

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Held on Monday 18th July 2022 at 5:30pm
 Via Zoom (recorded meeting)

Present: John Preston
 Olly Priestley
 Patrick Robinson

Brian King
 Richard Kelley (late)

Apologies: None received

In attendance: Joe Basquill (Guest)

Item	Details
1.	WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER JP welcomed everybody and there was a moment of reflection
2.	APOLOGIES None received.
3.	DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS No declarations
4.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH MAY 2022 The minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.
5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING Minute 3: Actions from last meeting:</p> <p>QUESTION: What is the update on recruiting a new clerk? What are the contingency plans for September?</p> <p>OP explained that there had been no interest in the role. Discussions had occurred between OP and Angela Morley who would step in if there was no successful applicant as an interim measure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OP commented that the school had hired a toilet for the field to give access for the summer term. • Plans to have more clubs and for the children to participate in competitions the following year • Children have been attending festivals throughout the year • Daily mile has been a success • Sports hoodie has been added to the school website <p>QUESTION: When will the hoodie be used at school?</p> <p>OP explained that the children would continue to wear PE kits on the days when they have lessons. This was due to reducing changing time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OP explained that Angela Morley had completed the job description for the office roles and gaps in operations had been covered • There is a plan to reduce Alan Mitchell's role to support some finance and become IT technician when Premises Manager had been appointed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angela Morley praised by board for performance throughout the year and effectiveness of role. • An update requested in the new year to review operations <p style="text-align: right;">Action: OP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OP confirmed that the PREMISES MANAGEMENT policy had been circulated and agreed
6.	<p>HEADTEACHER WRITTEN REPORT</p> <p>OP had distributed the report to members but there was discussion on each area to offer opportunities for questions.</p> <p>School Characteristics</p> <p>An observation was made on pupil numbers rising and a rise in EAL children in the school.</p> <p>QUESTION: Why has there been an increase in EAL children and how are they being supported in school?</p> <p>OP surmised that families had come into the country for increased work opportunities. There had been further applications – some have been accepted – some declined due to numbers in class.</p> <p>OP reflected that the families had been very positive about the school and education. The support needed was varied due to differing language barriers. There had been significant progress made by some of the pupils. It was an area that needed support and increased the strain in terms of fulfilling needs of all the pupils.</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>QUESTION: What is the explanation for the lower attendance and increasing persistent absence?</p> <p>OP there have been considerable cases of various illness and also holiday leave.</p> <p>QUESTION: What has been done to curb this rise?</p> <p>OP fines have been issued to some parents and we have used County to support in two cases of persistent absence – one resulting in fines for the parents.</p> <p>QUESTION: How are the school tackling the problem of lateness?</p> <p>OP confirmed letters were sent to parents and one to one discussions had been held. He is making changes to starting times to stop the amounts of late children. His observation was that this had been more problematic since the onset of COVID.</p> <p>Discussion occurred regarding governor involvement with attendance. Attendance to be included in future updates so it can be monitored.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: OP</p> <p>Richard Kelley joined the meeting.</p> <p>Staff Attendance</p>

OP reported that there had been a vast increase in the number of staff absences. He confirmed that this was a combination of COVID, illness and compassionate circumstances (including death of family members).

Concern was expressed regarding the level of staff absence and the impact on the workload of those staff remaining in school.

QUESTION: What impact has this had upon the whole staff?

OP explained that there was exhaustion in the staff due to covering multiple roles.

QUESTION: Are there staff who have been off frequently? How are they supported?

OP: There are some staff who have been off on multiple occasions and there have been referrals to occupational health to try and support. All staff have Back to Work interviews and frequent absences are escalated to a formal context.

A member commented that the level of absence was not sustainable and shared concern regarding the impact upon the children. **OP** was asked if he would like further support from the board to manage absence to assist in reducing the impact. This was accepted.

PR to meet with **OP** to support with absence procedures with a view to creating a context whereby attendance is improved.

Action: OP and PR

Assessment

The governors congratulated staff on their efforts with the results from the last year.

QUESTION: What has contributed to the rising standards in KS2 results?

OP commented that the children received quality first teaching. The tutoring had also been successful and this had impacted pupil premium children.

QUESTION : GLD seems very low – what are the factors behind this and what can be achieved in the new year?

OP explained that the children had made considerable progress from their baseline entry – this was very low and possibly caused by the pandemic. There had been a change of teacher that would have influenced to some extent, but the challenge was accelerating learning for a group of children who entered well below age expectation.

OP confirmed plans to strengthen Year 1 in the Autumn term to ensure the children were on track with reading,

QUESTION Year 2 results were lower than usual expectations – how can progress accelerate in the new academic year?

OP explained there were plans to use tutoring money to support this year group. The year group had enormous disruption with the pandemic and changing teachers and the impact of this was considerable. The teaching structure was set next year with added experience to ensure the group push on.

OP stated that the phonics score for the year group was up at the old national figure, which was encouraging.

QUESTION: There are concerns with regards to the impact some high tariff children are having on the education of a class in Year 3. What is the plan to ensure that this disruption doesn't occur when they move up to Y4?

OP explained that the current teacher had worked hard to manage this scenario and harnessed the support of SLT when negative behaviour was impacting the whole class. Y4 have been allocated an experienced and talented teacher, with strong classroom management skills. EHCP's were being prepared for two – one was in place and the child likely to attend another setting. A third child had been moved up temporarily to build a bond with new teacher, this is working well.

A governor commented on adopting a compassionate attitude to the high tariff children but stated that all children needed to be safe.

QUESTION: If the children continue to disrupt the learning of others despite relevant support – what will the school do to protect the class?

OP stated that if the children were behaving in a manner which was hurting others or disrupting the learning then he would follow the behavioural policy in terms of suspensions and ultimately permanent exclusion. He stated that he would endeavour to support the children who were also suffering due to a number of mitigating circumstances.

Teaching Headlines

The concern for fatigue in staff was commented upon again and a reference to ensuring staff absence is tackled to avoid stress on others.

OP confirmed that the two new teachers were commencing in the autumn term and this would result in extra capacity. This capacity would further improve when the EYFS teacher returns from maternity leave.

The governors thanked the staff for their efforts in a challenging year.

QUESTION: Are the technological challenges resolved now?

OP the school are changing the support provider as we haven't been happy with the current provider Soft Egg. There will be an update about the change of provider and technology in next meeting.

Action: OP

Training

QUESTION: Is there a strategic plan for training and is it supporting the goals of the school?

OP stated that training has been challenging due to the staff absence and the focus has been essential/statutory training.

In the new academic year training would be linked to the SDP and used to enhance the skills of the staff. The partnership with Whole Education would help to drive this forward.

OP also stated that he would like regular in-house training and would be exploring opportunities to deliver to all without disruption.

Pupil Premium

Question: Has the impact of spending this year been successful?

OP stated the school have used the money to support an extra class and ensure staffing levels remain high in the school which support quality first teaching. The results of children show that there have been some year groups where the gap is very small.

Nurture has been provided which has impacted the behaviours of some children. The school were investing in Thrive to be able to show more clearly the impact of some of the SEMH work that has been completed.

OP confirmed that he would go through the Pupil Premium in October meeting.

Events

The governors praised the school for the extra events and activities provided over the last year.

Exclusions

OP described some of the events that resulted in exclusions and the board agreed with decisions. A reminder from the board to be compassionate to the pupils but, when necessary, the need to safeguard all the pupils is important.

OP reported the challenges that some cases with safeguarding needs had when excluding

Safeguarding

QUESTIONS: Are the families reported repeatedly on the concern list?

OP stated that we track the families from year to year to see how the support changes. There are examples of families who are supported in some capacity and then things change for the positive. There are examples of some families following the same cycle when support is reduced.

OP shared a concern with the lack of support that was available in the area and County.

JP suggested contacting the County to share the board's concern about families on this cycle.

Action: JP

OP commented that a teacher was leaving after four years due to family circumstances and stopping teaching.

OP also reported that there two fixed term, part time TA contracts had concluded. OP had undertaken a review of the needs of the school and advertised two full time TA posts. Neither wanted a full-time position so didn't apply for the vacant role.

	Vacancies for Premise Manager, Crossing Patrol, Clerk and LSA would be advertised at the beginning of the new term.
7.	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>OP presented the Month 3 finance report to all the governors.</p> <p>OP stated that this was very early in the cycle and that it was challenging to make too many judgements from this report at this stage. He said the Month 6 would give a greater interpretation if the school was on track to stay in budget.</p> <p>QUESTION: What will the impact be of the new pupils that have been admitted in recent weeks?</p> <p>OP concluded that this would be taken into consideration at the next census and the school had made predictions on less pupils than had enrolled.</p> <p>QUESTION: If there is more income then how will this impact the children in the next academic year?</p> <p>OP reported that he would be prudent due to the current financial climate and would be able to plan more investment as the year progressed depending on the figures.</p> <p>QUESTION: Is the school going to be affected by the growing energy costs? What plans are there to try and reduce this as much as possible?</p> <p>OP reported that it was his belief that the school were on a secure rate and that the impact might be managed but would confirm and report back.</p> <p>OP suggested that this would be a good whole school project to reduce energy costs that the children could be involved with – lead by the school council.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: OP</p>
8.	<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p>BK confirmed that he had been working with Angela Morley regarding healthy and safety. The two had been working through an overview of health and safety compliance.</p> <p>BK was discussing with Angela how he could support termly in this.</p> <p>OP requested that the governors approve delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to approve Educational Visits in Category 'A'. Governors approved. Action: OP</p> <p>BK had compiled a list of action points that he wanted addressing at next meeting.</p> <p>OP informed the board that a health and safety audit was occurring in November and that training was being arranged for inset for whole school.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: BK/OP</p>
9.	<p>SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION</p> <p>OP confirmed that safeguarding had been reported mainly in written report.</p>

	<p>OP commented on the continued strain that safeguarding has on the operational side of the school, particularly without the SEND lead in place.</p> <p>QUESTION: What support is in place for the staff managing the cases?</p> <p>OP confirmed that supervision was in place for Laura Plant and himself.</p> <p>QUESTION: Is training for staff adequate and up to date?</p> <p>OP confirmed that basic awareness would be repeated for all staff at INSET and that all staff would read Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 again. It is also a regular feature of all meetings and emails circulated with updates and case studies.</p> <p>OP shared concerns regarding families over the holiday due to a rise last year in domestic violence.</p>
10.	<p>SEND REPORT</p> <p>OP explained that due to an absence of a SEND lead, Laura Plant was covering SEND duties and her pastoral role during the last term. Julie Rolfe was also undertaking an extra day per week to attend to the SEND admin. OP stated that the report would be ready for the first meeting of the new term and that it would be a good opportunity for the new SEND lead Jane Nicholls to understand the role that she was beginning.</p> <p>The board agreed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: LP JN</p>
11.	<p>REQUEST FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>JP reported that there were two further requests for absence that had been made by teachers.</p> <p>Staff 1 had requested for 5 days of absence due to a family member getting married in September – the leave would commence in the second week of the new term.</p> <p>There had been discussion over email regarding the issue, with two options available:</p> <p>To give the full leave unpaid days other than wedding day and well-being day. To offer three days paid using a roll over wellbeing day, next year's well-being day and also the wedding day.</p> <p>QUESTION: Would unpaid leave for extended holiday set a precedent to all staff?</p> <p>JP: Reported concerns that this would result in further applications with grounds of unpaid for weddings in the future which could lead to operational difficulty.</p> <p>The board decided on the second option offering three days which JP would report back to staff member.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: JP</p> <p>Staff 2 had requested an unpaid day of leave due to a planned 40th Birthday long weekend. The plan was to take a day of well-being and an unpaid day.</p>

	<p>The governing board concluded from conversation that this would again be a precedent that would cause operational difficulties in the future and wasn't a valid reason for requesting time off. Therefore, this request was declined.</p> <p>JP agreed to feed back to the member of staff.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: JP</p>
12.	<p>POLICY REVIEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OP confirmed that the PREMISES management policy had been circulated and agreed by all via email after the last meeting. • The following policies were circulated and there were no points raised regarding the content and they were agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grievance Policy • Admission Policy • Anaphylaxis Policy • Complaints policy • EYFS policy • Staff leave of absence • Attendance policy • Medical policy <p>OP confirmed the policies that had been adopted from the County or from an accredited organisation.</p> <p>QUESTION: Why are the school introducing an anaphylaxis policy?</p> <p>OP explained that we had a child who was extremely allergic to nuts and dairy arriving in September and the school wanted to be prepared for his arrival.</p> <p>QUESTIONS: What other measures are being taken to ensure the staff are ready?</p> <p>OP confirmed that training had been booked for INSET and that this would include EpiPen and basic first aid awareness training. In addition, all staff had been asked to complete online anaphylaxis training.</p>
13.	<p>GENERAL ISSUES</p> <p>Catering</p> <p>OP reported that there had been recent mistakes with regards to the allergens reported by West Buckland.</p> <p>One of the challenges was down to a change in gravy that wasn't communicated clearly, but was no risk and was accurate.</p> <p>OP also explained that on investigation the standard of presentation and communication had been short of expectation.</p> <p>QUESTION: What action has been taken to ensure that this is avoided in future?</p> <p>OP confirmed that a meeting had taken place which had resulted in discovery of a skills shortage in terms of IT that had been addressed through support in this area.</p>

There was also a checking system in place now to check the menu before distribution.

OP confirmed that the layout of allergen charts and menu had been changed and improved.

QUESTION: If the school lost West Buckland, how would that impact the operational side of the school?

OP stated that there would be a financial loss that would impact staffing throughout the school. In terms of the kitchen, it wouldn't be cost effective to give up the kitchen to an external provider.

JP suggested that it would be prudent for updates about the kitchen in the new term and also for more involvement to support the headteacher.

GDPR

OP reported that there had been a GDPR breach reported by a parent – a breach to just them and it was considered low risk due to the circumstances.

OP reported that a letter of guidance had been issued to the member of staff to support them and ensure that a further breach was avoided.

QUESTION: What is being done to raise awareness to the whole staff regarding GDPR?

OP confirmed that there was further training planned at the INSET Day and that there was an increase in information in the school. Posters and updates are now presented on the noticeboards in the staff room.

14. **GOVERNOR ITEMS**

Joe Basquill was given the opportunity to introduce himself to the rest of the board giving an outline of his career and his desires for wanting to be a governor.

JP asked Joe if he was interested still in pursuing the position of governor and he accepted.

JP instructed that all the relevant paperwork was completed in order for Joe to become a full governor.

Action: Angela Morley

It was agreed that the monitoring timetable and calendar would be agreed by **JP** and **OP** before the next meeting and presented at the meeting,

JP stated that the group needed to continue a search for foundation governors to add depth to the board.

OP reported that there was interest in the vacant Parent Governor position and that he was in discussion. The candidate had experience of health and safety and GDPR.

OP to feed back at the next meeting progress in this area.

	Action: OP
	It was confirmed that Jo Rogers had left the governing board due to personal reasons but expressed her sadness at leaving the school.
15.	CORRESPONDENCE No correspondence received.
16.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING JP and OP to meet to confirm dates for new year. It was agreed that Thursday was the best day. Calendar dates to be circulated to all governors when organised.

Meeting ended at 19:20

Action points arising from meeting held 6th May 2022

Minute Ref	Action Point	Responsibility
5	OP to give update about office structure in new school year	OP
6	OP to update every meeting regarding attendance so it is monitored more frequently	OP
6	PR and OP to meet regarding staff attendance in new term	OP/PR
6	Update on technology for next meeting	OP
6	OP to share pupil premium report – October meeting	OP
6	JP to write to the county sharing concerns about the cycle of challenges for families	JP
7	OP to discuss energy costs with Angela Morley and report back to governors at next meeting	OP/AM
7	OP to organise discussions with staff and pupils regarding energy costs with a plan to be more sufficient	OP
8	OP and BK to meet with Angela in Autumn 1 st half term to explore progress of health and safety management	OP/BK/AM
10	Present the SEND report to the governing board	JN and LP
11	JP to inform staff members of decisions to take leave	JP
13	OP to feedback about developments in the kitchen at the next meeting	OP
14	OP to liaise with parent governor candidate and report back to board	OP
14	Paperwork to be completed for Joe Basquill to be inducted	AM
16	OP and JP to organise meeting dates for the new year	OP and JP