



West Hill Primary School
(a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
Beech Park, West Hill, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1UQ
01404 812599
admin@west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk
Headteacher: Cheryl Boulton



West Hill Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting

held on Thursday January 19th 2017 at 6.30 pm at the school

Actions (Bold) GB questions, decision making and challenges (*Italics*)

Present: Chair -Sally Sycamore (SS), HT - Cheryl Boulton (CB), Vice Chair - Jonathan Brook (JB)
Esther Apsey (EA), Dot Bioletti (DB), Hilary Eade (HE), Matt Fripp (MF), Ian Heard (IH),
Debbie Hudson (DH), Jenny Meredith (JM), Danny Murphy (DM), Sue Tovey (ST), Chris Webster (CW)

Clerk: Margaret Whitlock (MW)

PART 1

1. Introduction:

Apologies – none

Declaration of Interests/ check RBI and remind of Governor Code of Conduct:

SS reminded Governors of the requirements to maintain up to date RBIs and declare any conflicts of interest, during meetings. Governors had no changes to their RBIs or any declaration of interests apart from JM who raised a concern around discussing the Admissions Policy as she had a child who would be admitted to the school in September 2017. *She asked whether there would be an issue around his date of birth related to the date of entry.* After discussion the GB agreed that as the dates of entry were not being changed or reviewed in the Admissions Policy, this would not be an issue. However, if the discussions moved into that field, when reviewing the policy, it was agreed that JM would leave the meeting.

Appointment of new Governors:

SS welcomed EA and DM to the GB and thanked them for their willingness to contribute to the life of the school.

Parent Governor – Esther Apsey - Proposed DB and seconded SS

Foundation Governor - Danny Murphy – Proposed DH and seconded JB

2. Confirmation of Minutes of meeting 24.11.16:

Matters arising from minutes: None

Completed annotated actions: Outstanding actions – none – all actions met.

The minutes were agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair. Proposed DH and seconded JB

- 3. Agree the new Monthly FGB Cycle:** The new monthly Annual Cycle of GB meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting and Governors had been invited to consider the choice of dates for meetings, taking into account the requirement for regular meetings over the year and the notes outlining the times of reports to be generated. It was agreed that the selected dates allowed for an even spread of meetings and that all meetings would continue to take place at 6.30 pm; due to the commitments of the majority of Governors. The Chair confirmed that dates

were still flexible and could be altered with the full agreement of the GB at an FGB meeting. **(Action – MW to email GB the new Governors Annual Monthly Cycle with the agreed dates.)** SS also stated that the aim had been to condense several areas of responsibility into each Lead Governor report by bundling a number of tasks together. She reassured the GB that there would be an element of flexibility with opportunities for discussion and the review of the Annual Cycle in FGB Meetings as the trial year progressed.

Visits Programme: The Visits Programme had been updated in line with the SDP, taking account of the skills and interests of each Governor and their Lead Governor roles. **(Action – MW to email the agreed Visits Programme to all Governors.)**

The Terms of Reference for the Lead Portfolio Governors: Agree D or R for Leads:

(D= decision to be taken by the committee and reported to the full GB in the minutes)

(R= the committee to bring recommendation to a meeting of the full GB for a decision.)

The new Lead Portfolio Terms of Reference had been generated from the original Resources Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee Terms of Reference and sent to Governors for their agreement. It was noted that the content for the Pay and Performance Committee, The HT Appraisal Panel and the Hearings Committees would remain unchanged, though Ian Heard will be added to the list of Governors for the HT Appraisal Panel to ensure a Foundation Governor is included, as required for a Foundation School.

Governors were asked to give feedback on each of the new Lead Governor Terms of Reference:

- **Curriculum Lead** – HE agreed the content, *though questioned if she should have had input on the generation of the new ToRs*. It was agreed that this would take place in the summer for the review of the ToRs, ready for the FGB meeting in September.
- **Finance Lead** – MF agreed the content, *though questioned what “Voluntary Funds” might cover and how he would oversee these funds*. The GB suggested that these would include SMILE, PTFA and any monies acquired as donations or through profit gained from sales. MF agreed he is happy to monitor these funds as part of his Lead role.
- **Health and Safety Lead** - IH agreed the content.
- **Premises Lead** - IH agreed the content and noted that he would be meeting Lara Dart to discuss the Asset Management Plan and related premises issues to report at the next FGB Meeting.
- **Inclusion Lead** - JM agreed the content, *though noted that there is an overlap in the outline of her role with SEND*. The GB agreed that roles often had an overlap and that Inclusion Lead is an umbrella role that has links with other Lead roles. JM agreed that she would aim to meet with DB and DM to enable the effective sharing of information. It was also noted that as JM has the role of Safeguarding Lead, DM would share the Inclusion role, with a view to taking it over by the start of the new academic year. DM confirmed he was happy to take on this role, once he had a good understanding of the school.
- **Safeguarding Lead** - JM agreed the content. *IH, as Safeguarding deputy noted that monitoring allegations and safer recruitment were also included in the Personnel Lead role and acknowledged the value of Lead Governors working closely on these areas.*
- **Personnel Lead** - DB agreed the content.
- **SEND Lead** - DB agreed the content.
- **Community and Parent Links Lead** - EA agreed the content and confirmed she had much experience that would support this role. *She questioned the strategic input a Lead Governor has in the case of complaints and SS clarified how the GB is there to check and monitor while*

ensuring the HT handles the operational side. However, if a complaint is escalated to the GB, the Hearings Committees are then the domain of the GB.

The GB agreed unanimously with the New Monthly Annual Cycle, the Visits programme and the content of each of the Lead Governor and Committee Terms of Reference brought to the meeting. Proposed DH and seconded SS

4. Date of the next FGB Meeting: February 23rd 2017 at 6.30 pm

5. Safeguarding Audit and action plan:

CB confirmed the GB that had received the Safeguarding Audit and resulting action plan that CB had worked on with the Babcock Safeguarding Advisor. CB stated that she had been reassured to know the strengths and weaknesses of Safeguarding at WHPS and was pleased that the review had been comprehensive and informative. She noted that there are 5 key areas of recommendation:

- **Single Central Record** – CB explained that this is maintained by the office staff and contains information about staff working in the school. She stated that this record is extensive and must have no gaps. At the time of the review this record was not complete and CB felt this was due to the Business Manager leaving in May and the appointee not receiving a full and informative handover or sufficient training, although the former Business Manager had returned for one day a month. *Governors were concerned that this situation will be rectified soon.* CB acknowledged that this is now being addressed, helped by the employment of a new member of the Administration team, who has extensive knowledge and experience of working on the Single Central Record.
- **Safeguarding training** – CB noted that there are a number of new areas of training that all staff and Governors should be receiving including Prevent, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). *The GB were concerned that the review had highlighted that there had been a lack of consistency and understanding around Safeguarding protocol and effective record keeping up to now.* However, it was noted that all staff and most governors had attended the Level 2 Safeguarding training recently and had also completed the online Prevent training, which would update all members of staff and also ensure there is vigilance and a sound understanding of protocol across the school. In the next few weeks staff and governors will also complete online courses for FGM and CSE.
- **Inconsistency in policy and procedure** –The review noted that members of staff were not always giving consistent answers around protocol outlined in the Safeguarding policy. Members of Staff are trained annually but as at WHPS any safeguarding incidents are fairly infrequent, this knowledge is not put into practice on a regular basis and therefore knowledge can become hazy. *After discussion the GB agreed that this would be improved following the recent training blitz and future regular "drip-feed" planned training.*
- **Record keeping** – CB stated that there is a two tier system of record keeping. Teachers' chronologies are for recording the day to day observations for each pupil around minor concerns, where if any patterns were observed, these would be flagged up to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who would take any further necessary action. The serious disclosures and observations made by staff are recorded on the blue forms available in the staff room on the Safeguarding Board and in staff chronology folders. These are passed to the designated Safeguarding Lead – CB or the deputy – DH, who will then speak to the parents or make the decision to contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), if it is judged that the situation demands their intervention. *In response to a Governor's question,* CB reassured the GB that all those who interact with the children are aware of that protocol and that these issues would be regularly raised in staff meetings to ensure Safeguarding knowledge remains fresh.

JB questioned the continued use of paper records when CPOMS had been researched by the HT. CB explained that she had been advised to continue with the current system as staff were confident with that, but that this would be researched further in the future and would be likely to be used across the county in the next few years. HE enquired if CPOMS would enable links with siblings in other schools. DH stated that there are benefits in that it enables shared information within school, but it is not linked to other schools and organisations in the county.

- **Site Security** – The removal of bushes and the building work by the school field have both compromised school security. CB reported that Cedar Homes (Kier) have agreed to erect a 1.2m chain link fence along the boundary, *though Governors questioned if the height was sufficient to deter entry or escape.* Currently there are two lines of barbed wire at a low height. *DB questioned what action was being taken to ensure pupil safety up until March, when the fence is due to be erected.* CB stated that pupils did not go on the field at this time, due to the water logged nature of the grass. *EA asked that a check be made of other schools and the height of fencing used by them to ensure pupil security. (Action – MF to contact Jessica Bailey a Town Councillor, to see if the height of the proposed fencing can be raised to 6 feet.)*

CB also proposed that fencing be installed to ensure security along the side of the school where the bushes had been removed. **(Action – CB to check that fencing and procedures are in place to ensure site security at WHPS.)**

SS asked that CB confirm by whether these issues would be resolved by Easter as a possible date. CB agreed that Ofsted would be rigorous in its judgements of Safeguarding at WHPS, even if all other areas were judged excellent. CB stated that the Single Central Record (SCR) was being updated by Wendy Bowen and that Katie Hunter was working full time for 2 weeks to allow WB to achieve this as soon as possible. IH enquired how current WB's knowledge of the SCR is. CB informed the GB that WB is visiting another school recommended as having a strong SCR, which would ensure that WHPS could achieve the same, hopefully by Easter. *JB enquired if those present were aware of what a good SCR looked like.* JM confirmed, as Safeguarding Lead, that she had a good knowledge, outlining the mandatory headers and key characteristics. It was agreed that each term JM and IH would review the SCR, complete a data collection exercise and check there are no gaps; reporting back to the GB. To provide CB with the valuable support, this will take place termly, as required for a new HT.

JM and IH had both attended the Audit and acknowledged that the Babcock Assessor had been rigorous, but had also provided much guidance and support, which will continue as required. CB noted that she is doing the L3 Safeguarding training in February, although she had completed L3 in the summer 2016 in Wiltshire, as there are some differences in Devon. CB will be cascade new information down to staff and the GB. SS was confident that all appears to be on track and was reassured that these issues had been raised and are being addressed efficiently over the next few weeks.

JM, the Safeguarding Governor reminded Governors that they should have read "Keeping Children Safe in Education", which was circulated by the Clerk in September 2016, and asked that each Governors sign to say they had read Part 1 and if possible Part 2 in detail by January 30th. (Action - MW to re-send "Keeping Children Safe in Education" to the GB and governors to sign the record provided in the office by 30.1.17.) A quiz of key points was suggested for the next FGB meeting.

JM also requested that Governors ensure they attend Safeguarding training annually and that all records and reports should be sent to the Clerk so that these are held by her and in the school. For those Governors who had not been able to attend the safeguarding training 18.1.17, the Safeguarding trainer would send hard copies of the slides for them to read. In response to a query by SS JM confirmed that the GB met the requirements for at least one L3 Safeguarding Governor being on the GB (there are 3 on the GB including the HT) and one

governor who has attended Safer Recruitment training, which JM has confirmed should be refreshed every three years. (JB and DB have this qualification.)

It was agreed that all staff and Governors would do Safeguarding training every September, as in autumn 2015. JB asked if there is any online L2 safeguarding training available. **(Action – MW to send JB and CW online safeguarding training information as they were unable to attend the training – 18.1.17.)**

JM informed the GB that she would be submitting a report in March. EA state that she had attended courses in the past and it was noted that training done outside the school is deemed relevant and that any certificate should be sent to the Clerk for the GB training records. **(Action - Governors to send certificates of relevant training to the Clerk.)** SS reminded Governors that the GB Self Evaluation in June is also an opportunity to update the GB records on relevant training undertaken outside the school. *IH stated that he was reassured that a robust structure is now in place. DM asked about the nature of the links with Public health and the School Nurse.* CB stated there is currently limited contact, but that advice and guidance can be sought from the School Nurse, as she had recently for the Asthma Policy. DM outlined the value of regular meetings with schools, the GB and other organisations to ensure the sharing of information and concerns. **(Action – CB to investigate the arrangement of a meeting with all bodies linked to safeguarding, health and education for pupils in the WHPS community.)**

DB also checked that volunteers had sufficient safeguarding training, noting that they would be keen to ensure they met all Safeguarding guidelines and would be willing to attend in-house training. Currently they sign they have seen the safeguarding information card.

(The meeting went into Part 2 – 7.34 pm – 7.40 pm)

(Action – MW to send the training record to the GB for them to add any additional information.) It was noted that JM and IH are meeting CB on 1.2.17 to discuss Safeguarding.

6. Website Audit and action plan:

The Babcock Website review had been circulated to the GB. CB also thanked MF for the extensive review he had made of the school website, which the GB had also received. CB acknowledged that though the website would appear up to date to the wider parental community, she noted that the review outlined the key areas for attention. Many of the issues were deemed to have been caused by there being no designated person with responsibility for updating the content or ensuring the website is Ofsted compliant. The review found that many documents on the website are not current, including policies that had been reviewed by the GB but not uploaded to the website. *SS was concerned that CB had to take on much of the workload for rectifying the issues raised and wondered if another member of staff be able to take some of the responsibility.* However, CB stated that many of the policies required her input. EA noted that her Community and Parent Links Lead role covered the website, but it was agreed that this is a strategic overview and monitoring responsibility, where the generation of policies lay with the HT or designated staff. The GB agreed that Governors would be available to help CB where they had the Lead responsibility or necessary knowledge. *DM suggested the school could pay to hire an expert,* but CB stated that this would be for an upgrade of the layout of the website rather than the content of the documents. CB explained that Jim Cocks has volunteered to upload documents once he has a login for the school website and the documents are prepared. *JB suggested that the first recommendation be met that any policies be removed that are not statutory for the website.* **(Action – JB to come into school to remove any non-statutory policies from the website with MW.)** CB stated that she has 38 policies to check and amend for the GB to review this spring term. In addition, those statutory policies that are out of date but not requiring review on the website also needed to be checked, amended and agreed by the GB. *HE enquired if there are DCC model policies that can be used,* which CB confirmed there are, though often additional input is required to personalise the policy to the school. SS stated that it would be useful to draw up an action plan of work and research into the websites of other schools

websites to gain an understanding of how to upgrade the whole website. **(Action – MF to research other schools websites.)** JM was concerned that Ofsted will assess the website before inspecting a school, identify out of date policies and highlight any other issues of concern. CB gave the example of a requiring a Safeguarding tab on the WHPS website to ensure good access for Safeguarding information. SS asked if CB was confident that she could meet the deadline set of Easter for updating the policies. CB said that she was not fully, but hoped that working from home one day a week would enable her to get this work done. The GB agreed they were happy with the Website Audit and the action plan.

7. **HT Appraisal:** The GB acknowledged that the HT Appraisal had taken place with Brad Murray on December 9th 2016. Objectives had been set and agreed and the Governors present at the appraisal reported that it had been robust. No salary change had been made due to the new appointment of CB on September 1st 2016.
8. **Vision and aims:** A group of Governors had met to discuss the Vision and Aims of the school with a view to making them up to date, memorable and concise. The aim is to achieve a vision that has a concise and effective strap line for use around the school. It was agreed that the ideas generated for both the vision and aims should be brought to the staff and GB for further consideration. Suggestions will then be discussed at the next FGB meeting for final agreement. **(Action – CB to approach all staff with ideas for the Vision and Aims for WHPS.) (Action – MW to add the Vision and Aims to the agenda of the next FGB – for further discussion and agreement.)(Action - SS to email all GB with the outline ideas for the WHPS Vision and Aims.)**In addition CW will collect ideas from other schools. Anyone who wishes to join the group (HE, IH, JM & SS) to work on the Vision and Aims is asked to contact SS.
9. **Budget Monitor:**

Governors had been sent the Budget Monitor for Period 9, generated by LD. MF also handed round examples of a shorter and easier to access version, which he is in the process of creating to focus GB understanding and to enable effective challenge and monitoring by all. MF stated that areas such as Pupil Premium (PP), catering issues including the effective use of profit to be used to replace equipment, budget deterioration and teacher pay working hours ratios need to be understood by all Governors.

MF noted a small improvement with the over spend since Period 7. It was noted that the costs for the new playground markings, met by the school, would be paid for by the PTFA. In presenting key measures the GB would have clear areas to refer to in their monitoring. MF reported that LD had prepared the documentation for the LA Audit – 24/25.1.17 and that he had met with her to discuss the process. LD had been reassured that Cheryl Haddy, the former Business Manager, is to be present during the LA Audit as much of the work had been generated by her. Actions that have not been met from the last Audit have been discussed and the steps taken to deal with these issues explained to MF. MF noted that he is to meeting LD to carry out bench marking and will report back to the GB in February.

JM raised a concern that a summary sheet should be generated to outline the planned use of PP 2016/17 and the likely outcomes and that this report should be available on the school website. **(Action – JM and MF is to liaise over the use and outcomes for PP funding.)**

MF stated that he plans to use the National Funding formula to begin preparation of the budget, noting that WHPS has a 0.5% reduction in addition to DCC taking back £55.00 per pupil in April. JM questioned that rural schools should be better off following the Government initiative, but CB stated that though some schools were better off, many had found they had much greater reductions in their budget than WHPS. CB reported that she had received far fewer requests for items and felt that the teaching staff had a good understanding of the financial constraints and priorities for the use of the school funds. ST noted, though that the higher expenditure in the previous years had been due to the need to purchase resources for the New Curriculum.

10. Head teacher's Update - including Safeguarding Children and Child Protection:

(The meeting went into Part 2 – 8.19 pm – 8.21 pm)

CB reported that she had appointed two new members of staff, a meal time assistant and a part-time Administrator. CB noted the help received from the TAs, who had been covering that role whilst there was a vacancy and thanks have been communicated to them.

(The meeting went into Part 2 – 8.26 pm – 8.35 pm)

CB reported that Staff had received training on the Inset Days before pupils returned. This included:

- Children's Mental Health – giving useful input on the value of sleep and healthy eating
- Handling stress – training given by occupational therapy
- Sharing the SDP with staff
- Working at height training

All staff had attended the L2 Safeguarding training – (18.1.17) and had done a course on FGM with a CSE training planned for the week beginning 23.1.17

(Action – CB to send a link to the online training for Governors to complete the FGM and CSE courses.) It was requested that on completion the certificates should be delivered to the Clerk for adding to the GB training records.

CB reported to the GB that she had received a letter from the Ombudsman stating that a complaint made by a parent at WHPS against the LA Admissions Panel had not been upheld and no investigation is required.

MF enquired how the members of staff were since returning from Christmas holidays. CB stated all were fine, though the wearing of high visibility jackets on the playground and green tabards in the dining hall had not been met with full agreement. This had however been resolved by DH at a MTA meeting that morning.

11. SMILE Learning Trust (SLT) Update:

Governors had received the draft minutes of the SMILE Learning Trust meeting – 12.1.17 and had seen the progress with the Land transfer and proposed changes to the function of the SMILE Learning Trust. JB reported that it had been agreed that the SLT would be run with the main focus being on teaching and learning and the sharing of resources between the schools in the partnership. The aim was to make the administration costs and demands on time as lean as possible and to that end it had been agreed that there would be one general meeting and AGM held each year on the same day in the summer term. This change would require an alteration of the SLT Articles. JB and MW will work on the alterations and submit the new Articles at the AGM for agreement before informing the Cooperative College and DK, who will inform Companies House. **(Action – MW to email the SLT Articles to JB for amendment ready for the AGM.)** The SLT costs were outlined in the minutes and the GB agreed that the £500.00 would continue to be provided by each school. CB reported that LD had indicated that she was not keen to take on the SMILE Accounts, with WHPS continuing as the cost centre, so it was proposed that OSMPS would be approached to take on the running of the accounts. **(Action – JB to approach MG to discuss the transference of the cost centre for the SMILE LT.)** *There was also a question over the figures for the payments made for the Land Transfer fees and costs of the lawyers.* JB stated there had been one fixed cost agreed for the process. **(Action – JB to email MF to discuss reviewing the costs of the SMILE Land Transfer paid by WHPS.)** JB outlined the reasons for the SMILE Learning Trust being set up in 2013 and the decline of the increasingly fragmented Local Learning Community for the benefit of the new Governors. He explained that though those original conditions had changed, the school was unable to return to the LA and therefore had to remain

a Foundation School and part of the SLT at present. Governors agreed with the new focus to build stronger links through teaching and learning as well as the sharing of best practice and resources. The GB saw value in building links with the Governors at OSMPs and agreed it would be beneficial to attend the SMILE AGM with Governors from the other schools. *JM noted that Ofsted looked for collaborative learning in schools, which would be good to develop through the SLT. EA agreed and stated that Ofsted was also looking for diversity with learning taking place across diverse communities.* CB said that she and MG had recognised their schools had similar needs and appreciated the opportunity to work collaboratively. CW had brought ideas to the meeting following his research across the county when working in different schools. **(Action – CW to talk with JM, updating her on his research around collaboration in local schools.)**

12. Governor Visit Reports: Governors had received the Finance Report from MF and had no comments.

Governor Training Reports: Governors had received the report from The Heads, Chairs and Clerks Course attended by CB, SS and MW. CB noted that this course had been very worthwhile and a number of issues had been outlined in the report.

13. Policies, Statements & Provisions for review in the spring term 2017:

a. Admissions Policy and Arrangements - (Website)

b. Staffing Policy, inc. recruitment - (Stat-not req. on Website) - JM checked that the staffing code of conduct was in place on the Safeguarding board in the staff room, which CB confirmed.

c. Lettings Policy - (Stat-not req. on Website) JM questioned the appropriateness of the inclusion of the “Extended Schools Agenda” under the objectives. After discussion it was agreed that the phrase was acceptable for WHPS and would be retained. It was agreed that the review date would be altered from March and noted as the spring term, as policies could be reviewed at any one of the FGB meetings in that term. **(Action – MW to alter the month of March at the end of the Lettings Policy to show the term of review as spring.)** EA questioned whether the school could be used outside school hours, explaining that there is an increasing demand for wrap around care. HE asked if the school was responsible for the School Hall. CB stated that although the Village Hall is hired out through the Village Hall Trust and the school building is unlikely to be rented out due to cleaning times, this may change and the Lettings Policy would then be altered accordingly if lettings were to be arranged to help raise money for the school.

Governors’ Expenses Policy - (Stat-not req. on Website) MF noted that the header dates were confusing on the policy and it was agreed by the GB that the Review Grid would provide the only date information. **(Action – MW to add the WHPS review grid at the top of each policy and ensure all other dates are removed as each policy is checked.)**

d. Marking Policy - non statutory

All Governors unanimously ratified all the above policies: Proposed HE, seconded DB.

14. Matters brought forward at the Chair’s discretion : None

15. Impact of meeting:

- A clear understanding of the Safeguarding requirements for the GB
- The development of a simplified and accessible Budget Monitor for the GB.
- The GB has a much improved understanding of the website issues and has discussed the action plan to ensure the necessary changes are made in good time.
- Two new Governors have been appointed to ensure WHPS has no vacancies, thereby creating an effective team of Governors who have a good balance of skills.

- The GB has recognised that CB has a considerable workload and has encouraged CB to seek those opportunities for delegation to other members of staff or Governors where possible.
- The acknowledgement of the benefit to CB of working at home one day a week, enabling her to complete more actions.
- CB reported that the regular fortnightly meetings with SS, the Chair, had proved very helpful.
- The revised Annual Cycle has been agreed and includes clear guidance for Lead Governors, shaping each meeting under procedural, strategic and monitoring areas.
- The FGB meetings are becoming more concise, despite the requirement to agree the new documents for the monthly FGB meetings.
- Sub-committees working on a particular focus such as SEF and the Vision and Aims have proved beneficial.
- JM has offered to go through the MATs Presentation with EA and DM updating them on the research done into school collaboration.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm