MINUTES
La Retraite RC Girls’ School
Full Governing Body Meeting
Tuesday 21st February 2017 at 5.00 pm

Governors Present: Father Chris Basden, Deborah Bedeau, Roger Bennett, Ross Burnett (Associate Member), Linda Collins – Chair of Governors, Gillian Econopouly, Hannah Greene, Deborah Hogan, Suzanna Kawalek, Dominic Malins – Head Teacher, Anna Semmens (Associate Member), Helena Wojnowska, Mary Yates, Agatha Yuk Fang Lai-Au, Sue Woodman, Pauline Robertson

In attendance: Clare Baskott - Clerk to Governors
Paul Steward - Director of Learning, Business & Operations

Apologies: None
Absents: Gerry Kerins

MINUTES

The meeting was quorate with eleven governors present throughout the meeting.

1 Opening Prayer
   Father Chris opened the meeting with a prayer.

2 Welcome and apologies for absence
   The Chair of Governors welcomed all governors to the meeting at 5:04pm. There were no apologies for absence. Gerry Kerins was absent.

3 Welcome Associate Members – Anna Semmens and Ross Burnett
   The Chair of Governors introduced Anna Semmens and Ross Burnett, newly appointed Associate Members to the Governing Body. All present made their introductions.

3:06pm – Deborah Hogan arrived

4 Declarations of interest/annual register of business interests
   The following declarations of interest had been made following the previous meeting: Sue Woodman was a Trustee of RBB Barnes Charitable Trust and a Trustee and Director of Wimbledon Book Fest. Suzanna Kawalek – none.

5 Notification of any other business
   None.

6 Minutes of the previous FGB meeting – 15th November 2016
   The minutes of the previous Full Governing Body meeting of 15th November 2016 were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair of Governors.

6 Matters arising from the previous meeting
   Annual declaration of interests – The Clerk advised that she had received completed declaration of interest forms from all governors, except for Gerry Kerins.
   Annual Governing Body Plan – The Chair of Governors informed the board that this was a ‘work in progress’.
   Learning Walks – It was agreed that this was included on the current agenda.
Parent Governor – It was noted that there had been no applications for the role of Parent Governor and the Chair of Governors would look at re-advertising the position.

5:11pm – Paul Steward arrived
NGA log-in - This had been completed.

Head Teacher’s Report

The Head Teacher’s report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Head Teacher gave a verbal update. It was noted that the Head Teacher’s report covered items 7, 8 and 9.

Catholic Ethos
It was noted that the School Chaplain had recently returned to school from sick leave. In her absence, other staff had contributed to maintaining the school’s Catholic ethos.

Mark Conneely, the Year 8 YLC, would be completing the London Marathon for a charity called Best Beginning and would appreciate any support.

Academisation update
The school had received information about Year 7 to 11 funding for 2017-18 which had convinced them that academisation was the right step and arrangements had been made to meet solicitors from Veale, Wasbrough, Vizards LLP who specialised in the conversion process. The school would be joined at the meeting by representatives from St Bede’s, St Bernadette, BTG and St Anne’s. Wandsworth Catholic primary schools had decided to form their own umbrella trust.

It was agreed that the Governing Body’s Away Day would plan the school’s next steps towards academisation.

Gov: Would the school look at converting to a stand-alone academy or as part of a MAT? It would look at setting up as a stand-alone academy but it would be more beneficial for the catholic community if they formed a MAT.
Gov: What was the government’s current preference on stand-alone academies and MATs? It was important to show due diligence in whichever choice was made.

Admissions Policy
It was noted that changes to the Admissions Policy for admission in September 2018 had gone out to consultation with a return deadline of January 2017. No objections had been received and so Governors were asked to agree the changes to the Admissions Policy.

Gov: Why were students from Eastern Orthodox families not given the same status as Roman Catholics families? The Diocese said that Roman Catholics must be given a higher preference on the Admissions code.

Governors voted unanimously to approve the Admissions Policy to take effect from September 2017 for admission in September 2018.

School Uniform
The school had investigated the introduction of a ‘business suit’ for the sixth form. This had predominately been led by the School Council.
A query was raised about the school’s uniform expectations for Muslim students as one student wore a black or blue head scarf. The school would be drawing up a Uniform Policy having taken advice from the Diocese, who supported the school’s current approach.

**Curriculum developments**
There was a proposal out for consultation to create a Creative Arts Faculty from the Arts and DT departments. This would involve a curriculum change with Art joining the current DT rota.

It was agreed that the Head teacher would discuss this further with the Chair of Governors and Suzanna Kawalek on 27 February.

**Staff changes/developments**
Since the HT’s report had been written, the current part-time SENDCo has recently resigned.

**Student progress**
Student progress was mixed. It was noted that year 11 had coped well with major changes especially in Maths. The school had introduced a wide range of interventions and students were working hard.

**Overall effectiveness**
The Chair of Governors referred those present to page 6 and the School’s Improvement Adviser’s judgement that the school was in category 1 i.e. Outstanding, across all areas.

**Partnership work**
It was noted that the school had been looking at ways to start jointly working with The Laurels School, including hockey coaching.

**School newsletter**
The Chair of Governors congratulated the Head Teacher on the school’s recent newsletter.

**Spring concert**
It was noted that the Spring Concert was scheduled to take place on 7th March 2017 at 6.00 pm. Governors were welcome to attend and were asked to email the Head Teacher to let him know if they would attend. **(Action: Governors)**
The Chair of Governors thanked the Head Teacher for his report.

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<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>Receive Academisation status and progress update report</th>
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<td>It was agreed that this had been covered in item 7.</td>
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<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th>Update on changes to the Admissions policy</th>
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<tr>
<th>10</th>
<th>Report from Curriculum Committee</th>
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<td>The minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair of the Committee gave a verbal update. It was noted that the Committee had held the Head of Geography to account for the department’s poor results in 2016.</td>
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<td>The Committee had discussed the early cancellation of the ICT Managed Service which would now finish with Civica on 31st March 2017. The school had employed an ICT Network Manager.</td>
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<td>It was noted that the Chair of the Curriculum Monitoring Committee would visit school to focus on both Science and Safeguarding.</td>
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Governors noted the importance of attending Learning Walks and for Link Governors to report to the Governing Body.

### 11 Report from Admissions Committee meeting

The minutes of the Admissions Committee meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair of the Committee gave a verbal update. It was noted that the Chair of the Committee had met with the Head Teacher to oversee the Admission applications.

### 12 Report from Financial Monitoring Committee

The minutes of the Financial Monitoring Committee meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. In the Chair of the Financial Monitoring Committee’s absence, Roger Bennett gave a verbal update. It was noted that the committee had discussed leaving the school’s ICT contract early although it would still be required to pay for the service up to 31 July 2017. Since the meeting, Civica had requested full payment by 31st March 2017. The school had advertised for an ICT Technician to support the ICT Network Manager who would start after the Easter break.

Governors noted the school’s expected end of year surplus was currently about £235,000. This was due to changes made to staffing structures, fewer unexpected staffing costs, minimum spending on premises in the summer and the income generated from facilities hire. It was noted that the school was expected to finish the year with a nominal in-year deficit which seemed to buck the national trend.

Changes to the New Fair Funding Formula had not been as drastic as predicted and would be phased in from to 2018 until 2020. The 2017/18 and 2018/2019 funding was protected with a slight increase in pupil numbers to 165 per year group (from 150 previously) expected to offset the reduction in funding. A lengthy discussion took place about Capital Funding and its increased availability if the school were to become an academy.

### 13 Report on Single Central Register

Pauline Robertson’s report on the Single Central Register had been circulated to the governing body prior to the meeting. Pauline Robertson gave a verbal update and had made several suggested changes. It was agreed that Pauline would provide a signed written report about the SCR each term to the governing board. Clerk to add this as an agenda item for future meetings. (Action: Clerk).

### 14 School charity for approval

Sue Woodman gave a verbal update about the School’s Charity Account and the Head Teacher proposed that the school fund account should become the school charity account so that Gift Aid could be claimed from parental donations.

Governors voted unanimously that the School Fund Account should become the School charity account. It was agreed that the Trustees would be Sue Woodman, Suzanna Kawalek and the Head Teacher who would meet following with next FGB meeting on Tuesday 13th June 2017.

### 14.1 Governors: Chair of Governors

**Approve Curriculum Monitoring Committee’s terms of reference**

The Curriculum Monitoring Committee’s terms of reference had been circulated to the governing board prior to the meeting. Governors were asked to review and approve the Terms of Reference. **Governors voted unanimously to approve the Terms of Reference.**

The Terms of Reference were signed by the Chair of the Committee.
14.2 **Approve Admissions Committee’s terms of reference**
The Admissions Committee’s terms of reference had been circulated to the governing board prior to the meeting. Governors were asked to review and approve the Terms of Reference. 

**Governors voted unanimously to approve the Terms of Reference.**
The Terms of Reference were signed by the Chair of the Committee.

14.3 **Notice of any complaints received**
It was noted that the school or governing body had not received any complaints.

14.4 **Updated on code of conduct**
The 2017 NGA Code of Conduct had been circulated to the governing board prior to the meeting. 

**Governors voted unanimously to adopt the NGA Code of Conduct.**

14.5 **Reports of Governor visits to school**
There were no reports of governor visits to school this term. It was agreed that in future governors would report to the Governing Body about their Learning Walks and Link Governors would report on their assigned area.

14.6 **Governing body membership update**
It was noted that Roger Bennett’s term of office would expire on 1st September 2017 when Roger had decided to step down from the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors thanked Roger for his hard work and the support he had given to the school and the Governing Body over 20 plus years. It was noted that a former pupil had contacted the school to express an interest in joining the Governing Body.

A discussion took place about checking the backgrounds of potential governors.

**Governors voted unanimously for Ross Burnett and Anna Semmens to be appointed Associate Governors for a four-year term, without voting rights from 21st February 2017.**

14.7 **Governor training**
The Clerk had circulated the latest Lambeth training brochure to all Governors. Governors were asked to email the Director of Learning, Business and Operations if they wished to attend any of the courses.

14.8 **Agree panel membership**
The Clerk had advised that the Governing Body should document who would sit on Staff Discipline/Grievance, Pupil Discipline/Grievance and Parental complaints and advised that it should state ‘three non-staff full governors who do not have a conflict of interest’.

**Governors agreed unanimously to the panel membership being three non-staff full Governors who do not have a conflict of interest.**

A discussion took place about the importance of ensuring that all governors sat on these panels.

14.9 **Skills audit**
The Clerk had circulated the NGA Skills Audit to all Governors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that all Governors would complete and forward the Skills Audit document to the Clerk for the Governor training day on Saturday 11th March 2017. **(Action: Governors)**

15 **Review Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The Chair of Governors highlighted to those present their roles and responsibilities.
A lengthy discussion took place about the policy and the need for the Governing Body to seek reassurance on point 16 and teaching students about safeguarding. A discussion took place about the importance of Safeguarding training for governors.

It was noted that the Diocese offer online safeguarding training which governors could access free of charge. It was agreed that the Clerk will circulate the details. **(Action: Clerk)**.

It was agreed that the Chair of Curriculum Monitoring will report to the Governing Body about points 5.1.3 and point 16. Pauline Robertson would also undertake an audit of staff files. **(Action: Deborah Hogan/Pauline Robertson/Clerk)**.

It was agreed Safeguarding would become a standing agenda item for the Full Governing Body. **(Action: Clerk)**.

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<th>16</th>
<th>Review and approve terms dates 2017-18</th>
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<td>The Governing Body were asked to review and approve the term dates 2017-18. One minor amendment on an incorrect date was made by hand. Governors agreed unanimously to approve the term dates 2017-18.</td>
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<th>17</th>
<th>Identification of Confidential items - none</th>
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**Agenda items for next FGB meeting and Away Day**

The Governing training day would take place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and would focus on Academies. Governors were asked to attend at 9am for coffee and the training would begin at 9:30am and finish at 12.30pm.

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<th>18</th>
<th>Date of next meeting</th>
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<td>Training day – Saturday 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; March 2017</td>
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<td>FGB – Tuesday 13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June 2017 at 5pm.</td>
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<th>Close of meeting</th>
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<td>With no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 6:22pm</td>
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Signed: ________________________________ Date: ________________________________

(Chair of Governors)

**Table of actions:**

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The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The Chair of Governors highlighted to the board the roles and responsibilities of the governing body. A lengthy discussion took place about the policy and the need for the Governing Body to seek reassurance on point 16 and teaching students about safeguarding.

A discussion took place about the importance of Safeguarding training for governors. It was agreed that this would be a future agenda item for the Full Governing Body. *(Action: Clerk).*

It was noted that the Diocese offer online safeguarding training which governors can access free of charge. It was agreed that the Clerk will circulate the details. *(Action: Clerk).*

It was agreed that the Chair of Curriculum Monitoring will report to the governing board about points 5.1.3 and point 16. Pauline Robertson would also undertake an audit of staff files. *(Action: Deborah Hogan/ Pauline Robertson/ Clerk).*

### Skills audit

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