



Whitchurch Primary School and Nursery
Full Governing Body Meeting, 18th May 2023

Meeting Attendees:

Name	Role
Peter Tenconi (PT)	Chair and Co-opted Governor
Paul Smith (PS)	Parent Governor
Matt Bradley (MB)	Headteacher (ex-officio Governor)
Martin Thompson-Lawrie (MT)	Contributor
Deepa Samani (DS)	Parent Governor
Maria Nickson (MN)	Staff Governor
Nisha Chikhliia (NS)	Co-opted Governor
Vinay Patel (VPAT)	Governor
Rupen Shah (RSh)	Co-opted Governor
Rickesh Samani (RS)	Co-opted Governor
Bobby Dixit (BD) – apologies	Parent Governor

Clerked by Ben Riddell, Governance Professional

Meeting Record:

Governor Scrutiny/Governor Question (GQ)

Meeting Action

Decision

	Item	Action
1.	Welcome and Introductions PT welcomed attendees.	
2.	Apologies Apologies were noted for BD.	
3.	Declarations in Respect of the Agenda None.	
4.	Review of the Previous Minutes and Matters Arising The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved subject to below. PS asked for the minutes of the previous meeting to be amended to more closely reflect his comments regarding strike action. ACTION: PS to edit his comments regarding strike action and share with DB and PT MB checked in with the LA on their view on children missing more days than other children as a result of the strike. The view is to follow the government guidance. The government guidance says that schools and headteachers should do what they can to keep schools running. MB felt that there is a fair point raised by PS to consider. MB is the Secretary for NAHT for Harrow. With the next round of action, it is worth seeing how this will unfold if all unions go on strike. If there was a mixed outcome, it be for the Governing Body to consider. MB suggested that teachers may feel conflicted to cover staff who are striking. The staff member who is withdrawing their labour,	PS to edit his comments regarding strike action.

	<p>not someone else's. There is a very tight staffing structure at Whitchurch which makes avoiding closure challenging. It is worth seeing what happens at the next strike. There needs to be a joint governing body agreement based on a joint agreement. MB reminded Governors to be cognisant of their strategic rather than operational role.</p> <p>PT suggested an action to look at strike action that is planned and how this can be best covered. PS noted fewer classes were closed in the last action. PS felt that the most important things which Governors and leadership are responsible for is to value all children equally. PS was mindful not to sleep walk into the same situation again. He felt that the guidance allowed for options such as supply teachers. VP felt that this would have a budgetary impact and supply staff would not provide quality teaching. MN noted the restrictions on supply staffing. MN was hopeful that one large strike as the unions are now working together may be helpful. PS raised what was the problematic issue of how to answer a child who did not understand why they were disproportionately affected.</p>	
5.	<p>Budget 2023-24</p> <p>SS noted the major areas of change were increasing the teacher supply budget. £1M has been allocated to capital projects as major building works are planned. The school was at the point of applying for planning permission. This has been put on hold until the new HT arrives. SS noted the need to ring fence the reserves to protect them. SS noted that Harrow was under pressure financially and may be looking at a claw back of school reserves in the future.</p> <p>RS noted that the Finance Committee had reviewed and observed that over the years there was additional income each year than that typically budgeted for.</p> <p>Capital works are on hold and it may be that that is the project which is the right next step for the school. It is, however, further away from implementation and more work is required to get to the stage of planning. MB felt that it would take a full year to move on to the next stage (planning, structures).</p>	

	<p>PS noted that the school had held reserves for a long time and was mindful that money should be spent on children at the school.</p> <p>If the school is only a step away from a water survey etc to get to planning permissions, what is the cost of this and is this worth doing? VP felt that considerable due diligence had taken place. MB noted that it could be that a new headteacher may think there is a better project for the school. MB was happy to get the ball rolling with progressing the works.</p> <p>ACTION: MB to look into the cost of the water survey and share at the next meeting.</p> <p>VP asked about the overspend in agency staff? MTL explained that this arose from unexpected staff needs which required cover. RS noted that the additional £100K was committed to staffing (not just supply teachers) – how the money was spent would depend on the model as it evolves next year.</p> <p>PT noted the finance committee looked at the spending on staff compared to other schools. Even with this additional amount, the school spends less per pupil.</p> <p>DECISION: The budget 2023-24 was approved unanimously by Governors.</p>	<p>MB to look into the cost of the water survey and share at the next meeting.</p>
6.	<p>Committee Updates</p> <p>Achievement and Standards Committee Update</p> <p>VP noted that a number of subject leads presented. For English, there is clear implementation and intent. In Science, this is an area which is being developed. This will be tabled again at a future committee. The IDSR was noted as circulated.</p> <p>PS asked about MB about his observations in terms of Quality of Education? MB felt that by the end of his Headteachers reporting (next agenda item), this would be addressed.</p> <p>PT asked MB to reflect on his view of where the school was at for the Strategy FGB.</p>	

	<p>Finance and Premises Update</p> <p>RS noted that financial position was as outlined by SS in her budget presentation. This had been reviewed in detail by the Finance and Premises Committee.</p>	
7.	<p>Headteachers Report</p> <p>MB returned to his observations. In summary, there were many strengths, however, vulnerabilities too. The discussion has been about shoring up key areas to tighten them up further. Some are areas which have only emerged recently, e.g. the progress of pupil premium children, EYFS and phonics. The Achievement and Standards Committee is well aware of and focusing on these areas. The behaviour is good around the school but sometimes engagement is not always there. There is a need to tighten attendance and some minor areas of safeguarding. There is also a need to bed in vision and values.</p> <p>MB felt that the SLT was very strong in terms of experience and capacity. The Personal Development key judgement in the Ofsted framework is very strong. The curriculum is very well developed as well.</p> <p>DS asked about SEND? MB noted an interim action plan in terms of SEND to ensure that all of those children are fully supported.</p> <p>Priorities were noted as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ofsted preparedness. 2) Phonics – this is moving forward very quickly. 3) EYFS – this is a larger job and will take time but strong plans are in place 4) Behaviour for learning – engagement of pupils within lessons. MTL noted that general behaviour was excellent. MTL is also working with teaching support 5) Attendance 6) Vision and values 7) Safeguarding – a review of the SCR is taking place to ensure that it was perfect for all staff (including those who are long serving). 	

MN asked about attendance? Attendance was 93%. The national figure last week for school was 94% and so the school lags behind only very slightly. Attendance is, however, a national issue. MN asked if there was a pattern which sits behind this? MTL explained that this is being unpicked. Where there is not a known reason and reasonable reason for missing school, fines are now being issued to parents as a matter of course.

DS asked if there is anything different which the school is doing? MB suggested looking interim action plans and the progress made at a visit.

PT asked about the thresholds for EPNS? MTL explained that this was in the newsletters so parents were clear that the school was applying policy systematically. Governors noted the impact on term time absence for holidays. MB explained the significant pastoral work which was with families to support them from managing anxieties regarding COVID and COVID absence.

Phonics was a focus across the school. RWI needs to be used more consistency with fidelity to the scheme. MB noted that training sessions for phonics will take place and links with a local school who have used RWI successfully have been made. There will be external validation of phonics to ensure that the right actions are taken to move this forward.

Early Years is more complicated. There is a strong Lead in place who can move this forward in time. She is being closely supported too. DS noted feedback over the years regarding Early Years. **MN appreciated the links between Newton Farm and West Lodge. MN and MTL welcomed the links and hoped that they would continue.**

As part of Ofsted learning, MB noted that the contextual data would be useful to disseminate to staff so they understood the contextual factors of their pupils.

PS asked about how SATs went? MTL felt that children responded well broadly.

	<p>PT noted that it was incumbent to maintain things which worked – such as a collaborative and network approach.</p> <p>MB noted that a lot of ground work had been set with CR and there was strong work which had taken place which needed to continue to be developed.</p> <p>PT noted strategic planning areas for governors to monitor. MB noted that a Strategic Day was coming up. The morning could focus on Ofsted preparation and then time with the leads in the afternoon.</p> <p>ACTION: MTL to share dates for Visits.</p> <p>MTL suggested revisiting the link allocations based on skill sets and the new governors.</p> <p>ACTION: To re-look at link roles at the Strategy FGB.</p> <p>ACTION: DB to share docs for parent governor elections with MB.</p> <p>ACTION: DB to table PT Co-opted role at the next FGB.</p> <p>ACTION: DB to ask Governors to complete missing skills audits.</p>	<p>MTL to share dates for Visits.</p> <p>To re-look at link roles at the Strategy FGB.</p> <p>DB to share docs for parent governor elections with MB.</p> <p>DB to table PT Co-opted role at the next FGB.</p> <p>DB to ask Governors to complete missing skills audits.</p>
8.	<p>Staffing</p> <p>There have been four resignations confirmed with two further staff who are interviewing. Two teachers have been offered roles (one is an ECT). Four vacancies are currently live. There are a number of applications for each role.</p> <p>MB provided an overview of staffing. MB noted that the organisational chart reflected the current structure.</p>	

	<p>MTL was not anticipating unexpected resignations and felt secure about the next academic year. PS noted that turnover was manageable.</p> <p>MTL noted that staff would be offered an opportunity to take part in staff exit interviews including a conversation with the Chair should they wish.</p>	
9.	<p>Safeguarding Report</p> <p>MTL provided a report on contextual information. The school takes the approach that abuse can and does happen; and it is everyone's responsibility. There were 511 safeguarding reports made last year. There are 28 children (22 referrals) for children made to the local authority. There are 7 CIN and 7 LAC. The most common safeguarding issues are physical chastisement, domestic violence and parental separation/conflict.</p> <p>PS asked about areas for development? MTL noted that some refresher training had been put in place to ensure that lines of reporting are followed consistently. MTL is also looking at ways to continue to cascade information on local and national level safeguarding themes and issues. The updates to KSCIE 22 were noted as well as updates from the safeguarding team. MTL also provided an overview of the process when a disclosure was made.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed a number of safeguarding scenarios specifically in their capacity as being responsible for safeguarding with leaders.</p> <p>ACTION: Safeguarding Training Link to be re-circulated.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Training Link to be re-circulated.</p>
10.	<p>Quality Assurance</p> <p>The quality assurance reporting was noted with clear actions emerging.</p>	
11.	<p>Policies</p>	

	<p>MB noted that the three policies were governance policies and governors should be responsible for directly holding and editing them. This was for governors to consider in the future.</p> <p>Policies were approved, however, Governors were invited to review the policies to ensure that they were comfortable with them.</p> <p>ACTION: Policies to be re-tabled at the next FGB in case any amendments.</p>	<p>Policies to be re-tabled at the next FGB in case any amendments.</p>
12.	<p>Visits</p> <p>PT visited the school and as well as an assembly. He observed a piano lesson as part of this. PT thanked the staff for facilitating the visit.</p>	
13.	<p>Training</p> <p>RS had completed finance training.</p> <p>PT confirmed that he had undertaken a number of safeguarding training courses.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors were reminded to update their training on the Hub or share with DB</p>	<p>Governors were reminded to update their training on the Hub or share with DB</p>
7.	<p>AOB</p> <p>The next meetings were noted as:</p> <p>12 June 2023 at noon – Strategic FGB 7th July 2023 at 8.30am – Finance 10 July 2023 at 6.00pm – S&A 19th July 2023 at 6.00pm – FGB</p>	

Post Meeting Action Log:

No	Item	Deadline
1.	PS to edit his comments regarding strike action and share with DB and PT	After meeting.
2.	MB to look into the cost of the water survey and share at the next meeting.	Before next meeting.
3.	MTL to share dates for Visits.	Before next meeting
4.	Governors re-look at link roles at the Strategy FGB.	Strategy FGB
5.	DB to share docs for parent governor elections with MB.	After meeting.
6.	DB to table PT Co-opted role at the next FGB.	Next FGB
7.	DB to ask Governors to complete missing skills audits.	Before next meeting
8.	Safeguarding Training Link to be re-circulated.	After meeting.
9.	Policies to be re-tabled at the next FGB in case any amendments.	Next FGB
10.	Governors were reminded to update their training on the Hub or share with DB	After meeting.

Accepted as a true and accurate record by the Chair _____