St. Thomas FGB Minutes

Meeting – Part 1 Minutes			
Date/Time	14 July 2021-18.00.	Location	Microsoft Teams Meeting.

Governors:	I			Governors Attended.	Initials		
C Edwards	CE	Chair – Parent		C Rowe	CR	Co-opted	
M Laver	ML	Vice Chair – Co-opted		A Evans	AE	Co-opted	
J Downing	JD	Staff		T Al-Khalili	TA	Co-opted	
F Radmore	FR	Staff		J Stone	JS	Head Teacher	
J Noakes	JN	Co-opted					
M Rich	MR	Co-opted					

Apologies	Initial	Reason (Category of Governor)
J Downing	JD	Staff

Absent without Apology	Initials

In Attendance	Initials	(anyone who is not a governor/associate)
P Lane	PL	Clerk
R Shaw	RS	CEO
M Simpson	MS	SENCo

Minutes to
Attendees
Apologies
Academy Website
Trust Board.

No	Agenda	Led by
1	Welcome and Apologies.	Chair
2	Declaration of Interests.	Chair
3	Minutes of the previous meeting 9 June 2021 – Part 1:	Chair
4	SEND Review:	MS/CR
5	Head Teacher's Update:	Head Teacher
6	Safeguarding Update:	Head Teacher
7	Staff & Pupil Update:	Head Teacher
8	Policy Review:	Clerk
9	Governor Monitoring Reports:	ML/MR
10	Risk Register Review:	Chair/MR
11	Review of Governance:	All
12	Review of Governor Training:	Clerk
13	Links to Parents & Community:	Chair/AE
14	Communication with the Trust Board:	Chair
15	Matters brought forward by the Chair:	Chair
16	Future Meeting Dates:	Clerk

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Agenda Number	Details of discussion	Decision or Action
1	**Welcome and Apologies:** CE opens the meeting at 18.03. TA has advised of a late arrival, no apologies are noted at this point. CE sets out the order of the meeting and welcomes RS and MS to the meeting.	
2	**Declaration of Interest:** None recorded.	
3	**Minutes of the previous meeting 9 June 2021 – Part 1:** The minutes are approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. CE is re-appointed to the LGB and the Clerk advises of the necessary checks to continue CE's term of office. **HT Appraisal Committee:** RS advises of the number of members and criteria for the Head Teacher's Appraisal Committee which exclude staff governors. JN and CR are appointed as the governors to be part of this committee.	**Action: Clerk to arrange Head Teacher Appraisal training.**
4	**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Review:** CE introduces this item and confirms the document associated with this item was circulated ahead of the meeting. CE asks for governor questions and comments. JN refers to the report and the difficulties expressed regarding the online system and notes that staff have not had the adequate training and seeks further clarification. MS explains how the online hub operates. JS concurs with this and explains the difficulties in using the Devon system and advises the system is very challenging to the user and not necessarily down to adequate training. CE asks will the staff changes from September help with capacity? MS replies, in having the two days for SEND will help with the workload and with teachers to access SEND information from September will assist with profiling and graduated responses. AE refers to the 'fun fit' activity which was stopped due to Covid restrictions and asks will this activity return? MS replies from September intervention groups will operate as normal. CE refers to a point on the report regarding staff training for dyslexia assessment. MS replies JD is best candidate for this training as she works across all the year groups and has capacity in her time table for assessing children for dyslexia. At the current time diagnosis cannot take place due to staff not having the relevant training. A discussion takes place regarding children with dyslexia and JS advises the school are able to put in place interventions for dyslexia concerns without a formal diagnosis. AE suggests would it be possible to have a Trust wide trained member of staff to assess dyslexia? RS advises she has already had discussions with other Trusts to investigate if as a group of Trusts they could collectively use specialist members of staff. CE seeks	

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	clarification regarding what defines pupils of concern? MS explains these are children who are being monitored but have not yet been assessed. **SEND Policy Review:** CR advises that herself and MS have reviewed the current SEND policy, but advises of a couple of matters relating to Covid, funding and the impact of the funding. RS asks MS does she receive an overview of the available SEND funding? MS replies that she has not, but explains when a child receives an Educational Healthcare Plan (ECHP) the level of funding available is indicated, although MS explains she is not aware of the amount when allocated. RS advises that the school receives a monthly report and suggests MS is copied into these reports. JS briefly speaks about the recent SENCo situation and MS's lack of capacity, but assures this will be addressed in September when MS has more capacity available to her. The DfE Covid guidance for children with SEND is discussed briefly. The SEND Policy 2021/22 is approved. CE thanks MS and CR for the report. *TA joins the meeting at 18.34.*	
5	**Head Teacher's Update:** **Sports Premium Strategy (SPS):** JS explains the SPS is currently under review. SP funding for 2020-2021 has not been utilised due to the Covid restrictions and under current Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) regulations cannot be used for capital projects. Premier Sports are providing sports clubs for years 3 and 4 and the school recently took part in the race for life. JS requests this report is to be deferred to the next meeting once completed. JS speaks about PE for life and a new sports resource which is built into the sports curriculum. The school have liaised with Ide Primary School who are already using the resource. Sports days took place, but in separate year groups due to Covid. AE asks about swimming lessons and will lessons resume? JS confirms that as the riverside is reopening, spaces have been booked throughout the year for lessons. A portion of the SP funding will be used to facilitate this. **School Development Plan (SDP) Priorities:** JS reflects on the past year and the positive impact the teaching resources have had on the children and in particular reading, which JS thinks has improved greatly and comments on the children's love of reading. Read Write Inc (RWI) continues to strengthen children's reading and phonics, but it is not so effective with developing writing skills. JS advises writing will be a main focus for next year. JS speaks of a new resource called Write Stuff as a teaching aid to improve writing. AE seeks clarification as to what needs to be improved with regard to writing is it spelling or actual hand writing? JS replies the main areas for improvement are spelling, grammar, punctuation and word choices. Improvement in writing is more prevalent in the higher year groups. CE refers to the Trust's School Improvement Model and notes improvement of vocabulary is one of the main priorities and asks is the focus to improve writing at St Thomas derived from this? JS replies in the affirmative and gives an explanation on how the school want to improve vocabulary across the whole school in line with the Trust's Strategy moving forwards.	**Action: SPS to be brought forward to the next meeting.**

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	Leadership and Management: JS outlines the main priorities: • Clear roles are to be defined for St Thomas' new staffing structure moving forward. Fully embedding teaching strategies, such as RWI, Power Maths and Accelerated Reader will help towards clear role definitions. • Improved parental engagement, in particular with reading. • Closing the gap, to investigate further the barriers to learning especially with SEND and disadvantaged children. RS comments the proposed strategies and feels the school is moving forward and expresses her support of the key priorities. **Curriculum Planning:** JS reports a significant amount of work has been invested into the producing a curriculum map and shares the curriculum vison with the governors. JS advises the curriculum documents are now available to view on the school website. JS introduces the curriculum pathway which summarises the skills and knowledge a child will receive during their journey through the school. JN observes a typo on the document and expresses her support of the curriculum pathway and asks how accessible is the information for parents with regard to what their children will be learning and when? JS explains knowledge maps will be available to parents. The maps will focus on the subject, parents will receive the maps during the school year. CE refers to the curriculum pathway with regard to Personal Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). JS explains all year groups will follow the same subject theme each term appropriate to their age to ensure there is consistency to school assemblies through a whole school approach. RS adds her support and requests the governors to familiarise themselves with this curriculum subject not only for Ofsted purposes, but to develop lead governor roles and governor monitoring.	
6/7	**Safeguarding Update, Staff & Pupil Wellbeing:** *ML joins the meeting at 19.08.* JS reports of an increase in safeguarding reports and the school are currently working on 10 cases requiring early help. JS speaks about the challenges the school have encountered with regard to the significant increase in safeguarding cases. RS advises this matter is a long term problem involving the Local Authority and in turn schools are spending a lot of time and resources trying to deal with the workload. This is having a detrimental effect on staff wellbeing. JS refers to the additional work with regard to parental mental health and the general effect Covid has had on children and parents. JS refers to a survey from Public Health Devon and a Schools Health, Education Unit (SCHEU) for the year groups 4 and 6. JS reflects over the past year with regard to Covid, changes in teaching, getting ready for Ofsted and feels the staff really need their need their summer break. ML asks do the school know how close are they are to their Ofsted inspection? JS explains he cannot confirm when the inspection will be, but assumes this will be in the Autumn term. AE asks are there any schools within the Trust awaiting inspection? RS replies Ide are due an inspection. JN refers to the SCHEU survey	

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	and asks is the only one planned at the current time? JS replies in the affirmative.	
7	**Policy Review:** The Intimate Care Policy is deferred to the next meeting. The Governors adopt the Trust's Health and Safety and Emergency Plan policies.	**Decision: Governors adopt the Trust policies.**
8	**Governing Monitoring Reports:** **Pupil Premium (PP) Report:** CE thanks ML for his report, which was circulated ahead of the meeting. No further questions are brought forward. For clarity JS explains the difference in PP and Free School Meal (FSM) pupils. ML speaks further regarding the issues for PP and the stigmas attached PP children. JN seeks clarification, is a majority of the additional funding spent on the RWI and Accelerated Reader schemes? JS confirms this and directs JN to the school's PP strategy report. JS refers to the current year 3 cohort and the directed support provided to this cohort. FR comments the extra tuition is focussing on writing pupil self-esteem and confidence. The Parent Support Adviser (PSA) is assisting with Thrive time and one to one support. CE makes reference to the Trust's disadvantaged pupil strategy. JS advises this is Trust document and is currently in consultation with the Head Teachers. AE refers to point 16 from the report and seeks clarification regarding the baseline figures and time periods and suggests it would be beneficial to see the figures in a graph form. AE asks is there enough of a range of books to aid reading progression? JS explains how the Accelerated Reader scheme works and explains that there is a good range of books available and the school buy into the Local Authority library service. AE suggests there could there be a book collection to donate to school. A discussion takes place regarding a possible book donation scheme and the library being involved in the summer reading challenge. **Health & Safety Report:** CE thanks MR for his report and asks are there any outstanding actions to be addressed and is this a clear indication of where the school is currently with health and safety compliance? MR explains the report is a starting point of what governors need to be aware of. MR advises the governors need to ensure they are kept up to date with any outstanding actions and regular monitoring take place.	
10	**Risk Register Review – Health & Safety:** CE refers to MR's report and to the Trust's health and safety policy. CE would like to propose himself and MR to liaise before the next meeting to review the health and safety section of the risk register. MR is in agreement.	**Action: CE and MR to review the H&S section of the risk register.**
11	**Review of Governance:** CE refers to the governor self-evaluation form and proposes to adapt the form to be more in line with the school. AE mentions the governor recruitment plans and wonders how this is progressing. JS advises that he is currently working with CE and has spoken to prospective parent governors. ML suggests forwarding the governors a skills audit before September with a view to identifying the gaps in skills.	
12	**Review of Governor Training:**	

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	The Clerk reviews the training that has taken place over the year.	
13	**Links to parents & community:** AE sets out her views regarding the school and social media and would like to progress this. AE is of the opinion a school Facebook page would promote and celebrate the school in line with the Trust's Social Media Policy. The governors discuss this further.	
14	**Communication with the Trust Board:** **Chairs Forum:** CE as Chair reports to the governors an overview of the content of the recent Chairs Forum. This included the Central Team structure update, the LGB contribution to the Trust and the proposed changes to ensure each school contributes fairly across the Trust. RS offers the LGB a brief update on the Central Team recruitment plans and explains the Trust are currently consulting with the Head Teachers. Recent challenges to the Central Team include recruitment, but GDPR and other compliance has improved since the implementation of the new team. RS explains how the funding for the central trust model will be implemented. **Trust, Vision and Values Day**: JN as the governor representative for the St Thomas LGB briefly updates the governors regarding the Trust's vision and values session and explains the session focussed on an analytic session and discussing collective values and visions.	
15	**Matters brought forward by the Chair:** CE thanks ML for his many years of service as a school governor and his Chairmanship to St Thomas Primary School. ML offers the LGB some advice including the importance of spending as much time as possible in the school. The LGB wished the Clerk the best for her upcoming wedding. The part 2 minutes from 9 June 2021 were approved. CE confirms the LGB will be meeting six times per year from September.	
16	**Future Meeting Dates:** Clerk to confirm.	

The meeting closed at: 20.28.

Date/Time of next meeting	29 September 2021 – 18.00.	Location	Microsoft Teams Meeting- until further notice.

Signature of Chair