



**Minutes of a meeting of the full Governing Body
of William Fletcher Primary School
on Tuesday 11 January 2022 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) (Co-opted)
Anna Isles (AI) (Co-opted) (from 6.35 pm)
Andrew Lister (AL) (Co-opted) (from 6.34 pm)
Deborah Nind (DN) (Headteacher)
Oliver Petter (OP) (Local Authority)
Charlotte Rayner (CR) (Co-opted) (from 6.35 pm)
Neil Shewry (NS) (Parent)
Rosie Staniland (RS) (Staff)
Kate Thorpe (KT) (Parent)
Daniel Wickham-Jones (DWJ) (Parent) (from 6.33 pm)

Absent – apologies received in advance and accepted:

Stephanie Delargy (SD) (Co-opted)

In attendance:

Clare Saunders (CS) (Clerk)

The meeting was opened by **TA** at 6.31 pm. The meeting was **quorate**.

1. Welcome

TA wished everyone a happy new year, and welcomed governors to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

SD had sent her apologies. These were accepted.

(6.33 pm – **DWJ** joined the meeting.)

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

The **Clerk** had sent out reminders to some governors who had yet to finish their declarations and confirmations on GovernorHub. Most had done these by the start of the meeting.

(6.34 pm – **AL** joined the meeting.)

During the meeting, all declarations and confirmations were completed. **Action:** the **Clerk** to arrange for the Register of Interests to be published on the school website.
(6.35 pm – **AI** and **CR** joined the meeting.)

4. Urgent Additional Items

There were no items.

5. Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting held on 30 November 2021

item 3: Declarations of Pecuniary Interests have already been discussed. Action completed.

The **Clerk** had emailed Governor Services to ensure that they were aware that **OP** was now also a governor at another school, and confirmed that there is no problem with a governor serving on two governing bodies as long as no conflict arises. Action completed.

item 5 (7) (11): AD will not now be attending induction training. **TA** said that she would explain this later. Action completed.

item 5 (9): Governors' Code of Conduct and School Code – these confirmations had been discussed earlier on the agenda. Action completed.

item 5 (10): Keeping Children Safe in Education – this had been discussed earlier on the agenda. All governors have read it and confirmed that they have done so. Action completed.

item 6 (i): TA reiterated her encouragement to all governors to sign up for training, and especially the *Headteacher's Appraisal* training as well as *Taking the Chair*.

item 6 (iii): TA apologised for not having set up the buddy system yet, explaining that the idea was to give new governors the information they needed to understand key documents, abbreviations and terminology. She emphasised that governors could ask her or other experienced governors about anything they did not understand.

Referring to training courses, **NS** commented that there were currently no Appraisal or Chair training sessions scheduled but that he would keep checking and let governors know if he saw any listed.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021 were **approved** by governors, and signed by **TA**.

6. Chair's Items

TA did not have any items to raise other than governor appointments, resignations and terms of office, listed separately on the agenda.

7. Governor Appointments and Terms of Office

TA told governors that Andy Dalglish, who had joined the governing body as a Co-opted Governor in September, had resigned as he felt he could not give the role the time it deserved. Accordingly, there is now a vacancy for a Co-opted Governor.

TA explained that, in addition to this vacancy, and one pre-existing vacancy for a Parent Governor, there are two governors whose terms of office will end soon: **AI** (Co-opted Governor) and **KT** (Parent Governor). She said she had spoken to **KT** and suggested that if she would like to remain on the governing body, the consent of the governors could be sought to appoint her as Co-opted Governor; unfortunately, **KT** had said that, in the immediate future, she would have insufficient time to give to the role, and so would be stepping down from the board at the end of her term of office on 8 February. On behalf of all the governors, **TA** thanked **KT** for her contribution to the work of the governing body over the past four years, and for her commitment to the school. She added that the governors would be sorry to lose her and that her input had been extremely helpful.

TA said that she had previously asked **AI** whether she was happy to renew her term of office as a Co-opted Governor, and that **AI** had agreed she was. The **Clerk** asked **AI** to leave the meeting temporarily.

(6.44 pm – **AI** left the meeting.)

TA asked governors to vote in favour of re-appointing **AI** as a Co-opted Governor for a term of four years. The vote was carried.

(6.45 pm – **AI** rejoined the meeting.)

TA confirmed to **AI** that she had been reappointed as a Co-opted Governor, and thanked her for her willingness to continue serving on the governing body.

TA informed governors that there would be two vacancies for Parent Governors after 8 February, said that she would begin the process of holding an election, and that a notice would go out in the school newsletter. **DWJ** asked whether there were other ways of advertising the election to parents; **TA** replied that as well as being sent out via email, the newsletter was available on the website, and also on the school's app. **DN** said that no paper copies were sent out but that some parents came into school to collect them; she agreed that she would arrange for posters to be put up on classroom doors. **Action: TA** to produce the letter about the elections and to arrange for it to be included in the following week's newsletter; **DN** to get posters put up around school publicising the elections.

8. Headteacher's Update

DN introduced her update by informing governors that the school had celebrated Founder's Day today and that children from Years 5 and 6 had taken part in the usual church service. She thanked **OP** for the service, and commented that the children had also enjoyed ringing the bell, once for every year of William Fletcher's life. She added that there had been cake at school for all the children.

Pupil Numbers and Attendance

DN confirmed that there are 277 children on the roll, that one child had joined Year 1 at the start of this term, and that there are vacancies in all year groups except Year 3.

DN told governors that attendance is now 95.72% since September – lower than the figure given at the previous meeting. She explained that this is due to Covid but also to the colds and other bugs which had been circulating, and she added that there had been one fixed term exclusion since September.

Safeguarding

DN reported that there had been one referral to MASH by the school, and one by other agencies. She confirmed that all teachers had renewed their Prevent training this month and that support staff would be doing theirs later in the term.

Staffing

DN told governors that there had been three members of staff absent due to Covid at the start of term, but that two of them had now returned. In addition, Mrs Buchanan had returned from maternity leave, and there had been two appointments – one teaching assistant and one lunchtime supervisor.

Covid-19

DN reported that there had been 18 children (and the three staff) confirmed as having Covid at the start of term, and that this had been a shock as it was a much higher number than at any point in the previous term. In addition, the leader of the breakfast club had been absent and **DN** had been running the club, handing over each day at around 7.45 am to a teaching assistant.

DN emphasised that the impact on teaching staff was considerable as they were teaching face to face all day, but also setting learning activities for children isolating at home.

Curriculum

Referring to the new phonics scheme, **DN** explained that it was for use in Foundation Stage and KS1, and for some children at the lower end of KS2. She said that the staff had had training on it, and were starting to use it in class. She also mentioned the new computing teaching scheme – Kapow – which the school had purchased, adding that Emma White had trained the staff on it that day.

After School Club

DN reported that the after school club run by Energy Kidz was not currently operating on Thursdays due to staff shortages.

DN invited questions from governors.

TA: It is very concerning news about both the breakfast club and the after school club. We cannot have teaching staff having to run these clubs.

KT: Have there been any negative comments from parents about the situation?

DN: No, not yet. We have worked with Energy Kidz for some years and they have been very reliable. They communicate directly with parents as they are a separate organisation.

KT: Could the school pay teaching assistants to run the breakfast club?

DN: We did ask TAs to volunteer to run it, and they would of course be paid. But it starts at 7.15 am and I fully understand that this is too early for many people, so I have been doing it, until a helpful TA comes and takes over from me around 7.45 – 8 am. It is not a long term solution for me to do it. I am hopeful that the staff member will return soon.

TA: What is the take up at the moment?

DN: Around 10-15 children each day attend the club. This is fewer than before because so many parents are working from home. For those who need it, however, it is a lifeline.

9. School Development Plan

DN had uploaded and circulated the updated SDP 2021-22 in advance of the meeting.

DN commented that as there had not been many school days since the last meeting of the full governing body, there were few changes to the SDP. She thanked governors for their contributions and asked them to check their own sections and let her know if they had met with their Priority Leads but that the meeting had not been recorded in the current version.

Action: **all governors** to check whether their sections of the SDP are up to date.

DN referred to the new phonics scheme, saying that after investigating a number of schemes on the market, they had decided to buy *Letters and Sounds*. She told governors that using the scheme ensured pacy lessons; the idea was that all children should be able to keep up, rather than some having to catch up later – it was adapted for all abilities. **RS** confirmed that she had used the scheme for one lesson and that so far it was going well. She said that it came with a lot of resources and that the children were enjoying using it. **DN** agreed, adding that the Year 1 phonics check results in the summer would be reviewed closely to assess the effectiveness of the scheme.

KH asked whether the new scheme meant that new reading books had had to be purchased. **DN** replied that new books had been bought but said that the older books could also continue to be used.

NS asked whether the decision to buy a new phonics system had been forced on the school, and **DN** agreed that it had, as the DfE had decided that all schools had to use schemes which they had approved. She added that the school had chosen the computing scheme, explaining that it is difficult to teach computing unless the teacher is a specialist. Different options had been explored, and although Kapow was not expensive, it provided training videos for teachers and came with ready-prepared lessons.

10. Safeguarding

DN referred to the Prevent training for teachers which had taken place at the start of term, saying that support staff would receive the training in the next few weeks.

She confirmed that the two new staff would receive safeguarding training from Paul Austin, and that she had booked a safeguarding audit for February. **Action:** **DN** to let **TA** have the date of the audit so that she can attend.

11. **Health and Safety**

VB reported that there had been no actions arising from the audit which had taken place in December, although there were a couple of issues which needed consideration:

(a) **DN** is now personally liable, under Natasha's Law (which came into force in autumn 2021) if a child suffers an allergic reaction after eating food on the school premises. **VB** explained that this had implications for cake stalls at the fair, bake sales etc.

(b) **DN** is personally responsible for children's safety when swimming.

NS asked about the limits to the personal liability for food – eg did it include food eaten after school hours? **DN** answered that it is something which needs to be investigated further but that her understanding was that it covered food eaten on school premises – but not food which a parent has given their own child in their lunchbox, for instance. She confirmed that she was very confident in the efficiency of the school meals provider but said that food eaten at other times could be a problem. **KT** said that there was guidance for governors on the internet. **CR** commented that once an issue like this was raised, it became impossible not to think of the potential outcomes and the need to take action; **DN** agreed, adding that she would be attending a Partnership meeting soon and that she would raise this with the other Heads, and talk to the Health and Safety Adviser again.

12. **Governor Training**

VB reported that there had been no new training attended since the last meeting but that she had now got details of training sessions available this term. **Action:** **VB** to send the link for training courses to all governors.

13. **Resources Committee**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2022 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

KT updated governors on her investigations into grants for a 3G or 4G artificial grass surface and a multi-use games area if the planning application for new houses goes ahead: the local councillor had replied to her enquiry saying that development was still in its very early stages. In addition, Oxford United had just announced that they might be moving to Stratfield Brake in 2026, which could affect the availability of grants in the area.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 10 March 2022.

14. **Performance and Standards Committee**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2022 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

AI confirmed that **RS** had sent apologies for the meeting and that these had been accepted but not minuted.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Wednesday 9 March 2022.

15. Curriculum Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2022 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

CR told governors that the meeting had been extremely interesting as **AL** had talked about the curriculum policy, and she asked for guidance on the difference between reviewing and approving a policy. **Action:** the **Clerk** to look into the nature of the governors' responsibility for the policy.

DN commented that the governors should be able to agree with the core values in a policy; that they did not dictate what the school should be doing but could agree the general direction being taken.

CR told governors that the committee had celebrated the engagement taking place between Priority Leads and Link Governors, noting that more meetings had taken place and thanking all governors for the contacts they had made with teaching staff. She invited all governors to attend any of the Curriculum Committee meetings, which had dates and subject matters scheduled to the end of the school year.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 3 March 2022.

16. Any Other Business

Noting that **KT**'s term of office would end before the next meeting of the full governing body, **TA** emphasised her thanks to **KT** for her work as a governor and for her involvement with the school.

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Monday 21 March 2022

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

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

CS 12.01.2022