



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 April 27th 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 Apsy (EA), Dot Bioletti (DB), Hilary Eade (HE), Matt Fripp (**MF**), Ian Heard (IH),
Debbie Hudson (DH), Jenny Meredith (JM), Danny Murphy (DM),

Associate: Chris Webster (CW)

Clerk: Margaret Whitlock (MW)

PART 1

1. Introduction:

Apologies – Sue Tovey - sanctioned unanimously

a) Declaration of Interests/ check RBI – JM informed the GB that she had become a Parish Councillor for Aylesbeare and this information has been added to her RBI.

b) Governor Code of Conduct: SS reminded Governors of the Code of Conduct and, in particular the section on **Conflicts of Interest:**

We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.

We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise. We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected by that group to the governing body.

c) OSMPS Governors agreement for back up for GB First and Second Hearings:

SS had been in communication with the Chair of OSMPS GB to agree that Governors from each school could be called upon to be members of a Hearing Committee at the partnered school.

This would only need to occur if there were no Governors available for a First or Second Hearing within each school; being either tainted or unable to attend. The GB agreed that they would be happy to be members of a Hearing Committee at OSMPS and for OSMPS Governors to be called upon, should WHPS require their attendance, for the above reasons.

Proposed JB and seconded HE.

SS had been in communication with the Chair of the GB at OSMPS and was waiting to hear his

response. **(Action – SS to email the Chair of OSMPS informing him of the vote at WHPS to form**

a reciprocal agreement for Governors to be members of each other's Hearing Committees, should the need arise.)

2. Confirmation of Minutes of meeting 23.3.17 (Part 1):

Matters arising from minutes:

IH raised the issue of the reference to MATs being included in discussions as part of the remit for the finance sub-committee, which had been created to look at the long term budget projections for the school. It was agreed that the members of the sub-committee should focus on the WHPS financial situation and consider the priority budgetary options at present. It was agreed that the wording would be changed on Page 1, section 2 from "should include validation" to "could include validation." The amendment was made and signed by the Chair.

The minutes were agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair. Proposed CB and seconded DB

Actions outstanding from the minutes:

(2) CB to check with Lara that she can send the 3 Year Budget Forecast to the Finance Sub-Committee – ***these were prepared and circulated to the GB for the FGB meeting 27.4.17 and are being considered in this meeting***

(7) CB to ask LD to check with DWF, the solicitors, to gauge how the Village Hall lease is progressing – ***there were some ongoing issues which CB and JB followed up and have now been dealt with.***

3. Date of Next FGB Meeting:

Thursday May 18th 2017 at 6.30 pm

The FGB Meeting in July (20.7.17) has now been altered and confirmed as Tues. July 11th at 6.30 pm. Apologies were received from HE and IH with JM stating she would be late.

4. Head teacher's Update (CB):

a. Staffing updates:

- CB reported that a TA is off sick for 6 week period, or perhaps longer, following an operation. Other TAs are covering and it was noted by CB that the situation is creating pressure for all staff. A teacher is also due to take sick leave from May 10th for 6 – 12 weeks, for which cover has been arranged and insurance is in place to meet the costs. *HE asked about the financial implications and whether the insurance is sufficient to cover all costs.* CB informed them it would, though the first 10 days costs are not covered and will need to be met by the school. Governors were pleased to note that there had been no negative comments from parents about the situation.
- CB reported that the problem of ensuring efficient caretaking at the school continues as the replacement caretaker was asked to leave after a few weeks. The manager is now in place until a permanent caretaker can be found and is effective in his role. *The Governors were keen to see that a caretaker would be found to ensure consistency. CW asked if the school could employ a caretaker instead of looking to Devon Norse.* CB stated that cleaning is provided by Devon Norse and it is logical to employ a caretaker through them, particularly as in the situation of a caretaker leaving, Devon Norse will provide a temporary replacement.

b. Teaching & Learning review:

The T&L review was completed on Wed 19th April with Brad Murray and his report will follow. HE received feedback and there was global feedback on the day to teachers by Brad Murray as well as individual feedback to teachers by CB. Lesson observations, which had

enabled most of the staff to be seen had taken place throughout the day. CB was pleased to report to the GB that, with limited notification on that morning, staff had risen to the challenge producing a range of effective lessons, which had included clear evidence of some differentiation being used in a variety of ways. CB stated that there were many positives observed, with only a few minor negatives noted by Brad Murray that will be addressed by staff. CB was very appreciative of the way staff had professionally risen to the challenge; particularly as they had not been warned far in advance. The GB were pleased that Brad Murray had noted that CB's assessment of each lesson was in line with his, which is evidence of effective leadership. CB stated that, though intense, the day had been positive with some of the best lessons observed since she had joined the school.

CB stated that a day had been arranged with Brad Murray to return for a day to do a book scrutiny, as this has already been funded. Governors were reassured that nearly all staff had been observed over the day. CB noted that the NQT is already in a regular programme of observations and stated she has a clear picture of his attainment, so had not been included to avoid additional pressure.

c. School Assessment Data:

Governors had received assessment data for the spring term from CB.

SS enquired why the data seemed to suggest that progress had appeared to reverse in Year 3 & 4. CB stated that this apparent regression was due to a number of reasons including a child joining the school, who had been assessed at a higher level than they were achieving and therefore it looked like no progress had been seen in the ensuing period on SPTO. In addition data in had been uploaded by a teacher, who in the past had not fully understood the process and figures that had been too high had had to be amended. Training has now been given to rectify the problem.

The GB noted that Ofsted required 3 points progress over a year. *Governors were concerned that individuals may not make that expected progress*, which CB acknowledged was often the case for many SEND pupils who, although expected to make 3 points progress from their own starting point, may have other issues which impede their progress. However, CB reassured the GB that each class average should meet that requirement of 3 points progress for the year. *Governors noted that closing the gap is a key aim for vulnerable pupils, though MF observed that some classes had higher numbers of SEND pupils and enquired if there is an action plan to meet those needs.* CB confirmed that Clare Bennett (CBe), the SENDCO, is closely monitoring those groups. DB observed that there is clear improvement in writing. CB reported that all Pupil Premium Pupils are being supported and progress is ongoing, though may require significant time to succeed.

SS enquired about G&T (more able) pupils as their progress was not clearly identifiable. DH agreed that it was not clear in the way data was generated observing that the data evidenced only 9 G&T pupils, though on further in-depth investigation by ST and DH, 29 pupils were found to be functioning at that level and are effectively the top 10% in each class.

CB reminded the GB that CBe is reviewing SEND pupil numbers to ensure a realistic cohort is monitored, as a number of children had been included in the list in the past, who had only minor isolated issues. *MF enquired if any new pupils are likely to join who will affect the*

data. CB stated that recent new pupils would not be an issue and a potential pupil is unknown at present as information has not yet been received from the previous school.

5. Safeguarding and Child Protection:

CB reported that Jonathan Galling had kindly returned to check the Single Central Record (SCR), training and progress with the action plan. He had been impressed with the progress made by the school and thanks were extended to CB, DH, JM and IH by the GB for their hard work. IH agreed that huge progress had been made, which the GB agreed is very reassuring.

Governors were happy with the Data Collection Report, noting that the data is clear and accessible. CB stated that an additional 5 children are on the targeted families list (spring term data). *The GB enquired about the process of follow up for these children and DM asked how the blue forms are monitored.* Governors were reassured that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (CB) has all processes in place to ensure that pupils are monitored and actions followed up as appropriate.

CB stated that she had received Children in Care training on April 25th, which had updated her on current procedures; should a child in care join the school.

An online safety session had been run for parents, staff and pupils that had proved most successful, with a higher number of parents attending. The GB were pleased that attendance was higher this year, helped by the provision of a crèche to enable more parents to attend. JM and IH had held their termly safeguarding meeting with CB to clarify their roles and agree actions. CB had sent out a useful document informing the Governors about inspecting safeguarding, with Page 19 highlighted as outlining the governor role. *DM observed that all areas in the guidance had been considered by the GB and was reassured that WHPS was now in line with the requirements outlined.*

JM stated that she and IH now have the aim to ensure that the safeguarding ethos is outwards facing. CB stated that she intended to create a safeguarding section on the website and planned to look at other schools to see how they presented their safeguarding information. In addition Level 2 safeguarding training for meal time assistants will be arranged. JM reminded Governors that all information related to their own safeguarding training should be sent to MW to be added to CSR.

CB informed the GB that a fire drill had taken place with pupils evacuating the building in 2 minutes 37 seconds. Information on the fire drills is logged after each drill and previous issues addressed, which this time had included windows and doors being shut to ensure the fire would not spread.

6. LA Audit Report:

CB reported that the actions listed had been created by LD and herself following the detailed Financial Audit Report. Some of these actions have been completed or are in the process of being met. *SS was pleased that the Audit was generally positive and had gone well.* CB, however, was concerned that advice that had been sought from the auditor had not been received.

(Action – CB to contact the Auditor to see if the advice required to meet certain actions set in the Audit, could be obtained.) *MF asked if relevant actions might be added to LD's objectives in her next Performance Management review.* CB deemed this unlikely to be necessary as LD is already instigating these matters.

7. MATs:

The Chair invited Governors to share their views on the way forward with MATs for WHPS in the light of local and national discussions.

(The meeting went into Part 2 at 7.25 – 7.55 pm)

8. Vision and Aims:

SS reported on ideas generated by pupils and staff. Governors had received a copy of the questionnaire created for sending to parents to get their feedback on the vision, ethos and aims for the school and were happy with the content, having given feedback by email. The questionnaire will be sent out, using Survey Monkey or a similar company, on Friday May 12th giving two weeks up to May 26th so that the results can be processed in good time. The survey company will collate the results and these will be brought to the FGB meeting in June for ratification; ready to go live in July. **(Action – SS to email the office with the prepared Vision and Aims survey.)**

9. Curriculum (HE):

HE had generated a report evaluating progress in line with the SDP, based on evidence from Governor Visits, advisor reports & data on bench mark staffing levels, lunchtime and after school clubs.

HE had also checked and recommended staffing structures for the next year, ensured statutory requirements for curriculum and reviewed the planned induction process for next term's intake, ensuring that assessment requirements are being met.

The GB thanked HE for her informative report. *MF enquired whether detailed statements had been received for the new entrants.* CB reported that at present offers had been sent to parents and their responses were being awaited. All would be likely to take up the offer, though there is also a reserve list. The induction process is in place, as outlined in HE's report which will include the collect of individual pupil information.

HE reported that she had done some benchmarking on staffing and found after much endeavour that the pupil staff ratio was as expected, with a slightly higher level of staffing in the office than average, though she noted had been hard to gauge the size of schools being compared to make a fair comparison.

10. Financial Monitoring (MF):

a. CB had presented three budget options to the GB prior to the meeting, with the current requirement for WHPS to reduce expenditure and increase income:

- Option 1 - (current budget) only £100 rollover in April 2018
- Option 2 - will produce a negative budget for the last 2 years.
- Option 3 - will give a 5 year budget without any negative rollover

Further copies of these options were handed out in the meeting as the first set had to be amended to include the addition of increased superannuation for all support staff from 19.75% to 23.3%.

Governors questioned why, when a proposal was based on fewer children in the school, the expenditure came out higher. CB explained that it is better value to have more children as that increases income. David Dominey (DD) had informed the school that the current budget was not workable and cuts had been made including the removal of Forest School and the library budget, as well as reductions in funding of resources for English, Maths and Science. In addition there had been cuts in expenditure for cpd. The budget will now be used for essentials and not luxury items, which CB stated that all teaching staff had agreed was not easy but necessary. *JB noted that the budget did not show the money that the PTFA contributes that could be used to meet extra needs not covered in the budget. MF was concerned that the budget options did not allow flexibility for any unexpected expenditure.*

DD had stated that Option 1 was unworkable so CB encouraged Governors to consider the other two options, which were based on an increase in class sizes:

- Option 2 – classes of 31 in KS 2
- Option 3 – classes of 32 in KS 2

CB made it clear that PAN would remain at 30 with the LA Admissions; giving the school the choice to increase the KS2 class sizes according to budget demands, were the GB to agree. She

outlined how the extra 2 pupils in Option 2 or the extra 6 pupils in Option 3 would improve the school's financial situation significantly.

MF asked about the reaction of DD to these options. CB confirmed he had given LD support in producing the budget options. JB observed that additional pupils would have a cumulative effect on the budget figures, which would improve accordingly. It was also noted that figures put in to the budget were often lower than the outcomes, with the example of the catering budget coming in as a profit of £7,000.00. CB, however, reminded the GB that this had to be used to replace equipment long term.

EA questioned the impact on pupils with increased class sizes. SS observed that in going over PAN there is the issue of the physical size of the class rooms. SS was also concerned that in the case of an appeal, twins joining and being viewed as one or a child in care moving into catchment, the school would have to take that child even if the class size as over PAN at 31/32 pupils. Governors asked how the staff viewed this proposition. CB reported that they are not happy, but understand the options are limited due to the financial pressures the school is under. DH stated that in the choice between resources, larger classes and maintaining their support staff, teachers would choose to keep the TAs and have a larger class of pupils. DB observed that staffing costs are around 85% of the budget and this could make cuts hard to achieve. DH informed the GB that the school is pretty well resourced and those resources can be shared. DM also suggested that resources could be sponsored by parents and the PTFA, which would cushion the impact of budget cuts.

In addition CB highlighted the staffing decisions, which she wished to bring to the GB that would impact on the budget.

(The meeting went into Part 2 – 8.25 – 9.05 pm and Staff Governors left the room – DH & CW)

The GB continued to discuss the Budget Options following the meeting, having returned to Part 1. They considered Budget Option 3, should Option 2 not meet the criteria discussed. The GB aimed to produce a positive position for the school at the end of year 3 in selecting Option 2 or 3. The GB however, after much discussion, concluded that they should discount Option 3.

JB was concerned that extra funding such as PTFA money was not being included in the calculations, but CB stated this could not be the case and added that other local HTs had already gone to 31 in their classes to increase income for their schools.

The GB voted unanimously for the agreed approach to update the Budget Options 1 & 2, check which one would ensure that at the end of year 3 the school would be in a positive position and then select the budget that met those criteria.

Proposed DM and seconded DB

- b. Investors in People funding – The GB decided in the light of the discussions around the three year budget projection that IIP is a significant cost that the school cannot afford and would terminate their IIP contract. The GB was keen, however, that the values promoted in IIP would be principles that the school wished to maintain in their ethos.

11. Community and Parent Links (EA):

In her detailed report, EA outlined her observations, having checked and reviewed the website statutory information and fed back on progress with meeting the actions set, following the Babcock Website Review in December. *SS was keen to ensure that the actions flagged up, as red should be dealt with as soon as possible.* A number had already been done since the report was written, but CB was unable to give a date for all of them to be met due to other pressures. CB informed the GB that MW and CB are in the process of updating the statutory website policies and MW informed the GB that the H&S Policy could be removed, as it is not required on the website. **(Action – CB to arrange for the removal of the H&S Policy from the website.)**

12. Governor Visit Reports:

These reports had been circulated to the GB and read. Governors raised the following questions as noted below:

- MF – Finance meeting report
- DB – SEND Visit Report
- DM – Languages Report – *MF asked about the funding of language teaching.* CB explained that lunch time clubs were paid for by parents, but added that French in KS 1 would end as this is a cost the school can no longer met, despite all seeing the benefits of this teaching. CB stated that the PTFA may fund this and added that she is waiting to hear if they are willing to take on this cost. *DM suggested that sponsorship could be sought from parents,* which CB stated would be around £2,300.00 per year to fund. DM noted that he had been very impressed with the quality of the teaching he had observed.
- DM – Sports Report – *MF questioned the value for money and use of Sports Premium.* DM had discussed the monitoring of SP with CBe, which he was reassured to see was overseen and assessed closely, as CBe checks that value for money is achieved for WHPS and bench marks standards in PE regularly.
- HE – Collective Worship Report

All the Governors commented on the high quality of teaching observed as well as the commitment and dedication of the teaching staff. **(Action – CB to communicate the appreciation of Governors to the teaching staff and the quality of teaching observed.)**

Governor Training Reports: None

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

Statutory Policies:

- a. Equal Opportunities Policy - (Website)- deferred as a new policy has become available and will be brought to the next FGB meeting – 18.5.17
- b. Child Protection Policy - (Website) - it was noted by JM that this is a very detailed and comprehensive policy provided by the LA by Babcock. The contact details were discussed on Page 5 for the Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Governors, with the proposal being made that a new school safeguarding email being created for them. It was agreed, however, that with the MASH contact listed for reporting any confidential issues, these contacts would be kept as the admin email address with the option to review if any problems arose. The policy was ratified by the GB – Proposed SS and seconded HE.
- c. Online Safety Policy and Internet Code of Conduct (optional to go on website) - a typo on Page 9 and references to committee are to be amended. *Following a concern raised by a governor, there was discussion about security around website photos of children and names.* DH outlined the rules and it was agreed that first names only would continue to be used and any reference to the year group that may aid identification would be avoided. In addition, CB stated that no child in care or one without parental permission would be photographed, as has been the case. JM and JB are named in the policy as governors with safeguarding and computing responsibility. **(Action – DH to make the necessary amendments to the Online Safety Policy and MW to email to the GB.)** Proposed SS and seconded DM.

Non –statutory policies:

- d. WHPS Road Safety Policy – the GB agreed to delete this policy as it is no longer needed.
- e. Dropping off and Collecting Policy – the GB agreed to delete this policy as it is no longer needed.
- f. Pupil Premium Policy – DB had created this new policy, for which CB thanked her, as it sets out important criteria for Pupil Premium at WHPS.
- g. The above non-statutory policies were agreed by the GB - Proposed CB and seconded HE.

14. Matters brought forward at the Chair's discretion :

The Chair informed the GB that the Clerk had tendered her resignation from the end of the academic year in July. The advertisement for a new clerk had been placed in the school

newsletter and Clerks' Alert, with the aim to appoint a new Clerk of Governors by June to ensure there will be time for the new clerk to shadow the current clerk and for there to be a useful period of handover.

15. Impact of meeting:

- All Governors had a sound financial understanding of the budget options with in depth discussion taking place around the provision of resources and staffing to agree a long term budget that takes account of the tightened financial circumstances facing all schools
- The GB had received positive feedback from the Teaching and Learning Review and were clear about the quality of leadership and teaching in the school and look forward to the report with further information from Brad Murray
- The discussion on MATs had helped the GB to clarify the way forward in researching and considering MATs for the school
- Having gathered ideas from pupils, staff and governors, the questionnaire has been generated to send out to parents for their input prior to agreeing the new Vision and Values for the school
- The GB had considered and raised questions around the assessment data provided by CB for the spring term, gaining a good understanding of the stories behind the figures
- There had been pleasing feedback to the GB about the standard of safeguarding and increase in knowledge, as confirmed by the Safeguarding Inspection Guidance, which shows that the school and all Governors are on track with the requirements for stringent safeguarding standards. Any outstanding Safeguarding Governor training is to be done by Governors and all records sent to Wendy Bowen to go in the CSR
- The Financial Audit had proved generally positive with the GB feeling confident that standards are good and all actions are being either achieved or worked on
- It was noted that a good number of visits by governors had raised their profile and given them a sound understanding of life in the school, with challenges being raised and evidence collected to check all is on track

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm