



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



West Hill Primary School

Final Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting

held on Thursday November 16th 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)

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

Clerk: Sarah Woolfries (SW)

1. Introduction (SS):

Apologies – Debbie Hudson, Chris Webster –sanctioned unanimously. JB advised SS was expected to join the meeting at 7pm so he would be chairing the meeting.

- **Declaration of Interests** – none
- SW notified governors that EA had resigned as a parent governor, and that a parent election needs to take place in the near future. All governors passed on their thanks to EA for her work as part of the governing board. SW said SS was going to notify a parent who had previously shown an interest in the role that there was a vacancy should they wish to apply. **(Done)** CB offered to send a thank you card to EA on behalf of the governing board.

2. Confirmation of Minutes of meeting 19.10.17 Part 1 & Part 2:

The Part 1 & Part 2 minutes were agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair.

Actions outstanding from the minutes: None

3. Date of Next FGB Meeting: Thursday 14th December 2017 at 6.30 pm

4. Policies, Statements & Provisions for review:

- a. Finance Policy (Statutory)** – MF had completed a review of the document, and he and SW subsequently proposed further changes to the policy to take out repetition of information held elsewhere (Mission Statement and Aims, Terms of Reference). MF noted the policy was prepared on the assumption that governors would retain the monthly FGB meeting cycle and not revert to a Resources Committee. JB said this would be officially voted on in January 2018, but asked governors to give an indication now if they might wish to revert to the previous system. No-one indicated they would, but CB suggested retaining the old Finance Policy just in case it was required. **Action: MF and SW to update policy for Dec FGB meeting.**
- b. DCC Lettings Policy (Statutory)** – IH advised he and CB had reviewed the policy, and noted any hirer must provide their own PLI insurance. Also, IH noted that Appendix 2 and 3 had not been in

the previous policy, so have been added so it is there if and when the School are able to let their premises (in which case a scale of charges would need to be agreed). *HE asked if the school field could be let out? CB confirmed no as it is community land outside school hours. JB asked why do we need the policy as rooms are not hired out? IH said it was a statutory requirement and worth having in readiness. The policy was agreed by all present.*

- c. **New Privacy Notice for Pupils and Staff (Statutory and website)** CB advised that this only came out on 01 November 2017, in readiness for the new GDPR regulations. CB advised being in the process of updating it, and was attending a course in January which would be helpful. CB also needed to talk to staff regarding pupil information that is collated, held and shared. MF noted it was important to understand why they are collecting it and what happens to it at the end of Y6. **CB said she would talk to other Heads in the LLC to see what they were doing regarding the privacy notices and the appointment of a Data Protection Officer. CB is also to speak to a parent at the School who has a background in Data Protection and had offered to provide guidance.** MF noted Babcock will be offering a DPO service. SW confirmed this was mentioned at a recent course, with graduated services at different costs expected to be available to schools. **All agreed that GDPR would have a significant impact and should be added to the agenda again in January. All governors to review recent Governance Alert link (SW to recirculate) Done.** *JB asked CB if there is anything specific the governing board need to do? CB was not sure at this stage how much was operational and how much required governor involvement, and hoped to find out more on the course on 30th Jan 2018. MF said the implications were far reaching, including suppliers processing of data, and might incur additional costs. Therefore MF felt it was important to see what the rest of the LLC intended to do.*

5. Headteacher's Verbal Update

- **School Development Plan** – CB noted that other schools were taking different approaches, with one not doing a SDP and another doing a 3 year plan. CB said she had looked at the sheets completed by staff and governors on the training days in September and taken out any day to day operational items. CB invited questions:
- **Section 1:** *MF asked how would this be evidenced and monitored as it would be quite difficult? CB said evidence was input on an ongoing basis, plus three times a year when staff and the SLT get together to review it;* No. 6 – Improve the School Website: *MF asked how was this to be achieved, what resources/money might be required? SW noted in her previous role she had approached 3 well known school website providers for quotes and the cost came out at up to £5k for a new site. CB said it was important to agree what specifically needs to be improved. HE asked if pupils went in to the site, most governors thought not. JM felt the site was not user friendly and did not celebrate success in the same way as in the newsletter. DM asked if spending money on the website benefitted the children? CB said that if the School had empty places it would be more important from a marketing perspective, but the school has waiting lists for every class. IH noted the website was 'traditional' compared to one such as Ottery St. Mary Primary School. JB said it should be possible to spend less but make the site look better, as long as there is clarity of what the School wants. **CB proposed a small working party to take this forward, and asked any interested governors to email their interest to CB by the following Monday 20th November. Done.***
- **Section 2** – CB noted that with reference to No 4. Improve marking across the school, a full training day was taking place in January to all TAs and teachers to feed back Brad Murray's findings. CB said examples of good and bad marking would be shared, with a focus on how

the marking should move the children's learning forward. There will also be codes to identify if children have completed tasks independently, with TA or with teacher help; No. 3 – HE noted the teacher mentioned was no longer an NQT. **CB to amend. SS joined the meeting at 7.05pm.** No. 7: JB asked does the three years start now? CB said no, it started last year with Y3/4/5 receiving new boards, then 2 more this year and next year. MF asked if there was any benefit to the children in getting them installed sooner, given the PTFA have the funds? CB said it would mean the School couldn't have other things so preferred a phased roll out. No. 8: SS report (about The Arts) said we have received the award? SS said the school has had confirmation that our 'Statement of Commitment' has been accepted by the Arts Council (a big task in itself) and now has got 24 months to complete the plan before gold is awarded, which then lasts 3 years. SS said Sue Bedford (SB) has a meeting arranged with teachers to confirm what has been committed to, and how it is important to evidence the impact for children and parents. DM asked how do you evidence an increase in participation and ability? CB said there is data for this for both The Arts and Sport, such as increased participation and results (sport). However, CB recognised more feedback was required from children and parents relating to the Arts. MF asked when children do an activity, are the staff on board to obtain feedback? SS confirmed SB had a folder of comments made by the children, but it just needs to be streamlined across the school.

- **Section 3** – No. 4: DM felt it was important to recognise that the provision of outdoor activities, music and the arts, and other extra curricular activities can have a positive impact in reducing anxiety and supporting mental health for children. **CB to include in the SDP.** No further questions were raised on the SDP and JB noted that all governor requirements were in there.

b. October Performance Data CB said the whole school breakdown of pupils per class was useful data for teachers. For example in Y6 there are 17 summer born children - the split of girls/boys is also useful as it can have an impact on the class. Whole school ARE comparison – CB noted that SEND/statemented children were in the pink category, 1 pupil premium child was in the white category and the rest were in 'green', which was very positive. The meeting then moved to part 2 at 7.20 and returned to part one at 7.30. ARE Comparison - MF asked why no-one was on ARE? **CB said this was relating to pupil tracker, but CB would respond specifically to the governing board with further details.** MF noted Y3 & 4 data looked high in writing, with a significant % well above? CB felt confident that the data supports those scores, and that a book scrutiny would be undertaken before Christmas to ensure the evidence also backs up the scores. CB noted the Y1 below scores are high, but this reflects their scores coming up from reception, and pleasing to note maths is stronger. Whole School Progress – CB noted it was good to see at least half are expected to be at +1 by the end of the autumn term, with most significantly over. Vulnerable Groups – CB advised that the data looked really promising, especially relating to PP and SEND. JM asked why gifted and talented are not better, is it because they are so high already they can't go any higher? CB responded that it was not possible to evidence this progress on pupil school tracker but there will be evidence in the children's books to support the progress made. JM felt it gave a false impression as progress appears to plateau (therefore hard to monitor when progress is a governor priority), although she assumed it would be reflected in the hash tags, which CB confirmed. MF also noted it can be seen in the ARE comparison of individual classes, with gifted and talented at +3.9. CB said she and DH will be delighted if this progress continues.

JM noted she would like to see an uplift in the Y1 ratings in January. **Clerk to add to the agenda (It was noted that governors will also be able to look at data against last year's data for comparison). Done.**

- **Staff recruitment** CB confirmed a 1:1 SEN TA had been appointed following a rigorous interview process supported by DB, where 2 high quality applicants had been identified. The new TA will start on 20 Nov or as soon as their DBS has been received. CB also noted that this freed up other staff that had been providing cover.
- **Draft Admissions Policy** JM noted some significant changes in the criteria, with priority 2 now being given to exceptional medical or social needs of a pupil or parent/carer. *JM questioned could this take the class over its maximum? CB said this ranking is relating to the waiting list only. JM questioned does this change exceptional circumstances (page 6) to take a class over criteria? SS noted a recent situation and asked could it happen again? CB noted this relates to 2019/20 intake. DM asked if governors had any control over the policy? CB said no. JM noted in Section 5 summer born babies born after 1 April could defer to January and miss a term. JM asked if this meant they could defer a whole year? CB said yes, but they would have to apply as an 'in year' applicant for Y1. JM asked if they could join reception later too? CB said possibly on medical needs. JM asked if that was a change? JB said parents can choose to drop them down a year.* CB confirmed the policy was only received on 11th October so there was insufficient time to review it in the October FGB meeting. It has already gone on the website for consultation as 'draft', which closes on 5th January 2018. CB also mentioned that a response is still awaited to her letter regarding an admissions matter that had been sent to County Hall. **Policy agreed by all present.**

6. Safeguarding and Child Protection

- a. JM advised that she, IH and CB met on 02 November to discuss safeguarding and the website, and with the support of Jim Cocks, a first draft was available on the safeguarding tab. JM said the aim was to have all the key information on the front page, with links to relevant policies and MASH details. CB advised that she had 2 further sections to complete. IH noted that safeguarding was not mentioned on the first page of some school websites at all. JM felt great progress had been made. **JM asked all governors to look at the new pages, check the links were open and provide constructive feedback to herself, IH and CB. JM asked parent governors to also consider from their perspective does it say it all, is there enough information, too much, is it suitable? CB asked SW to register the thanks of the governing board for the excellent support of Jim Cocks. Done.**
 - IH and JM are attending a staff meeting on 21 November to explain more about the role of governors. JM and IH will be reviewing the CSR in December, and JM noted Wendy had raised some questions which she/SW would be emailing out to certain governors. CB noted the new swipe card doors are being installed over Christmas, and that if children need to come back into school from the hall (to use the toilets) teachers will be able to provide them with a special 'child' swipe pass to regain access to the building.
- b. Case study carried forward to December FGB meeting.**

7. Financial Monitoring – data shown on screen

- a. MF met with LD last Friday to review the budget monitor and discuss the meeting she had the day before with David Dominey. MF noted 2 main points; Income levels have increased

by a small amount (to £860K), with the main movements being the receipt of insurance monies for staff sickness cover, (anticipate £8218 in total), and a slight increase in money from visits. Cost wise, MF noted staff illness and costs of cover, and costs of repairs to the Elliott building took the predicted deficit to £3k (from £1K). This means a predicted carry forward of £26K rather than £29K. *JM asked whether any PTFA money had been received? MF said they had been invoiced but not paid yet.* MF also noted catering generated a £13.5K surplus, and that good meal uptake in addition to the contribution from Payhembury helped subsidise the expenditure. MF said there were a number of cost centres where costs are being accrued as no one can predict what is going to happen and we need to be prepared for the worst case scenario. *JM asked if funds are set aside for replacement of ovens/catering equipment etc.? MF said no, School was not in a position to put funds aside at the moment.* CB said there was no update from Payhembury (as advised by Devon Norse), who had to give a term's notice if they wanted to cease the arrangement.

JM noted that WHPC had given funds to the PTFA for the repair of the Mediterranean garden and forest school area (£1K), plus agreed to meet the cost of the band for the village fete (circa £350). However, no funds had been provided for field drainage.

- b. Financial Benchmarking** – MF showed various data comparisons on screen of 2 schools of similar size and mix of pupils to WHPS; One in the LA area and one outside. MF noted that WHPS staff costs were high by comparison, reflecting the number of senior staff at WHPS, but also the number of staff and clerical support appeared high by comparison. So this raises the question of where are the other schools spending their money? In terms of total income, and % expected compared to income, WHPS had overspent, whilst others appear to balance their books with 'voluntary' funding. E.g. PTFA or asking parents to donate. MF also noted one school benefitted significantly from 'community focus school funding'. **MF to ascertain what this is.** CB noted WHPS was good on managing spending on supply staff. *SS asked if there was anything MF was worried about? MF said no, he felt the School was doing quite well.* CB noted staff had made big cutbacks in their use of resources, as they appreciate the challenges on the budget. *IH asked if LD does any projections? MF confirmed yes, it will be in the data to be circulated after the meeting.* MF said the LA comparison school had double the expenditure of WHPS for a similar size school, another school had less teachers but more catering staff (WHPS sub out catering), others had big premises costs so it was hard to make direct comparisons. *HE asked if insurance premiums are likely to go up as a result of the recent claims for teacher sickness? MF said no, it is a mutual fund.* MF said comparisons are hard as schools answer questions differently. However, he was confident in the current position of the School's finances and there is an awareness of the challenges for future expenditure. MF confirmed staff pay increases had been budgeted for, and that LD had improvements to put in place for budgeting process next year.

MF noted that longer term discussions will need to take place regarding the Elliott Building, so the governing board can plan now for the future, rather than being reactionary and wasting money. *CB asked if that was not a DCC matter? JB felt they would only be involved if the building was falling down. Therefore MF said the School might need to make a decision to address the matter itself, possibly a PTFA long term project. JB felt it would be beneficial to get a projected cost so everyone is aware of the figures. CB suggested another working party could be arranged in due course.*

MF confirmed he will phone the schools used in his comparison to get further details (including the community focus school funding') and produce a report in due course. MF to provide financial reports to SW for circulation.

c. **Pay & Performance meeting rearranged to take place on Friday 24th November at 9.00am.**

8. **Review of complaints procedure and related processes** – the meeting moved to part two at 8.35 and returned to part one at 8.50.

Outcomes:

- As part of the new GDPR, there will be a requirement for the appointment of a new Data Protection Officer (DPO), who must be externally appointed. Governors will decide whether a lead Data Protection governor is also required. It was noted that the governing board still 'own' the data protection policy. Some governors suggested the inclusion of specific data retention protocols and timeframes should be added to the Data Protection Policy. **Both to be reviewed as part of the wider GDPR discussions.**
- It was recognised that it was not ideal for governor's personal email addresses to be used in correspondence relating to school matters/complaints. However, it was also noted that the GDPR may change the way in which communication by governors is conducted. **Therefore it was agreed that in the short term, a new Chair of Governors email will be created. In the interim, any communication between the governing board and parents / external parties relating to a complaint will be conducted through the clerk to governors email address. Done.**
- It was felt that the Complaints Policy (based on a Babcock model policy) was not detailed enough regarding some procedural matters and as such it would be beneficial to create an appendix to the policy. *MF asked if this would be flexible enough to cover most situations?* **SW confirmed it would, and advised that this had been raised with Babcock, who were in agreement in principal and would look into creating an appendix for the model policy. Clerk to monitor and provide an update in due course.**
- **JB to talk to the School Office about use of Office365 'team' functionality, which can be used to create specific groups of people working on a particular issue, to show them how it works and see if it might be suitable.**
- All governors need to undertake online training for Data Protection. **CB to send governors the link (Done).** *DM asked if there is any central guidance about what is likely to change regarding data retention.* **CB advised more should be known after her course in January, she will pick up with the LLC and it will be added to the Jan 2018 FGB meeting agenda.**

9. **Lead Governor Reports – questions arising:**

a. **Modern Languages** *JM asked if it might be possible to reinstate KS1 French?* CB said the PTFA would not fund teaching as they cannot commit to the funding long term. *JM asked could we run more French clubs as they are oversubscribed?* DM said there were not enough on the waiting list to warrant another club. *MF asked is there benefits to the children of having KS1 French?* **CB and HE both said definitely yes, but it cannot be funded.** *HE asked if whole staff training to KS1 was an option?* *DM suggested external sponsorship as an option.* *JM asked the cost of running an afternoon a week of KS1 French which CB provided.* *MF asked if parents*

could be asked to specifically donate for French lessons, but CB was not comfortable with that idea. **Governors asked DM to consider further with input from Liz Shackleton and PTFA.**

- b. The Arts** MF asked if art therapy for pupil premium children was no longer funded? CB confirmed the funding had run out but restarted again at the beginning of the new school year. DM asked why double sessions are not allowed (as mentioned in the report)? CB said Brad Murray had advised that double Maths and English sessions should be changed to daily lessons, but double sessions of other specific subjects could still be arranged (ideally not weekly but every other week). SS did not feel all teachers were aware of this. **CB to notify teachers when double sessions are permitted.** DM asked if there was any cost attached to attaining the Arts Mark? CB confirmed no, and has subsequently discovered that Sue Nield paid this from the School budget before retiring (approx. £500).
- c. SEND** – no questions
- d. Ethos/Behaviour** – no questions
- e. Premises** – no questions. CB confirmed she had attended a premises manager's overview course that day.

10. Governor Training Reports – questions arising:

- a. Exclusions Training** – JM asked if it was right that governors should be aware at every stage of the process? DB advised it happens already, in as much as emails are sent out and it is included in the Head Teacher's Report. JM asked can the Deputy Head sanction an exclusion? CB said yes, if the Head Teacher were not on site, although the Deputy Head would generally phone and consult first. Also, it could only relate to a temporary and not a permanent exclusion.
- b. Personnel Responsibilities for governors** – no questions
- c. Governor Induction** – no questions
- d. Governance and School Improvement** – carried forward

11. Matters brought forward at the Chair's Discretion

- A revised date for the MATs discussion will be arranged for January 2018
- SS noted that a parent governor election would shortly take place, and that SW was looking at Inspiring Governance to identify candidates for the co-opted governor vacancy. Also, JM confirmed she will be stepping down in September 2018 when she returns to work. JB suggested trying to elect 2 parent governors now, but SS felt too many parent governors can cause issues when dealing with complaints for example.

12. Impact of the meeting on outcomes for pupils' teaching and learning

- School development plan agreed
- Monitored progress and attainment of all pupils using October data, including Y1, SEN and Pupil premium progress – strengths and areas for improvement identified
- Financial Benchmarking / investigate what is a 'community fund'
- Safeguarding on website
- Lead governor visit showing different aspects of The Arts
- Modern Foreign Languages KS1 discussed
- Governor involvement with subject leaders
- New staff recruitment / release of other staff

The meeting closed at 9.25pm