



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: Sue Nield BA (Hons) NPQH



West Hill Primary School

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on the 12th March 2015 held at school at 6.30pm

PART 1

Present: Sue Nield, Jonathan Brook, Lewis Jones, Dot Bioletti, Matt Fripp, Kara Green, Debbie Hudson, Sue Tovey

Clerk: Margaret Whitlock

1. Introduction:

Apologies:

There were apologies from Steve Walker, Chris Webster, Dave Underwood - sanctioned.

Declaration of Governor Interests:

Nothing was declared for this meeting.

Confirmation of minutes of the meetings held on 22.1.2015:

The minutes were proposed as a true and accurate account.

Matter arising from minutes:

- It was confirmed that the FGB draft minutes of 22.1.15 had been placed on the website.
- SN had investigated the arrangement of a Governor Health Check. May was proposed as a suitable time, after SATS, before IIP Gold Award in June and avoiding the course arranged for JB, SN and MW on May 20th. **(A - SN to arrange with JB)**
- The Policy for Photographic Images was reviewed and agreed in the Resources Committee Meeting 11.3.15.
- The School Mission Statement and Aims had been reviewed by Governors and ideas will be discussed in this meeting.
- MW confirmed she had requested a visits report from LH and will follow up if necessary.
- Subject leaders and Governor visits have been addressed and updated.
- **(A – SN to invite a Devon Norse representative to the next Resources meeting – 17.6.15)**

Date of next meeting: May 7th 2015 – for which MF and DB gave their apologies.

Endorsing of Parent Governor:

Kara Green was welcomed as Parent Governor.

2. Accountability and Monitoring:



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Gold



Parental Questionnaire:

The response to the annual Questionnaire, based on the OFSTED format, which had been sent online using Survey Monkey, had generated a response from parents of children in KS1 – 44.4% and in KS2 – 55.8%. This was compared with about 80% for the last questionnaire. Governors were concerned that the response was lower this year and discussed if this was due to it being sent online. SN felt that it was more likely that most parents were content with the school. SN stated that most of the confidential responses had been positive, though there had been a polarisation of responses to the question about homework, as to the appropriate quantity given. SN stated this was an expected response and that the school would maintain its policy on homework, responding to individual needs of pupils when appropriate. The issue of keeping parents informed about progress was also raised by a few. **(A - SN to email copies of the questionnaire to the Governors)** SN stated that the school could not respond individually to any negative comments where parents had responded anonymously but did discuss issues of concern with pupils in their pupil questionnaires.

Teaching and Learning Committee Report:

- SN reported that with the appointment of a new clerk she was reviewing the policies folder and looking for an easy way for all Governors to access this. By next week all Personnel Policies, the last batch to be completed, will have been reviewed and updated by SN.
- JB raised the issue of assessing pupil progress. SN responded that, in the light of changes caused by the implementation of the New Curriculum, the school was working hard to develop methods of monitoring and communicating progress. SN was confident that the school will meet the requirement to have a system of monitoring in place by September 2015. SN and DH will be attending further conferences on Assessment and ideas are being shared and discussed regularly by teachers in staff meetings. The Learning Community is also sharing ideas and is seeking to ensure there is a common framework between the local schools that feed the King's School. E.g. Year 5 Moderation meetings are being held on 16/17.3.15 between Ottery St Mary Primary School and WHPS to agree learning goals for H, M and L ability; assessing pupil writing skills. SN stated that the emphasis is now on pupils developing a broad understanding and assessing their depth of knowledge. Teachers will now be monitoring pupils' mastery of skills across the curriculum. In the past tracking linear progress within a subject was the aim for pupils to proceed to the next level. The focus is now on consolidation and achieving mastery. School Pupil Tracker (SPT) will be reinstated after Easter for online reporting to parents. Parents have been kept informed about the issues surrounding assessment in relation to the new primary curriculum by letter and through the School Newsletter. MF raised a concern that it would be a challenge communicating these changes to parents. SN replied that teachers will seek to reassure parents at the Parents' Evening consultations, demonstrate progress through the children's work and explain the changes to the curriculum and the work covered within each year group, as the comparison of levels was no longer possible. SN stated that there are many ways of tracking progress and that it might be beneficial for all in the long run not to be relying on the old levels. DH is to run a meeting for new parents to explain how to use the SPT.

Resources Committee Report:

JB stated he would like to defer this report as the meeting had only taken place on 11.3.15 and the draft minutes sent out later that day; giving Governors little time to read them. SWa had also not been able to attend the meeting and had had insufficient time to assess the budget. In the Resources Committee meeting it had been agreed that a working party of SN CH, SWa and MF would examine and discuss the draft budget further in time for submission to the LA by May 1st. MF has already begun this work and SN agreed it would be beneficial to delegate these deliberations to the working party. The GB therefore agreed the draft budget, in principle, subject to any changes the working party may make.

SN also wanted to gain agreement from the FGB for the LA buyback, which covers services such as Governor Support, GB Health Check, training, school improvements and the work of Brad Murray through the School Improvement Partnership, English and Maths groups as well as the Mutual Fund for Teacher Absence Insurance. SN is also proposing to move from the DCC HR1 to trial the NAHT Strictly Education for Personnel Services. The Draft Budget was agreed in principle subject to input from the working party and LA buyback was agreed by the FGB – agreement of the Draft Budget and LA Buyback was proposed by JB and seconded by ST.

SN reported that the New Budget Monitor, with notes provided by CH, has a healthy carry forward of £53,277, though it does include the 'Three Peaks' funding from the PTFA for the Foundation Stage Project. The details were delegated to the Resources Committee to assess. The FGB agreed it. MF proposed and DB seconded.

SFVS:

The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is an annual audit which was completed by SN, SWa, MF and CH. It is complete and was approved by the FGB. JB signed it as Chair.

Governor and Staff Matrices:

The information about Governor and staff skills is recorded and submitted as part of the SFVS. The skills are graded and reviewed annually. This has been completed and signed off by DU.

Key Monitoring Requirements:

No additional requirements to discuss.

3. Head Teacher's Reports:

The Head Teacher's report had been sent out prior to the meeting for scrutiny and was based on the previous one with blue highlights to show areas of change against those of continuity. The Governors felt this had been helpful and requested that SN provide some highlights from the report:

- SN has recently been appointed to the position of Local Leader of Education for which she received congratulations from the Governors. The role would involve supporting one or more schools in the South West and will gain useful additional funds of £400 a day for the school. (see - p8)
- SN has also been asked to work with Brad Murray in the School Improvement Partnership providing Evaluation Visits for schools that are experiencing difficulties. This may take 10 days a year and would earn the school £3,500 a year. Both of these roles benefit the school with the

acquisition of new ideas, the dissemination of experiences from a school that has achieved Outstanding in OFSTED and demonstrates a willingness to share expertise by WHPS.

- WHPS and SN are also supporting the future of education through SCITT and by working with PGCE students from Exeter University.
- ST is working closely with OSM Primary School on Maths.
- Staff meetings are focusing on progress meetings, marking and assessment.
- SN was very grateful for the many activities of the PTFA that have raised a considerable amount of money, which has been significant in the current situation of reduced funding. This was recognised by KG, who cited the many basic school resources that have been funded by the PTFA. Concerns were raised about diminishing numbers on the PTFA and SN has been working to invite new members to take on key roles. SN noted that Devon schools are in the bottom 5 for funding in the country and stated that if these schools were to receive the national average for funding, they would receive an additional £365 per pupil. At WHPS, SN considered cutting the current curriculum budget from £15,000 to £7,000 with the shortfall being met by the PTFA. KG suggested that sponsorship could be sought from local businesses, though the PTFA has not found that easy to acquire for other events. SN highlighted the ongoing sponsorship provided by Sainsburys for the SMILE Trust which had currently raised the sum of £1,500.
- Although a few children are leaving from across the school and numbers are currently down for this year's Reception Class, there is a significant waiting list for all other years. For September 2015 Reception has the potential for being over-subscribed with 37 applications having been submitted, many being first choices.
- The report contains an update on the premises and building with an overview of projects and of planned work.
- The Learning Community Development Plan outlines activities. Planning will be discussed in the meeting on 20.3.15. As the funding for the LC has fallen by 70% from £64,557 to £19,367. SN has suggested to the LC that each school would contribute an equal share of £1830.50 to meet the shortfall. In addition, neither the planned Accelerated Reader support, costing £5500, nor the Read and Write Gold literacy support would now go ahead, to make further savings. SN however noted that IT support will continue as it is proving beneficial. Educational Psychologist support will also continue with Kathy Lowther within the LC. Should there be a carry forward this would need to be spent by August.
- The OFSTED Dashboard, which provides useful information and is pertinent for Governors, demonstrates the healthy position of WHPS. It is based on last summer's SATS data and the old levels which is therefore challenging for teachers as the New Curriculum has made many changes to what is being taught and in which year group it is covered. SN noted that the tables showed that WHPS was high in points scoring even when it receives low funding. JB reiterated that this made the role of the PTFA particularly valuable in providing financial support, though questions were raised about funding for new technology such as ipads.
- SN has undertaken appraisals and performance management, setting targets and writing a Report on the impact of Performance Management for 2013-2014 which she has passed to DB as lead Personnel Governor. DB has also written a report outlining her observations.

Local Learning Community:

The Learning Community report is covered in the Head Teacher's Report, though it was added that The Otter Valley Federation Governors (Feniton and Tipton St. John Primary Schools) had expressed a wish to join the SMILE Learning Trust and had nominated their Executive Headteacher, Colin Butler, to represent them on the Trust Board. This will be discussed with the other LC Schools in the meeting of 20.3.15.

4. Policies, statements and provisions:

The DCC Disciplinary Policy had been read and agreed by the Governors, subject to SN attaching the standard WHPS details. Proposed LJ Seconded DB.

5. The Governing Body:

- **Governor Subject Areas:**

These had been revised and agreed in the Resources Committee Meeting. Changes made since the original proposals of September 2014 include:

Inclusive Education – DB

SENCO, Pupil Premium and Forces Premium – DB

Gifted and Talented Education – MF

PSHE, Citizenship & Multi Cultural Education – KG

Environmental Education, School Grounds, Eco Schools and PE – KG

It is expected that each Governor will make at least one subject related annual visit to the school to liaise with the designated member of staff and to observe lessons. These visits will be recorded on the report form provided, looking at learning styles, highlighting good practice and raising questions. The reports will be given to MW who will make a copy for SN. They will then be kept as a record in the Governor Visits Folder as evidence of Governor monitoring within the school. Other events and visits to the school, listed in the Governor Programme of Events can also be recorded on the report forms to show Governor involvement and feedback.

(A - MW to send out the report pro forma, the revised Subject Area document and the programme of events to which Governors may come)

(A - Governors to agree the term in which they plan to make their visit with their staff subject leader and to communicate this to MW to record)

DB's report, which was circulated by email recently, linked to her role as Governor for Staff Development and IIP, was cited as evidence of how this should work. DB raised the question of who was to sign the report off. It was agreed that this was the role of The Chair.

Visits report forms are currently being generated by LJ – Parish Council Meeting – 6.3.15, MF – visit to work on the SFVS and the Year 2 Assembly as well as a report by LH, a former Governor.

- **The Website:**

The Draft Part 1 FGB Minutes of 22.1.15 were successfully put on the website for the first time with the New Governor Check List. **(A – JB to email this to all Governors)** The list of Governors has been updated to include KG.

- **Mission Statement and School Aims:**

The school currently has 9 aims, which the Governors have been reviewing. JB had received feedback from several Governors and a number of suggestions were made to changes in wording including encouraging self evaluation linked to excellence and reflecting self improvement, nurturing confidence, developing perseverance and resilience and adding in problem solving. In aim (4) emphasis was to be placed on Maths, English, Computing, Science and Technology. It was suggested that (7) could include the aim to produce rounded individuals through a holistic approach. It was felt that (8) should be quantified in line with the current cuts in funding. It was agreed to remove (9) which was questioned as being an aim. SN cited the SMILE Trust aims as useful examples and questioned whether British Values should be included. All agreed that the aims should be short and pertinent. **(A – SN and JB to consolidate suggested ideas to adapt the school aims, which will be emailed to all Governors for their consideration)**

DB noted that she will attend a Safeguarding Course this month.

AOB:

None

Part 1 of the meeting closed at 8.15 pm