



**Minutes of a meeting of the full Governing Body
of William Fletcher Primary School
on Tuesday 26 January 2021 at 6.30 pm**

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, this meeting was held online using Microsoft Teams

Present:

Trish Amesbury (TA) (Co-opted) (Chair)
Vicky Ball (VB) (Vice Chair) (Co-opted)
Kate Hopcraft (KH) (Parent)
Anna Isles (AI) (Co-opted)
Andrew Lister (AL) (Co-opted)
Deborah Nind (DN) (Headteacher)
Oliver Petter (OP) (Local Authority)
Charlotte Rayner (CR) (Co-opted)
Neil Shewry (NS) (Parent)
Rosie Staniland (RS) (Staff)
Kate Thorpe (KT) (Parent)
Daniel Wickham-Jones (DWJ) (Parent)

In attendance:

Clare Saunders (CS) (Clerk)

The meeting was opened by **TA** at 6.32 pm. The meeting was **quorate**.

1. Welcome

TA welcomed everyone to the meeting, commenting on what a very different start to a new year this one has been. She recorded the sincere thanks of the governing body to **DN** and the staff team, for all the incredible work they are doing in very difficult circumstances.

2. Apologies for Absence

All governors were present online – there were no apologies.

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

All Declarations had been returned in the autumn and the Register is up to date. There were no further updates.

4. Urgent Additional Items

There were no items.

5. Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting held on 2 December 2020

item 5: TA emphasised the need for more governors to undertake the appraisal training and asked that this be kept as a standing item for future meetings. **Action: all governors** to look at the appraisal training and to attend it if possible; **the Clerk** to ensure that it is kept on the Agenda of future meetings.

Referring to the vacancies for three Co-opted Governors, TA commented that she had not received any suggestions from governors of potential candidates and she asked all governors to think about whether they know anyone suitable. She suggested that OP in particular might be able to suggest possible candidates because of his involvement in the community. **Action: OP** to think whether he knows of anyone who might be interested and to let TA know if so; **all governors** to pass any possible names to TA.

NS was able to attend two of the committee meetings this month. **Action: VB** to ensure that he receives an invite to the next meeting of the Resources Committee. RS is now a member of the Performance and Standards Committee.

TA emphasised that all governors need to read *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. **Action: all governors** to ensure that they have read KCSIE and to tick their own Declarations on Governor Hub when they have done; **all governors** to let VB know if they complete any training, and to send her a copy of the relevant certificate.

item 8: RS sent an email to all staff members, passing on the governors' thanks and appreciation for their work. Action completed.

item 9: Link Governors will be discussed at item 6.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2020 were **approved** by governors, and signed by TA.

6. Chair's Items

TA told governors that she and DN had discussed Link Governor and staff meetings, and agreed that at the moment these should be on hold, so as not to overload teachers with too much work. She suggested that Link Governors should contact teachers but not suggest a meeting or increase their workload. **Action: all Link Governors** to email their Priority Leads, just to make contact. KH will remind Link Governors who the Priority Leads are, if necessary.

Referring to the visit before Christmas of an OCC representative to look at the traffic situation in Rutten Lane, TA told governors that she had been in contact with him again and had asked for an update. She confirmed that there would be some work done – eg reinstating the zigzag lines, ensuring the marking which indicates the presence of the school is clearer etc. This work should be undertaken in March or April. AI asked whether TA could make it clear to OCC that there are currently two entrances to the school – one

being the lane to the nursing home – and that therefore the zigzag lines should be extended further along Rutten Lane than they are at present. **TA** agreed that she would make this point, but said it was likely that only the existing lines would be painted. **Action: TA** to contact the representative and ask for the zigzag lines to be extended further along Rutten Lane.

7. Headteacher's Update

Attendance

DN reported that there are currently 270 children on the roll – one left in December to move abroad, and one joined the school (in the same year group).

DN highlighted the attendance figure of 98% for the first two terms of the school year, commenting that this is a very high percentage. She reported that this term the attendance has varied between 13% - 17% (34 – 46 children) since most teaching moved online on the second day of term. She said that 56 parents qualify as key workers but that some who were entitled to send their children to school have in fact been able to keep them at home, for which she has been very grateful. She added that the number of children coming to school has been rising but that when she has received requests for children to come, she has been questioning parents about their reasons and explaining the need to keep the numbers at school as low as possible.

Commenting on the figure of 2.95% for persistent absence in terms 1 and 2, **DN** said that this had reduced but that it still meant that seven children needed to be supported to come to school; she was aware of the reasons for their absence.

DN reminded governors that the school had opened for the new term on Monday 4 January, saying that it had been lovely to see all the children return, but that, following the government's announcement that evening, the school had then closed the next day to all except vulnerable children and the children of key workers, and that most children had moved to remote learning from home – Google Classroom for Years 1-6 (a mixture of videos, live lessons and tasks for the children to complete and send in); emails to the parents of FS1 with tasks for the children and feedback on the completion of those tasks.

DN told governors that in the first lockdown, staff had been telephoning only the families of vulnerable children, but that this time they had been contacting the family of every child apart from those who were still attending school in person. She commented that these conversations had been very useful in finding out what support the children at home needed eg IT equipment or a face to face conversation with a teacher. **NS** asked whether the teachers had the time to do this, saying that, as a parent, it had been great to have a telephone call but adding that he recognised the time pressures that they were under at the moment. **DN** replied that this had been a trial run, that she would be discussing the telephone calls with the teaching staff to see whether they would be able to continue, and that she had found the conversations with parents and children to be very fruitful so far.

NS asked whether **DN** had refused to allow some children back to school if she was not satisfied that they needed to be there, and if so whether this had led to any problems. **DN** answered that she could refuse a place in school but that she had not yet had to do so.

She said that it was sometimes just a question of explaining to parents the need to limit numbers in school to break the chain of transmission of the virus, and that the local authority had very helpfully spoken to some local employers eg HR at the University of Oxford, to explain the situation.

Commenting on the need to keep numbers low, **CR** asked whether **DN** had made progress with getting those children back into school who she felt should be there. **DN** replied that all except one of those children were currently in school, and that she understood the reason why the other was not.

DN reported that all the children who have an EHCP are being kept at home by their parents, and that this is their choice to make. She emphasised that the teachers needed to make sure that the learning provided by the school met those children's needs.

DN told governors that there was some anxiety among the children who were still coming in to school, and that staff were aware of this and working on it. She said that they had also been looking at the level of engagement from those children who were doing remote learning:

7 children are not engaging at all – printed packs have been given out to their families, as well as one electronic device;

20 children are partially engaging – they have been given laptops where necessary, and different strategies are being used eg spending some time in school;

15 children are having work packs made up by their teachers specifically for them.

KH thanked **DN** for providing these figures, commenting on how useful they were, and much appreciated by the governors. She asked if there was a directive on whether the school should just be keeping education going or whether it should now be trying to follow the curriculum again. **DN** replied that in the first lockdown, the emphasis was on trying to keep the children's skills going; now, however, the DfE expects new learning to be going on. **AL** agreed, highlighting the situation with maths – in the first lockdown teachers had kept to the basics, but now the resources available are better and the teachers have the scope to move on to different, new areas of maths.

Staffing

DN said that the staff are operating a two week rota – staff at home supporting the remote learning, other staff being in school, then swapping over every fortnight. Two of the staff are clinically vulnerable and need to remain at home, while another will be working at home after the half term holiday due to pregnancy. **DN** added that she and Sandra Morris are in school each day, although **AL** takes over from **DN** on Wednesdays so that she can work from home. She expressed her gratitude to **RS** who works every alternate week teaching, but in the other weeks supports a child with SEND.

Teaching and Learning

DN reported that the group working is going very well, and that the staff had put together a plan to allow parents to return and collect reading books in the car park.

DN updated governors on the latest developments around testing staff for COVID-19, saying that all staff in primary schools now had the opportunity to be tested and that all the testing kits had been handed out to her staff. The tests will be done on Wednesdays and Sundays, with the aim of identifying any asymptomatic carriers of the virus. **TA** asked what the take up for tests was like, given that the tests were not mandatory; **DN** confirmed that it was completely voluntary, but said that all the staff had agreed to take the tests. **CR** commented that the tests were worth doing even if they were not 100% reliable as although they could give a false negative, they would not give a false positive. They could pick up some cases even if not all of them. **DN** agreed, but said that there was a lot of additional work involved in the testing, including chasing up results, a lengthy risk assessment which she would be sending to **TA** to sign off as Chair, and the need to report to governors. She added that according to research which was published very recently, the tests are more accurate than originally thought.

Free School Meals

DN referred to children who qualify for FSM because of their family income, saying that at the start of the first lockdown in March 2020, they had been provided with food boxes which they could collect from school. However, this time there were vouchers which they receive weekly, and which can be used in supermarkets. She reported that the DfE had just announced that they would not be providing vouchers over the February half term holiday because of the winter grant scheme which provides money to local authorities, who should then provide the support. This announcement had only just been made and it was not yet known what Oxfordshire County Council would be doing.

Staff Morale

DN reported that the staff are all calm and very upbeat in front of the children, and that they are keen to ensure that the children feel safe and happy at school. She explained that, away from the classroom, emotions can be very up and down; but that the teaching team had been meeting once a week online, giving them the opportunity to see each other and share experiences with their colleagues.

Partnership Working

DN referred to the partnership meetings which the Heads of the schools in the partnership attend online every alternate week, saying that these are an extremely useful way of exchanging valuable information and learning from each other.

NS asked whether the other Heads were dealing with similar issues to those facing **DN**; she replied that they all have had similar experiences although they come from schools of different sizes, so some things are done differently by other Heads. She said that the Heads share training, and feed back information from meetings, and added that she also works as a School Improvement Partner with three other schools, so there is sharing of information there, too.

KT asked whether the school shared teaching resources with other schools; **DN** answered that the Heads tended to discuss the management of their schools, and that less time was spent talking about the curriculum.

A Future without Rubbish

DN explained that the school had linked with this charity in the autumn and that two classes were currently working with them but that the intention was to get everyone in the school involved with the work. She said that she was very excited about the link as the charity also works with schools in India and Japan, so it would be an opportunity for the children to learn about waste reduction in other countries as well as their own.

8. Safeguarding

DN shared with governors the numbers of children within each category – Child Protection Plan; Child in Need; Early Help. She commented on the role of the Family Support Worker, saying how invaluable Clare Pink's work was. She told governors that Clare works hard to support vulnerable families, checking in and sometimes going for walks with them. **TA** agreed, saying that Clare's work had been so helpful, and she asked that the governors' thanks be recorded. **Action: DN** to pass on governors' thanks to Clare Pink.

9. Health and Safety

VB said that she had done a health and safety walk at the end of the first week of term, and that the audit had taken place the following week. She confirmed that the school had scored 100% in the audit. Governors congratulated **DN** and the staff on this result.

10. Governor Training

VB emphasised that more governors needed to undertake the appraisal training, saying that it has been the same few governors doing the Head's appraisal for several years now.

She thanked **KH** for having sent in her certificate from the Safeguarding training.

11. Resources Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21 January 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub.

VB told governors that **DN** had already reported on pupil numbers and staffing, and invited questions. There were no questions for the committee.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 11 March 2021.

TA reminded the Committee Chairs of the need to send Minutes to the Clerk, or upload them to GovernorHub, seven days before the next meeting of the full governing body is due to take place; she asked that, when setting meeting dates in the future, this be taken into consideration. **Action: Committee Chairs** to ensure that Minutes of committee meetings are submitted at least seven days before the next FGB meeting.

12. Performance and Standards Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 January 2021 had been uploaded to Governor Hub.

AI asked whether governors had any questions; there was none.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 11 March 2021.

14. Curriculum Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21 January 2021 had been uploaded to Governor Hub.

CR said how wonderful it had been to have Caeron Phillips talk to governors at the last committee meeting, how much they had enjoyed hearing about everything that was going on and that they had learned about aspects of school life that they had not previously known of. Referring to the expectation that this generation of children was expected to continue to be active as they grew up, she told governors that there had been an online PE session for the whole school which had been of enormous value to all the children, who enjoyed being able to see the other children. She commented on the very different emphasis on teaching now, compared to that in the first national lockdown.

DN thanked **CR**, saying that Caeron Phillips had found attending the committee meeting a very positive experience and that she had enjoyed celebrating the work she had been doing with the children. She added that all the staff believe in the importance of encouraging children to be more active in order to give them the best chance of living long and healthy lives.

There were no questions for the committee.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on a date to be decided.

15. Any Other Business

There was none.

16. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 23 March at 6.30 pm online

Items for inclusion on the Agenda should be sent to the Clerk a fortnight in advance.

The meeting closed at 7.36 pm

CS 27.01.2021