



West Hill Primary School
(a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
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Headteacher: Cheryl Boulton



West Hill Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting

held on Thursday October 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)
Dot Bioletti (DB), Hilary Eade(HE), Jenny Meredith (JM), Danny Murphy (DM), Simon Pedrazzini (SP),
Matt Fripp (MF), Ian Heard (IH), Esther Apsey (EA)

Apologies: Debbie Hudson (DH), Chris Webster (CW)

Clerk: Sarah Woolfries (SW)

1. Introduction (SS):

Apologies – Debbie Hudson, Chris Webster –sanctioned unanimously.

- **Declaration of Interests** – none.
- **Check and sign off RBI for those not at meeting in September** – noted that EA no longer secretary of preschool. Minor amendments made as necessary and forms signed.
- **Sign off WHPS Governors Code of Conduct** – new NGA code of conduct circulated prior to the meeting for all to read. *EA asked if a clause to say that governors must read all papers prior to each meeting should be included? CB asked for Clerk's input as concerned about changing a standard document. Clerk advised governors might consider having a separate protocol for governing body meetings, rather than changing this standard document. Clerk to forward an example to SS (Done).* NGA Code of Conduct signed by all governors present. **Clerk to obtain remaining signatures as soon as possible.**

2. Confirmation of Minutes of meeting 21.09.17 Part 1 & Part 2:

The Part 1 minutes were agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair.

Minor amendment to spelling were made to the Part 2 minutes, agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair.

Actions outstanding from the minutes:

(2a) To be addressed under 'reports' section.

3. Date of Next Meeting to discuss MATs: Thursday 9th November 2017 at 6.30pm

Date of Next FGB Meeting: Thursday 16th November 2017 at 6.30 pm

The meeting moved to Part 2 at 6.40 pm and returned to Part 1 at 6.45pm

4. Policies, Statements & Provisions for review:

- a. Sports Premium Report – (Statutory & Website) - circulated prior to the meeting. CB noted the first set of tables relates to impact in 2016/17, and work is still being done on 2017/18, as School

advised in September that the sports premium funding would be doubled. Therefore planning is required on how to spend it. DM has a meeting planned with CB after half term to ask questions and discuss use of the funds to build sports provision. *MF asked if the extra funding was a one off or on-going? CB said it was unknown at this time. EA asked if the funds could be used for the provision of facilities and their maintenance e.g. field drainage? CB replied no, it had to be used to support PE teachers' delivery of PE and the provision of resources, such as coaches to tournaments. Clerk asked whether the report should be published as is or wait until completion of the 2017/18 data? MF suggested publishing with a caveat of work in progress (Done)*

- b. Curriculum Statement** – (Statutory and Website) – circulated prior to the meeting. EA questioned the line that stated the School will 'never discriminate' as in reality the School does prioritise the acceptance order of certain pupils? CB felt that as this was meant in a positive way it was acceptable. SS noted that the prioritisation of pupils is also documented in the Admissions Policy so was happy for it to remain. MF noted the first paragraph related to gifted and talented children, and questioned should this be first, as it perhaps feels a bit elitist, which is not the impression the School want to give. After some discussion about where best to place the paragraph, governors all agreed to place it before the 'homework' section, along with the section on SEN children. **HE agreed to make the change, prior to document being published on the website. (Done)**
- c. Curriculum Policy** – circulated prior to the meeting. Agreed by all present with no amendments.
- d. New DCC Lettings Policy** – CB and IH have discussed, and IH will prepare for the November FGB meeting.

5. Chairs Update

- a. Changes to policy review cycle** – SS advised that the Clerk has reviewed the existing policy schedule, and stripped out anything operational or not governor related. Currently there are only 9 policies that must go to the FGB for agreement. SS hoped that once completed, this would significantly reduce the amount of reading of policies required by governors.
- b. Review of Governing Body Annual Cycle / Governor Visits programme** – SS advised that if the governing board decide in January to retain the monthly cycle of FGB meetings without committees, she and the Clerk will review the annual cycle and related visits, as it was felt that the number of visits currently on the schedule was excessive. SS also noted that it doesn't need to be a physical visit to school if one has recently taken place, an email exchange and a short report (to retain a paper trail of evidence) would suffice.

CB gave some feedback from staff on recent governor visits. Staff would appreciate questions in advance so they are able to prepare, and at least a month's notice of meetings. Then staff can arrange the meeting on their release time so they can take governors around and show them what they want to see. *Some staff asked the purpose of governors coming in to observe lessons, as they found it difficult to know what the governors were looking for. JB asked are staff concerned? CB noted some are anxious as they are not used to governor involvement and need to have a better understanding of what governors want to see/learn. JB asked if there is a lot more governor involvement than in the past? CB said yes but saw it as a positive by being able to celebrate change and evidence a better understanding of governance within the school. IH asked if the anxiety arose more when the governors are in the classroom? CB said yes. SS asked if it would help to send staff the governor visit schedule, introduce more use of email rather than face to face visits where possible, and perhaps a*

governor to attend a staff meeting to explain why the governors are in school? IH and JM said they were due to attend a staff meeting and could cover it then, or JB offered to attend separately. Clerk suggested possible use of a template/form to be shared by staff and governors, covering what governors are looking for in their subject plus wider issues e.g. school displays / tidiness etc. IH & JM to give input at staff meeting as required. Clerk to forward template to SS (Done).

6. Discuss Launch of Visions and Values

SS noted that whilst the launch will be driven by the school, as the governors had set the visions and values, what input was required from the governors in the launch? SS suggested input to the newsletter? JM suggested launching at an assembly. SS noted that parents also need to know about it. JM mentioned that Miss Kemp had used the small playground at the end of school to publicise a topic on looking after the sea. Children had made and sold items, and JM felt that worked well. EA suggested balloons with each of the values written on, tied to fences and in the foyer, or badges / key rings. SS suggested a balloon for each child. EA noted feedback was still awaited on the final design, and then her friend was happy to do what is required in terms of branding materials. **CB was collating governor feedback, so will check responses and reply to EA (Done).** SS asked when should be the proposed launch date? SS suggested New Year, but CB felt everyone should be told sooner. EA didn't think it would take long to organise materials once a design decision was reached, in the meantime she would look into costs. SP felt it was good to have a phased launch as it keeps it in people's minds. *MF asked about staff?* CB confirmed they were already aware.

After further discussion, governors agreed the following launch approach in the New Year:

- **Remove the SMILE logo and replace it with the new Visions and Values logo on headed paper**
- **School values day – children pay a donation to wear yellow, Visions and Values assembly**
- **Launch letter from governors**
- **Ask PTFA to fund gift for each child (EA to establish costs)**
- **Promotion in small playground at pick up, with governors on hand to answer questions**
- **Update website to reflect new visions and values**

7. A. Headteacher's Verbal Update

- **Breakfast Club** CB approached Ottertots but they confirmed it was not of interest. However, CB said FISH was very interested and CB was hoping to have a meeting with them during the first week in November. IH said that if it does proceed, he and Mike Harris from West Hill Village Hall will want to look at the content to the Village Hall hiring agreement to ensure its suitability for a commercial venture.
- **Pupil Numbers** CB confirmed the School will be at the maximum of 214 pupils, 30 in each class in KS1 and 31 in each class in KS2 after half term. Currently CB noted that there are 31 children in Y2, however a child is leaving after half term, taking the class back to the maximum of 30. CB has notified Admissions that no further children will be accepted into Y2, and CB is writing a letter to go out to all Y2 parents explaining that the class will remain at 30 pupils. CB also noted that Y3 has only 30 pupils but will be going up to 31 shortly, giving the maximum 214 pupils figure. CB said there is a waiting list for every class.

- **Staff Update** CB said there are 2 staff on long term sickness, return dates will be confirmed nearer the time. Also a TA has resigned and leaves prior to half term. The role had been advertised and 7 applications received by the closing date. DB and CB have shortlisted 4 to interview, but there is a potential 5 week gap, so TA cover will be moved in the mornings from Y3/4 to support short term. JB asked when do Y2 SATs stop? CB said they have been made non-statutory from 2023.

B. Set governor priorities for the next SDP (based on list already circulated prior to the meeting). SS recommended a maximum of 3 or 4, so governors could ensure a proper focus on achieving them. Various options were discussed, including:

- **MATs** and future direction of School (DM)

- **Closing gender and ability gap** so that lower level achievers are at national average (EA). JM was keen to see children specific priorities, and to focus on the progress of pupils rather than achievement. DB had a concern that writing and maths is not making enough progress, but was not sure why. EA agreed that maths and writing should be a focus, and SS noted addressing the gender gap. *CB asked what governors propose to do about it? MF asked what governors can do to influence it?* JM felt the focus should be on progress, since it is measurable. CB noted that pupil premium children are not at ARE. CB said she had looked at the replacement for Raise Online (ASP) with CBe, to see the progress at the end of KS1 compared to the end of KS2, as based on the KS1 average (2b) the system predicts what should be expected in Y6. CB said the children that didn't get the required progress can be identified, but there is concern that the software is over grading so at Y6 some pupils won't achieve government expectations. Therefore it's important to track those above average from KS1 through each year group. CB noted above progress required was achieved in reading, but maths and writing were only at average progress. CB said they needed to look at ASP in more depth in terms of all three subjects, SEN and pupil premium. *EA asked if it could track gender performance too? CB said yes, but more work would be required in order to do so.*

- **Sport** JB noted in surveys, sport is often a priority for parents, and given the recent increase in sports funding, should a priority be to monitor spending to ensure children are getting the most out of it? DM asked what are we looking to monitor? EA asked how are outcomes measured? JB felt it was good to listen to parents and review spending. CB noted some parents felt there was too much sport. DM keen not to alienate teachers by pushing sport, as he wouldn't want them to see it as a criticism of their current teaching. *CB asked if it was a whole governing body priority?* JB said he would support it, especially taking part in events in the wider community. *SP asked if the school takes part in lots of competitions? CB said Heather Little from Kings is paid to run events in which the children can take part.* CB was concerned that some parents may not like an emphasis on sports, and that it was important to get maximum value for the additional funding for the whole school community, ensuring all children are engaged, whilst not putting more pressure on teachers.

- **SEND** SS noted the school is not doing as well in terms of the progress of children with SEND, and asked should this be a priority? CB agreed that SEND should be a priority. IH agreed that this stood out as an absolute priority for him, although concerned that the lack

of teaching resource is a barrier for which there is no quick fix. *IH asked what can we do to get children up to the standards we seek?*

- **Community Links** MF said launching the new values effectively will have a long term benefit to the children, which can be seen and recorded. Also, MF felt there is a lack of community links, for example the PTFA lacks support. *EA asked if this could be linked with MATs (links with other schools), to create an outward looking strategy?* SS felt the focus should be on addressing real weaknesses as a priority.

- **Funding** JM mentioned funding both in terms of the PTFA and staffing as being really important. *DM asked what was the measurable outcome? Were these outcomes beyond the control of governors?* EA said engaging with the Parish Council is important, as they may be able to provide financial support to the School. *MF wasn't convinced this should be a governor focus as it is something that is already ongoing. EA expressed concern that all the priorities were inward looking, rather than looking outward, sharing the school's values and ethos in the wider community.*

Safeguarding – all felt that there has already been a lot of excellent work done which is ongoing, so this didn't need to be a specific SDP priority.

Website EA felt the website needs to look more modern, as whilst the content is better now the look of the website should be representative of the school. *CB was not sure how governors would know the impact of the new visions and values. JB felt it would make a difference, as it shows the school is engaged in the wider community, but perhaps looking at the website would be an effective means of reflecting this. MF felt the website was important for the perception of the school in the wider community. EA noted WHPC had said there was a split in the village between parents and non-parents of children at WHPC, so a website reflecting the community spirit is important.*

The final three governor priorities were agreed as:

- **Children with SEND to make the required progress**
- **Pupil Progress – with a focus on maths and writing, gender gap, pupil premium children**
- **Review of Website, to ensure it reflects the correct perception of the school to the wider community, including the new visions and value**

SS and CB to ensure governor priorities and measures are included in the SDP.

8. Safeguarding and Child Protection

- a. JM said she and IH met CB on 10th Oct to complete the school annual safeguarding audit, which is very comprehensive. CB and DH have put together an excellent, detailed action plan for the year ahead. IH said it demonstrated the massive breadth of the subject, and IH thanked CB and her team for completion of all the actions listed in December 2016. *MF asked if there were any critical actions still to be done? CB noted the website, and has a meeting arranged with JM and IH to discuss.* CB said the website must reflect how important the school takes safeguarding and how children are kept safe. CB said links are required to 'Whisper', a system where children can report concerns. CB also said everyone needs to be trained in safeguarding, including MTAs (complete), but also all school volunteers. 3 sessions have been arranged, and everyone must sign up if they want to continue to volunteer in school. IH & JM continue to carry out a termly review of the SCR and talk to staff at meetings

and ask a range of questions (which are sent in advance). JM reminded governors that their training will be renewed in January 2018.

Feedback on Safeguarding – Ofsted preparedness course CB felt the course was reassuring as most of the things recommended had been done. However, there was still more that could be done including ensuring all staff and volunteers were trained, looking at children’s use of social media and ICT and record keeping/managing allegations. CB felt quite proud of how much had already been done, but still noted there was lots to cover. *EA asked if the use of CPOMS was being considered? CB said not at the moment as the school was currently focussing on paper based procedures.* CB noted the new Stanley doors are going in during the Christmas holidays, with new swipe cards so no unauthorised people can get in and no children can get out unless the fire alarm sounds, in which case there is an automatic cut-off. JM thanked CB for all her hard work on the audit.

- b. Case Study for governors to complete** – carried forward to November FGB meeting
- c. Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One** – circulated prior to the meeting. Governors that did not attend the FGB meeting in September were asked to sign. All did, with the exception of MF who confirmed he would read the document and come in to School the following day to sign off. **(Done)**

9. Financial Monitoring

- a. Budget Monitor** MF confirmed budget monitor P5 is the most current. MF will be meeting with LD on 10 November with the aim of presenting P7 at the next FGB meeting. Also, to discuss the Finance Policy and financial benchmarking. MF noted staff absence and premises costs challenge the budget and the extra sports funding has not yet been received, otherwise the budget is on plan. *IH asked if teaching costs will even out over the rest of the year? MF said P5 didn’t reflect all the staff changes, but he will talk to LD about it. CB noted it is 20 days before staff absence insurance is paid, so with part time roles this can take 7 week to be paid, plus there was the additional costs relating to covering the absence in the office, where no supply costs are provided by the insurance.*
- b. PTA Funding** MF noted the PTFA report circulated to all parents was encouraging, and that MF intends to go to the next PTFA meeting on 10 Nov. CB went to last PTFA meeting with a list of funding requests, all of which were approved, and the PTFA indicated they would be prepared to meet further requests. MF noted the funds have not been paid to the school yet. MF said two capital spends could be approved by the Head in accordance with the Finance Policy, and that FGB approval was not required for the amounts involved.

10. Lead Governor / Classroom visit reports: Questions arising

Lead Governor Report Premises/Health & Safety IH noted the timber skirt was rotten and needed replacing on the Elliott Building, and a cable required replacement. *SS asked if the School is spending money patching up the Elliott huts when they are in need of replacement?* MF felt a longer term plan should be considered. CB said on a recent visit to Stockland School, she noted they had similar classrooms in a much worse state of repair. They had applied to DCC to replace them, but were rejected on the basis they were in reasonable condition. *SS suggested this might be a future PTFA project.* IH said the cost of replacing the boarding was £650. EA thought a metal alternative might be cheaper than wood. **Governors approved this spend subject to checking if metal is a cheaper but suitable alternative.**

IH also advised that lighting in the Year 6 classroom needs replacing, cost of LED lighting being £708. MF agreed this needed to be done, but hoped the PTFA might be able to help with the cost. **Governors approved this spend, with MF/CB to liaise with the PTFA.**

Lead Governor Report Curriculum MF noted the report referred to the same issues about writing, and asked what evidence there is of a longer term plan to address it? CB advised that there is now a daily writing lesson in each class (as per feedback from Brad Murray). MF asked what does success look like? CB noted there were lots of different reasons/many aspects that can affect writing; fine motor skills, having ideas etc. CB felt daily writing in EYFS was a positive change, as it strengthened muscles and developed early writing skills. EA noted how impressed she had been when she saw examples of writing in Y1. CB referred to the changing of 'assembly' to collective worship under 'next steps'. CB said that the statutory obligations had been explained to staff at a recent staff meeting, and how collective worship can be built in to the timetable and evidenced, as this is an area which Ofsted might look at. JB asked if those listed in the report were all the school clubs? HE said the information had come from the School office. CB noted drama club was missing. JB asked if computer club still took place, but governors believed this was no longer running (was previously run by a parent volunteer).

Classroom Visit Report – Maths and English HE asked if these reports were shared with staff other than the subject leader, as it might be reassuring for them to see them (given earlier feedback from staff about governor visits)? **CB agreed and will arrange for the reports to be shared with the teachers who were visited (Done).**

Lead Governor Report – Personnel and Pupil Premium No questions were raised

Lead Governor Report – EYFS No questions were raised

Lead Governor Report – West Hill Parish Council (WHPC) MF noted charities were able to apply for grants, and asked if the PTFA had submitted an application? CB confirmed they were applying for funds (Max £500 each) for the Mediterranean garden, forest school, summer fete and field drainage. DM asked if the PTFA liaised with School? CB confirmed they had as they needed to demonstrate the community benefit, with decisions being made at the Parish Council meeting on 7th Nov. MF will try and attend to support the PTFA application. CB was concerned that the PTFA's audited accounts showed funds in hand, so this might go against them. SS asked if that was why WHPC has asked to see the School's 5 year financial plan? MF said it was a school document and unrelated to the PTFA grant applications, so would not be shared, but that **he would speak to Margaret Hall.**

EA noted WHPC are looking at the School playing field as one of the only flat, open spaces in the village, but are aware that the drainage issues might limit its use. They are also considering ideas for a teenagers' base, and the equipment in the existing playground is due to be increased. EA suggested an annual meeting with WHPC might be beneficial, and perhaps MF might attend from the financial angle? MF noted that roads around the school and parking are issues that the school can't influence but are impacted by, however WHPC can influence them so it's important that the School keep in contact with them. EA noted WHPC are keen to encourage schemes for families to walk to school. IH noted that in the past, the police were the biggest objector to

pedestrian access from West Hill Road, but is happy to raise it again at the Village Hall committee, albeit he anticipates issues being raised. CB felt parents would appreciate more than one access point, as walking through the car park is not ideal. CB also thought a breakfast club might ease congestion at drop off time in the morning. **Governors agreed to revisit this subject in the Spring Term – Clerk to add to agenda planner (Done)**

11. Governor Training Reports

- a. Understanding Performance Data** SS said they had looked at ASP on this course, which was an online system and more flexible than Raise Online. *MF asked if governors have access? SS said no, the trainer had depersonalised data and provided hard copy sheets. In School, SS said there would be 4 password controlled logons for School staff. Governors would not be able to access ASP themselves but needed to ask the right questions. CB offered to carry out an ASP overview for governors if interested? CB said this could be hard copy examples of cohort data lead/all governors might want to see? All agreed a 6pm session prior to a FGB meeting in Dec/Jan (once data out) would be very beneficial. CB to arrange ASP overview at December FGB meeting.*

Impact of meeting and Annual Governance Statement:

- Governor SDP priorities agreed
- Plan in place to review/reduce time spent on policy renewal and increase time spent on strategy
- Plan to launch visions and values agreed
- Clarity of communication relating to governor visits and staff
- Budget monitored
- Signed new code of conduct / KCSiE
- Safeguarding update confirmed moving forward with effective action plan and plans for website
- Links made with new parish council
- Plan for work on premises agreed

The meeting closed at 9.22pm