

Minutes from the Full Governing Body Meeting
Held on Tuesday 26th September 2023 at 6pm
at The ACE Centre Nursery School

Present Kate Barlow (KB) – Co-opted Governor and Chair
Mike Cahill (MC) – Local Authority Governor
Cat Hemmings (CH) – Co-opted Governor
Sally Purssell (SP) – Co-opted Governor and Vice-chair
Lynn Jenkins (LJ) – Headteacher
Isabelle Robinson (IR) – Staff Governor
Zoe Wakefield (ZW) – Associate Member

Apologies: Topsy Fletcher – Co-opted Governor

Absent:

In attendance Hazel Sheridan (HS) - Clerk

The meeting started at 6:05pm and was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Topsy Fletcher.

2. Notification of any urgent business

The SEND Information Report was circulated to Governors via email to request their comments and approval.

ACTION: Governors to read to report and reply to Clerk as soon as possible.

3. Declarations of pecuniary interests

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2023 and matters arising

4.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2023 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to send approved minutes of 28th June to KB for signature and filing at the school.

Previous actions were:

4.2. Item 2 KB to put statement on website regarding publication of Governors' diversity data – completed.

4.3. Item 5.1 Clerk to send approved minutes (including confidential minutes) to KB for signature and filing at the school – completed.

4.4. Item 6.3 MC and TF to amend minutes regarding the action assigned to the Clerk and send final version to the Clerk for uploading onto Governor Hub – completed.

4.5. Item 6.3 Clerk to email MC and TF to clarify if the contents (except any grammatical changes) of the policies were approved and give a deadline for a response. (If policies were approved Clerk to send to KB for signature and update policy register) – completed.

Signed (by Chair):

Date:

- 4.6. Item 8.1 LJ to update SDP and circulate to Governors by the end of the summer term – on agenda, item 7.
- 4.7. Item 12.1 LJ to draft SEND Information Report and send to Clerk. Clerk to circulate to Governors via Governor Hub / email for approval prior to publication on the website – please refer to item 2 above.
- 4.8. Item 13.1 TF to arrange a wellbeing visit to the school for term 6 – meeting arranged for 15th September. Draft report to be agreed for discussion at the next FGB meeting.

ACTION: TF, MC and LJ to agree final version of report and send to the Clerk. Clerk to note as FGB agenda item for the meeting on 21st November 2023.

- 4.9. Item 14.1 Clerk to circulate subject list to Governors and request that they i) add to list of subjects if necessary; and ii) put their name against which subject(s) they would like to lead on – completed. Please also refer to item 5.7 below.
- 4.10. Item 16.4 KB / LJ to amend the PSED as follows: i) add 'emotional coaching' reference to section 5; ii) add time off 'should be within the needs of the school' in section 6; and iii) remove the reference to the assembly calendar, before it is published on the website – completed.
- 4.11. Item 16.6 Clerk to send the two available policies to all Governors for approval via Governor Hub and give a deadline for responses. (Clerk to send approved policies to KB for signature and update policy register accordingly) – E&D Policy completed. Children We Care For Policy subject to query and possible amendment. Please refer to item 11.2 below.
- 4.12. Item 16 LJ to draft Accessibility Plan and Administration of Medication and Child Illness Policy and send to Clerk for distribution to Governors for approval – on agenda, items 11.1 and 11.4.
- 4.13. Item 18.2 Clerk to update Governor Hub calendar with FGB meeting on 26th September (i.e., fourth Tuesday of the term) and set future meeting dates subject to agreement with all Governors – completed.

5. Governance

All Governance documents are filed on Governor Hub and were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

- 5.1. Election of Vice-chair: SP was elected as Vice-chair of Governors

ACTION: Clerk to amend details on Governor Hub.

- 5.2. Terms of Reference and Standing Orders: There were some minor changes to the Terms of Reference relating to the reduction in the number of Governors (please see item 5.12 below) and therefore the quorum required, and that policies will be ratified in accordance with the policy register. Governors **approved** the Terms of Reference. Governors **approved** the Standing Orders with one minor amendment to say that FGB minutes are available on request from the school office (replacing they are available on the school noticeboard).

ACTION: Clerk to amend Standing Orders and send documents to KB for signature.

- 5.3. Declarations of Interest for 2023 - 2024: Governors were reminded that Declarations of Interest for 2023 – 2024 must be completed via their personal profile on Governor Hub.
- 5.4. Code of Conduct (and confirmation on Governor Hub): Governors **approved** the Code of Conduct for 2023 – 2024 (no changes from 2022 – 2023).

Signed (by Chair):

Date:

- 5.5. Scheme of Delegation: There were some minor changes to the Scheme of Delegation relating to the quorum number and reference to the Circle of Governance model now adopted. Governors **approved** the Scheme of Delegation for 2023 – 2024.
- 5.6. Annual Schedule of Business 2023 – 2024: This document shows what Governors need to monitor / approve during the school year and items are spread across the three terms.
- 5.7. Circle of Governance subjects and Link Governors: All Governors now have at least one area of responsibility to monitor school and pupil performance and report back to FGB. **Governors commented** that care must be taken that they do not focus solely on their area but have a fully rounded knowledge of what is going on at the school. Written visit reports submitted to FGB will aid information and knowledge sharing. **Governors also stated** that formal monitoring visits will not replace informal ones.
- 5.8. Governor Training Schedule Autumn 2023: The training schedule was circulated to Governors for their information. The following courses for this term were highlighted as being useful: Phonics briefing for Governors 28th September at 7pm; Effective Use of the Pupil Premium Grant 2nd October at 7pm; Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum on 4th October. All training can be booked via Governor Hub using the Oxfordshire Governor Services Training tab.
- 5.9. Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023 updates and confirmation on Governor Hub): All Governors are expected to read the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) document and need to indicate they have done this on Governor Hub. LJ informed Governors that she has been in contact with the IT Team to ensure that all filtering and monitoring processes / systems are fully effective. Staff are also not permitted to use YouTube on iPads with children in case any unsuitable adverts appear. LJ has also met with the family whose child is being home-schooled to ensure they are aware of filtering and monitoring so unsuitable online content is not seen by their child.
- 5.10. Guidance and information folder on Governor Hub: Governors were reminded of the useful documents that are contained in this folder and that should be read in preparation for an Ofsted inspection.
- 5.11. Communication with Governors (Governor Hub and possible What's App group): Governors were reminded that Governor Hub should be used for all non-urgent email communication. This will mean a record of online conversations is kept and all Governors can view them. **Governors agreed** to setting up a What's App group using mobile phone numbers for any urgent communications.
- ACTION: KB to set up What'sApp group.**
- 5.12. Recruitment of parent governors: Governors noted that there are now no parent governors on the Governing Board. An advert was placed in the last newsletter to parents but no volunteers have come forward so far. **Governors suggested** and it was **agreed** that KB writes a short note about what happens at FGB meetings to inform parents, it is mentioned again in the next newsletter, posters are put up on school noticeboards and that one member of staff could speak to individual parents when they drop off or collect their children. The Instrument of Government states that the ACE Centre Nursery Governing Board can have up to four parent governors. Given the size of the school it was **suggested and agreed** that this should be reduced to two.
- ACTION: LJ to arrange for posters to advertise for parent governors. Clerk to arrange change to the Instrument of Government to two parent governors.**

ACTION: All Governors to:

Signed (by Chair):

Date:

- i. **Complete Declarations of Interest for 2023 – 2024;**
- ii. **Confirm they will abide by the Code of Conduct 2023 – 2024 via confirmations on Governor Hub ;**
- iii. **Confirm they have read KCSiE 2023 via confirmations on Governor Hub.**

6. Finance

- 6.1. The period 5 financial figures were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting and a copy is filed on Governor Hub. The budget deficit is showing as £20K less than what was forecast and is mainly due to the lower staff costs. (Please also refer to confidential item 12.3 regarding staff matters.) The OCC Financial Advisor has stated that OCC want to see the school budget balance at the end of the financial year. Governors confirmed that they were happy with the current financial position.

7. School Development Plan update

- 7.1. The School Development Plan for 2023 – 2024 is filed on Governor Hub and was circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. LJ informed Governors that some items on the school context page were yet to be completed as the information was not yet available. Baseline assessments were being conducted this week and an attendance analysis will be completed by the end of term 1. Good attendance is a key factor in a child's development and progress and the goal is to have 85% attendance at The ACE Nursery School (attendance is non-statutory at nursery schools). Of the five objectives four are the same as last year, with a change made to objective 2 to include a child's personal development. Some ongoing or incomplete actions have been transferred from the SDP for 2022 – 2023 and words changed to make them more specific to the objectives. An impact column will also be added.
- 7.2. Figures show that 45% of children are on the SEND register, 12% of which have high-level needs. **Governors requested** that the percentage split of high-level and lower-level needs is shown on the SDP. **Governors also commented** that it would be useful to know the Oxfordshire and national averages for the percentage of nursery children who have SEND needs. LJ added that provision and practices at the nursery school are being tailored to the children currently attending.
- 7.3. **Governors asked** a series of questions that were answered to their satisfaction.

Q1. The context page shows 28 children on the school roll, which does not seem correct when taking into account the number of children who are eligible for EY Pupil Premium and on the SEND register. Is this correct?

A1. LJ confirmed the correct number is now 42 and will amend the SDP.

Q2. Do the objectives need to be made SMART so it can be seen if they have been achieved?

A2. LJ explained that the objectives are broken down later in the plan with how they will be monitored and the success criteria.

Q3. The SDP looks huge; will too many objectives dilute what you are trying to achieve?

A3. LJ replied that some items relating to safeguarding are already completed or underway. Others are a continuance or development of actions rather than anything new.

Q4. Can it be trimmed down as we go through the year?

A4. Yes it can, especially as actions are completed.

Q5a. You mentioned that it was more like a three-year plan; should target dates be included to make it more realistic and show what will be achieved by when?

Q5b. Is there anything that can be taken off if they are not going to be achieved this year?

A5. LJ stated that the SDP was formulated following feedback from staff and assessments and there is nothing on there that cannot be achieved this year. However, some items may still appear in next year's plan.

Q6. It shows what is progressing or developing, but what is our core focus? Is it focused enough?

A6. We can capture what is working and can adapt anything that is not working. LJ added that actions will be broken down across the terms and staff will focus on those ones.

- 7.4. It was **suggested and agreed** to add the date when the plan is updated to the title page and grey out rather than delete any items that are taken off the plan. **Governors commented** that this was a really useful, working document.

ACTION: LJ to amend children on school roll figure to 42, add 'last updated on...' to the title page, add an impact column to SDP and grey out any items that are not being actioned going forward.

8. School Improvement Partner report

- 8.1. There was no further update since the last FGB meeting on 28th June 2023.

9. Headteacher's Report

- 9.1. LJ went through and Governors noted the contents of the Headteacher's Report, which is filed on Governor Hub and was circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.
- 9.2. **Governors queried** the introduction of CPOMS (one of the school improvement priorities), bearing in mind they had decided not to adopt this system when it was mooted in 2021/22. Governors agreed to re-evaluate this decision and reviewed the security it offers compared with the current system. LJ explained that CPOMS is used across Oxfordshire, will make the noting and transfer of information to support agencies much swifter and it will be more secure than the current paper-based system. The cost is £500 per year. Governors asked a few questions that were answered to their satisfaction.

Q7. How is the CPOMS information backed-up?

A7. That is the responsibility of OCC.

Q8. Who inputs the information into the system?

A8. Members of staff can enter information, such as records of concern, into CPOMS. LJ will receive a notification of information entered.

Q9. Will you receive a notification if other agencies input or change information?

A9. LJ believes a notification is sent, however this will need to be checked.

Q10. Governors have looked at paperwork on past safeguarding monitoring visits; can they see information on CPOMS?

A10. Governors will be shown the information on CPOMS at monitoring visits.

DECISION: Governors approved the introduction and use of CPOMS.

- 9.3. The IT Team have visited the school and a plan is being drafted for the following changes: Move from Microsoft 365 to Google Drive; electronic visitor sign-in / sign-out; installation of VOIP systems and staff training on the new systems. LJ hopes that this will be a capital-funded project.

10. Safeguarding update

- 10.1. Safeguarding at the school: KB and ZW will be meeting on Friday 29th September at 2:15pm for a safeguarding monitoring visit. The report will be submitted for the next FGB meeting.

ACTION: KB to submit safeguarding visit report for FGB meeting on 21st November 2023 and Clerk to note as FGB agenda item.

- 10.2. Safeguarding training: It was confirmed that staff and Governor safeguarding training is up to date.

11. Policies

- 11.1. Accessibility Plan: The plan was **approved** by Governors.

- 11.2. Children We Care For Policy: A possible amendment was suggested at the FGB meeting held on 28th June. Governors **approved** the policy without the amendment.

- 11.3. Safeguarding Policy: The policy was **approved** by Governors.

- 11.4. Administration of Medication and Child Illness Policy: The policy was **approved** by Governors.

ACTION: Clerk to send approved policies to KB for signature and update policy register.

- 11.5. Policy register and approval of future policies: The current policy register was circulated to Governors prior to the meeting for their information. Another version of the policy register has been drafted to reflect the changing responsibilities for policy approval now the Circle of Governance model has been adopted; this needs to be looked at and approved by Governors before it is used as the policy register.

ACTION: Clerk to send draft policy register to Governors. Governors to inform the Clerk of their approval or any changes they would like to make.

12. Any other business

- 12.1. Staff support: **Governors asked** how they can help support staff as LJ is Headteacher of two nursery schools and her time is split between the sites. It was suggested that Governors could make themselves available for staff to talk to as it was important that staff feel they are listened to. IR and ZW stated that the strength of the team is paramount and there have been many recent changes to deal with. Being able to speak to a Governor and maybe a check on staff welfare would be really useful.

- 12.2. Governor photo display: It was **suggested and agreed** that a display of Governors' photos would be good for staff and parents to see who the Governors are.

ACTION: Governors to send photos of themselves to LJ for a school display.

- 12.3. Staff matters: This is a confidential item and minutes can be viewed in Part 2.

IR and ZW left the meeting at 7:58pm

13. Next meeting date

- 13.1. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 6pm at The ACE Nursery School.

- 13.2. Future meeting dates are as follows:

Tuesday 23rd January 2024

Tuesday 12th March 2024

Tuesday 30th April 2024

Tuesday 25th June 2024

Signed (by Chair):

Date:



The meeting closed at 8:15pm

Hazel Sheridan

Sent to Chair/Head on 28th September 2023 and FGB on 4th October 2023

APPROVED

Signed (by Chair):

Date:

- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.
- 21.
- 22.

13.1. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 6pm at The ACE Nursery School.

13.2. Future meeting dates are as follows:

Tuesday 23rd January 2024

Tuesday 12th March 2024

Tuesday 30th April 2024

Tuesday 25th June 2024

The meeting closed at 8:15pm

Hazel Sheridan

Sent to Chair/Head on 28th September 2023 and FGB on 4th October 2023

Signed (by Chair): *Sally Russell*

Date: *3/1/2024.*