



**Minutes of a meeting of the full Governing Body  
of William Fletcher Primary School  
on Tuesday 30 November 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)  
Andy Dalglish (AD) (Co-opted) (from 6.40 pm)  
Stephanie Delargy (SD) (Co-opted)  
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)  
Kate Thorpe (KT) (Parent)

**Absent – apologies received in advance and accepted:**

Daniel Wickham-Jones (DWJ) (Parent)

**In attendance:**

Clare Saunders (CS) (Clerk)

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

**1. Welcome**

**TA** welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked governors for attending.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

**DWJ** had sent his apologies. These were accepted.

**3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests**

The **Clerk** had sent out a reminder to governors to complete the Declarations on Governor Hub as these have to be published on the website. **Action: AL** and **AD** to complete their Declarations of Pecuniary Interests on Governor Hub.

**OP** is now a governor at another school as well, and declared it on his Governor Details form when he joined the other governing body. In practice it was unlikely that there

would be any conflict of interest and the **Clerk** confirmed that as long as potential interests were declared at the start of the year – and as they arose during the year – this should not be a problem. **Action:** the **Clerk** to email Governor Services to highlight that one governor has joined another governing body.

#### 4. **Urgent Additional Items**

There were no items.

#### 5. **Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting held on 28 September 2021**

**item 5:** Declarations of Pecuniary Interests have already been discussed.

**item 7 (11):** Several governors did attend the training course: *Holding the School to Account* and this is for discussion later on the agenda. **SD** has completed governor induction training. **Action:** **AD** to attend induction training.

##### **item 9:**

*Governors' Code of Conduct* and *School Code* – some governors have confirmed that they have read and agree to abide by these codes. **Action:** **all governors** to ensure that they have read both the codes and to confirm on Governor Hub when they have done so.

*Headteacher's Appraisal* – this will be discussed later on the agenda.

*Link Governors* – **TA** thanked **KH** for completing the list of Link Governors and Curriculum Leads, as well as the guidance for governors. Action completed.

*Committees* – this will be discussed later on the agenda.

**item 10:** **TA** reminded governors of their duty to read *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and that they should confirm when they have done so, on GovernorHub. **Action:** **all governors** to make sure that they have read *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the Safeguarding Policy, and to tick the confirmation when they have done so.

The *Behaviour Principles* document was discussed at the Performance and Standards meeting. Action completed.

The Pay Committee met and their work has been completed. Action completed.

**item 14:** Governor training will be discussed later on the agenda.

**item 16:** Committee meeting dates were reconsidered and moved forward where possible. Action completed.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2021 were **approved** by governors, and signed by **TA**.

#### 6. **Chair's Items**

i. *Headteacher's Appraisal*

**TA** thanked governors who had responded to her about training for the Headteacher's appraisal, but said that in the end the only two governors who were available on the date which was chosen, was herself and **VB**. She emphasised that it was important to have several more governors trained up. **Action: all governors** to consider signing up for the appraisal training and to do so if possible.

**TA** reported that the appraisal had been held with David Burrows, a former Headteacher, as the adviser, and had gone well. All targets had been met. She emphasised that the last 20 months had been an extremely difficult time for everyone at school, but especially **DN** as the leader of the school, and that she had done brilliantly managing the school in such circumstances. She added that new targets had been set for next year.

(6.40 pm – **AD** joined the meeting.)

**TA** reiterated that governors should do the appraisal training as more trained governors will be needed for future appraisals.

*ii. Ofsted*

**TA** told governors that it was four years since the last Ofsted inspection and that although it was thought that inspections are now running almost two years later than they would usually be, it would not be a good idea for governors to become complacent. She explained that the school is ready for an inspection but that governors need to know what will be needed, and what might be asked of them if they speak to the inspectors. She added that governors should understand the work the school is doing, how its leadership is organised etc, and that last time **AI** had created a very useful document for governors to read in preparation for an Ofsted inspection, and that this could be updated.

**TA** said that a working party would meet on 10 January 2022 to look at how governors could prepare for the inspection. **NS** and **SD** both offered to attend. It was hoped that the meeting could be in person but it might be necessary to hold it online. **AI** added that whatever was discussed at the meeting would be shared with other governors.

*iii. Holding The School to Account – training course held 17 November 2021*

**TA** said that she had been disappointed not to have got on this training course, but that she was pleased that others had attended, and asked them to feed back. **NS** said that the session felt a bit rushed, perhaps because there had been so many attendees making comments in the Chat, that it was hard to keep track of all the contributions. He added that it had nevertheless been a useful course.

**SD** commented that it had been very aligned to new governor training, focussing on the need for governors to remain strategic, but that she felt there had not been enough emphasis on governors' need to understand how the school operates first.

**KT** added that the role of governors to ask challenging questions had been highlighted, and that the minutes of meetings should show evidence of the questions and the answers given. **VB** agreed, saying that the questions asked in meetings must be recorded and that the response should be typed underneath the question. Governors should also be able to compare their school to others in the local area, as well as being aware of the national picture. She said that the Headteacher's report should be the main source for questions.

**TA** suggested that the governors could have their own session, focussed on the school, to discuss the issues raised on the course. **KT** commented that the training had emphasised how vital it was for governors without a school background in their professional lives, to understand how the school functions. **CR** added that the course had warned governors against straying into operational matters. She suggested that the governors set up a “buddy” system for new governors, pairing them with more experienced governors. **TA** agreed that this was an excellent idea and that she would be happy to offer her help to the new governors. **Action: TA** to progress the idea of a buddy system.

## 7. Headteacher’s Report

A written report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**DN** invited questions on her report. Governors asked the following:

**NS:** Why are only 42 out of the 46 Pupil Premium children entitled to free school meals?

**DN:** If parental income is below a certain level, the child will be eligible for Pupil Premium – this is checked using the NI number. The child would also be entitled to free school meals. If the income increases at a later date, the child might stop being eligible for free school meals but the Pupil Premium grant continues for six years. Children adopted from care also receive the Pupil Premium grant but not free school meals.

**NS:** The results of the phonics check were lower than in previous years. Is the support that is being given to children who did not pass it extra, or would it have been done anyway?

**DN:** Phonics are taught in FS1 and Y1, and the check is usually done at the end of Y1 but this year it was not possible because of the pandemic. There are always some children who need additional phonics sessions in Y2, and they usually join with Y1 children for these. This year, some of the children are working nearly on target and will be there by summer, but other children need a lot more support.

**NS:** Could you clarify the staff training needs? Do all staff need training?

**DN:** All teachers need ongoing training to update their knowledge – for instance, around new strategies for getting knowledge into children’s long term memory. One teacher who has a journalism background is keen to do work on children’s writing, and has been undertaking training on writing at greater depth. Some training needs are identified when lesson observations are done; some relate to the targets in the SDP.

**SD:** Looking at the SEND register figures, there are fewer in FS1. Is this what you would expect as their needs have not yet been identified?

**DN:** Yes, the number in FS1 is always low because those children are new to us and we have not yet got to know them.

**SD:** Are the pupil progress meetings in line with the SDP or are they different?

**DN:** They are done to identify children who may have plateaued in their learning. The results have been different from class to class. Some children are struggling with reading

because they missed so much school last year; we are able to look at children's individual progress in these meetings.

**CR:** How often are the pupil progress meetings held?

**DN:** We aim to do one in every half term, so six a year, but sometimes it is difficult to keep to that if there are other events going on eg residential trips.

**CR:** 36 of the 42 children entitled to free school meals choose to have those meals; you say that this is due to the quality of the food. Is it your opinion or theirs that the food is not good quality?

**DN:** I meant that the food quality is good – the number of children choosing to have the meals is high, better than in previous years.

**CR:** I wondered whether there was a problem with not all dietary or religious needs being met by the providers.

**DN:** Fresh Start are very good – they cater for all tastes and requirements. We do try to work with families to encourage them to take up the free school meals but some parents have made up their minds that they do not want them. The family support worker is going to do a session with parents around healthy eating.

**CR:** The recent lesson observations focussed on maths. How do you monitor the areas for development and how do you measure success?

**DN:** When we have done a lesson observation we write about the lesson, what the teacher and teaching assistant have been doing. We go on to highlight the strengths in what we saw, for example lesson planning, the relationship between the teacher and the children. It is very important for the teachers to identify the strengths. There is always something which can be developed, for instance extending the children with higher ability in maths, and we will measure this by going back and seeing how progress has been made. We try to ensure that we have a professional, open dialogue with the teachers. They need to see lesson observations as a learning opportunity for their own development. As senior leaders we try to ensure that it is an open discussion with them.

**CR:** How soon would you expect to review progress?

**DN:** If there is an area of concern when we carry out the lesson observation, we will provide support, for example a senior teacher, for 4 – 6 weeks, and then do another observation. In my experience, when the next observation takes place, there has always been a noticeable improvement.

**CR:** How do you measure the impact of the visits and trips that the children do?

**DN:** The impact is difficult to capture in a meaningful way although one way is to listen to how the children talk about their experiences, for example the residential in Glasbury, and to see how they have developed their teamwork skills, used their initiative and tried things which they have never done before. Y4 go away for two nights and this is the first time that some of those children will have been away from home. I have seen children grow in confidence on that residential, the change is visible. This is particularly true of residential visits but on other trips they can develop a new interest in what they have seen or done.

**KH:** Is the staff wellbeing questionnaire standardised? What do you envisage it will show you?

**DN:** I used to use one produced by the HSE, then researched other wellbeing questionnaires. We want questions about whether the staff feel valued, what the workload is like, whether there is any bullying. The Senior Leadership Team need to understand how the staff are feeling. The questionnaire is just one of many tools we use to measure staff wellbeing, for instance listening to what is said in the staffroom.

**KH:** Is the questionnaire done annually?

**DN:** Yes, the survey is carried out as part of the health and safety programme on an annual basis.

**KH:** Is the survey anonymous?

**DN:** Yes it is.

**KH:** Is there a plan for the Rights Respecting Schools programme to continue when Amy Lancaster leaves?

**DN:** Yes, someone else will take on responsibility for it.

**KH:** Is there an opportunity for staff to feed back about training courses they have done, to other staff members?

**DN:** Yes, the staff usually feed back at the whole staff level. Paul Austin has done a session with the Senior Leadership Team about the first assignment for his Masters.

**KH:** How have you responded to the results of the school questionnaire which parents completed?

**DN:** Parents requested an internet safety session and this was arranged and carried out. We also ran a phonics session for the parents of FS1 children, as requested. We are hoping to carry on the good work done by Clare Pink with family links, picking up on themes which emerged from the survey.

**TA:** Did the online sessions have a good take up?

**DN:** The phonics session had 11 parents attend, which was disappointingly low. The internet safety session was run by our IT provider and parents from other schools attended so we do not know how many of our own attended.

**TA** thanked **DN** for such a comprehensive report.

## 8. School Development Plan

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

**DN** told governors that since uploading the newest version of the SDP, she had received **CR**'s contribution, and that she would add this.

**DN** told governors that the staff had been working hard on all areas of the SDP, especially the updated work around reading, and moving targets forward in writing. She emphasised that the SDP and the meetings with teachers are an important part of the governors' monitoring role. **TA** commented that there had been a lot of activity around the SDP this term, and thanked governors for their involvement so early in the school year. **NS** asked whether it was acceptable for there still be a few sections not yet completed for this term, and **TA** answered that making contact with their Priority Leads is a priority for governors but that governors all needed to manage their availability with competing demands on their time, and use their best efforts. **DN** agreed, saying that she thought it was extraordinarily difficult for governors to find the time for these meetings and that she was very grateful to them for the time they gave to the school.

## 9. Safeguarding

The safeguarding audit had been uploaded to Governor Hub before the meeting.

**TA** informed governors that an incredible amount of work had to go into pulling the audit together, and that it was important for governors to appreciate that **DN** had to spend a lot of time on the document each year. She commented that she had read it and that, from her point of view, the audit had been signed off. **DN** agreed, adding that the audit appears to get longer every year, with more information requested each time.

**DN** told governors that there would be a safeguarding review with the OCC safeguarding team in February, four years after the last one. She said that it would be good to have the review. The team would look at the single central register (which Sandra Morris keeps up to date, and which **TA** as safeguarding governor has to check), child protection and safeguarding records, policies etc to ensure that the school are doing the best they possibly can. **TA** recorded her thanks to Sandra Morris for her work on the register.

Governors had noticed two typos in the audit – section 5.1 (2010) and section 2.2 (DLS).

## 10. Health and Safety

**VB** reported that she had done a health and safety walk last Friday with **DN**, and that there were a couple of minor issues which are already being addressed.

**VB** said that there would be a health and safety audit on 14 December.

## 11. Governor Training

**VB** encouraged governors to sign up for the appraisal training, and also mentioned the *Preparing for Ofsted* course which would be very useful for new governors. The next time this course will be run is 8 February. She reminded them to notify her and **TA** when any training had been completed. **Action: all governors** to let **TA** and **VB** know when they have done any training.

**VB** informed governors that their training records are now downloadable from Governor Hub, and suggested that governors check their profiles to see the courses they have done.

## 12. Resources Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

**VB** reported that the committee had approved the Health and Safety Policy. She also highlighted that the school needed the new phonics system which would cost £7,000 but which was essential. She invited questions from governors.

**KH** asked whether the new person who was needed as a lunchtime assistant was in addition to the existing staff, or a replacement. **DN** replied that someone is leaving so the post was a replacement for them.

**SD** said that she had been unable to attend the committee meeting although she had gone to the other two, but that she would attend the meeting on 6 January. **TA** asked her to let her know after that which committee she would like to join, saying that none of the committees were short of governors so it would be for her to decide where she felt she could contribute the most. **Action: SD** to notify **TA** of which committee she will be joining.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 6 January 2022.

## 13. Performance and Standards Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

**AI** reported that the visit by Hannah Haynes had been very useful, as it was good for governors to get an insight into the changes that are taking place in foundation stage. She confirmed that the committee had approved the new *Behaviour Principles* document and that this would be published on the school's website. She added that the committee had discussed the need for a working party to prepare for Ofsted, and had arranged the meeting for 10 January.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Wednesday 5 January 2022.



**14. Curriculum Committee**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2021 had been uploaded to GovernorHub and circulated in advance of the meeting.

**CR** invited questions from governors. There were no questions.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday 6 January 2022.

**15. Any Other Business**

**TA** confirmed that the school would still need the governors to help with stewarding in the mornings and that she would set up a new rota for January onwards. **DN** agreed, saying that the current situation would continue for the foreseeable future. **KH** asked whether the school had considered installing an additional “in/out” gate by Skylarks classroom; **DN** replied that they had in the past, when the second extension was done, and that it would be revisited when the school expands to a three class intake, as it could be done as part of new building work then.

**16. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Tuesday 11 January 2022**

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

The meeting closed at 7.52 pm

CS 01.12.2021