

ST. JAMES THE GREAT ROMAN CATHOLIC (VA) PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL
WINDSOR ROAD, THORNTON HEATH, SURREY CR7 8HJ

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARENTS AND GOVERNORS
held on 15 November 2006 at the school, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Mr Edwin Abreo	Foundation Parent Governor (Chairman)	Present
Mrs Sandra Barrington	Foundation Parent Governor	Apologies
Mr Stephen Beck	Headteacher Staff Governor	Present
Mrs Janice Bingham	Foundation Parent Governor	Present
Mr Francis Butler	Foundation Governor	Present
Mr Darren Byrne	Foundation Parent Governor	Apologies
Rev Tom Cooper	Foundation Governor	Apologies
Mrs Terri Cefai	Elected Staff Governor	Present
Mr Rossi Gonsalves	Foundation Governor	Present
Mr Chris Hart	Finance Officer	Present
Mr Rob Kremis	Elected Parent Governor	Present
Mrs Debbie Lawless	Elected Staff Governor	Present
Mrs Maria Marchant	Clerk	Present
Rev Francis Moran	Foundation Governor	Present
Mrs Ann Scowcroft	Foundation Governor	Present
Mr Alan Willis	Elected Parent Governor	Present
Mrs Rebecca Williams	Elected Staff Governor	Present
Mrs Elaine Williamson	LEA Governor (Vice Chairman)	Apologies

Others present: 59 parents and staff.

- 06.64 Mr Edwin Abreo opened the meeting at 7.40 pm and asked those present to ensure their mobile phones were switched off. Stephen Beck led the opening prayer. Edwin Abreo then introduced himself: his curriculum area of interest is Geography. He asked the the Governors present to then introduce themselves and outline their areas of interest. The Governors present were: Janice Bingham, PHCSE and Governor Training; Francis Butler – Foundation Governor, Numeracy and Gifted & Talented; Rossi Gonsalves – Foundation Governor, Design & Technology;; Ann Scowcroft - Foundation Governor, Early Years/Foundation Stage; Robert Kremis, Science; Alan Willis; ICT and Physical Education; Terry Cefai, Debbie Lawless and Rebecca Williams – Elected Staff Governors; Stephen Beck – Headteacher.
- 06.65 **Apologies for absence** were recorded from Governors Fr Tom Cooper, Fr Francis Moran, Sandra Barrington, Darren Byrne, Elaine Williamson, and from Tammy Lawlor, Isobel Vassallo, Helen Stock, and Mo Faik .
- 06.66 **Previous Minutes - 17th November 2005** The minutes were accepted as read and Edwin Abreo signed the minutes as a true record.
- 06.67 **Matters arising from Minutes** – no matters arising.
- 06.68 **Governors' Annual Report to Parents** – Edwin Abreo presented the Governors' Annual Report for 2005/6 as circulated to the parents. He felt it was the best annual report by far. He said there was a lot of work involved in producing the annual report and thanked Mr Beck and the staff who had worked on it.
- 06.69 **Written Questions**
Please see attached questions and answers.

06.70 **Matters Arising from the Report and Questions Arising**

There were no questions.

06.71 **Adoption of the Report**

Edwin moved on to the adoption of the Governors' annual report to parents. Terry Cefai proposed the motion and was seconded by Alan Willis. The motion was carried unanimously. There was a vote of thanks on behalf of the parents to Mr Beck, the staff and the Governors for their hard work, which was carried unanimously. There was a round of applause.

06.72 **Any Other Business**

The workshop on 30 November reviewing the anti-bullying policy is covering PHSCE, so all parents should come along.

06.73 **Chairman's Closing Remarks**

Edwin thanked everyone for coming. He thanked the governors, Stephen and all the staff. He said we strive to do the best for every child at the school.

06.74 **Closing Prayer**

Mr Beck led the closing prayer.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed as a true and accurate recording of the meeting held on 15 Nov 2006

Signature..... Date

GOVERNOR PARENT AGM 2006 – Questions submitted in advance

Questions 1 and 2 from Mrs Juliet Goulding

Q1. Hair Extensions: Every Newsletter you continuously remind us of the correct hair dress. No extensions. However there are quite a number of parents who persistently disregard that rule. Are there any procedures in place to get parents to adhere to it? Last school year, St Joseph's Primary School called for a parent to come and remove their child from school after numerous talks to change the unacceptable hairstyle. The child returned to school a day later correctly restyled. I feel that it sent a clear message about what the school though was important. Or else why not just forget about it if there are no repercussions.

A. Mr Beck responded by saying the issue of the school's dress code is kept under review and the Governors are totally supportive of the Headteacher's approach to maintain high standards in this regard which it is felt benefits the learning ethos in the school. The issue is raised at pre-entry parents' meetings and there is a procedure in place to deal with breaches of the code. It is generally borne in mind that this is a parent's responsibility and that to penalise the children for breaches needs to be a last resort. In the first instance a warning letter is sent to parents on which they return a slip confirming receipt of the letter and agreement to ensure no further breaches of the code. These letters are kept on file and should a second breach occur a further letter is sent and parents are reminded of their previous response. Should there be a further breach parents are required to attend a meeting with the Headteacher. It is only after this process is completed that consideration would be given to a period of temporary exclusion. Under current legislation such action has to be used sparingly. We have asked the Headteacher to take a specific look at the concern you raise regarding hair extensions as it is only appropriate that the code is applied equally to boys and girls.

Q2. Recycling: Any thoughts on getting some extra bins for recycling? Especially on occasions when we have events at the school such as Sports Day, Fireworks, Christmas Fair. It seems a shame to dispose of all these bottles and cans in the normal bin.

A. Mrs Cefai responded. The school has a good record in regard to the issue of recycling. The paper recycling we were doing ceased but Mr Coles was able to arrange with the Council after much lobbying to take this over albeit at some cost to the school rather than as an income generated. We have been cautious about the issue of bottle recycling as this poses a potential hazard from vandalism. Now the CCTV has been installed this issue will be revisited. The Friends Association are conscious of recycling issues and at the recent dinner dance a member of the committee took all the empty bottles for recycling. We have previously undertaken can recycling but Alucan ceased this arrangement on the grounds of economics. All classes in the school actively recycle paper and have specific bins for this purpose located in the classrooms.

Questions 3 and 4 from Mrs Dolores Collins

Q3. Now that the Oratory Board has been installed recognising contributions towards the establishment of the Oratory, it seems an opportune time to set out the Oratory in a fitting way that reflects its purpose as a place of prayer and reflection for the school community.

Could the musical instruments and stands and other pieces of furniture be moved to the Music Room and music lessons take place in the Music Room. This would allow the Oratory to be set up with a focus on the Altar.

A. Mrs Williams answered - the Governors are sympathetic to the points raised in regard to the Oratory. It was originally established on the understanding that the area would serve a range of purposes, not least because the school is always short of space. However, it is important to remember the main function of the area. The Headteacher has agreed to be more pro-active in this matter. When the Governors discussed the setting up of the Oratory it was felt appropriate that the area could be used for the purposes of music tuition and small group use. The current position to which you refer has been resolved but was as a result of the setting up of the new Soundstart group following the delivery of 30 instruments that needed unpacking and tuning before being relocated to the Music Room when space was created on collection of the old instruments.

Mrs Collins said she appreciated that schools are always short of space and there must be a big temptation to use any space you have but she thought that using the Oratory for Recorder lessons before school does not seem appropriate. She felt it would be nice to have the chairs facing the Altar at all times so that people could go in there any time of day if they so wish. Mr Beck said he was very sympathetic to what was being said but it was designated an Oratory and not a Chapel so it could have multi uses.

Q4. Congratulations to the school on the success at the London Schools' Environmental Awards. It would be good to continue taking responsibility for the environment by encouraging children to walk or cycle to school. There are more people cycling to school causing congestion at the entrance. The school could encourage more cyclists by providing a separate entrance for cyclists and additional covered bicycle storage. I understand there is funding available for this purpose. Has the school investigated this?

A. Rossis Gonsalves said thank you for the acknowledgement of the school's success in the Environmental Awards. Environmental issues are an ongoing part of the school's curriculum and we believe children are very aware of these issues. Our school Travel Plan has targeted the raising the number of cycle journeys to and from school and we will be looking at the possibility of parents establishing a

walking bus(es).

The issue of congestion at the main gate has already been raised and will be considered by the Governors Premises Health and Safety Committee. The idea of a separate entrance for cyclists is a good one but is logistically complicated if we are to avoid solving one problem and creating another by having pedestrians walking across the car park. It is hoped that decisions in this regard can be linked to the issue of increased cycle storage. The school monitors the availability of additional funding and avails itself of such funding wherever possible.

Mrs Collins said she understood there was lots of money available from TFL and the Council. Mr Beck said we are on the list for covered shelters but the money is released in stages and we will be notified when it is our turn to receive some funding. To create a cycle path we would need to relocate the main gates and this would cost a very large amount of money and it was acknowledged that although there are now a significant number of cyclists they were by no means the majority. This issue will be kept under review.

Questions 5, 6 and 7 from Mr and Mrs De Zoysa

Q5. Has the school carried out a risk assessment of vehicle traffic entering and leaving the school at the beginning and end of the school day and does the school find this risk acceptable?

A. Mr Kremis said that one of the reasons for installing automated gates was to control the flow of traffic particularly at specific times of the day. This acts both as a monitoring tool and speed control on vehicles leaving and entering the premises.

Q5B. Would the school consider a ban on vehicles parking in the waiting area, especially because of the risk posed when these vehicles exist the school via the car park?

A. Mr Kremis said there is a small tarmaced area to the front of the school which acts as an overspill to the very limited staff parking on site. The minibus also makes use of this area and does not directly impinge on the waiting circle around the school flagpole. The movement of traffic at the start and end of the school day is kept to an absolute minimum and where it proves necessary to move a vehicle at these times great care is taken and at the end of the day in particular there is a significant number of parents around to ensure the safety of such movements.

Mrs Modeste said it is not staff cars that are the problem, it is the after school club vehicles before and after school – they do not stop to give parents the right of way. There are young children crossing so vehicles should stop to let them pass. Mr Beck said he would write to the after school clubs regarding this issue. Mrs Madigan said the minibus is sometimes moved at the beginning and end of the school day; there should be two adults present one to move the vehicle and one to

keep the children out of the way.

Q6. Would the school consider a ban on all smoking within school grounds?

A. Mrs Scowcroft responded by saying the issue of smoking is acknowledged to be a very sensitive one and is one the dangers of which are highlighted as part of our Healthy Schools work. For this reason smoking on site is severely restricted in an attempt to meet the needs of both smokers and non-smokers.

Mr Leathem asked was the designate smoking area away from the children. Mrs Collins said unfortunately it was the youngest children in the school who have to pass the path where the smokers stand. Is there anywhere in school available. Mrs Modeste said the smoking room was not the issue it is the smoking outside that cannot be hidden from the children. This issue will be addressed.

Q7. Will the school be consulting parents in January 2007 when the school and local residents will be consulted by Croydon Council about traffic calming measures around the school?

A. Mr Butler said it is our understanding following communication from Croydon Council that there are plans to introduce sleeping policemen in Windsor Road. There was also a local petition to make Windsor Road one way at least in part. The former proposal was in part generated by points raised in the school's Travel Plan submitted to the Local Authority. The consultation process in the main is directed at the local residents who are most affected by such changes. The school will, of course, be supportive of traffic calming measures although historically when these matters have been raised by the governors with Croydon Council no action has been forthcoming based on the argument that there is no record of serious accidents or fatalities.

Questions 8 and 9 – Anonymous

Q8. Could there please be proper clarification and formal amendments to the Behaviour/Discipline Policy with regard to 'withdrawal of privileges' for challenging behaviour in class and can any such amendment be incorporated in future PowerPoint presentations at the September/October year group open evenings.

A. Mr Beck said at most of the Autumn term year group meetings the formal process of dealing with challenging behaviour in class was outlined. This involves a tick system on the board, followed by referral to a year group colleague, Phase Co-ordinator, Deputy Headteacher and ultimately to the Head. It is at this point that consideration would be given to involving parents. There is an understanding that individual teachers may withdraw privileges such as periods of play or specific activities where this is felt to be appropriate. There must be a degree of flexibility in this area to enable teachers to use their professional judgement regarding what is appropriate for a specific child. This would be difficult if such a policy was highly prescriptive.

Q9. What is the school's policy regarding pastoral care if families need to avail themselves of this vital supportive tool and what is in place at present at the school? I think staff also need to be made aware of what is in place as on asking recently about this no-one seemed to know.

A. Mrs Bingham said the school has a good record of supporting families which is obviously undertaken quietly in order to respect of confidentiality. It is to be hoped that families would feel able to approach a member of staff with whom they felt comfortable to discuss issues of a pastoral nature. This could be a teacher, a member of the support staff or the Head or Deputy Headteacher. We feel that all staff would know to refer such matters on subject to the family's agreement to a more senior member of staff if they felt unable to deal directly with any issue. Experience shows us that Mrs Pillay's Wednesday morning open appointment time is a route used by some people for such issues. The school has agencies to which it can refer as appropriate. This means that provision at any one time would be dependent upon need. Historically this has involved counselling, family liaison/parenting and behaviour support.

Question 10 from Mr and Mrs Fernandes and Mr and Mrs Byrne

Q10. We were interested to read in the Governors' Report that the school has a "Gifted and Talented" register and would like to know more about this.

1. How many children are on the register?
2. From what year are they assessed and put on the register.
3. What is the criteria they have to meet to be on the register?
4. Are the parents told if their child is on the register?
5. How are the children's needs met and monitored.

A. Mrs Murphy said in answer to the query on the school's Gifted and Talented register we can comment as follows:-

1. There are currently 28 pupils on the register.
2. Liaison with the Nursery is undertaken and children can come onto the register from the start of Reception.
3. Identification of pupils is undertaken through teacher assessment using a national checklist for identifying learning strengths in a range of areas, e.g. linguistic, bodily kinaesthetic, spatial, intra-personal, inter-personal and musical. All teaching staff have been involved in in-service training and staff meetings in order to moderate and aid identification.
4. The register is newly established and at present we take the view that parents are appraised of their child's capabilities at open evenings and children are moved on and off the register as appropriate. We are cautious about labelling children and feel the register provides the school with a means of ensuring appropriate provision for all pupils.

5. Children are included in class assessments, tracking and monitoring that is undertaken on a termly basis. Provision is made for them through the teacher's planning and opportunities to attend externally provided workshops. The school constantly reviews the availability of new resources and sees this very much as an area for future development. In addition use of the register will be monitored.