<u>The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School</u> <u>Minutes of the Additional Full Governing Body Meeting</u> <u>Tuesday 12th September 2023 – 7.00pm</u>

Prior to the meeting, a Welcome Mass was celebrated in the School Chapel for our current Governors.

Present at the meeting:

PART 'A' MINUTES

	Category of	
Name	Governor	Information
Nicole Alexander-Morrell	Foundation	Elected Chair of Governors at this meeting
Jerrome Buck-Townsend	LA (Citizen)	
Daniel Coyle	Staff	Headteacher
Michael Doyle	Foundation	
Clare Ivory	Parent	
Caroline Mackenzie	Foundation	Via Teams
		Chair of Catholic Life Committee
Anne Majcherczyk-Olczak	Foundation	Elected Vice Chair of Governors at this meeting
Michelle Sylvester	Foundation	
		Currently re-applying to continue serving as a
Michelle Samuel	Observer	Foundation Governor
Roz Smith		Clerk to the Governors

The meeting was declared quorate.

1/ The meeting opened with a short prayer.

2/ Apologies for Absence

Name	Category	Information
Betty Bonnardel-Azzarelli	Foundation	Apologies Received. Authorised Absence.
Edyta Marciniuk	Parent	Apologies Received. Authorised Absence.
Mya Theophilou	Staff	Apologies Received. Authorised Absence.

3/ Governing Body Membership

We welcomed at this meeting:

- Mrs Anne Majcherczyk-Olczak who has been re-appointed by the Diocese as a Foundation Governor at our school. Her term of office will run from 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2027.
- Ms Michelle Samuel, as an Observer, as she is currently re-applying to continue serving as a Foundation Governor at our school.

The Clerk advised that The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School's Governing Body membership needed to be fully represented as per the Instrument of Government and it should consist of 16 Governors: 9 Foundation, 2 Staff, 2 Parents, 2 Co-Opted and 1 Local Authority. The Clerk confirmed that currently our GB had 11 active Governors whose Terms of Office are as follows:

Name of Governor	Type of Governor	Term of Office Ends	Action
Nicole Alexander-Morrell	Foundation	31 August 2026	
Jerrome Buck-Townsend	LA (Citizen)	25 April 2027	

Betty Bonnardel-Azzarelli	Foundation	31 August 2025
Daniel Coyle	Staff (H/Teacher)	Continuous
Michael Doyle	Foundation	31 August 2026
Clare Ivory	Parent	3 April 2027
Caroline Mackenzie	Foundation	31 August 2026
Anne Majcherczyk-Olczak	Foundation	31 August 2027
Edyta Marciniuk	Parent	3 April 2027
Michelle Sylvester	Foundation	31 August 2026
Mya Theophilou	Staff	9 October 2025

Michelle Samuel is currently re-applying to continue serving as a Foundation Governor at our school. For the time being, she will attend meetings as an Observer.

Caroline Mackenzie has notified her intention to step down as a Foundation Governor by the end of the Autumn Term.

The Chair advised that the Governing Board needed to recruit Governors with a legal background or HR experience. The vacancies would be advertised in 'Governors for Schools' and in the weekly newsletters of local Catholic parishes. The Chair added that if Governors knew of someone who they would like to recommend for their particular knowledge or skills to contact her. It was agreed that following a Governors' Skills Audit, this would indicate more clearly the Governing Board's strengths and weaknesses and help with the recruitment of Governors.

Decision: The GB acknowledged the above information and agreed for the Governors' vacancies to be advertised as indicated following the GB's Skills Audit.

Action1: The Clerk will follow-up M. Samuel's paperwork in order to complete the application process with the Diocese.

<u>Action2</u>: The Clerk will email the Skills Audit form to all Governors for completion. The form should be returned to the Clerk by the deadline given.

Action3: To advertise the roles of Foundation and Co-Opted Governors and liaise with the Chair on this matter.

4/ Election of Chair

The Clerk confirmed that only one nomination had been received: **Nicole Alexander-Morrell** Those in attendance unanimously voted to elect Nicole Alexander-Morrell as Chair of Governors at The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School, for a period of one year. This was seconded by Anne Majcherczyk-Olczak. **Action:** The Clerk will notify the Local Authority of this appointment.

5/ Election of Vice-Chair

The Clerk confirmed that only nomination had been received: **Anne Majcherczyk-Olczak** Those in attendance unanimously voted to elect Anne Majcherczyk-Olczak as Vice Chair of Governors at The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School, for a period of one year. This was seconded by Michelle Sylvester. <u>Action</u>: The Clerk will notify the Local Authority of this appointment.

6/ a) Declaration of Business Interests 2023/24

A new Declaration of Business Interests form had been provided to each member of the Governing Body prior to the meeting. Governors were asked to read the guidance notes, complete and sign the form and return it to the Clerk. Those in attendance handed in their signed Declaration forms.

<u>Action1</u>: As per LA guidance, all Governors must declare any changes to their Declarations at each FGB and Committee/Panel meeting. The Clerk will contact any Governor not in attendance to complete and hand in their form.

Action2: The Clerk will maintain the Register of Governors' Pecuniary (Business) Interests.

b) Governing Body's Code of Conduct 2023/24

A copy of the updated Governing Board's Code of Conduct 2023/24, as recommended by the National Governance Association, had been provided to each member of the Governing Board. The Chair advised that a new section (as highlighted) had been added and it was appropriate for our Board. If agreed and approved by Governors, the document would be signed by the Chair on behalf of the Full Board. This was noted and agreed.

Decision: After careful consideration, those in attendance agreed and approved the updated Governing Board's Code of Conduct 2023/24.

Action: The Chair will sign the Code of Conduct 23/24 and the Clerk will keep this document on file.

c) Governors' Skills Audit

As discussed earlier, in order to recruit new Governors, it was advisable for all Governors to complete a Skills Audit to ascertain the Board's strengths and weaknesses and initiate recruitment for the roles of Foundation and Co-Opted Governors. In addition, the audit will improve Governors' skills through relevant training. <u>Action</u>: The Clerk will email Governors a Skills Audit form which must be completed and returned to her by the deadline given.

d) Governors' WhatsApp Policy 2023/24

The WhatsApp Policy 2023/24 had been provided to all Governors. The policy must be updated regularly to include current Governors. All those in attendance agreed to abide by the WhatsApp Policy 2023/24. <u>Decision</u>: The WhatsApp Policy 2023/24 was agreed and approved by all those in attendance. <u>Action</u>: All Governors must sign the policy at this meeting. Those not in attendance will be asked to do so at the next meeting.

7. <u>School Policies for Approval & Ratification by the FGB</u>

The following policies had been provided to the Governors in advance and these were taken as read prior to this meeting:

A) The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015

<u>Comment:</u> This Head advised this was a standard but important document which the FGB needed to agree to adopt on an annual basis as indicated by the Diocese of Westminster. <u>Decision:</u> The Full Governing Board agreed to adopt this document.

B) Student Attendance Policy 2023 (Annual)

Comment: The Head advised that this policy had been updated due to the number of changes the DfE had made, which the school would be focusing on this academic year. Changes made had been highlighted for ease of identification. The policy needs to be reviewed annually to make governors aware about their responsibility about attendance and its importance. Changes had been shared with members of staff and we will focus on internal systems to ensure families receive a phone call straight away if their child is not in school.

Q: A Governor referred to the letter to parents about students not being seen in public places before/after school.

R: The Head replied that this was for clarity of the school's expectations from pupils.

Q: Do you take registers at the start of lessons?

R: The Head confirmed this. He added that the school had increased the penalty for punctuality and lateness and sanctions had been increased.

Q: When the pupils go through the turnstile, does it clock the student is in school but not in class?R: The Head replied that this applies to 6th Form students only and also to confirm staff are in school.

Decision: The Full GB agreed and approved this policy.

C) Behaviour Policy 2023 (Annual)

The Head advised that the policy promoted our values and the school endeavoured to make everything clearer so everyone knows where they stand in. He added that during the Year 12 Information Evening, the school goes through this with parents and students and it is included in their Students' Planner. This was to ensure there is clarity and greater understanding and awareness of social behaviour.

Q: Some schools do random checks on students. Does it happen at our school?

R: The Head replied our school did not feel there was a need to do that on mass. As long as the Headteacher is informed, teachers can search students. Reference was made to a previous situation and the Head reassured governors that such instances of theft would be addressed appropriately.

Q: *Is there a police officer based at our school?*

R: The Head replied that our school had not given up on that request and, overall, Headteachers would like to have the support of a PCSO to support our young people; however, that was not available at present.

Q: Do parents and students sign the Code of Conduct?

R: The Head confirmed this was done and tutors checked this.

Q: Are there any smoke detectors in toilets for vapes?

R: The Head replied none were in place as they are very expensive but the school was very proactive and alert to this issue. The highlighted sections were some examples of what had been included in this policy, which is 70 pages long, and encapsulates what is in place at our school.

Q: *Is there anything to focus on this year?*

R: The Head confirmed it would be attendance and lateness.

The Head confirmed that a Safeguarding session for Governors would take place at the next Full GB meeting.

Decision: The Full GB agreed and approved this policy.

D) Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2023

The Head advised that there had been some changes and these had been recommended by the DfE. He confirmed that members of staff had received safeguarding training the previous week. Members of SLT, the Head and a number of Governors had received Designated Safeguarding Lead training to Level 3. He referred to the main areas of changes as instigated by the DfE: "On-line Safety" and "the provision of a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns". The Head advised that all

staff was aware of our Wellbeing Hub (open daily at lunchtimes). The Head advised that our school has an on-line system that flags up the adequacy of media access instantly and identifies who is using such media. It was now statutory to have this in place and our policy includes it. Furthermore, our school informs social workers when a student is permanently excluded, the government requires this as an obligation. "Forced marriage" is another issue in some places in the UK but it is not an issue that has prominence at our school.

- Q: Could 'forced marriage' happen at our school?
- R: The Head confirmed it could happen at our school.

A Governor added that this was happening at other schools.

Decision: The Full GB agreed and approved this policy.

E) Suspension & Exclusions Policy 2023

The Head advised the policy provided greater clarity and the government would like to make it best practice. A number of Governors advised they had not read the full document and wished to defer its approval.

Q: A Governor had queried if the following was a new sanction: "Serious incidents of theft or repeated incidents of theft will result in permanent exclusion"

R: The Head replied that this was a legitimate concern due to increasing incidents. Teachers can check school bags and it is important for them to inform the safeguarding lead of any concerns.

Q: A governor asked if a child was on a school trip and then was suspended, would parents get a refund?

R: The Head replied that the trip organiser would arrange for the parent to collect the student but a refund would be unlikely.

Q: Is there an area that highlights this and that trips are non-refundable?

R: The Head replied that he would make this clearer for all concerned.

The Chair agreed that it was reassuring to hear the Headteacher's comments and, as long as all families and governors were kept informed, our school was very transparent about suspensions and exclusions.

<u>Decision</u>: Those in attendance agreed for this policy to be emailed to all Governors in order for them to read it in more detail. It was agreed for Governors to email their approval or comments to the Clerk.

F) SEN Policy 2023 (Annual)

The Head confirmed that this policy must be reviewed yearly. The SENCo had put this policy together and the level of detail therein was remarkable. The Chair agreed that this policy stood extremely well to external scrutiny following a recent review of the GB's decision making.

Q: A governor asked if there were more SEN pupils this year.

R: The Head confirmed this was the case in Year 7 which is a national trend. The SENCo would be busy the following month as there was the need for some intervention regarding a Care Plan. If funding was not obtained, our school would need to find the money from its budget to support a pupil.

Q: How many Teaching Assistants are there?

R: The Head advised there are 12/13 teaching assistants and it was not easy to recruit them. Another two or three teaching assistants will need to be recruited.

Q: In terms of Pupil Premium students, how many are there?

R: The Head advised the percentage is between 7% or 8%. Recently, there had been many requests for school uniform support or food.

Decision: The Full GB agreed and approved this policy.

G) SEN Information Report 2023 (Annual) <u>Decision</u>: The Full GB noted and agreed this Report.

H) School Trips Policy

The Head thanked Governors for their support for the History trip to Warsaw in February 2024. He advised that the email received from the Head of History would be shared with Governors shortly.

Q: Is the trip going to be open to all students?

R: The Head confirmed the trip would be open to those students doing A-Level History.

Decision: The Full GB agreed and approved this policy.

<u>Decision1</u>: The amendments made to the policies presented at this meeting were agreed, approved and ratified, unanimously, by the Full GB.

<u>Decision2</u>: The Suspension & Exclusions Policy 2023 will be reviewed by Governors who will email their approval to the Clerk.

<u>Action1</u>: The documents will be uploaded onto the school's website and staff SharePoint, as applicable.

<u>Action2</u>: The Clerk will email the Suspension & Exclusions Policy 2023 to all Governors for their approval by the deadline given.

<u>Action3:</u> The Head advised that a large number of policies will need to be reviewed at the Autumn Term meeting. Governors acknowledged this.

8/ Finance Protocols Update

The Head advised that following a recent meeting with the Chair of Resources and the School Business Manager (SBM), a number of documents needed updating. The Head referred to the Chair of Resources' email with a number of queries and the Head's and SBM's replies.

The following documents require the final approval from the Governing Board and had been provided to Governors to read prior to this meeting:

a) List of School Bank Accounts 23/24

Decision: The Full GB agreed and approved this document.

b) List of SLT Signatories 23/24

Comment: The Head confirmed that the School Business Manager's name had been added to the list. He added that two members of SLT are required to sign the BACS document before it can be uploaded to our BACS bureau. However, due to the pressure on teachers and the need for them to be in the Finance Office to sign the paperwork at set times, it is not always possible for them to be available and that is the reason it is proposed for the School Business Manager to oversee this and make it a smoother activity. The Head referred to the Chair of Resources comments in her message quoted earlier. The SBM does not get involved in the BACS preparation but she would be doing mainly spot checks. The Head pointed out how difficult it was to find a member of SLT to help out with the BACS checks. He added that Governors should feel confident that he and the Chair of Resources will be carrying out a feedback check. What is being proposed is improving our finances processes and we are not exposed to any problems.

<u>Decision</u>: The Full GB agreed and approved this document. <u>Action</u>: The Headteacher will provide feedback to Governors at the next Resources and Full GB meetings.

- *c)* Protocols for Signatories of Cheque & BACS Payments 23/24
 Comment: The Head advised that following the meeting with the Chair of Resources and the SBM, from September 2023 the SBM will be a signatory of BACS.
 <u>Decision:</u> The Full GB agreed and approved this document.
- d) Scheme of Delegation 23/24

Comment: The Head advised that the only change to this document was the addition of the SBM's name and her scheme of delegation.

<u>Decision</u>: The GB agreed and approved this document.

e) BACS/Cheque Procedures 23/24

Comment: The Head advised that, as previously indicated and discussed, this document had been updated to be consistent in the procedures.

Decision: The GB agreed and approved this document.

f) Main Account Finance Procedures 23/24 (includes: School Meals and School Events)
 Comment: The Head advised that the document had been updated specifically as discussed during this meeting.

Decision: The GB agreed and approved this document.

g) Devolved Capital Account Finance Procedures 23/24

Comment: The Head confirmed this document had been updated outlining the changes discussed at this meeting.

Decision: The GB agreed and approved this document.

9/ Academisation

The following documents had been provided to Governors prior to this meeting:

- > Academy Presentation Sept 2023 by Nicole Alexander-Morrell
- > The Case for Academisation Sept 2023 presented by Danny Coyle

Academy Presentation by the Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors advised that at the last Full GB meeting, the Head had been asked to put a motion for "academisation" information to new Governors. The Chair advised that she would like to introduce some information about academisation with a view to further discuss this at the next Full GB meeting. The Chair added that she would be happy to hold an additional meeting if any governors wished to talk about this much further. The Chair referred to the presentation she had prepared and advised:

- Academies are publicly-funded state schools
- Funding comes directly from central government
- Some schools convert to academy status by choice
- > Ofsted 'Inadequate' schools are issued with an Academy Order
- Academies are run by an Academy Trust
- > The Diocese of Westminster is keen for our school to convert
- Academies are publicly funded schools that give heads and teachers greater freedoms and flexibilities and there is an emphasis on retaining and attracting staff
- > The ability to set their own pay and conditions for staff
- Greater control of their budget and many reports are submitted to central government and to the governing board and there are more requirements to be more transparent
- > There is freedom to change the length of terms and school days but there is a lot more oversight
- There is freedom to spend the money the local authority currently spends on their behalf and control where it is targeted
- Greater autonomy academies can define their relationship with their local authorities

The Catholic-Academy Trust (CAT) is one legal entity, accountable for all schools within it. The CAT has a Master Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State and each academy in the CAT has its own Supplemental Funding Agreement. *Members** (5) have ultimate control over the trust (*think shareholders of a company). *Trustees*** (7-11) have day to day responsibility for the running of the trust (*think company directors). Key people in the Diocese are Members but they do not get involved in the running of the school.

The Chair advised that if you have a CAT with another school, the Scheme of Delegation sets out what powers are retained at Trustee level and the Local Governing Board is based on the individual requirements of the school. The Chair added that if you searched in Companies House, our accounts would be published so anyone can see them. The accounts would be audited by an independent auditor.

Accountability

CATs must comply with the Articles of Association; any legislation or legal requirement that applies to academies, including the Independent School Standards and legislation about meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and disabilities; the Academy Trust Handbook; the Master Funding Agreement and each academy's Supplemental Funding Agreements.

Staffing

On conversion all staff will TUPE on their current terms and conditions.

The Chair provided Governors with a number of links to useful information to read about the academy conversion process. The Academy Handbook sets out very clearly the structure of an Academy Trust and the Church Academies provides specific documents for church schools. Governors were invited to look at this important information.

Headteacher's Case for Academy Conversion

The Headteacher advised that he had put a rationale paper for the Cardinal Wiseman School's conversion to an academy. He explained that in 2017, the Cardinal had put forward his request for all Catholic Schools to convert into academies in his "*Families of Schools: The Implementation of Catholic Academy Trusts* (*CATs*)". This document sets out the whys and the wherefores of the formation of CATs within the Family

structure. The aim is made clear: 'how collectively we can protect, secure and develop the Church's mission in Catholic education'. The Head pointed out that, nationwide, 80% of schools are now academies.

He advised that academy conversion had been discussed in 2017, very acrimoniously, by all Ealing's Catholic schools but the process had not moved on. Some of these schools are still not interested at all but a couple of them were exploring this proposal and would like to work with Cardinal Wiseman.

The Head added that CATs, organised along Families of Schools lines, would give us greater agency and self-determination, as they are more able than individual schools to forge events. The flexibility CATs enable in the face of complex dynamic challenges, combined with a readiness to respond and adapt, will build sustainability and development into their institutional DNA. With falling rolls and increased competition for places, Catholic schools need each other more than ever. Financial gains and economies of scale in CATs mean that there is a reduction in individual costs and more flexibility with budgets. CAT-wide contracts for areas like cleaning and catering help reduce administration, costs, and workload. Catholic schools need the resilience born of solidarity more than ever.

The Head encouraged Governors to read his proposal and confirmed that Governors needed to discuss this process much further.

The Chair added that Catholic primary schools were declining in numbers. There is real concern that Catholic primary schools PAN numbers are struggling.

Q: A Governor asked if the Headteacher was able to say who the primary schools were?

R: The Head replied he could not do so at this moment. However, the Diocese had been very strict on CATs Families.

Q: A Governor pointed out that Catholic primary schools used to be oversubscribed in Ealing. Had this changed?

R: The Chair replied that some of them were struggling and some of them were being filled by non-Catholic children.

A Governor added that this would be a big decision to make along with the legal implications and financial costs. A Governor pointed out that there would be staff anxiety as well. A Governor asked about retaining the identity of the school. The Head pointed out that there would be large savings in the future. The Chair added that there would be a procurement policy and, for academies, there was an expectation of more transparency. A Governor pointed out that it was a concern that some Catholic primary schools may not do so well. The Chair agreed that, from feedback, there would be better progression from primary to high school if those schools were in a CAT family.

M. Samuel left the meeting at 8.45pm

<u>Decision1</u>: Governors were asked to read the paperwork provided and presented at this meeting by the Chair and the Headteacher.

<u>Decision2</u>: Governors agreed for a further meeting to be arranged to discuss in more detail the Academy conversion of The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School.

Action: The Chair will contact Governors to arrange a date and time for a Teams meeting.

10/ <u>Confirmation of the following:</u>

a) Membership of 2023/24 Committees and Panels - Agreed

The following changes were requested by Governors:

- > C Ivory will join the Resources committee and be removed from Curriculum
- > E Marciniuk will be asked to join the Catholic Life and the Curriculum committees

Due to a forthcoming building project, the Chair asked for a "Project Working Group" to be set up comprising of three or four Governors who will attend meetings and visit the school during the project. N Rutherford may be available to offer advice but, otherwise, it may be necessary to bring in a consultant to provide advice to Governors. The Chair confirmed that she would be one of the members of this Working Group.

Action: Governors agreed to consider this request and contact the Chair.

b) Governors' Meetings Cycle for 2023/24 - Agreed

Governors were provided with a copy of the Governors' Meetings cycle for 23/24. <u>Action</u>: The Clerk will notify members of SLT and relevant staff of the Governors' meetings dates for 2023/24.

c) Link Governors for 2023/24 with Specific Responsibilities

The following governors agreed to be known as 'Governors with a Specific Responsibility':

Child Protection/Safeguarding:	N Alexander-Morrell, D Coyle, M Sylvester
Literacy:	TBC
Looked After Children:	J Buck-Townsend
Religious Education:	A Majcherczyk-Olczak
Numeracy:	M Doyle
PSHE:	TBC
Special Educational Needs:	TBC
Students' Careers:	TBC
Training for Governors:	C Ivory

11/ Training for Governors

C Ivory (CI), Link Governor for Training for Governors, had prepared the following documents:

a) Governor training approach - 2023/2024

b) Govenor training (Spreadsheet) – Autumn Term 2023

CI advised that it was all about upskilling governors as well-trained school governors were better equipped to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively, make informed decisions, understand school policies and contribute to the overall governance of the school. CI would like to link what governors do now and what they need to do following the Governors' Skills Audit in order for all Governors to gain personal and professional growth. Those in attendance agreed.

<u>Action1</u>: Governors to attend a training session every term. The Spreadsheet provided by CI outlines training for governors throughout the Autumn term.

Action2: CI will update the Governor Training Spreadsheet on a termly basis.

<u>Action3</u>: CI will check the Governors Skills Audit results to identify Governors' training needs and availability of courses during the year.

Safeguarding Training: The Head advised that the Director of Inclusion would be providing Safeguarding training to Governors prior to the next Full GB meeting in October.

Head's Performance Review Training: 28th September 2023

Those governors taking part in the Headteacher's Performance Review were reminded that they must attend the 'Headteacher Appraisal' training provided on-line by Ealing CPD. The Chair confirmed that she had registered on the course. The Chair advised she would send a link to those Governors who had agreed to be part of the Review Panel, so they register on the course.

Ofsted Inspection Training:

CI pointed out that training is provided by the National Governance Association (NGA), the training is free and all Governors should take part in this training.

12/ Minutes of Last Meeting - Agreed.

13/ Matters Arising from Last Meeting

The Head advised that Cardinal Wiseman had had the best GCSEs results in its school's history. There will be more information at the Autumn term meeting of the Curriculum committee. The Open Evening for prospective Yr7 students was due to take place on 14th September 2023. The Head emphasised that Cardinal Wiseman is a really strong school with great teachers and students who are working very hard. He confirmed that 'Results Day' had been a wonderful experience.

The Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Governing Board, asked the Head to pass on their 'Congratulations' to everyone.

14/ Date of Next Meeting: <u>Thursday 19th October 2023 – 6.30 pm</u>

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Part 'A' Minutes Approved by:

Nicole Alexander-Morrell Chair of Governors

Roz Smith Clerk to the Governors