



West Hill Primary School
(a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
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West Hill Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting

held on Thursday September 22nd 2016 at 6.30 pm at the school

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

PART 1

Present: Cheryl Boulton, Dot Bioletti, Jonathan Brook, Hilary Eade, Matt Fripp, Kara Green, Ian Heard, Debbie Hudson, Jenny Meredith, Sally Sycamore, Sue Tovey and Chris Webster

Clerk: Margaret Whitlock

1. Introduction:

- a. **Declaration of Interests/ check RBI:** Governors completed RBIs and were reminded of the requirements to maintain up to date RBIs and declare any conflicts of interest during meetings.
- b. **Governor Code of Conduct:** It is minuted that all have agreed the Code of Conduct and have signed it.
- c. **DBS Assessment:** It was agreed that the frequency of (Enhanced) DBS Assessment would be every 4 years, with a reassessment arranged sooner if a Governor was absent for 3 months or more. **(Action – MW to request that Lara Dart register with the update service and check which Governors might need a new DBS assessment.)** It was agreed by CB that the cost of all DBS assessments would be covered by the school, as Governors give their time as volunteers for the work of the school. Proposed ST, seconded DH.
- d. **Election process and term of office for Chair and Vice Chair:** The GB agreed that the term of office will continue to be one year for the Chair and Vice Chair. Proposed JB, seconded CB.
- e. **Agree appointment of Associates:** The GB agreed that Dave Underwood and Steve Wray will be appointed as Associates and may be called upon to be present at meetings to provide expert advice or to attend hearings, if necessary, to form an uncontaminated panel.

2. Confirmation of Minutes of meeting 30.6.16 (Part 1 and 2)

The minutes were agreed unanimously by the GB with no matters arising.
Proposed SS, seconded CW.

Annotated actions listed below:

- a. (1v)MF to submit the outstanding financial reports by the end of the term – **to be completed asap**
- b. (1v) A letter to be sent to parents about CSE by the HT will be proposed for the beginning of the next academic year. ***This will be linked to safeguarding issues and may be based on guidance from the NSPCC. (Action – CB to write and send CSE letter to parents in January.)***
- c. (2) CW to research funding for the track through the Athletic Association – ***briefly discussed by GB, but agreed as an operational issue, so removed from GB remit. A financial report will be given to the Resources Committee once more information on the possible grant is available. (Action – CW to talk to CB about possible application and guidance available through Mike Anderton, for a possible grant from either UK Athletics or England Athletics.)***



- d. (2) JB to pass details of the Waste Company to SN to contact and seek funding for the track – **briefly discussed by GB, but agreed as an operational issue, so removed from GB remit**
- e. (2) SN to contact Jo Pavey for advice and support on funding the proposed track – **briefly discussed by GB, but agreed as an operational issue, so removed from GB remit**
- f. (2) SN to circulate the grant application for the Astroturf track to the GB - **no feedback**
- g. (2) IH to research grants for the track and report back to the GB in the next meeting. **This issue will be added to the Agenda of the Resources Committee– 20.10.16 IH will provide information related to the 106 agreement, passing information to CB. (Action – IH to keep CB and MF informed of all data related to possible funding for Astroturf from Blue Cedar Homes.) (Action – MW to add Astroturf funding to the agenda of the Resources Committee meeting 20.10.16)**
- h. (4a) MF to meet with CH on one of the days she is in before the end of term and to contact LD to arrange. **(Action – MF to arrange a meeting(s) with Lara Dart and Cheryl Haddy asap to review budgets and other financial issues.)**
- i. (4c) CB to organise a programme inviting each teachers to a GB meeting to give feedback on the progress and planning for their subject area(s). **Subject Leader Reports have been submitted for review by the T&L Committee and recommendations to escalate any issue to the FGB will be decided by the T&L Committee.**
- j. (4c) Cheryl Boulton to arrange for Claire Bennett to attend a FGB Meeting to give an overview of SEND to the GB. **This will be considered if the GB requires more information about SEN.**
- k. (4c) CB to arrange a Christmas social event for staff and governors. **A social event is arranged for December 7th from 3.50 to 5.30 pm for mince pies and mulled wine in the staff room with Governors and all members of Staff.**
- l. (4c) JB to include MATs in the next Governor Development Plan. **This will be an item for discussion in FGB 3.11.16 (Action – MW to add MATs report to the agenda for the FGB meeting – 3.11.16)**
- m. (5e) MW to book IH on a Safeguarding Course – 5.10.16. - **done**
- n. (5e) MW to inform Governors of the Safeguarding inset training date for them all to attend - **done**
- o. (6b) CB and the GB to consider the use of cpoms for the recording of behavioural issues at WHPS. – **It was recognised that these issues were important for safeguarding, but the GB agreed that the cost related to the small number of concerns recorded and the possible lack of security for data stored, would be a concern. It was therefore agreed that record keeping would remain the same, using the existing system of chronologies.**
- p. (6b) SN to change the name of the HT on the HT DAPH Conference booking – **done and JM intends to seek a place at the DAPH conference to discuss MATs, which is now being held on October 4th 2016.**
- q. (6b) SN to contact Andy Ogden to see if a mentor can be arranged for CB – **not done, links with local HTs are providing support currently for CB.**
- r. (6c) The GB to agree the date of the HT setting of objectives that will be with Brad Murray in the next FGB – 22.9.16. **CB to arrange and inform the GB and HT Appraisal Panel.**
- s. (7a) MW to include the structure and content of the HT report for discussion in the next FGB Meeting – 22.9.16. **Done**
- t. (7a) JM to investigate Safeguarding and SEND provision for pupils with mental health issues - **Done**
- u. (8) JM to check whether Universal credit should be a trigger for free school meals and inform SN. **Done**
- v. (8) SN to amend Charging and Remissions Policy, send to MW and also place on WHPS website. **Done**
- w. (10) Governors to be sent the annotated Governor SDP Priorities with the P1 Minutes – 30.6.16 **Done**

3. Date of the next FGB Meeting: November 3rd 2016 at 6.30 pm

4. Governing Body Monitoring and Improvement:

a. Review of Governance:

JB extended thanks to all those involved in the Review of Governance process, noting that it had been a very worthwhile process.

JM summarised the key points that stood out from the review that she considered need to be addressed:

- *Quality of challenge not outstanding, though it was recognised that the GB supported the school well.*
- *Lack of GB ownership of the SIP*
- *GB's SIP not consistent with the SDP and visits not related sufficiently to the SDP and SIP*
- *GB input insufficiently strategic and observed to be too involved in operational matters*

The GB agreed that in the past the HT had had greater ownership of the SDP, which would now be rectified as the GB developed a more strategic vision, ceased involvement in operational issues and focused more on an active input into the SDP and SIP. The GB will use the processes of review, challenge and effective monitoring, supported by SDP related visits. The resulting evidence acquired through these visits would then be shared with the GB and support future proposed actions and strategic planning by the GB. CH reported that the staff were positive about the new approach to developing the SDP and welcomed the GB input. CB hoped that all Governors would participate in the generation of the SDP and SIP. IH welcomed the new approach as there had been a concern that the lines between operational and strategic had become blurred.

JB noted that the judgements in the Review of Governance were based on Governance being "outstanding" and were therefore quite critical.

The GB went through each amber or red item in the report, discussed areas of concern and considered possible actions:

- 1.2 – It was noted that Governor training was considered to be insufficient, but the GB agreed that Governors should individually assess their training needs, attend Refresher Courses if they had been in post for more than a year and select appropriate training to support their particular roles. It was agreed that MW would continue to inform Governors of courses available through Babcock and for Governors to share learning through the WHPS Report form and verbally feedback in FGB meetings.
- 2.3 – Recommendations to factor in succession planning with Governor Development are being met by JB, who has sent out a grid with key roles to gauge who would be willing to consider new roles in the near future. One has been received so far. **(Action – Governors to return the Succession Planning Grid to JB by October 31st)** It was agreed that one person should be in line for each key role with a sufficient handover period ensured and that training would be available if required. *MF questioned whether this would be difficult to achieve with the turnover of Governors, though JB thought it was better to make a clear plan if possible. CB noted that succession planning was a key area in the SDP under leadership and management.* There followed a discussion about the difficulties JB was encountering with his commitment to the role of Chair and options were suggested and discussed as to who could take on the role of Chair and Vice Chair, including the possibility of there being a joint Chair. The GB noted that this was an honourable decision by JB and thanked him for the considerable amount of time and energy he had given to the role, leading the GB through many new initiatives in a calm and supportive manner. JB reassured Governors that he would be there to give guidance as a new Chair took on the role. JB stated that he saw the planning and leading of meetings becoming

simpler as they became more focused and strategic. This item was deferred to the end of the meeting.

- 3.1 – The GB agreed the HT report should be more concise – discussed further in (4f)
- 3.2 – Suggestions were made to increase the profile of the GB by occasionally placing information about the roles, meetings and strategic actions of the GB in the school newsletter and also by Governors attending Parents ‘Evenings. Governors also stated that the questionnaire would act as a link to parents and will be sent out in the New Year. **(Action – The questionnaire to be added to the Resources Committee Agenda – 20.10.16)**
- 3.3 – GB understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses will be clarified by their involvement in the generation of the SIP as discussed previously.
- 4.2 – The quality of challenge will be evidenced by the generation of the SIP by the GB, Governor Visits Reports and the minutes of GB meetings.
- 4.3 A new Visits programme is to be planned following generation of the SDP. The Visits programme is to be discussed in the FGB meeting – 3.11.16 **(Action – MW to add the GB Visits Programme to the agenda of the FGB 3.11.16.)**
- 5.1 – HT Report – scope and format discussed below in(4f)
- 5.2 It was agreed by the GB that the profile of the GB is good so the GB will review ways to improve their profile further at a later date.
- 7.1 The GB agreed that an Annual Cycle, which included two committee meetings per term, would be beneficial as they would be shorter, more focused and pertinent to current events. The Annual cycle will be adjusted accordingly.
- 7.2 *The GB agreed that, as recommended, Part 2 Agenda items will no longer be included and the meeting will be run as Part 1 with a vote by the GB to move into Part 2, should this be deemed necessary. This would aim to lessen the operational involvement of the GB and ensure their role remains strategic, gaining an overview of actions. Lead Governors could check information by making relevant visits to gather evidence to support information received in meetings.*
- 8.1 The Policy review was clarified by CB, noting that Subject Leaders will have ownership for their subject policies and will email them out for GB information only. Other policies will continue to be assigned, as required, to Lead Governors for review and monitoring.

b. **Committee Terms of Reference:**

These were discussed and it was agreed that it was not best practice to have staff governors in lead roles. It was therefore agreed that on the T&L Committee, the School Improvement Lead would change to JB and the Curriculum Lead would be HE; due to their current areas of subject responsibility. Other roles may change according to the Governors who may take on the role of Chair and Vice Chair. Proposed JB, seconded CW

c. **Agree D and R Check list:** It was agreed that there would be no changes to the current assignment for D & R for each area on the ToRs. Proposed JB, seconded CW

d. **Annual Cycle:** It was suggested that monthly meetings of the FGB could replace Committee meetings and the twice termly FGB meetings, as this might give all Governors a better understanding of broader areas of GB responsibility and avoid duplication of information being covered in meetings. *However, after deliberation the GB decided that they would continue to meet twice termly for FGB Meetings, but move to having twice termly T&L and Resources Committee meetings. JB valued the use of delegation, trusting the expertise of each Governor. MF saw the advantage of committees meeting twice termly as this would make for shorter more focused meetings where challenge took place with less delay between*

meetings. (Action – MW to amend the Annual Cycle to include the two sets of committee meetings per term and circulate to the GB.)

- e. **Safeguarding Governor:** JM reported that she had attended rigorous training in July and had circulated her report. She deferred the decision to have a shadow until after her meeting with CB, as she wished to gauge the need to have the support of another governor. It was noted by CB that emotional support was often needed and that succession planning should also be considered.
- f. **Headteacher Report:** CB had brought three examples to the GB of HT Reports. These were discussed and the GB agreed that the format of the Chiseldon Report and the content of the Wroughton Report March 2016 would give a useful indicator of the content, length and format the GB would like to see for the next HT Report. This will be circulated to the GB in the FGB Meeting – 24.11.16. Governors would then feedback their views of the HT Report and, if necessary, make suggestions for any amendments in that meeting. *Governors agreed that HT Reports should include the SDP and areas based on the Ofsted criteria, Attendance etc. It was agreed that a summary of assessment data would be included in the report but that specific and detailed assessment data would be distributed in accompanying documents. Governors also requested that amendments to existing policies for review by the GB should be highlighted for ease of review, which was agreed by CB.*
It was agreed that CB would produce a HT Report for the second meeting of the FGB in each term and that a verbal update would be given in the first meeting of the FGB in each term.
(Action – CB to give a verbal report in first FGB and produce an HT Report for second FGB.)
- g. **Governors Self Evaluation Report:** JB stated that there is a good balance of skills and only one skills area was highlighted as needing input across the GB; which was legal knowledge and understanding. As there is a vacancy for a Foundation Governor on the GB, MW has requested SGOSS look for a person with legal knowledge, as a preference. *It was noted that the GB agreed that the Governor Development Plan should be included in the SDP under Leadership and Management, as this is part of the strategic development of the school. Actions will come from the Governor Self Evaluation and the Review of Governance. The GB will receive the SDP in draft and will review, challenge, edit and agree it at the next FGB Meeting – 3.11.16.*
- h. **Role of Vice Chair:** The GB agreed that the role of Vice Chair is to support Governor Development and training.
- i. **Governor Training:** Governors considered their training requirements and agreed that it was for individual governors, in consultation with the Vice Chair, to agree the nature and quantity of the training they should attend. A list of Babcock courses is displayed in the Devon Governor Magazine and the Clerk sends out regular updates on courses available. Training Reports are written by each Governor, following attendance at a course and information shared with the GB.
- j. **Governor Visits Programme:** Visits will be linked to the SDP and the focus kept tight with key questions communicated ahead of the visit to the member of staff, making visits more targeted. The Visits Programme will be reviewed, following the generation of the SDP. Governors will also pick up on actions set for staff in each subject area, from the Subject Leader Reports.

5. Committee Items:

a. Pay and Performance Committee Report:

MF reported that the committee had met for the first time and had successfully agreed the process for staff appraisal, the method of reporting back to the P&P Committee by CB and

the timing of the next meeting to review and agree the outcomes of the appraisals conducted by CB. A salary increase of 1% had been agreed by the committee and was recommended for approval by the GB.

The GB agreed to the proposed salary increase of 1%. Proposed MF, seconded JB.

It was noted that the Pay Policy and Appraisal Policy had been agreed but that a few minor amendments would be made, as noted in the minutes to be circulated shortly. In the Terms of Reference the dates for meetings will be adjusted to reflect the needs of the Pay and Performance Committee, with the next meeting set for 3.11.16 to review the appraisal outcomes, with a midterm review of staff targets taking place after the Resources Committee Meeting – 1.3.17.

- b. **The date for the SI Partner to conduct the HT Appraisal:** CB will aim to meet with Brad Murray in November or, at the latest, mid December. **(Action – CB to contact Brad Murray to arrange a HT Appraisal date and to notify the GB.)** The HT Appraisal Panel currently consists of DB, HE and JB.

6. **Accountability and Monitoring:**

- a. **Budget Monitor** – The GB had received a copy of the Budget Monitor for Period 3. MF noted that he would have liked more information and that he planned to meet with CH and LD to discuss the budget. **(Action – MF to meet with CH and LD on one of the days CH is in to discuss the budget and CB to contact LD to arrange.)** *MF questioned CB to learn if there had been any major expenditure since the beginning of term, which she confirmed had not been the case, though items had been purchased with money from the PTFA: £500.00 on books and £100.00 on a canopy for when it was raining.* CB informed the GB that David Dominey had visited the school to work with LD for a day, though CH had since amended the budget to include annual increments and the 1% pay increase.

The GB had a break (8.45 – 8.50 pm)

7. **Head Teacher Update:**

a. **HT Handover:**

CB reported that she had had four productive handover days with SN. JB expressed his appreciation of the Wroughton Primary School Chair of Governor's agreement to release CB to meet with SN, making the handover as smooth as possible. DH reported that staff members were reassured to see CB when she visited in the summer term and appreciated the meetings CB had arranged with individual staff members to gain an understanding of their role and personal background this term.

b. **Safeguarding Children and Child Protection - assessed the effectiveness of provision:**

CB reported she had looked at the chronologies held by each class teacher to assess the safeguarding needs in KS 1 and KS2. *JM raised a concern that these documents might not be permitted to be taken home, but CB reassured her that there was no sensitive information in the folders and that any serious safeguarding documentation was kept in a locked cupboard at school.* CB reported that she had attended a Safer Recruitment and Allegations training Refresher Course recently. *Governors checked that Reader Helpers were all DBS assessed, which DH confirmed that they were and that they also sign the Acceptable use of Technology Policy.* CB also informed Governors that she had placed a leaflet for any visitors to be given outlining key Safeguarding information and noted that the Safeguarding Policy requires updating as well and will be reviewed in the Resources Committee Meeting – 20.10.16. *DB also noted that Reader Helpers were encouraged to report any concerns immediately to the*

teacher, with whom they are working. CB confirmed there had been no safeguarding issues since September 1st 2016.

CH had requested that JB contact SN to ensure the laptop is returned and the hard drive cleared, keys handed over and any other issues of security dealt with. Emails to SN also need to be re-directed to ensure CB receives all Headteacher information and messages. The aim is to terminate SN's email account by the end of October. **(Action – JB to email SN to return the school laptop, keys and any other security item.)(Action - JB to set up an automatic divert on SN's email account.)(Action – CB to arrange for the door code to be changed on a regular basis to maintain security in the school.)**DH noted that SN has been removed from School Pupil Tracker, as is the policy with all staff members who have left the school.

c. Review Complaints and compliments:

There have been no complaints or compliments to report to the GB.

d. Admissions Update:

CB checked with the GB that they are happy to maintain PAN at 30 in KS2. It was noted that classes in KS1 are held at 30, unless special circumstances arise, though ST stated that numbers in KS2 have risen to 32 or 34 on occasion. It was agreed by the GB that this was not ideal and the aim was therefore to keep classes at 30, though there is no legal limit and certain categories of children may not be turned away, in the case of an appeal, or the school may choose to take siblings into consideration. The GB agreed to keep classes in KS2 at a PAN of 30. Proposed JB, seconded KG.

The Admissions Policy will be reviewed in the next Resources Meeting 20.10 .16.

e. Staff and Personnel Matters:

CB reported to the GB that it was intended that an additional person would be recruited to work in the office, as the administration team needed additional hours to cover the workload. Currently there are 62 hours assigned, when previously there had been 75 hours when CH and LD both in the office. The new person would be employed to work 18 hours a week and CB reported that this would cost less than the previous administration salaries. Governors were asked if they wished to be part of the interview process, but it was agreed that the Senior Leadership Team would conduct the interviews for this position. *DB checked that a sound job description and personal specification was in place, which CB confirmed.*

8. Policies, Statements and Provisions:

The following policies were brought before the FGB:

- a. Pay Policy - (Statutory –not required on the Website - reviewed by the P&P Committee
- b. Appraisal Policy (Performance Management) - (Statutory – not required on the Website) - reviewed by the P&P Committee
- c. Staff Capability Policy DCC - (Statutory – not required on the Website)
- d. Financial Management Policy - (Statutory – not required on the Website)
- e. Mission Statement - (Statutory - required on the Website)
- f. Aims of the School - (Statutory – required on the Website)

It was noted that it is good practice to review the aims and mission statement, but that these would be kept as they are at present. This was agreed by the GB.

The GB agreed the policies unanimously. Proposed DB, seconded HE

9. Election of Chair and Vice Chair:

It was agreed after much discussion that Sally Sycamore would be willing to put herself forward to be Chair, while Jonathan Brook agreed that he would be willing to become the Vice Chair. Governors voted unanimously for:

- Sally Sycamore to become Chair of Governors - Proposed CB, seconded DH.
- Jonathan Brook to be Vice Chair of Governors - Proposed JM, seconded SS.

The GB was reassured that JB would be available via email and phone, even if he was away, to support Sally as she took over the role. Ian Heard also considered being joint Chair with Sally Sycamore, to share the workload and responsibility, but at that point stated he needed more time to consider this idea. Governors felt they had to make a decision during the meeting, as the GB had been without a Vice Chair since the end of April and it would also be a concern to have no Chair in place at this stage of the term, particularly if an Ofsted Inspection were to occur.

10. Matters Brought Forward at the Chair's Discretion:

SMILE Learning Trust:

JB explained the position of the SMILE Trustees, following the meeting on September 15th and their decision to review the continuation of the SMILE Learning Trust after three years, as outlined in the SMILE LT draft minutes, circulated to the GB. He described the options before the Trustees, noting the Trustees concern that the SLT was not benefitting the pupils in each school and appeared to demand a disproportionate amount of time from the Trustees in the administration of the Cooperative Trust, compared with the positive educational advantages for the children and staff of each school. JB stated that Trustees felt that there was a good ethos, but were concerned that no one was available to drive the Trust forward. He explained that the Land Transfer had still not been completed. Once an option, deciding whether the Trust would continue or be closed had been agreed by the SLT, it would be brought before the GB for their consideration. JB intended to continue as Chair of the SMILE Learning Trust, in representing WHPS with CB as the second Trustee. Currently no meetings are scheduled, but will be arranged should there be a need to gain formal agreement over specific business requiring a quorum and a vote. The GB will be kept informed about the unpicking process and the impact on links with associated bodies such as the Village Hall.

JM enquired whether this would affect the beneficial links between the schools involved. JB reassured her that the LLC was strong and these links could be maintained if the SMILE Learning Trust was terminated. IH was concerned that in his research of MATs and Cooperative MATs he had found they were not a good model as they appeared no to encourage integration and shared teaching expertise. It was noted that the Otter Valley Federation is currently looking at teaching focused links with other schools, centred on the benefits to pupils. (Action – JB to keep the GB informed of progress with the decision over the future of the SMILE Learning Trust.)

11. Clerk's Update:

Information about the process of meetings had been covered at the beginning and during the meeting. However, the Clerk reminded Governors of:

- Requirements to raise any conflicts of interest during a meeting, if they arose.
- The Annual Cycle will be amended and sent to the GB.
- Regular information about training will be sent out for Governors to book through the Clerk.

12. Impact of Meeting:

Governors concluded that they had achieved the following:

- The Review of Governance had been very beneficial in enabling the GB to make necessary changes to its function, schedule of meetings, structure and meetings of

committees, the Headteacher report and the amendment of agendas with the appropriate use of Part 2 minutes.

- It was agreed that the appointment of CB would enable the GB to make all necessary changes in accordance with her plans for the school.
- The appointment of a new Chair and Vice Chair will ensure the GB will function well, provide reassuring support for CB and also enabling JB to support SS as she takes on the role of Chair.
- Governors agreed that this FGB Meeting had given the GB direction and any outstanding matters, which would have been covered in this meeting, would now be scheduled for discussion in the next FGB Meeting – 3.11.16. Governors agreed that the process had added value and ensured a top down review of the function and effectiveness of the GB within the school structure.
- The involvement of governors in the writing and review of the SDP was also valued and displayed the increased ownership of their strategic planning at WHPS.

At the close of the meeting, thanks were extended to Jonathan Brook. Governors recognised the considerable contribution he had made to the improvement and effective working of the GB at WHPS, in his role as Chair over the last two years. All agreed that he had done a brilliant job.

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm