



**Minutes of a meeting of the full Governing Body
of William Fletcher Primary School
on Tuesday 28 September 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)
Andy Dalgleish (AD) (Co-opted) (from 6.38 pm, until 6.59 pm)
Stephanie Delargy (SD) (Co-opted) (from 6.38 pm)
Kate Hopcraft (KH) (Co-opted)
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) (from 6.36 pm)
Kate Thorpe (KT) (Parent)
Daniel Wickham-Jones (DWJ) (Parent)

Absent – apologies received in advance and accepted:

Vicky Ball (VB) (Vice Chair) (Co-opted)

In attendance:

Karen Chambers (KC) (SEnCo)
Clare Saunders (CS) (Clerk)

The meeting was opened by **TA** at 6.33 pm. The meeting was **quorate**.

1. Welcome

TA welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new school year.

2. Apologies for Absence

VB had sent her apologies. These were accepted.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for the academic year 2021-22

The Clerk reminded governors that they had been asked in advance to nominate candidates for these roles, that this had been done, and that votes had been taken before the meeting via email because of the need for confidentiality in the voting process.

TA was elected Chair and **VB** was elected Vice-Chair, both for a term of one year ending on the date of the first meeting in the 2022-23 school year.

4. Governor Appointments: Co-opted Governors

TA referred to the two candidates who had expressed an interest in becoming Co-opted Governors, and she confirmed that there were currently two vacancies on the governing body for these roles.

(6.36 pm – **RS** joined the meeting.)

She reminded governors that information about the candidates had been circulated in advance of the meeting, and she invited comments and questions from governors.

Governors agreed to co-opt both Andrew Dalglish and Stephanie Delargy on to the governing body with immediate effect.

(6.38 pm – **AD** and **SD** joined the meeting.)

TA welcomed both new governors and explained to everyone that **AD** had already indicated that he needed to leave in a few minutes' time as he had an unavoidable and urgent commitment.

5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

TA commented that governors' Declarations had all been received very promptly last year and asked whether any forms had been completed so far this term. The **Clerk** replied that she had not sent out the forms for this year as it was now possible for governors to make their Declarations on GovernorHub; she emphasised that if it was decided to adopt this method of making the Declarations, it would be important for her to know when they had been done. It was agreed that governors should make their Declarations on GovernorHub in lieu of completing paper forms. **Action: all governors** to complete their Declarations on GovernorHub before the date of the next meeting of the FGB (30 November).

6. Urgent Additional Items

There were no items.

7. Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting held on 22 June 2021

item 5 (4): DN has been in contact with Neil Darlington at OCC about intake numbers. Action completed.

item 5 (6) (6): Link Governors will be discussed later on the Agenda.

item 6: Dates for Resources Committee meetings have been arranged. Action completed.

item 11: **TA** encouraged governors to look at doing any training which would be useful, commenting that the courses were online. She referred to the induction course for new Governors, recommending that both **SD** and **AD** attend this. She also mentioned the course *Holding the School to Account* on 17 November, suggesting that all the governors should try to attend this. **Action: all governors** to attend *Holding the School to Account* if able to do so; **SD** and **AD** to book for *Introduction to Governance in Oxfordshire* .

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 were approved by governors, and signed by **TA**.

8. SEN Report

TA welcomed **KC** to the meeting and introduced her to new governors as the SENCo for the school.

KC shared her written report with governors during the meeting. She began by highlighting the slight decrease in the number of children on the Register since this time last year and she drew governors' attention to the strong predominance of boys on the Register.

KC referred to the three EHCPs which she had managed to secure during the last year, explaining that applying for these always takes a very long time and that the children for whom the applications were made each need a high level of support.

KC told governors that she and **KH** had met a few times during the year and had discussed how the pandemic had affected access to support services. She added that another effect was that teaching assistants had been in "bubbles" with their classes and unable to move across to assist with other classes as they normally would have done.

Referring to a child who had been moving on to secondary school, **KC** said that she had managed to secure specialist provision for them – this had been a long process and the application had gone to a panel before being approved.

KC mentioned the interventions that had been run within school, adding that the pandemic had meant that some of these were not done as fully as she would have liked, but that there had been considerable success in some areas eg Reading Quest in Year 2, where children made great progress.

(6.59 pm – **AD** left the meeting.)

KC concluded her report by referring to the online training and continuing professional development which she had undertaken.

KH commented that it was great to see such significant results from some of the interventions carried out during the year.

DWJ asked whether there was a particular reason for boys being more predominant than girls, and **KC** replied that it was common to find more boys than girls with SEN at this age.

TA thanked **KC** for her report and asked that the written copy be forwarded to governors.

(7.02 pm – **KC** left the meeting.)

9. Chair's Items

Governors' Code of Conduct and School Code of Conduct

TA reminded governors that the updated Governors' Code of Conduct had been circulated before the meeting, and the changes (ie detailing the Nolan principles in full) were read out. **TA** asked governors to agree to adopt the Code, as had been done in previous years.

Governors **agreed** to adopt the Governors' Code of Conduct.

The **Clerk** confirmed that the Code had been uploaded to GovernorHub, and could be found on the Declarations tab for each governor. **Action: all governors** to read the Code and then confirm on GovernorHub when they have done so.

DN had circulated the school's own Code of Conduct in advance of the meeting, and asked governors to ensure that they had read it. Governors **agreed** to adopt the Code. This Code is also on GovernorHub.

Action: all governors to read the School Code and confirm on GovernorHub that they have done so.

Headteacher's Appraisal

TA explained that the Headteacher's appraisal has to be carried out in the autumn term, and that for this a committee of three governors is needed, as well as an external advisor. She added that **CR** had done the necessary training but said that she would like more governors to be trained as it could be difficult to find a suitable date for the appraisal if there were only a few governors who could take part. **Action: all governors** to consider doing the Headteacher's Appraisal training and to sign up for this if available; **DN** to contact other Heads in the partnership to ask for recommendations for an external advisor.

Governor and Curriculum Leads links

KH shared a provisional list of Link Governors for each subject; this was discussed and allocations were **agreed**. **Action: KH** to circulate a final copy of the list of Link Governors and Curriculum Leads to all governors and the Clerk. **KH** encouraged governors to make contact with their Curriculum Leads and to hold the appropriate number of meetings, so that this year it might be possible to get all sections of the School Development Plan completed.

NS asked for clarification of the current guidance around meetings; **DN** replied that the local authority was still recommending that full governing body meetings should be virtual, but that governors could go in to school individually to meet teachers, as long as the Covid-19 guidelines were followed.

DWJ asked about the timing of meetings with staff, and **DN** answered that these are often after school or could be done in teachers' PPA time if that was preferable.

Action: KH to circulate guidance for governors on how to contact teachers and conduct the meetings; **all governors** to look at the requirements of their specific Link role(s) and to make contact with their Priority Lead(s).

Committee Memberships

TA asked that the new governors attend one meeting of each committee to see where they felt they could make the most useful contribution. **Action: Committee Chairs** to include **SD** and **AD** when circulating any information, Agenda etc for the next committee meetings; **SD** and **AD** to attend the next meeting of each committee if able to do so.

TA confirmed that governors would remain on the same committees as in 2020-21.

10. Headteacher's Update

Pupil Numbers and Attendance

DN reported that there are currently 276 children on the roll, and vacancies in every class except Year 3. This year there are 37 children in Foundation Stage. She confirmed that she had written to Neil Darlington at OCC for advice about numbers for the future, reminding governors that in the past few years the school had asked for 30 but had been given 34, 42, 37. She added that she expected to see more applications for places in the future because of the housing developments planned for Yarnton.

DN told governors that, so far this term, four children had left the school due to family moves, 16 had joined (Years 1-6) and appeared to have settled in really well.

Turning to attendance, **DN** informed governors that this is currently 96.87% and that she is pleased with this figure; she added that in the summer term there was a higher rate of attendance, but this term has been harder because there have been a lot of coughs and colds among the children – these would not usually have been enough to keep them away from school but parents are understandably being more cautious than they were before the pandemic.

DN informed governors that there had been one fixed term exclusion – of half a day – this term, emphasising that exclusions are used only as a very last resort.

Safeguarding

DN provided governors with the numbers of children in each category.

Referring to the INSET day this term, **DN** said that the staff had been reviewing the updated *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)*, and she reminded governors that they had a duty to read this document as well as the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Action: all governors to read *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the Safeguarding Policy, and to confirm on GovernorHub when they have done so.

KH asked whether there had ever been a time before when the school had had no children in either the Child in Need category or with a Child Protection Plan. **DN** replied that it was very unusual but that the thresholds for both levels are very high, so families are usually directed to Team Around the Family (TAF) first. She added that Clare Pink is leading the work with the families although the teachers will also be involved.

Staffing

DN said that there was currently one staff member on long term sick leave and that other members of staff had stepped in to help with breakfast club and lunch time cover.

Covid-19

DN provided governors with the numbers of cases of Covid there had been among staff and children, and added that since the start of term 21 children had had PCR tests, most of which had been negative although the result of one test was currently awaited. She commented that the number of Covid cases in Oxfordshire schools was greater than the national average, and told governors that the view of both the DfE and the local authority was that schools should remain open. She said that this had meant employing a supply teacher to cover staff sickness, which was expensive and had implications for the budget.

DN confirmed that it was hoped to take the Year 6 on a residential in November. **KT** asked whether staff would still have to take two lateral flow tests when on the residential; **DN** replied that it was advised to do so although not compulsory. She said that DfE guidance was clear that only children of secondary school age should be taking the tests.

Behaviour Principles

DN reported that the DfE had asked that governors provide a written statement of behaviour principles, intended to help staff to be aware of and understand the extent of their powers in respect of discipline and sanctions. She reminded governors that the school already had a Behaviour Policy which is published on the school website and reviewed annually.

It was agreed that the Performance and Standards committee would take responsibility for preparing the statement. **Action: AI** to ensure that the statement is an item for the next committee meeting.

Pay Committee

DN reminded governors that the Pay Committee would have to be convened as soon as possible, as part of the staff appraisal process, and that it must consist of three governors. **Action: all governors** to let **TA** know if they have done the necessary training and can be included on the committee.

Concluding her report, **DN** said that it had been a lovely beginning to the school year as the children had been enthusiastic about returning to school and happy to be able to play with friends in other classes again. She expressed her delight that it had been possible to hold assemblies again, saying that for some children who had only started school last year, this was their first time experiencing assemblies in the school hall with other classes. She finished by saying that it felt as if things were finally moving forward again and that it had been a great start to the term.

11. **School Development Plan**

DN had circulated the current version of the SDP 2021-22 in advance of the meeting.

Priority One: The Quality of Education

Target 1(a)

DN mentioned the difficulties there had been over the last year in achieving engagement with the arts, but told governors that the school had now established a relationship with the Oxford Playhouse and that staff from there were working with children in Years 5 and 6.

Target 1(b)

DN highlighted two programmes around speech and language being used in Foundation Stage, saying that the school was adopting the NELI phonics programme for children who struggle with their reading. She commented that the disruption to school life over the last year had really impacted some children and that it was vital to support those children whose attainment and progress had suffered.

Target 1(d)

AL spoke about the ongoing review of the teaching of foundation subjects – history, geography and RE. He highlighted the work done by Liz McDonnell with the history curriculum, and said that there would be a working group of teachers put together to review the geography curriculum.

Target 1(e)

DN referred to the difficulty of teaching writing virtually, saying that giving meaningful feedback is extremely difficult. She commented that the link with the Oxford Playhouse will support the aim of achieving greater depth in writing in KS2.

Target 1(f)

AL explained that the teaching of maths is now focussing on fluency and promoting mental maths. He said that there had been tests of pupils' times tables knowledge in Year 4, and that the scores achieved could have been better.

SD asked how data is collected, and **AL** replied that there are termly assessments in school, but that the Year 6 assessments are externally marked.

Priority Two: Behaviour and Attitudes

Target 2(a)

DN said that Hannah Haynes had now taken over this area, and referred to the continuing importance of Pupil Voice.

Priority Three: Personal Development

Target 3(a)

DN told governors that an excellent parents' questionnaire had been devised.

Priority Four: Leadership and Management

Target 4(a)

DN emphasised how pleased she was for Emma Brown that she had been appointed to a Deputy Headship, adding that she had been able to promote two existing members of staff to leadership roles.

Target 4(b)

DN reminded governors that this section deals with a review of teachers' workload. She said that Paul Austin has just started a Masters course, which is very exciting for him and will be great for the school. He will lead on this target area, considering how the school supports staff, whether work can be done in a smarter way eg ways in which reports are written, how communication between staff is achieved etc.

TA thanked **DN** and **AL** for their work on the SDP, and emphasised that this is still a draft document which would be updated throughout the year.

12. Safeguarding

TA commented that most of the safeguarding points had been covered under item 10; **DN** agreed, adding that she had sent out the Safeguarding Policy for all governors to read. She also encouraged governors to attend safeguarding training (in person) on the next INSET day (Monday 1 November).

DN told governors that she had started work on the safeguarding audit, which would form part of her report to governors. **TA** offered to assist with the audit.

13. Health and Safety

In **VB**'s absence, **DN** reported that the roof had been repaired, and added that all issues were covered in the minutes of the Resources Committee which governors had received.

14. Governor Training

TA informed governors that they could book onto training courses via GovernorHub, and she asked all governors to look at the training course *Taking the Chair*. **Action: all governors** to book and attend training courses which would be useful, and to let **VB**, **TA** and **DN** know of training undertaken.

15. Resources Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

KT explained that the Minutes covered all points of the committee's discussion, remarking that the committee had been pleased to hear about the positive effect on funding produced by the number of new pupils.

The Terms of Reference for the committee had been updated and circulated via GovernorHub. Governors approved the Terms of Reference.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 18 November 2021.

16. Performance and Standards Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

AI told governors that the committee had looked at recent data, and considered progress in maths, writing and reading. She said that the new curriculum in the Foundation Stage had been discussed, and that she was hoping that Hannah Haynes would be able to talk to the next meeting of the committee.

DWJ asked whether it would be possible to make fuller use of GovernorHub for document sharing, and **TA** agreed that this was being looked at. The **Clerk** suggested that one issue with documents not being circulated a full 7 days before the meetings of the full governing body could be that committee meetings are held late, so that Chairs do not have sufficient time to complete the Minutes. **Action: TA** to email the Chairs of each committee to suggest that their scheduled meeting dates be brought forward, so that Minutes be uploaded to GovernorHub in plenty of time for the subsequent meeting of the full governing body.

The Terms of Reference for the committee had been updated and circulated via GovernorHub. Governors approved the Terms of Reference.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Wednesday 17 November 2021.

17. Curriculum Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

CR said that the committee had spent time reflecting on the Terms of Reference and how they could inform the focus of the committee for the year ahead.

She added that the committee had been hugely appreciative of subject leaders who had talked to them, especially since this had been a time when governors had been unable to visit the school personally. However, she felt that it was now the time to restart governor in-person visits as there was no substitute for governors being able to see the work of different classes for themselves. **DN** told governors that she would be happy to welcome them for visits, either individually or in pairs, and that this would be a very positive move; larger groups would not be possible as it was important to remain mindful of people's safety around the issue of Covid-19.

The Terms of Reference for the committee had been updated and circulated via GovernorHub. Governors approved the Terms of Reference.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 18 November 2021.

18. Any Other Business

Referring to the morning rota outside school, **TA** notified governors that **CR** was now unable to do Thursday mornings, and asked if governors could let her know if they could cover these times instead.

NS asked whether the current fuel shortage had affected the school; **DN** responded that it was on her list to check with staff in the morning.

TA recorded her thanks to **SD** and **AD** for having been willing to join the governing body.

19. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 30 November 2021

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

The meeting closed at 8.34 pm

CS 29.09.2021

