



Whitchurch Primary School and Nursery
Full Governing Body Meeting, 30th March 2023

Meeting Attendees:

Name	Role
Peter Tenconi (PT)	Chair and Co-opted Governor
Paul Smith (PS)	Parent Governor
Caroline Rowley (CR)	Headteacher (ex-officio Governor)
Deepa Samani (DS)	Parent Governor
Martin Thompson-Lawrie (MT)	Deputy Headteacher (Contributor)
Maria Nickson (MN)	Staff Governor
Nisha Chikhliya (NS)	Co-opted Governor
Vinay Patel (VPAT)	Observer
Rupen Shah (RSh)	Co-opted Governor
Rickesh Samani (RS)	Co-opted Governor
Bobby Dixit (BD)	Parent Governor

Clerked by Ben Riddell, Governance Professional

Meeting Record:

Governor Scrutiny/Governor Question (GQ)
 Meeting Action
 Decision

	Item	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions PT welcomed attendees - in particular, BD and RS.</p> <p>BD explained that he has two children at school; one in Y6, one in Y4.</p> <p>RS introduced himself as Coopted Governor (with a view to being appointed as LA Governor once approved).</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies None</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations in Respect of the Agenda None.</p>	
4.	<p>Review of the Previous Minutes and Matters Arising</p> <p>Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent Governor election to be held <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Done. BD has been elected. ● DB and CR to source LA Governor and DB to liaise with the LA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Done. DB has spoken with the LA to decline the candidate proposed. Rickesh Samani is proposed as the LA governor. The LA meet termly to review new appointments. ● CR agreed to connect Governors with their strategic lead in school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Included in later report ● CR to review dates for Diwali. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Done. INSET revised and published ● MTL to share the Safeguarding Training provided to new staff on a termly basis. Alternatively online training could also be facilitated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding training info from NGA has been provided. Contextual safeguarding info is available on the drive with links on GovernorHub. ● MTL to circulate the Governor training calendar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Done and posted on GovernorHub. CR added that this package is purchased for governors by the school, and is free to use. MTL recommended thinking about the skills audit and for governors to identify CPD opportunities. CR suggested DS take a lead on coordinating this. PT asked for volunteers. VPAT volunteered to do so. <p>RS explained that he has been very impressed by both pupils and staff at the school during the period he attended to complete the interviews.</p> <p>VPAT and PT echoed this, noting that pupils are a credit to the school.</p>	
	<p>Governance</p> <p><u>Finance & Resources (10.03.23)</u></p> <p>RSh gave an update:</p> <p>RS and BD joined the finance committee for the first time.</p> <p>The main item covered was a review of the budget / outturn. There is a £153k in-year deficit due to staff salary increases outpacing the budgeted percentage. The overall surplus is still substantial, however.</p> <p>CR added that £260k was committed to capital expenditure - a large amount.</p>	

Parents being charged once per year (£30), covering all school trips, doesn't appear to be working and a pay-as-you-go model will likely need to be reinstated. CR was disappointed, given the extra workload, but the losses of almost £10k were substantial.

MTL noted that many trips are happening for the first time on a three to five year cycle.

CR advocated trying again, as did MTL, for one more year.

PS asked if all pupils get the same number of trips.

CR confirmed that they do.

PS suggested that refunds be considered if a minimum number of trips are not run, to give parents an element of security.

CR noted that the payment is voluntary and must be a donation (not a charge).

MLT noted the impact of inflation, etc, on finalising trip pricing.

PS suggested making two payments per year, of £15 each, or three (once per term) of £10.

A governor suggested that all trips be mapped out and provided to parents at the start of the year. CR felt this to be a good idea.

Expenditure approval for CR was raised to £8k.

Cleaning/catering tenders are in progress.

Standards & Achievement (09.01.23)

VPAT gave an update:

CR explained that Hannah is the new leader of learning for all foundation subjects, coaching other curriculum leaders. She led the SIP visit last week, and the SIP was very impressed. Quality Assurance scrutiny was provided, with all governors satisfied.

The number of EHCP pupils will need to be kept in mind, given the strong increase at the bottom end of the school.

CR noted that an EYFS teacher has resigned and recruitment is underway. Nicola will move to cover Nursery - she was an Assistant Headteacher in her school for a number of years.

The final priority is to develop leadership capacity, and this will need to be borne in mind given the expected Ofsted inspection.

Current strike action has been completed. CR explained that each day was managed on an individual basis. The school closed only the impacted classes - others remained open.

PS felt that the outcome was not acceptable, and there should not be differential treatment of children in this way. He highlighted that some pupils received a different level of education from those who were unable to attend school given their teachers being absent (there is minority NEU membership across the school). He suggested that staff be asked to teach other classes to ensure a more even distribution of the impact of strike action. He made the point that if this was not the approach parents may prefer their child not be allocated to a teacher who is liable to strike. He asked that the legal impediments to teaching on a rotation basis are fully understood.

	<p>CR noted that strike action is a legal right, and it is not possible to prevent staff from taking up this right. Similarly, she is unable to ask teachers to cover other staff's work. MN added that another school kept open only Y6, Y2 and Reception, but this required staff consent and cannot be enforced.</p> <p>VPAT noted that members have been advised to strike, and it is designed to cause disruption. He also noted the difficulties with recruitment at present.</p> <p>CR further highlighted that it is not possible even to ask staff whether they intend to strike. Some schools take the view that they cannot understand staffing availability and are therefore closing under threat of strike action.</p> <p>PS specifically asked that his view that different treatment of children during strike action is unacceptable be minuted. He accepted that he will not get a consensus on this from the governing body, however.</p> <p>ACTION: CR explained that she will engage Harrow to understand how best to mitigate this issue, should more staff action take place.</p>	<p>CR explained that she will engage Harrow to understand how best to mitigate the impact on strike on certain classes.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>CR gave an update:</p> <p><u>School context data</u></p> <p>Data is in the process of being curated. MTL took an action to share this with governors, when available.</p> <p>A new Assistant Headteacher has been recruited and met earlier in the week.</p>	<p>MTL to share data with governors, when available.</p>

<p>Pupil numbers are as high as they have ever been (862). Y1 is over number, due to in-year fair access requirements. The school has been required to take a child previously Missing in Education.</p> <p>A number of pupils in Y6 have been lost - as normal - with parents moving children to secure their secondary school of choice. Mid-year joiners are generally EAL.</p> <p>Ethnic minority data remains unchanged, with most being Indian and a growing cohort of Romanian pupils.</p> <p>The surplus remains large. The capital works plan contains a lot of health and safety work. e.g. The playground. Work around the treehouse remains outstanding, however, but the majority of the capital works plan is complete and covering all major health and safety risks. The front door security risk has also been mitigated.</p> <p>There is a new sensory room fitted. Younger pupils have some specific needs, and will probably leave at the end of KS1 - there is insufficient special school provision in Harrow to allow them to leave earlier. The new space makes a big difference to pupils with sensory issues, ASD, etc.</p> <p>Three kitchen extension quotes have been secured and a contractor engaged. CR hopes that they will start earlier in the summer term. The current kitchen is far too small to be fit for purpose, and school meal uptake is 200+ more than when CR first joined. The kitchen is not able to cope with this added demand. A bigger dry store will need to be added, for example. CR is concerned that work will not be completed by September unless started earlier. MTL added that the handover has already been completed, so there are no impediments to this (other than the workshop needing to be cleared out).</p> <p>CR noted the mayoral funding for a period of one year only.</p> <p>The larger capital project has been handed over to Matt (by CR). Dixons architects and Academy are being used - the latter for project management.</p>	
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<p>Initial planning permission has been approved. Final permission has not yet been granted.</p> <p>CR noted the price of £16k for a new dishwasher.</p> <p><u>SFVS</u></p> <p>DECISION: This was reviewed and approved for submission by year end.</p> <p><u>Indicative budget</u></p> <p>Staffing has been completed, with expenditure around 83%. Service level agreements have been reviewed and are acceptable. Energy expenditure, etc, has been rolled forward. Curriculum leaders have written their budget approvals. A final number will be available by 28th.</p> <p>Financial competencies have been included in the meeting paperwork. Financial management expectations for all at the school are clearly set out.</p> <p><u>Governance audit</u></p> <p>This is available on GovernorHub.</p> <p>CR explained that DB does an excellent job of keeping minutes, etc, etc, up to date and in good order.</p> <p><u>Strategic priorities</u></p> <p><i>Priority 1 - Wider curriculum</i></p> <p>MTL confirmed that deep dives have been completed in all subjects over the last 12 months. The school, broadly, is very happy. Assessment of foundation subjects remains a concern, with this proving difficult without impacting on workload. Teachers will be asked to make a judgement based on end of unit assessments, pop-quizzes, etc. The next thing is to develop early years curriculum knowledge.</p>	
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PS explained that his child has given some feedback, talking about science and noting the very strong music offering. MTL felt this rivals the offer of any other London Primary School. Harrow Music Service (HMS) will no longer be used, because the school feels its own offer is better, and HMS are inflexible in the offering they provide.

PS explained that he was impressed that the offer is wide ranging, but also caters to high end performers.

CR added that the B-flat programme will run next year, with all pupils receiving a hired instrument.

CR explained that 28% of pupils learn an instrument privately.

Humanities, PSHE and MFL are all very strong.

LAMDA was introduced with 24 pupils taking part. 23 took exams with 60% getting distinctions.

Priority 2 - SEN and inclusion

This is in a stronger position than historically. CPD and the performance management structure for support staff is very strong. The majority have registered for specialist courses, etc. There is room for improvement in making systems less bureaucratic. Good decisions have been made re. EAL, with a new assessment being brought in. Pupils are now graded in five stages, with these assessments informing interventions. Regular EAL support is provided daily, or weekly, depending on the stage allocated. This has resulted in significant improvement.

EAL percentage is almost 70% - most are dual language, however, so the real percentage is significantly lower.

Priority 3 - Early years and nursery development

Parents are requesting 30 hour provision and full time provision. The nursery can be filled easily, and just needs to be made bigger.

EYP hours have been extended and Tapestry (online learning platform) is now in use. They now work 8am-4pm. Improving parental engagement will be a key focus. MN asked if pupils are able to upload work online immediately. MTL explained that all pupils have been given a device, and some are confident enough to upload immediately. CR added that there are c.15 uploads requested per week. MN suggested that this is too much. MTL clarified that this covers all seven areas of learning.

Priority 4 - Leadership and accountability

Academisation is no longer a focus or government priority. Curriculum subject leaders have a team writing budget proposals, etc, and are fully accountable for their own subjects - this is a big step forward. Impact reports (a two page report setting out what was done, why, what the impact was, and what is next) are written once per term. Year team leaders will be engaged to review impact reports and formulate two questions on each. A meeting will then be held to discuss these questions. This new format is working well.

PS asked how staff are, in CR's view.

CR felt that they are ok.

MTL explained that long-serving staff have gone through many periods of change. There is likely to be some movement at the end of the year, with two resignations already received and two more likely.

CR highlighted her very strong working relationship with MTL.

Stakeholder wellbeing

The pastoral team has been reviewed. Job descriptions have been reviewed, and one member of staff has left. A new leader, family liaison and several HLTAs are in place. Pastoral training will now take place.

Safeguarding roles have been considered as part of this restructure, with parental safeguarding workshops, parental EAL workshops run, etc. Parental EAL workshops saw poor uptake.

	<p>Planning formats have been fully reviewed.</p> <p>There was no English lead, all year. Reading and writing have been split between two existing staff and a new English lead has now been appointed. A maths lead is being advertised, with the post-holder resigning the position. It is likely that Science leadership will change shortly, also.</p> <p>CR felt the school to be doing well re. strategic priorities. The SDP has been RAG-rated with Matt, and the new Headteacher will inherit this (not needing to rewrite it for next year).</p> <p>All teachers have had midyear reviews. All site staff and admin staff have also been reviewed.</p> <p>Governing body dates have been circulated by CR. The Finance meeting on 14th July will now take place on the 7th.</p> <p>CR noted that link governor roles should be aligned with members of staff.</p> <p>BD explained that he has been in various schools in Barnet, and can pick up any of the areas, as felt appropriate.</p> <p>ACTION: CR took an action to provide the list of link governor areas to BD with MTL in copy, to agree his link responsibility area.</p>	<p>CR took an action to provide the list of link governor areas to BD</p>
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6.

Policies

CR explained that all required policies are in place. All policies are up to date, with those relevant to staff available on the shared drive.

- Exclusions
 - Is a model policy
- Admissions
 - Is a model policy
- Lockdown
 - Is a model policy
 - A lockdown drill will be completed next term.

Minor changes have been highlighted in yellow.

MTL reiterated the importance of Governors scheduling Link Governor visits.

CR confirmed that a new admissions and attendance officer from Park High has been appointed.

It was noted that a deferral of an Ofsted inspection would be requested if this is scheduled during the handover period between CR and the new Headteacher.

PT highlighted that the last parental complaint was very difficult to understand. DB wrote to the complainant and advised him/her to complete the appropriate form and the complaint appears not to have been taken forward.

DECISION: The policies were approved.

<p>6.</p>	<p>Chair's Items</p> <p><u>Chair's updates</u></p> <p>The proposal is that an offer is made to Joseph Pine (JP). He has managed a large international school in Bangkok for the previous 15 years, teaching the UK curriculum. He is very aspirational and inspiring, and the school is very highly rated following strong improvement.</p> <p>MTL noted the strong feedback from current staff.</p> <p>CR asked why he has returned.</p> <p>PT explained that he has young children and he wishes them to be educated in the UK.</p> <p>PT noted that the staff turnover at international schools is very high. PT explained that Matt's preference is for the appointment to start after half term, and has been very supportive throughout.</p> <p>Governors noted his very strong presentation ability.</p> <p>Five candidates were interviewed, in total.</p> <p>PT thanked CR for her contribution and service.</p> <p>CR thanked governors for their strong support.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>	

Post Meeting Action Log:

No	Item	Deadline
1.	CR explained that she will engage Harrow to understand how best to mitigate the impact on strike on certain classes.	Before next meeting.
2.	MTL to share data with governors.	When available
3.	CR took an action to provide the list of link governor areas to BD	Before next meeting

Accepted as a true and accurate record by the Chair _____