



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SARAH NISBETT, HEADTEACHER

DUCKLINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ASTON ROAD, DUCKLINGTON, WITNEY, OXON. OX29 7US

Telephone: 01993 703651

Facsimile: 01993 709212

E-mail: office.3122@ducklington.oxon.sch.uk

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

Present: Sarah Nisbett (SN) Headteacher Helen King (HK) Staff
Kathryn Keeping (KK) Parent Doreen Rose (DR) Co-opted
Neil Brading (NB) Co-opted Henry Cooke (HC) Foundation
Angela Dowley (AD) Parent Amanda Dickson (ASD) Parent
Sarah Varnom (SV) LA (Chair)
Laura Edwards (LE) Foundation (Vice Chair)
Nicci Boddam-Whetham (NBW) Foundation

The Meeting was quorate

In Attendance: Jo George (JG) Preschool Representative* and Gemma Peace (GP) Clerk.

Apologies for Absence: Richard Border (RB) Co-opted and Vicki Stephens (Associate) (VS) Deputy Head

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm.

54/17 Welcome, introductions and apologies

SV welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from RB.

JG spoke to the Governors about the preschool and the new building. See minute 66/17 below.

**JG left the meeting at 6.23pm.*

55/17 Update of Register and declarations of interest in agenda items

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

56/17 Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on 17 July 2017 for accuracy

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The Chair signed the minutes and handed them to SN to file.

Signed

Date

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

57/17 Matters Arising from the minutes, not covered elsewhere on the agenda

Nothing to report.

58/17 2017-18 Meeting Dates

The 2017-18 meeting dates were confirmed as follows:

FGB Meetings (starting at 6pm):

Additional meeting Wednesday 27 September 2017

Monday 13 November 2017

Monday 22 January 2018

Monday 12 March 2018

Monday 21 May 2018

Monday 16 July 2018

P&S Committee (starting at 5.30pm):

Wednesday 27 September 2017 (7.00pm start)

Monday 15 January 2018

Monday 26 February 2018

Monday 14 May 2018

Monday 16 July 2018 (5.00pm start)

Resources (starting at 8am):

Friday 13 October 2017

Friday 19 January 2018

Friday 9 March 2018

Friday 27 April 2018

Friday 22 June 2018.

59/17 Review of Governing Body Documents

All relevant documents were available on GovernorHub before the meeting.

FGB and Committee Terms of Reference: Governors agreed the terms of reference subject to agreed changes relating to the order in which the delegated powers are listed. It was agreed that the terms of reference would be uploaded to the school website as soon as possible, but reviewed again at the forthcoming Committee meetings.

Action: GP to add updated terms to GovernorHub and send FGB terms of reference and Committee terms in their current form to SN and Estelle

to put on the website, along with the list of Governor responsibilities.
Completed.

Committee membership: This was agreed as per the document on GovernorHub listing Committee members. Committee members are also detailed in the Committee terms of reference and on GovernorHub.

Delegation document: Governors agreed the delegation document in its current form.

60/17 Governor responsibilities

Governor responsibilities had been listed on GovernorHub before the meeting. These had not changed.

Governors spoke about the Whistleblowing Policy, which was **approved**. The policy was available for Governors to review before the meeting. The Chair and SN emphasised that Governors must be familiar with the contents of the policy. Governors agreed that DR would be the Whistleblowing Governor and that SN should add DR's contact details to the staff noticeboard.

Action: GP to send updated list of Governor responsibilities to SN and Estelle. **Completed.**

SN and Estelle to ensure that the updated Governor responsibilities are added to the website. **Completed.**

61/17 SEF and School Improvement Plan (SIP)

These documents were available on GovernorHub before the meeting.

SEF - Governors were encouraged to consider the contents of the SEF, and question and challenge the contents should they think it necessary.

Effectiveness of leadership and management is rated 'outstanding'. SN informed Governors that an independent School Improvement Leader, as part of the school's keeping in touch visit, had advised her that the rating was accurate and reflects the effectiveness of practices at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is rated 'good'. Governors agreed that they must continue to challenge outcomes, especially for the most able pupils. This should be a focus of the Performance and Standards Committee. Leaders have recognised that this is an area where an increased focus is required and there has already been considerable discussion in relation to this.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is rate 'outstanding'. Governors noted that there is strong and consistent evidence to justify this.

Outcomes for pupils is graded 'good' overall, although EYFS provision is rated 'outstanding', and that has been confirmed by external moderation.

The overall effectiveness grade is 'good'.

Governors noted that the SEF is a very comprehensive and well-presented document and thanked SN for producing the updated document.

SIP - The principal aims of the SIP include:

- A particular focus on reading across the school, in order to raise attainment in line with mathematics and English.
- A whole school focus on the most able pupils must continue, to improve their attainment and progress.
- Continue to improve the transition from F1 to Year 1, to ensure that the high standards in F1 are maintained as pupils progress through the school.
- Expand the school in line with the strategy adopted in relation to the preschool building on site.
- Develop monitoring by all aspects of the school leadership, including Governors.

Governors agreed that there should be a stand alone strand in the SIP relating to improving the outcomes for the most able across the school.

Action: SN to amend the SIP in relation to the most able and send to Governors. **Completed.**

62/17 Annual Safeguarding Report

LE (safeguarding lead) and SN had prepared the Report and it was available on GovernorHub before the meeting.

Governors **approved** the Report, subject to agreed actions.

Action: SN to date the Report and submit it to OCC. **Completed.**

The OCC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy had been updated and this was available before the meeting. Governors **approved** the Policy.

Q. Governors asked if, following her review of safeguarding procedures and practices at the school, there are any areas that caused LE concern.

A. LE confirmed that there are not.

63/17 Statement on Use of Pupil Premium

The statement was available on GovernorHub before the meeting.

Q. Governors asked whether the Pupil Premium impact document for 2016-17 is on the website.

A. SN said that the document should be on the website. The expenditure and impact is fully detailed in the second half of the document.

Action: VS to review the statement, identify how the money will be spent and send the revised document to Governors before the next FGB meeting.

NB to contact VS to arrange a meeting and send Governors an update as soon as possible.

64/17 SEND Update

Action: NB will arrange a meeting with Verity Banbury to discuss SEND.

Verity Banbury (SENCO) had drafted the update and it was available on GovernorHub before the meeting. SN explained that the number of SEND pupils at the school has increased and more complex needs have been identified. Some of the pupils are young, so monitoring in relation to those pupils is very important. Progress has been very good for SEND pupils across the school. One pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). That pupil's progress has been excellent over the past year and a half and the pupil is well settled at school.

Q. Governors asked what advice and assistance the school receives in relation to pupils with an EHCP.

A. SN explained that there are regular meetings with external parties regarding an EHCP. SN also told Governors that staff regularly attend SEND training and tag team staffing is used in relation to certain SEND pupils.

SN explained the challenges that arise when a SEND pupil is waiting to apply for an EHCP, including the fact that the school has to fund additional support. HK spoke about some of the issues that staff must consider in relation to these pupils. Governors considered whether external parties could be consulted and their expertise used to help the school obtain funding for extra support.

Q. Governors asked how many of the SEND pupils might be able to apply for an EHCP.

A. SN said that she believes that one more of the SEND pupils could apply. However, EHCPs are notoriously difficult to obtain and a significant amount of evidence must be gathered before making an application.

Q. Governors asked whether the staff time spent with SEND pupils impacts on other pupils and to what extent related financial issues impact negatively on the school.

A. SN said that she does not believe that there is a negative impact on other pupils, primarily due to the skills and abilities of the members of staff that deal with the SEND pupils. TAs at the school are extremely competent and are able to identify and implement appropriate arrangements to use with SEND pupils so that other pupils are not distracted. SN assured Governors that, even though funds are spent on TAs to assist SEND pupils, the skills the TAs gain can be used to help other pupils who do not have SEND needs.

Governors noted that it is very important that pupils with autism are able to attend mainstream schools. This increases their opportunities to contribute to and function in society and also improves the general population's understanding of autism.

65/17 Questionnaire Responses

SV, DR, KK and AD met as a working party to discuss the parental questionnaire responses that had been received at the end of the last academic year. A document had been produced outlining areas that had been given particular consideration and this had been posted on GovernorHub before the meeting.

Seventy two responses were received. The majority were very positive. However, there were some key issues that were apparent:

Communication: The working party recommended that more and repeated notice of events is required from the school. However, it was noted that although the school could provide additional communication, it remained the responsibility of parents to read those communications. It was also noted that some parents had praised the quality of newsletters.

School Calendar on Website: SN confirmed that the calendar is currently up to date and will be updated throughout the year. Changes in dates, and new dates, are marked in red in the school newsletter.

Website: SN confirmed that the website should be up to date, aside from any documents to be added after this meeting. SN also confirmed that it informs parents about what pupils will learn about each term. Each year group has its own page and there are class blogs; VS is responsible for updating this part of the website. Teachers must inform VS if there is anything that needs to be added. If a teacher has not sent an update for a while, VS will ask whether anything should be added.

Newsletter to contain full and up to date information: SN explained that not all information could be included in the newsletter, although all key information is included. Parents are also able to obtain additional information through Parentpay and should also consult the school website.

School trips: A proforma should be available for teachers to complete when leading a trip, so parents can see the number to call should they need to contact their child. There should also be a meeting at the school before any residential trip, and SN confirmed that meetings are held before residential trips. Governors agreed that sufficient notice must be given of such meetings, so that parents have time to make arrangements that enable them to attend. SN said that a new school mobile phone must be purchased and she will action that.

Action: SN to ensure that a new school mobile phone is purchased and a proforma is drafted for school trip contact information.

SN to check whether there had been a meeting before the last Year 2 residential, and report back to the Chair.

Parentpay: There had been issues around registering additional pupils on Parentpay accounts. Estelle can help parents with certain issues relating to Parentpay. However, there are some issues in relation to which parents must contact Parentpay directly.

Reading Diaries: There had been a suggestion that younger year groups use the same reading record/home-school link book as older year groups. Governors discussed this in some depth. SN and HK assured Governors that teachers are available to speak to parents/carers at the start and end of the school day. The KS2 link books are checked every day, so responses are prompt. However, comments in KS1 reading diaries might not be seen as quickly. Therefore, if parents are not available on drop off or pick up, they could use a note to communicate with the teachers should that be necessary. SN said that parents could also email or call the office should they need to arrange a meeting or communicate changes in collection arrangements. Governors agreed that the school should whether parents are aware of and understand the channels to use to communicate with the school.

Action: GP to add consideration of Homework Policy to the next agenda. This will first be agreed at a staff meeting, which is planned for 3 October, and SN agreed to post the policy on GovernorHub after that.

Action: SV to draft a response to parents following the questionnaire responses, to be included in the newsletter next Friday.

Action: HK to write a paragraph for SV's response relating to home-school communication. **Completed.**

66/17 Preschool Update

The update was completed at the start of the meeting (see minute 54/17). JG explained that thirty hour funding would be available and the preschool aims to be fully operational on site after half term. There will be a morning session and an afternoon session, with a lunch break in between.

The building work is nearing completion. The work is on budget and ahead of time. However, an area of grass must now be tarmacked. SN informed Governors that she has obtained two quotes and will obtain one further quote for that work, and that it should be covered by the school's budget for this academic year. NBW also suggested that the Beatrice Laing Trust might contribute to such projects.

Action: SN to investigate whether the Trust might contribute and report back to SV and HC.

Safeguarding has been a major consideration in relation to the preschool relocation. It has been a priority to ensure that, when lunchtime pick up and drop off is taking place, there is no access to the rest of the school. It was noted that the proximity with the school would assist with the transition from preschool to the school environment. Resources would also be

shared. Governors agreed that they must plan well ahead for a merger, with the start of the next financial year being the preferred date for this to happen. SN assured Governors that Kate Rippon has been working closely with the preschool staff to ensure consistency and ease of transition from preschool to F1.

JG said that the preschool must insure the building from the start of October. Therefore the preschool will move from the village hall in early October and run the morning session at the new building from that point.

Q. Governors asked how many children are currently registered for the sessions and the capacity of the preschool.

A. JG explained that the capacity is up to thirty six children in each session. At the moment the preschool is experiencing the usual drop in numbers that occurs at this time of year, due to children moving to F1. However, JG assured Governors that the preschool places fill up during the year.

Q. Governors queried how the new facility has been advertised.

A. JG informed Governors that word of mouth and a Facebook group (which has a relatively wide reach) have been used to publicise the new building. JG has contacted the Witney Gazette who will visit shortly and take pictures of the new building. The thirty hour funding would be publicised, as there are only a small number of preschool providers in Oxfordshire that have been awarded that funding. The County Council have not publicised it yet, although they had indicated that they would.

Governors discussed who should open the preschool. Once a date for the opening is agreed, this could be considered in more depth. Governors also acknowledged the money that had been provided by the Strickland Trust, and it was confirmed that the necessary paperwork had been updated over the summer.

Q. Governors asked about staffing at the preschool.

A. At present, there are five staff who have childcare qualifications and one who has a SENCO qualification. JG explained that the staff are currently contracted for five morning sessions per week, but also work additional sessions where required. As the preschool is officially overstaffed at the moment, the five session requirement will remain the same into the foreseeable future. However, staff will be asked to work extra sessions as the year progresses.

Governors are not yet responsible for monitoring the preschool but, ideally, the school and preschool would like to merge. This would necessitate a fully qualified teacher for a school nursery class. That requirement must be considered in preparation for any future changes.

Q. Governors asked whether JG would consider joining the governing body as an Associate for a year.

A. JG indicated that she would be happy to do so.

After JG left the meeting, Governors voted to appoint her as an Associate Governor for this academic year.

Action: GP to send relevant documents to JG. **Completed.**

Governors also offered their thanks to Narrelle Brooks, a parent who has organised a significant amount of fundraising for the preschool.

67/17 Review of Policies

The following policies were available before the meeting:

- Whistleblowing – see minute 60/17 above.
- Safeguarding – see minute 62/17 above.

Governors **approved** the policies, subject to the changes discussed.

68/17 Governor Vacancies / Terms of office ending

There are currently no vacancies on the governing body.

LE's term of office ends on 17 September 2017. SV confirmed that LE would start another term of office as Foundation Governor after that date.

Action: GP to update Governor list and inform Governor Services, and send forms to LE/JG to complete. **Completed.**

69/17 Governor Training, Training Record and Visits

Training – nothing to report.

Visits – SN had provided the school monitoring schedule for Governors. She explained that she and VS would like to take a more supervisory approach this year. Therefore, SN is encouraging link Governors to visit the schools at appropriate times, if they are able to. SN has made suggestions in the monitoring schedule as to when Governors should visit and what they should focus on.

Governors suggested that this document should also be referred to in the SIP.

Action: All Governors to let SN know whether they are unable to attend during their recommended week, or whether they have a preference as to when they would like to visit the school.

70/17 AOB/Date of the next FGB meeting

AOB – The school is a TA short and, after external advertising, had been unable to appoint a suitable candidate for the role.

**SN left the room at 8.05pm.*

SV informed Governors of a potential temporary appointment for the TA post. It is likely to last until October half term. The candidate could be interviewed later this week. Governors were asked whether they had any objections to this course of action. Governors confirmed that they did not. DR agreed that she would attend the interview of the TA candidate, as a governing body representative.

**SN returned to the meeting at 8.11pm.*

SV informed SN that Governors are happy for the candidate to be interviewed by DR and VS. SN must also bear in mind where the candidate might be best placed in the school. The measure is also to be temporary, with a view to a permanent TA being appointed after October half term. A risk assessment should be carried out before a DBS check is obtained.

Church events/links with school – a document from the Church for parents of new pupils had been posted on GovernorHub before the meeting.

Date of next FGB meeting – Monday 13 November 2017

Items for discussion at the next meeting:

- Headteacher’s Report
- Committee Reports
- Homework Policy
- Pecuniary interests document for website and paper pecuniary interest forms to keep at the school

The meeting ended at 8.15pm

GP: 13 September 2017