

Minutes from the Full Governing Body Meeting

Held on Tuesday 25th June 2024

at The ACE Centre Nursery School

Present	Catherine Hayward (CHa) – LA Governor and Chair Sally Pursell (SP) – Co-opted Governor and Vice-chair Rob Horsfall (RH) – Co-opted Governor Phoebe O'Donnell (POD) – Parent Governor Lynn Jenkins (LJ) – Headteacher Zoe Wakefield (ZW) – Associate Member
Apologies:	Cat Hemmings, Rachel Caseby
Absent:	Sophie Elliott
In attendance	Hazel Sheridan (HS) - Clerk

The meeting started at time 6.12pm and was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cat Hemmings. Sophie Elliott did not attend the meeting.

ACTION: CHa to look at Inspiring Governance for any further contact details for SE as she has not been in contact with anyone and Governors are concerned.

2. Notification of any urgent business

There were no items of urgent business raised.

3. Declarations of pecuniary interests

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2024 and matters arising

4.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to send approved minutes of 30th April to Chair for signature and filing at the school.

Previous actions were:

4.2. Item 4.2 Clerk to send approved minutes of 12th March 2024 to CHa for signature and filing at the school – completed.

4.3. Item 4.9 All Governors to complete bite-size finance training before 25th June 2024 and inform the Clerk when this has been done – all completed except for CHe and SE (please refer to item 7.2 below).

4.4. Item 4.10 LJ to send possible dates to Governors for a brief online session to show them the education provision available at The ACE Nursery School – completed, arranged for 15th July 2024.

4.5. Item 4.15 LJ and CHa to meet to discuss SEND identification - completed. Item 4.21 LJ to amend the Disciplinary Policy and Wellbeing Policy as stated above and send to the

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Clerk. Clerk to send amended policies to CHa for signature and update policy register - completed.

- 4.6. Item 5.3 SP to arrange for school email addresses to be set up for RH and SE and DBS and Section 128 checks. CHa to conduct induction and discuss Link Governors areas. Clerk to add RH and SE to Governor Hub - school email addresses set up; RH checks completed, SE checks to be completed; RH inducted, SE to have induction; RH and SE added to Governor Hub.

ACTION: Clerk to note actions that need to be carried forward – SE DBS check, Section 128 check and induction.

- 4.7. Item 6.6 SE to investigate if search criteria on Google for The ACE Nursery School could be improved and report back to FGB. LJ and SE to look at the school website – action carried forward as SE was not at the meeting to give an update. CHa undertook to contact Adrian to get login details.

ACTION: CHa to contact Adrian to get login details for the school website and make the necessary changes.

- 4.8. Item 6.6 LJ and SE to add compliance documents to the school website and discuss future changes – please also refer to item 4.7 above.

- 4.9. Item 7.1 CHa to let LJ know what items need to be included in future Headteacher reports – completed. CHa will let LJ know what Governors would like to see in that term's Headteacher's report.

- 4.10. Item 8.1.1 LJ and RH to meet to discuss action prioritisation - completed.

- 4.11. Item 9.1 LJ to meet with James Robertson before May half-term then send possible meeting dates to Governors to agree the ACE Vision - completed. A meeting was held with James Robertson and it was agreed that a small working party should be set up. The working party of LJ, CHa and SP met last week, LJ has identified how this will affect staff and will hold discussions with them. The ACE Vision will be finalised and then submitted to the FGB meeting in September 2024.

ACTION: Clerk to note as agenda item for FGB meeting on 3rd September 2024.

- 4.12. Item 10.1 Governors to look at the risk register and prepare for the next FGB meeting. Clerk to ensure risk register is an item on the agenda for the meeting on 25th June 2024 – on agenda, item 10.

- 4.13. Item 13.1 CHe and SP to meet to discuss safeguarding and documents currently on Governor Hub. Clerk to move or link current safeguarding documents on Governor Hub into the dedicated safeguarding folder – on agenda, item 9. Safeguarding documents collated into one folder on Governor Hub.

- 4.14. Item 14.2 Governors to inform Clerk when training has been completed. Clerk to send training record and schedule of training for the summer term to all Governors – completed and on agenda, item 13.2.

- 4.15. Item 15.8 Clerk to circulate Behaviour Policy via Governor Hub and note other policies as agenda items for FGB on 25th June 2024 - completed.

5. Finance

- 5.1. The P2 budget report and deficit action plan are filed on Governor Hub and were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. At the time the report was compiled it was forecast that income would increase by £374 more than budget and expenditure would be underspent by £2,537. However, LJ reported that three 30-hour children and one 15-hour child have not taken up the offer to attend the nursery school and three new children

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that were anticipated to start in September would also not be attending. This will result in a reduction of approximately £20K in funding income and advertisements will need to be placed to hopefully fill the places available.

5.2. **Governors asked** a series of questions that were answered to their satisfaction.

Q1. Can advertisements be placed outside of the school?

A1. Yes and LJ has contacted a printing company to get a banner to put up outside of the school. CHa added that she could place a poster advertisement in the Co-op Hall and in her village.

Q2. Does the school have a Facebook page or could adverts be put on communal groups' pages?

A2. The school has a 'Friends of the ACE' Facebook page but not a specific one for the nursery school. LJ added that there is no time available to run a full marketing campaign. POD volunteered to create a nursery school Facebook page using photos from the school website. All Governors were reminded that any photos that contained children cannot be used. It was also suggested that posters could be given to toddler groups in the area and maybe other pre-schools.

ACTION: ZW to send information to POD to include on the nursery school Facebook page. POD to create Facebook page and circulate to Governors. SP to find out what toddler groups are in the area.

Q3. What are the intake figures looking like for January 2025?

A3. There are no accurate figures for January yet and more will be known from September onwards. At the moment LJ believes the figures to be reasonable.

5.3. LJ has discussed the staffing hours required from September and even though there will be six fewer children, these cannot now be changed. There are also some costs occurring that were not included in the original budget, which is a concern. LJ has discussed these with the SBM (RT) and will arrange a discussion with POD as the Link Governor for finance. CHa added that there will also be some costs for actions required from the Health and Safety audit that were not in the original budget, however LJ assured Governors that budget did contain some H&S costs.

5.4. **Governors queried** the capital balance of £20K and LJ explained that this was for the planned projects to develop the forest school, realigning current work methods and workspaces, and creating a new maintenance workshop. It is anticipated that the development of the forest school may cost less than budgeted for, in which case the money can be spent elsewhere.

6. Headteacher's report

6.1. LJ gave a verbal update and circulated a data report showing the percentages of children that had achieved expected levels of development at baseline (entry level), AP1, AP2 and AP3 (AP = Assessment Point) for personal, social and emotional development (PSED), communication and language, physical development and overall. Data is input on a termly basis. LJ explained that they have found some issues with the Early Years Development Tool (EYDT), as some children may have more assessments than others if they are at the nursery school for more than one academic year and this may impact on the percentages given. LJ has requested training from OCC on the EYDT and to discuss the issues they have.

6.2. The nursery school is continuing to see low baseline development for PSED and this is also a national issue. The children demonstrate a low level of independence, resilience and managing their feelings. However, good progress is made due to the commitment of staff. Lower levels of literacy and maths have also been seen this year.

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6.3. **Governors asked** the following questions that were answered to their satisfaction.

Q4. Is the baseline assessment being changed?

A4. Levels of development for children's age on entry have not been changed and are not expected to going forward.

Q5. So should we be changing our curriculum?

A5. Expected levels of knowledge and skills on entry are step 2 in our curriculum, with step 1 reflecting children's development below what is expected. Changes to the curriculum will be made to meet their needs. ZW informed Governors about the Kind Minds initiative and twelve sessions were delivered by the Thrive charity. Children had at least three sessions with Thrive and some sessions included staff. Children and staff have benefitted from learning some techniques for dealing with emotions.

Q6. Is there a way to access these sessions in the future and could EYPP funding be used to pay for them if necessary?

A6. Thrive has offered to return to the nursery school in the future and EYPP funding can be used if necessary.

ACTION: ZW to find out if Thrive can return in the next academic year and to target vulnerable children.

Q7. How were these sessions funded this year?

A7. Thrive is a charity and delivered the sessions for free this year. **Governors commented** that if they can deliver for free that would good, however if they cannot the school can pay for some sessions using EYPP.

Q8. Is there a way to extend this to parents?

A8. It may be possible as they have delivered sessions for staff.

ACTION: ZW to look into workshops for parents.

Q9. Are you going to put this as a target in the SIP for next year?

A9. Yes, it will be included.

6.4. Good progress has been made with physical development and LJ commented that the school environment lends itself to this. LJ is disappointed with the progress of communication and language as lots of work has been done on this.

Q10. Why do the totals of percentages not add up?

A10. LJ believes this is due to the figures being input according to the termly intake of children and is why she has requested training in how EYDT can make assessment clearer and easier to summarise, and a discussion with OCC.

Q11. If there are concerns about communication and language, how is the key knowledge element of the curriculum going to help?

A11. Staff are aware of what new vocabulary needs to be used and are always using it so hopefully this will improve. Children are observed to see if and how they use the vocabulary they have learned. **Governors suggested** that arranging peer review sessions to observe key vocabulary use may be helpful.

Q12. How accurate are the attendance figures?

A12. LJ answered that attendance figures change termly. If there is concern about a child's attendance, they are put on an attendance programme and then come off when their attendance improves. **Governors commented** that with small numbers of children at the nursery and even smaller with attendance concerns, the percentage figures are adversely impacted.

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7. Driving Progress at The ACE

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

- 7.1. OCC Programme of Support: Most areas are rated green, which in this instance indicates that the school is on track to achieve them by the end of July. **Governors stated** that there were only three to four weeks left of the term so time is short.

Q13. Can the items on the POS be prioritised to ensure they are achieved in the timescale?

A13. LJ informed Governors that although the POS should be prioritised, the school has reached a tipping point in that staff are being asked to achieve too much in the time available. The school has a very small leadership team (LJ and ZW) to deal with everything. LJ requested the support of Governors in 'taking the foot off the pedal' with other items such as the infrastructure and this was **agreed**.

Q14. Can you prioritise being in the nursery school more before the end of term to ensure the quality of teaching and learning?

A14. LJ agreed that she can spend more time in the nursery school until the end of this term.

Q15. Can the SBM do more?

A15. LJ informed Governors that the SBM was not yet at the point where more could be taken on.

Q16. Is there a list of what support is needed?

A16. It mostly involves H&S and HR matters. Following recruitment to the SBM role it has been difficult to disentangle everything as it was done very differently in the past.

Q17. Do any other maintained nursery schools have a competent and experienced SBM who could help?

A17. LJ has arranged someone to mentor the SBM.

Q18. Is there enough support for the admin team that you can spend more time in the nursery school?

A18. Yes.

Q19. Can observations be carried out to see what is in place?

A19. Yes, and we are identifying areas where staff may need more training.

Governors stated that they will support LJ in focusing on the nursery school until the end of the term.

- 7.2. Governor Action Plan: Many areas are rated green which indicates they have been achieved, but the key issue is still the recruitment of new governors. There has been no contact from SE, which is a concern, and CHe has informed CHa that she will be standing down from the end of the academic year as she cannot commit sufficient time to the Governor role with her work commitments. Some areas rated green will have to be changed to amber because of this. CHe was the Link Governor for safeguarding and CHa and SP have been doing monitoring visits while CHe was unable to do so. RC has informed CHa that a parent with a nursery school child could be recruited as a parent governor, even if their child does not attend The ACE.

- 7.2.1. It was noted that a survey needs to be sent to parents and the collated results submitted to FGB.

Q20. Is it possible for survey questions to include specific areas, e.g., finance, where Governors want to know parents' opinions?

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A20. LJ replied that she will find the last template survey used and questions can be amended or added to as necessary.

Q21. Does there also need to be a staff survey?

A21. Yes, and LJ will find the template.

ACTION: LJ to find parent and staff survey templates and share with Governors.

- 7.3. School Evaluation Form: LJ has requested a new template and will complete and submit the SEF by the end of the term.

ACTION: LJ to circulate completed SEF on Governor Hub for Governors to comment.

- 7.4. School Improvement Partner Report: LJ has not shared this report with staff due to the impact it would have and will discuss this with them in a different way. **Governors commented** that the main remit of the Ofsted report was about staff understanding and delivering the curriculum, not the curriculum itself, and gave clear guidance on what they wanted the school to do. The SIP and the Lead Primary School Improvement Office will be visiting the school again in two weeks' time and LJ feels the school is being pulled in two directions with different priorities being given – from Ofsted and from SIP. LJ's time at the nursery school was limited for much of the past academic year due to the collaboration with Grandpont, which was supported by OCC, and the collaboration was ended so LJ could concentrate on The ACE and the actions required by Ofsted. The different messages need to be honed down to what are the absolute priorities.

- 7.4.1. Governors understood** that the staff team had developed its new curriculum, however not all staff were yet confident in implementing it and the curriculum will be looked at again for the new academic year. **Governors were happy** that key knowledge and language were identified and noted in the planning documents and did not necessarily have to be detailed alongside the curriculum progression steps.

Q22. Do you feel you have made progress in the necessary areas?

A22. Yes, staff are doing peer observations which have given them a real insight and there have been useful conversations about any barriers.

Q23. Are you seeing the difference in things raised by the peer reviews?

A23. Yes, there is weekly monitoring, progress with children's engagement, staff are more aware of children's engagement and dealing with low level behaviour.

Governors remarked that it was positive that progress is being made and it may be useful to consolidate on this before moving on to anything else.

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1. The Health and Safety Audit 2023-24 and notes from a Governor monitoring visit are filed on Governor Hub and were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. CHa informed Governors that the monitoring visit was a positive one and LJ was able to show evidence in answer to all the questions that were asked. Governors noted the visit report and had no further questions or comments on it.
- 8.2. **Governors commented** that it was disappointing to see so many actions marked as red on the H&S Audit and **asked** a few questions as follows:

Q24. Are the rated actions the ones that came from the most recent audit?

A24. Yes., however one action, the critical management plan, was carried forward from the previous audit. LJ has shared the audit report with the SBM and requested that he adds the timeframe for completion and who will be responsible for each action by the end of the week.

Q25. What is the timeframe for the short-term items?

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A25. LJ answered that short-term actions are due to be completed by 24th July, medium-term by 20th October and long-term by 20th December 2024. RH agreed to be the Link Governor for Health and Safety and will arrange a monitoring visit for the end of October.

ACTION: RH to do monitoring H&S visit by the end of October. Clerk to amend Governor Hub to show RH as H&S Link Governor.

9. Safeguarding

9.1. Safeguarding update: CHa and SE were not at the meeting to give an update on safeguarding and no monitoring visits had taken place since the previous FGB meeting. CHa volunteered to conduct a safeguarding paperwork monitoring visit.

ACTION: CHa to conduct safeguarding paperwork monitoring visit and report back to Governors at the next FGB meeting. Clerk to note as agenda item for FGB on 3rd September.

9.2. Safeguarding training: Safeguarding Level 2 courses delivered by OCC are showing as full. Governors who have not completed this training should do an online safeguarding course via Knowledge on Governor Hub in the meantime and book on the next available OCC course.

ACTION: Governors who have not completed Safeguarding Level 2 course to complete online course via Knowledge on Governor Hub.

ACTION: All Governors to inform HS when they have completed any training.

10. Website Information

10.1. Pupil Premium Funding Review 2023-2024: CHa will be meeting with LJ and ZW on 2nd July to review the Pupil Premium Funding for 2023-24. When the review is finalised it will be circulated to Governors for approval and published on the website.

ACTION: LJ/ZW to circulate Pupil Premium Funding Review 2023-24 to Governors for approval and publish on the school website.

10.2. Public Sector Equality Duty Statement (PSED): The current PSED has not yet been updated for 2023-24. This is a statutory item and must be published on the website following FGB approval.

ACTION: LJ to review PSED and submit to FGB for the next meeting. Clerk to note as FGB agenda item for 3rd September.

POST-MEETING NOTE: The PSED has now been amended and circulated via Governor Hub for Governors to approve before being published on the website.

10.3. Behaviour Principles Written Statement: LJ will complete and submit this Statement to the next FGB meeting in September 2024. This item

ACTION: Clerk to note for FGB meeting in September 2024.

10.4. SEND Information Report: ZW has updated the SEND Information Report and will send this to CHa. This will also be discussed at the meeting on 2nd July (please refer to item 10.1 above). This is a statutory item and must be published on the website following FGB approval.

ACTION: ZW to send updated SEND Information Report to CHa. Clerk to note as FGB agenda item for 3rd September 2024.

11. Risk Register

11.1. Governors noted the risk register and that no changes were necessary as falling pupil numbers is already noted on there.

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12. HR matters

12.1. Headteacher Review Panel: SP undertook to arrange the Headteacher Review Panel which must take place by 31st December 2024. Two or three Governors are to be appointed plus an external advisor.

ACTION: SP to appoint two or three Governors and an external advisor to the Review Panel and arrange date for the Headteacher’s appraisal to take place by 31st December 2024.

13. Link Governor reports

13.1. Curriculum: SP has arranged a visit with ZW for Friday 12th July and will report back at the next FGB at the beginning of the next academic year.

13.2. Safeguarding: Please refer to item 9 above.

13.3. Disadvantaged pupils: CHa will include this in her visit on 2nd July 2024.

13.4. Finance: POD informed Governors that she is waiting to hear from SBM about convenient dates for a finance monitoring visit.

ACTION: Clerk to note all items above as FGB agenda items for 3rd September 2024.

13.5. Link Governors are required for Health and Safety, website and filtering and monitoring. RH volunteered to take on these areas.

ACTION: Clerk to update Governor Hub with RH as Link Governor for the above.

14. Governance

14.1. Updates: HS gave a summary of the issues raised at the Clerks’ Briefing that took place on 31st May. The most important item was the draft update of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 which Governors are expected to read.

ACTION: Clerk to add summary of items with associated links to Governor Hub and circulate to Governors.

14.2. Governor training: This was discussed earlier in the meeting. Please refer to item 9.2 above.

14.3. Diversity data on website: Governors discussed the publication of Governing Board diversity data on the website and **agreed** that it should not be published at present as individuals could be identified. This will be reviewed when more Governors have been recruited.

ACTION: Clerk to note as future agenda item.

15. Policies

15.1. Admission to Local Authority Nursery School Policy (OCC): LJ stated that the policy that was circulated to Governors was still a draft from OCC and she had not yet seen the final version that is effective from September 2024.

ACTION: LJ to follow up regarding the Admissions Policy from September 2024 and circulate to Governors.

POST-MEETING NOTE: This is now published on the website.

15.2. Anti-bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy: This policy was **approved** by Governors.

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15.3. Charging and Remissions Policy: LJ and POD will be discussing this policy further as changes need to be made.

ACTION: Clerk to note as FGB agenda item for September 2024.

15.4. Data Protection Policy: This policy was **approved** by Governors.

15.5. Stress at Work Policy: This policy was **approved** by Governors.

15.6. Equality and Diversity Policy: This policy was **approved** by Governors.

15.7. Freedom of Information and Publication Scheme: This policy was **approved** by Governors.

15.8. Health and Safety Part 4: **Governors noted** that this policy was comprehensive but there was lots of repetition.

ACTION: RH to look at H&S Policy Part 4 to see if any repetition can be removed.

ACTION: Clerk to amend typos and formatting and send all approved policies to CHa for signature, file on Governor Hub and the school's Google drive and update the policy register.

15.9. HS let Governors know that CHa had reviewed the policies within her remit as Link Governor of safeguarding, premises and health and safety and had suggested some minor amendments.

ACTION: Clerk to send amended policies to CHa and LJ for response to queries and final approval. Approved policies to be sent to CHa for signature, filed on Governor Hub and school's Google drive and the policy register updated.

16. Any other business

16.1. Complaint: CHa reported that one complaint had been dealt with by a complaints panel consisting of her and two independent, experienced Governors from other schools. There were some learning points for the school which will be actioned.

17. Next meeting date

17.1. The next meeting will be held on 3rd September 2024 at 6pm at the school.

The meeting closed at 8:17pm

Hazel Sheridan
27th June 2024.

Sent to Chair/Head on 27th June 2024 and FGB on 1st July 2024.

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ACE Centre FGB minutes 20240625 APPROVED

Final Audit Report

2024-09-09

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