



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**SARAH NISBETT, HEADTEACHER**

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**Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on  
13 November 2017 at 6.00pm at the School**

Present: Sarah Nisbett (SN) Headteacher                      Helen King (HK) Staff  
Kathryn Keeping (KK) Parent                                      Neil Brading (NB) Co-opted  
Henry Cooke (HC) Foundation                                      Sarah Varnom (SV) LA (Chair)  
Laura Edwards (LE) Foundation (Vice Chair)  
Richard Border (RB) Co-opted

*The Meeting was quorate*

In Attendance: Gemma Peace (GP) Clerk.

Apologies for Absence: Nicci Boddam-Whetham (NBW) Foundation, Doreen Rose (DR) Co-opted, Angela Dowley (AD) Parent, Amanda Dickson (ASD) Parent, Jo George (JG) Associate and Vicki Stephens (VS) Associate/Deputy Head.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm.

**71/17 Welcome, introductions and apologies**

SV welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from NBW, DR, ASD, JG, VS and AD.

**72/17 Update of Register and declarations of interest in agenda items**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to agenda items.

Governors present were asked to complete pecuniary interest forms to be filed at the school, and also update the website interests document.

**Action: ASD and NBW** to update their row in the website pecuniary interests document and return to GP as soon as possible.

**Action: GP** to update website interests document and send to SN/school office to add to website.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Action: All Governors** who have not yet completed a pecuniary interest form, please bring to the next meeting or drop it into the school as soon as possible.

### **73/17 Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on 13 September 2017 for accuracy**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The Chair signed the minutes and handed them to SN to file.

**Action: SN** to contact SV once the school mobile phone has been purchased and a proforma is drafted for school trip contact information.

**Action: GP** to ensure that the 2017-18 list of Committee members is on GovernorHub. **Completed.**

**Action: GP** to send pdf version of September minutes to the school office. **Completed.**

At the last meeting, SN had informed Governors that she had obtained two quotes in relation to tarmacking work at the school and had agreed to obtain another quote. She had subsequently approached Smiths of Bletchingdon and reported that Smiths will provide an element of the work as a goodwill gesture, and the school will fund the remainder.

It was noted that SN had submitted the Annual Safeguarding Report to OCC.

### **74/17 Matters Arising from the minutes, not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Nothing to report.

### **75/17 Headteacher's Report**

The report was available on GovernorHub before the meeting. SN invited questions from Governors.

**Q.** Governors queried why the absence figure has risen slightly.

**A.** SN explained that this figure has been affected, to an extent, by parents stating that their children had been ill when, in fact, they had not been (for example, to avoid holiday related unauthorised absence). There has also been an increase in genuine illness related absence.

**Q.** Governors asked what the school is doing to address the fact that the attendance of PPG pupils is lower than other pupils at the school.

**A.** NB explained that he had discussed this matter with VS at their recent meeting, and they would continue to monitor this issue. Verity Banbury works with families whose children are entitled to PPG and have poor attendance records. SN also detailed what has been done to

assist pupils who have encountered issues relating to transport to school, which has affected their attendance data.

Governors agreed that they were satisfied with the response that had been given by SN and NB in relation to the school leadership's approach to PPG pupils' attendance, and that they are doing all that they can in the present circumstances to improve PPG pupils' attendance. Governors also noted that PPG pupils continue to make good progress at the school. NB stated that his work with VS (he had met with VS on several occasions to consider individual pupils' data) has satisfied him that the school is working well to assist PPG pupils to attain their objectives.

**Q.** Governors asked how the school deals with attendance statistics that are skewed by term time holidays, and the potential of fabricated authorised absences as a result of the policy surrounding term time holidays.

**A.** SN explained that, unless she has evidence to prove what has happened, there is little she can do in relation to fabricated authorised absence. She assured Governors that she continues to adhere to the policy regarding unauthorised absences, and works with families whose children have poor attendance records. SN also assured Governors that she challenges parents in situations where absences that are found to be unauthorised were, in fact, reported as authorised absence.

Governors acknowledged that they are aware that the Headteacher and School Inclusion Officer are working hard to address issues in relation to attendance and absences, which should have a positive impact on attainment.

Governors noted that they were impressed with the high levels of parental attendance at the recent parents evenings.

SV reported that the Messy Church event, which was held in school on a Saturday afternoon, was very successful. Children from the school, church and local community attended. Governors agreed that any similar events in the future should be well advertised, as this event had been.

SN and VS had visited Cokethorpe last Monday to meet with Damian Ettinger and headteachers from other local schools. SN detailed some of the matters that were discussed at that meeting. SN also informed Governors that she had indicated that it would be helpful if the format of these meetings, and the parameters within which they take place, are set out for future reference. Governors discussed how the school could benefit from the relationship with Cokethorpe and how best to approach this relationship in the future.

**Action: SV** agreed to draft an email expressing the school's wish to formalise the arrangement.

**Action: SN** to send the minutes from the meeting to Governors.  
**Completed.**

The school's Systems Leader from OCC had visited the school recently. He examined the SEF, SIP, internal data and Position Statement. He spoke to SN and VS, and conducted a

learning walk and book scrutinies. He had been very complimentary about the school and, in particular, the breadth of the curriculum. He had posed challenging questions and SN reported that his visit and feedback had been very useful. The report had been posted on GovernorHub before the meeting.

SEF/SIP update: nothing to report.

Incidents of racial harassment/bullying: nothing to report.

Health and Safety/safeguarding: ASD had carried out a health and safety visit on behalf of the governing body on 3 November, and her report was available on GovernorHub before the meeting. The health and safety audit took place on 10 November. SV reported that ASD and the Inspector had commented on how well behaved the pupils were. The meeting went well and the school is waiting to receive the report. Governors extended thanks to ASD for her preparation for and attendance at the audit.

**Q.** Governors queried the comments relating to staff work/life balance in ASD's report, and asked if staff wished to discuss this with Governors.

**A.** SN said that she had been advised that if staff did not wish to complete a stress questionnaire, they should not be made to do so. SN had been advised to continue with the current supportive approach at the school. Governors were also assured that staff are aware that they can approach senior members of staff at the school should they have concerns about stress at work.

## **76/17 Committee Reports**

Performance and Standards Committee – The Committee had met on 27 September 2017. The minutes were available on GovernorHub. SV reported that the Committee had discussed:

- Reappointment of the Chair; AD was reappointed for a further one year term.
- The terms of reference were approved.
- The Position Statement was reviewed, as was data from the previous year, and Governors asked questions about the data.
- Data for PPG pupils was considered.
- Phonics data was studied.
- Outcomes for the end of KS1 and KS2 were considered. Governors had noted that that the most able pupils are being challenged in order to make accelerated progress in KS1, so challenging the most able in KS2 is now a priority.
- Attendance was also discussed.

SV noted that the school now has access to Analyse School Performance (ASP), which replaces RaiseOnline.

**Action: SN** to send SV log on details for the ASP site, and Governors to discuss this at the January Performance and Standards meeting. **Completed.**

**Action: GP** to add this item to the next Performance and Standards agenda. **Completed.**

Resources Committee – The Committee had met on 13 October 2017.

HC reported that:

- He had been reappointed as Chair for a further one year term.
- A new cook has started to work at the school.
- Governors had visited the preschool building before it opened.
- Governors had decided to carry out lighting improvements in a piecemeal fashion at the school, as and when the need arises, due to the overall cost.
- The budget is healthy and continues to be, despite typical fluctuations.
- Governors were assured that appropriate procedures had been adhered to in relation to an exclusion at the school.
- Turn It On continue to provide computing support to the school, which is very helpful, and have created a bespoke computing curriculum for the school. It was agreed that this should be discussed in more depth at the next Resources meeting.
- HC explained that Vicky Hickman runs after school clubs at several local schools, and is hoping to set up an after school club in the preschool building in 2018. SN is going to visit another local after school club run by Vicky's company. Governors suggested that Vicky Hickman could speak to them at a suitable point in the future. SN has asked her to send out a questionnaire to parents to gauge interest in an after school club.

**Action: HC/SN** to add discussion of computing to next Resources agenda.

Pay Committee – The Committee had met before the FGB meeting. RB reported that the Governors had agreed with the recommendations made at the meeting. Pay limits were discussed and it was agreed that they would be reconsidered at the appropriate time following the expansion of the school to include a nursery class.

## **77/17 Review of Policies**

The following policies were available on GovernorHub before the meeting:

- **Home Learning Policy** – Governors discussed aspects of the wording used in the policy. It was suggested that there should be a comment stating that the list of areas that the policy covers, which are listed towards the start of the policy, is not comprehensive. Governors discussed whether 'finishing work from school' should be altered. It was agreed that it would be changed to 'consolidating work from school.' It was noted that a school in Scotland had stopped giving pupils homework, but was encouraging pupils to engage in wider reading that links to their schoolwork. Governors discussed expectations relating to reading at the school, and related guidance for parents. SN informed Governors that additional guidance documents are mentioned in the policy. Governors also noted that the website contains a great deal of useful information regarding homework and resources to facilitate home learning. Governors suggested that there should be a question on the next parental questionnaire regarding homework and SN agreed to that proposal. Governors also discussed continuity in relation to recognition of homework achievements throughout the school.

SN made the suggested changes to the policy, and Governors **approved** the policy in its amended form.

- **Appraisal Policy for Teachers** - Governors **approved** the policy (OCC model policy).
- **Dignity at Work Policy** - Governors **approved** the policy (OCC model policy).
- **Capability Procedure for Schools** – Governors approved the policy (OCC model policy).

The Chair signed the policies at the meeting.

### **78/17 SEND Update**

NB had visited the school recently and completed a learning walk with Verity Banbury. His report was available on GovernorHub before the meeting. NB and Verity had visited each class to examine the visual aids that are used to support learning of SEND pupils. NB noted that these aids appeared to be particularly useful lower down the school and that pupils with SEND needs are very well supported and well integrated into the classroom environment. Pupils he spoke to were well focused on their learning. NB noted that it is clear that Verity appreciates the needs of the relevant pupils and that teachers are well supported.

An Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) has resulted in very good progress being made. NB explained EHCPs to Governors, and how difficult it is to obtain one. SN said that the school must use its own money to prove that a pupil needs such additional support, and any financial assistance awarded is not backdated. Also, the first fifteen hours of support for a pupil is not covered by an EHCP. SN also informed Governors that the majority of the school's SEND pupils have needs arising from autism.

Governors thanked NB for his work in relation to SEND and PPG pupils.

### **79/17 Preschool Update**

Governors discussed the potential expansion of the school to include a nursery class. Governors were assured that all preschool staff understand the proposals that have been made. SN explained that she is meeting with JG and Sue Brown (an independent party) next week to discuss the process, and how that meeting would signal the start of the formal process. Minutes will be produced from that meeting, and Governors requested that they see a copy of those minutes.

**Action: SN** to ensure that the Governors view the minutes from the meeting with JG and Sue Brown.

Governors discussed whether Vicky Hickman should attend a FGB meeting to discuss the possibility of whether an after school club could be run at the school, possibly using the preschool building (see minute 76/17, Resources Committee, above). However, it was agreed that she could attend a more informal meeting with SN and SV. It was noted that the initial discussions with Vicky had been very favourable and an informal meeting would be arranged between SV, SN and Vicky Hickman to discuss the possibility of after school provision at the school.

**Action: SN** to arrange a meeting with Vicky Hickman and SV.

### **80/17 Church/School Update**

See minute 75/17 above.

### **81/17 Governor Vacancies / Terms of office ending**

There are currently no vacancies on the governing body.

LE's term of office as a Foundation Governor was renewed and will run until 20 September 2021.

**Action: LE** to complete governor details form.

### **82/17 Governor Training, Training Record and Visits**

SV told Governors that DR has been re-elected as a member of the Executive Committee of the Oxfordshire Governors' Association. SV is meeting DR shortly to discuss the presentation given at the OGA annual meeting.

Training – nothing to report.

Visits - ASD had completed a health and safety visit on 3 November (see minute 75/17 above).

NB had completed PPG and SEND visits (see minutes 75/17 and 78/17 above).

### **83/17 AOB/Date of the next FGB meeting**

AOB – SV told Governors that the proposed layout for the replacement for Data Dashboard, the Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR), is now available. The actual IDSR should be available later this term.

### **Date of next FGB meeting – Monday 22 January 2018**

Items for discussion at the next meeting:

- Pecuniary interest forms – all Governors who have not completed a form, please bring to the next meeting.
- Standing Orders – to be approved for a further year.

*The meeting ended at 7.50pm*

*GP: 13 November 2017*