



**MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD ON 26TH MARCH 2024
AT 8.30AM IN THE SCHOOL**

“We are a community with a lifelong passion for learning.”

Present: Hilary Priest (HP), Head, Ian Stewart (IS) Chair, Mike Waterson (MW), Becky Nel (BN), Richard Gibbon (RG), Jo Counter, Jenny Barker (JB) – online via TEAMS

In attendance: Dawn Pettipiece (clerk)

Minutes

1	Welcome & apologies for absence* Rob Hill's apology for absence was accepted.
2	Attendance & declaration of Interest* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governors signed the attendance form There were no declarations of interest
3	Approval of Part 1 and Part 2 Minutes of FGB Meeting on 5.12.24 The Minutes were approved as being a correct record and signed by the Chair.
3.1	Matters arising from minutes of the last FGB meeting including progress made on the actions raised* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft document to explain terminology regarding the children's achievements in the Head's Report. Once perused by governors can be presented at the next parents evening and put in the next newsletter. HP - this document is a summary of how well the school is doing and is on the school website. Governors PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) training information was sent to the Governors Marketing to parents the effects of PACE training on their children's behaviour. HP – we are planning on launching the Behaviour Policy after Easter. The deputy head has written a brief introduction for parents regarding the Policy and the Contract of Conduct. Make a list of children who meet funding criteria for the Benevolent Fund. HP – this has been started and will be ongoing. It is mainly used for school trips, but we have bought head lice treatments. I need to work with the chef Marco Piloni (MP) to identify children who need support with funding school meals. Meeting to discuss the two Co Vice-chair roles JB and RH are going to do these roles and MW is stepping down. <p>ACTION: IS will put some information explaining the terminology for the children' achievements in the Governors section of the next newsletter.</p> <p>ACTION: HP to speak to Chef to identify children who are eligible for Benevolent Funding.</p> <p>ACTION: IS, JB AND RH will have a meeting to discuss which areas the Co Vice-chairs will cover.</p>
4	Committee reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Learning Committee (T&L) MW (T&L Chair) has reviewed the Performance Data, School Improvement Plan and Behaviour Policy. The Committee talked about the SEF (School Self-Evaluation form), but there is nothing that the FGB needs to be aware of as it is for the T&L Committee. Governors need to plan some visits as none have been done this term. Resources Committee IS (reported as the Resources Committee Chair is absent from this meeting). Resources had two meetings this term and discussed Benchmarking, and Evacuation plans as well as other things. We also discussed the Budget and Wraparound Care. This is because a new directive from the government requires that there has to be care available from 8am and after school until 6pm in the area where the school is situated. ACTION: Meeting to discuss Wraparound care to be organized. HP to invite SL, IS and RH.
5	Budget HP – There is not a lot of money in the budget and we have had to cut the budget to the essentials. For the Head Teacher's Performance appraisal – we are now asking another Head Teacher from the Primary Partnership to be involved rather than pay for outside expertise. The Finance Officer from Devon County Council (DCC) came to The Grove and found more money for the budget, making the carry forward better. The Budget is tight, but we can continue for another year without any staff redundancies. Q: The budget is still on a “knife edge”, so how are you managing it?

A: The issue is if we cut staffing costs this impacts on the quality of education. We need to look at income generation. The Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) are very proactive and the school disco last Friday, did well generating income. We have covered staff costs but need money for other things.

Q: So, we got here by being careful and the school needs to carry on with that?

A: We need to forward plan as there is nothing to carry forward into the next budget.

Q: Maybe the Leadership Team need to scrutinize everything that is being spent?

A: The Deputy Head has money for things that are needed and the PTA are supportive.

Q: In terms of income generation have you got any ideas in progress?

A: We are looking at providing “Wraparound Care” and the “Holiday Club” but they need careful planning. I have spoken to the Head of another school who already delivers those services, for ideas on how to provide it. I have also been applying for lots of funding in areas that the budget would normally have paid for. The PTA have put together a calendar of events to generate money and we need to be honest with them about how much money the school requires. I am facilitating National Professional Qualifications (NPQ) training sessions and that money will go to the school.

Another area to look at is Lettings, although other schools say it doesn't make much money.

Q: What about if the field is redone?

A: A nearby senior school do well letting theirs out. Ours would be suitable for netball etc.

Q: How many children are in the school?

A: The maximum is 315 and we currently have 309.

Q: Is next year's intake going to be low?

A: No, we are full. We are losing 48 year six children and have 44 new ones coming in. We get approximately £2600 per child, as long as they are on the roll by Census Day in October.

Q: Do we turn children down?

A: No. We are full but could make places for another one or two.

Q: So, we need to give a message to parents etc. that funding for the school this year is low but the quality of education will remain the same?

A: It will be a difficult message, but on the news today it was stated that Devon County Council (DCC) has overspent on education. IS will write a brief message from the governors that the funding issue is a general problem in all schools.

Q: Chair: We are not renewing the Mutual Fund (insurance scheme to fund supply teachers when staff are off sick), but do not have money in the budget for supply staff?

A: We can cover with staff, although long-term sickness would be difficult to manage and we have only occasionally used the Mutual Fund.

Q: Will it put pressure on staff to come into school when they are unwell if we are not funding supply staff?

A: Our staff do turn up if they have something minor like a cold.

Chair: The recommendation from the Resources Committee is that the budget be approved and for the school to come out of the Mutual Fund.

The governors approved the school budget.

The governors agreed the school could come out of the Mutual Fund.

ACTION: IS will write a brief message from the governors. **UPDATE:** message was sent out on 23.3.24. **DONE.**

ACTION: IS will meet with PTA to discuss ways they can support the School Budget. **DONE.**

6

Head's report

- Any questions?

Q: What is the item about the wraparound club?

A: It will have to be OFSTED (The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) registered when the opening hours' increase.

Q: What is the part about sexual language and racial discrimination in Behaviours?

A: There was an incident about a racist comment which I reported to DCC.

Regarding the sexual language – it was about a couple of year five children who have older siblings who have been talking about sex and information was shared with other children. Emails were sent to parents in years 3,4,5 and 6. Some of the boys' “talk” was misogynist and that is concerning. The school have a fire wall and there have been a few inappropriate searches.

Q: Is it a safeguarding issue?

A: No. It is within the normal curiosity of that age range, although it was quite new to us as our children are usually fairly innocent.

Q: The misogynist stuff is a worry.

A: Yes. Our PSHME (Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education) curriculum does not teach sex education, but teaches anatomy to years 5 and 6.

Q: Statistics show that nearly 100% of boys have seen pornography by the age of ten.

A: We follow the guidelines but can teach younger children and are honest with the children.

Q: Is it worth thinking about teaching sex education in the school as some do not get taught at home?

A: Yes – we can put it on the agenda for the Teaching and Learning Committee (T&L) to discuss.

Q: There has been no school wide communication about this and there have been concerns about children being exposed to pornography on the internet.

A: We directed communication to the relevant year groups involved.

Q: What about the exclusions in Spring term in the report?

A: It is the same children. One once and one twice.

Q: What is going to be put in place to support the children?

A: They have lots of pastoral care and support and we try and keep them in school as much as we can. All staff have had PACE and Trauma Informed training. We are working closely with the families and local authorities.

Q: Did the exclusions work?

A: Yes, as the children missed school and wanted to come back.

Q: There are no longer assessments in Key Stage 1?

A: We have our own assessments and monitor them in the same way we work to the national curriculum. The difference is that we no longer have to administer actual SATS (Standard Assessment tests) and no longer have to teach things that will be in the SATS tests until we are ready. The less you test children the better.

Q: Will governors get information about the end of year key stage 1 tests?

A: Yes, when we have got the information. The teachers have done videos and Powerpoint slides for the curriculum updates and I will send them to the T&L Committee next term.

MW: We need a member of staff to come to the T&L committee meeting in May and need to decide that.

ACTION: Whether the school should provide sex education to go on T&L agenda. DONE.

ACTION: HP/IS will put together an email to be sent out to parents regarding inappropriate sexual language in school.

ACTION: HP to send video/powerpoint curriculum updates to T&L committee next term. UPDATE: HP loaded them onto GovernorHub on 15.4.24.

ACTION: HP to invite a staff member to the next T&L meeting to discuss the curriculum. UPDATE: Not required as Governors were invited to attend a curriculum update meeting on 29th April.

7 School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Governors Strategic Plan

- Progress for this term

HP – The focus is on Behaviour and looking at the more exciting plans for the Summer Term. Next term we will look at the term priorities and broad long-term plans over the next 2-3 years. I wanted to have the detail in the SIP for planning and as part of that we need the Governor Objectives.

The governors discussed the SIP.

Q: There are a lot of great ideas but how will they be fitted in and how will they work together?

A: By continuous provision. The curriculum is embedded and doing really well and we can see which things are missing.

Q: Does the new curriculum need simplifying?

A: For the Summer Term we are trialling things like “being in nature” and teaching in a more play-based, creative, fun way. Helen Fernyhough (deputy head) is doing a trial to see how that works in years 5 and 6.

Q: Another large area is the communication and engagement plan.

A: We are working on a communication calendar. We also have the whole school WhatsApp group and that is used for reminding people about things such as an upcoming mufti day.

Q: We need to show how well the school is doing on these things.

A: The newsletter does that and the WhatsApp group will start soon.

Q: We need to show the whole community how well the school is doing.

A: That is in the plan and is why the engagement part has been added.

Q: There are two more people on the leadership team.

A: We expanded it to give staff doing NPQ’s experience.

Chair: We need to discuss the Deputy Head position as we said we would wait until Easter before making a decision. The governors had a discussion and decided to advertise the post internally with a formal interview early next term. IS, MW, JC and BN all agreed to be on the interview panel for the interviews.

	<p>ACTION: IS to look at governor objectives for the SIP and possibly delegate to another governor.</p> <p>ACTION: HF//IS/HP to meet up to see how the school WhatsApp group is going.</p> <p>ACTION: HP to arrange interview for the deputy-head post and invite IS, MW, JC and BN.</p>
8	<p>SFVS/Benchmarking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs approving by governors <p>The full board of governors approved the SFVS and BENCHMARKING following recommendation by the Resources Committee.</p>
9	<p>Local Authority (LA) admissions arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update. <p>Head – we can accept it as it has not changed.</p> <p>Governors approved the LA admissions arrangements.</p>
10	<p>Presentation from Staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked to an aspect of the school’s work (SIP, curriculum or area of focus for board). <p>Already discussed in item 6.</p>
11	<p>Inset (in service training days) and occasional days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For approval <p>HP – we have not been given these dates yet so requested it be moved to the next agenda so the school can choose seven days from the calendar Devon will send.</p> <p>ACTION: Move to next agenda so school can choose inset days.</p>
12	<p>Primary Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and impact on school <p>HP: Myself and IS are going to a Governors and Headship meeting in April, to discuss future plans.</p> <p>Q: On the plan there was information about looking at becoming part of a Federation?</p> <p>A: A member of the Primary Partnership is looking into it for discussion at the meeting.</p> <p>Q: Have the numbers in the Partnership increased?</p> <p>A: Yes, we now have 11 schools.</p> <p>Q: How do staff link up from different schools?</p> <p>A: There are groups and we are putting a calendar together to make it more organised.</p> <p>Q: What do you hope to get out of the meeting?</p> <p>A: We plan to talk about finances.</p> <p>Q: Apart from sharing ideas what are the school doing?</p> <p>A: The agenda for the day is an introduction to the background of Primary Partnerships and we need to sign off a basic agreement about how the schools work together. We are looking at accountability for heads and governors and how the Partnership continues to work.</p> <p>Q: Would it be worth knowing who some of the other governors are so we can ask for their support with things like appeals and recruitment?</p> <p>A: For myself as a head, I found the partnership really valuable, e.g. for help writing difficult emails. It is a good networking possibility for governors to ask how other schools run holiday clubs etc.</p> <p>Chair: DAG have a forum for chairs and I can ask questions about various issues and it is very useful.</p> <p>Head: The meeting is not very formal but we need to decide the future of the group.</p>
13	<p>SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the school get the right amount of money for this? What are the barriers to receiving the funding? Would the local authority be able to support the school to get more funding for EHCP (education, health and care plan)? How to we compare with other schools regarding SEND funding. How can the governors help? <p>JC – We are really affected by DCC’s funding issues and have children coming to the school without EHCP funding. With teacher assistant recruitment problems and funding cuts we have been told we need to move to whole class provision.</p> <p>Q: Are schools being discouraged to apply for funding</p> <p>HP: No, but we cannot afford expensive psychologist reports and as parents do not need one they are applying instead of schools.</p> <p>JC – EHCP applications are taking a lot of time.</p> <p>Q: How can governors help with this?</p> <p>A: It could be really effective if governors wrote to DCC as we have children who need to go to the 0-25 team (DCC team that manage SEND and EHCP funding). Other governing bodies have written to DCC about the support provided by the team. HP - Can we see an example of a letter someone else has sent?</p> <p>JC- Yes. In the past we had to provide 1 to 1 support for children, but are moving away from that. It is not linked to funding. It is research based better practice.</p>

	<p>Q: What happens to a child who is awaiting funding? A: We ensure they receive everything they need. JC – EHCP funding is a maximum of £4,500 and the actual cost is around £20,00. HP – We applied for funding for a child who we consider needs support and were turned down at appeal. JC – There have been cuts to the Children’s Initiative and Parenting course, which the DCC has put online with lots of tools, but parents want “face to face” support and that is disappearing. HP – Lots of them are only accessible for secondary school children, ACTION: JC will get an example of a letter governors have written re 0-25 Team support. ACTION: JC AND MW to meet to devise a letter about the 0-25 Team for DCC.</p>
14	<p>EDI group (equality, diversity and inclusion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at managing their interest in governance and whole school link-ups. <p>IS – It is a group who meet as a book club. They want to help in school with EDI and maybe have someone on the board to increase diversity. HP – some of the group are not parents, so cannot join the school WhatsApp group. Q: Who are they? IS: AG set up the group. JB (EDI governor lead) is working with them and we need to decide how to manage it. The governors discussed ways to involve the group. JB: Approximately 30 parents came to the meeting and Dartington wants to do something similar. It was a positive meeting. They have a list of people in different jobs who can come into school. HP: We need to go back to them and say we need a non-parent community governor on the board. IS: We need some new governors to increase EDI and this group are keen to work on that. JB: Barriers to being on the board include the length of time and amount of meetings. HP: They need to be aware that they need to sign up for four years to be a full governor as it takes time to understand the role, although they can resign. BN left the meeting at 10.05am ACTION: EDI to go on the next Resources meeting agenda. DONE.</p>
15	<p>Policies*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Governor Code of Conduct was approved in the September FGB, but not signed. Pay Policy <p>Was reviewed at the last Resources meeting but need board approval. The FGB approved the Pay Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND policy <p>Reviewed at last T&L meeting but needs FGB approval. The FGB approved the SEND policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Redundancy Policy. <p>This is a DCC Policy and was approved by the FGB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Virtual Attendance Protocol for governors who wish to attend a meeting virtually. <p>MW – Do we need to specify a notice period, if we do the day before would be preferable. We don’t normally send a link and just have a phone link, so shall we leave this out? The FGB approved the Virtual Attendance Protocol and agreed to change the two above bullet points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors Visiting the School Policy <p>Reviewed by MW and the FGB approved the policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on upcoming “Children at Risk of Flight” policy. <p>IS is reviewing it. It was discussed at the last T&L meeting and needs to be discussed at their next meeting. ACTION: Clerk to find out which documents need paper records and ones to be signed online (eg regarding Code of Conduct). UPDATE: Business Manager has had a response about this from Audit. Governors can sign Code of Conduct in GovernorHub. DONE. ACTION: Move review of Children at Risk of Flight to next T&L meeting. DONE.</p>
16	<p>Annual skills audit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit in GovernorHub meeting folder – please complete and email to clerk. Plan date for annual skills audit (complete dashboard) and discuss skills results. <p>ACTION: move to next FGB meeting as not all the governors are here.</p>
17	<p>SAFEGUARDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update <p>Covered in other areas of the meeting.</p>
18	<p>Governor visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports from visits undertaken since last FGB meeting. <p>We have completed SEND and Safeguarding. Pupil Premium was discussed in other meetings.</p>

	<p>MW: SEND is quite difficult to take in and see how the children were interacting in class. The younger children seemed more involved.</p> <p>Q: How are the Parent SEND meetings going?</p> <p>A: There were four parents yesterday. They want a regular slot for advice to support family life. Tonya Stirrup (SENCO lead) has created a video. It could possibly go on the school website.</p> <p>ACTION: IS to work with relevant governors to plan a curriculum visit in April or May.</p> <p>ACTION: HP to put SEND on the next staff meeting agenda and discuss whether to put the SEND video on the website.</p>
19	<p>Governor training</p> <p>Discussed new governors training and regular emails are sent out regarding relevant training. Governors to contact IS or clerk if they want to attend any relevant training.</p>
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Interest Forms (members to sign their business interest forms) <p>Discussion about whether the governors need to sign a paper form or if signing on GovernorHub is sufficient for audit.</p> <p>ACTION: clerk to contact the business manager to find out the protocol for this. OUTCOME: School Business manager sent email with response from audit on 17.4.24.</p>
21	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please forward any relevant correspondence to the clerk or bring to meeting.
22	<p>Items brought forward by the Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chefs in Schools update <p>HP – we have visits on a regular basis as the school represents Chefs in Schools. The BBC Radio 4 Food Programme came in and interviewed the school and that programme will be broadcast in early May, nearer the date it will go in the school newsletter. There is a lot going on. We have introduced other schools to the organisation so we can show how it works.</p>
23	<p>Date & time of next meeting</p> <p>FGB meeting Tuesday May 21st 2024 at 8.30am in the school</p>

- * = standing items

The meeting ended at 10.30 am.

	Action	By whom	By when
3.1	Document explaining terminology about childrens' progress to go in Governor section of the next newsletter.	IS	By next half term
3.1	Discussion with Chef to identify children who are eligible for Benevolent Funding for meals.	HP	By next half term
3.1	Meeting to discuss which areas the new Co Vice-Chairs are going to be responsible for.	IS, JB, RH	By next half term
4	Meeting to discuss Wraparound care and invite SL, IS and RH.	HP	By next half term
5	Brief message from Governors to go out to parents regarding the school's financial situation. DONE.	IS	Within two weeks
5	Meeting with PTA to discuss how they can support the school's finances. DONE.	IS	By next half term
6	Discussion about whether the school provides sex education to go on next T&L agenda. DONE	Clerk	Within two weeks
6	Email to go to parents regarding inappropriate language in school.	HP	By next half term
6	Video/powerpoint curriculum updates to go on GovernorHub for T&L members. DONE.	HP	Within two weeks
6	Staff member to present to next T&L meeting – governors are now going to the next curriculum update meeting. DONE.	HP	By next half term
7	Chair to look at governor objectives for SIP and possibly delegate to another governor.	IS	By next half term
7	Meeting to see how the WhatsApp group is going.	HP, HF, IS	By next half term
7	Head to arrange interview for deputy Head post and invite IS, MW, JC and BN. DONE.	HP	Within two weeks
11	Move Inset days approval to next agenda. DONE.	Clerk	Within two weeks
13	Source an example of letter another school's governors have written regarding 0-25 Team support.	JC	By next half term

13	Meeting to draft a letter about the 0-25 Team's support for DCC	JC, MW	By next half term
14	ACTION: Discussion about the EDI group to go to the next Resources meeting. DONE.	Clerk	By next Resources meeting
15	Find out which governor documents need paper copies for audit and what can be signed online (eg regarding Code of Conduct). DONE.	Clerk	Within two weeks
15	Review of Children at Risk of Flight policy to be moved to next T&L meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Within two weeks
16	Annual Skills audit to be moved to next FGB meeting. DONE.	Clerk	Within two weeks
18	Chair to plan governors' curriculum visits (governors now attending a curriculum update meeting. DONE.	IS	Within two weeks
18	SEND to go on next staff meeting agenda to discuss putting video on website.	HP	Within two weeks
20	Do Business Interest forms need a paper version for audit? DONE.	Clerk	Within two weeks