
- National pay agreement for support staff.
- Outcome of budget monitoring.
- Position of the deputy head.

16/73 RESOLVED: That the minutes from the Resources Committee meeting this

term be received.

(ii) Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee

The Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee meetings held on 17 January and 8 March 2017 discussed the following issues:

- Meeting with the Head of Modern Foreign Languages following its review.
- Progress on the implementation of the assessment without levels strategy.
- Examination analysis and RAISE on-line data for 2015-16.
- Meeting with the Head of English Faculty on review outcome.
- Review of Post-16 Education provision across the authority.
- Internal data from Years 7-13.

16/74 RESOLVED: That the minutes from the Standards in Learning and Teaching Committee meetings this term be received.

(iii) Mission Committee

The Mission Committee meeting held on 28 February 2017 discussed the following issues:

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. In response to a request by the Chair, Karen Winterburn, Head Teacher's PA, had emailed all governors, asking them to confirm that they had read at least parts 1 and 2 from this document. The Chair reminded governors to respond accordingly.
- Reports from SENCo and Chaplain.
- School attendance and exclusion.
- 3-year accessibility plan.
- Pupil Premium Action Plan and Annual Report to Parents and Governors.

16/75 RESOLVED: That the minutes from the Mission Committee meeting this term be received.

(iv) Pupil Admissions Committee

The Pupil Admissions Committee meeting held on 9 January 2017 discussed the following issues:

- Planned Admission Number in Year 7 to remain 198.
- Academy remaining over-subscribed.

16/76 RESOLVED: That the minutes from the Admissions Panel meeting be received.

(v) Complaints Committee, 24 January 2017

The Chair reported that the complaint was not upheld.

(vi) Appeals Committee, 27 January 2017

The Chair reported that the appeal was not upheld.

(vii) Pupil Discipline Committee, 13 March 2017

The Chair reported that the Panel resolved to uphold the decision of the Head Teacher to permanently exclude one pupil from the current Year 10 and that the parent had been informed of the decision in writing.

16/77 RESOLVED: That the Chair's oral feedback on the outcomes from the Complaints, Appeals and Pupil Discipline Committee meetings held this term be received.

11. MINUTES FROM THE TRUST BOARD MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2016

Highlights included:

- Trust's priorities for 2016-17.
- Approval of the Trust's Annual Report for 2015-16.
- Meeting with the Regional Schools' Commissioners.
- Review of the Self-evaluation Forms for each academy.
- Headteachers' reports for term one.
- Approval of 6 Trust wide policies.
- Approval of bids for the 2017-18 cycle.

16/78 RESOLVED: That the minutes from the Trust Board meeting held on 6 December 2016 be received.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

13. DATES OF FULL ACADEMY COUNCIL MEETING

16/79 RESOLVED: That the Chair advises on a date for a meeting of the Academy Council to progress the appointment of a new Head Teacher.

16/80 RESOLVED: That the next full Academy Council meeting be held at 6.00 pm at the Academy on Wednesday, 28 June 2017.

14. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – ACADEMY COPY

16/81 RESOLVED: That no part of the agenda, minutes or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the school in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act **with the exception of the restricted elements of the meeting of the Resources Committee on 31 January 2017.**

15. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair thanked the headteacher, staff and academy council members for their work this term.

The meeting closed at 8:34pm.