

Signature of Chair:

Date:

**BOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL - FGB - NO.4**  
**Minutes 26 January 2021 - 6pm - Virtual Meeting via ZOOM**

**Present:** Melanie Bishop; Erin Blake (Vice Chair); Richard Drake; Anna Fay; Lesley Hodgson (Head); Anita Jellings; Tony Neal (Chair); Kathryn Tayler; Bella Westlake; Megan Heath (Clerk)

**In attendance:** Christopher Johnston (Literacy Lead Teacher); Amy Harvey (Maths Lead Teacher)

4.1	Apologies and Business Interests
4.2	Election of Chair
4.3	Minutes of FGB3 01.12.20
4.4	Matters Arising
4.5	Clerk's Update
4.6	Budget
4.7	SDP
4.8	Skills Audit
4.9	Headteacher Report
4.10	Staff Survey
AOB	CJ and AH Subject Lead Reports
4.11	Lead Governor Reports 1. Personnel 2. Premises 3. Curriculum 4. Safeguarding & Inclusion (Including Safeguarding Policy Appendix 3) 5. Community & Parental Links 6. Finance
4.12	RE/PHSE Curriculum
4.13	Finance Audit
4.14	Training
4.15	Policies and Procedures 1. Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions 2. Pandemic Policy 3. Finance Policy 4. Records of Individuals with Authority 5. Information Security Policies
4.16	Bow Times
4.17	Website
4.18	Next meeting

AJ opened the meeting as chair.

## **PROCEDURAL**

4.1 No **apologies** received. No changes to business interests.

AJ thanked governors for their support since she has been chair and for their leaving gift.

AJ steps down as chair. MH takes chair for the next item.

### **4.2 Election of Chair**

- It was agreed at FGB1 (15.09.20) that AJ would continue as Chair of Governors until the Spring term.
- TN has agreed to take on the role in a temporary capacity to allow other governors to undertake the appropriate training.
- All governors agreed to TN taking on the role of Chair of Governors.

- TN thanked governors for electing him to the position of chair. He explained how feedback is welcome as he chairs slightly differently to AJ.

TN takes over chair of the meeting.

4.3 **Minutes** from FGB3 01.12.20 were agreed as an accurate record.

4.4 **Matters Arising** from the minutes of the meeting on 01.12.20

- See 'Summary of Actions' document.
- Item 5.3.3 - The Finance Audit and the SFVS flagged no serious issues. This action was addressing the concerns that there are certain elements of school finance that only LH and SV can address and would be difficult to pick up should there be an emergency. This action is carried forward until restrictions allow a review.
- Item 5.8.2 - This item was as a result of the secondment and the positive feedback from staff. The COVID situation has prevented this action from being carried out. AJ will aim to discuss this with LH soon.
- Item 1.6.1 - This is now complete, however BW will now need to provide a photo.
- Item 2.15 - Carried forward.
- Item 3.5.1 - This item is complete. No feedback has been received from staff.
  - *Governors asked if LH has received any feedback from staff regarding this budget communication.*
    - LH explained that she is not aware of any. All schools are under pressure and staff are aware of this.
    - AF explained that the message was clear and understood by staff.
- Item 3.5.2 - This item is complete.
  - *Governors asked if LH had confirmed any additional subscriptions at the staff meeting.*
    - LH confirmed that suggested subscription renewals or purchases were reviewed at the staff meeting. MyMaths runs out in March and costs £350. EdShed runs out in October and costs £350. Twinkl would cost £220. However, Phonics Bookclub was cut due to the cost of £500, and that it is only used by KS1, rather than the whole school. FOBS have voiced an interest in funding this and are looking into alternative funding streams locally (Den Brook Windfarm and the Co-op Shop).

**ACTION: BW to send MH photo for the school website.**

4.5 **Clerks Update**

- The Finance Audit results were as expected for governance, this will be picked up later in the meeting.
- The Development for Clerks course is underway. It is an intense course and MH is learning a lot about governance. MH thanked governors who have volunteered to act as appraisers for part of this course. This course has flagged some minor issues that MH will raise with TN via email.
- The updated Governor Contact Detail document is on the back room. However, there will be another updated version soon to address TN's new position as chair. All contact information will remain the same.

- MH requested that governors double check the email addresses they use to send emails to other governors. Many have been sent this week that have needed to be forwarded to the correct addresses to ensure all governors receive them.
- MH reminded governors that CJ and AH are due to join us at 7pm to discuss their subject lead teacher reports.

**ACTION: MH to email TN regarding issues raised in the Clerks Development training.**

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

### **4.6 Budget**

- There is little change in the status of the budget since FGB3.
- The Benchmarking exercise; the SFVS; and the finance audit have raised no major problems.
- The capital is ok.
- The revenue position has been challenged by County. They have not yet replied to the schools justification. This lack of reply could be down to the fact that a majority of schools are in this same situation.
- There is currently £14,000 worth of COVID expenses. There is currently no means of claiming this money back.
- The repairs budget is overspent for the year.
- Both the catering and supply teaching budgets are underspent.
- We are currently in the forecast position.
- The overspend on TAs is £12,000. The needs of individual children are being taken into account. Due to the current restrictions, shared support has had to stop, meaning more 1:1 TA hours required. This overspend also covers the pupils safety. Pupils' home situations mean that some pupils cannot function without extra support. County are unwilling to exclude pupils, and this would be a likely consequence of cutting TAs.
- Pupil and staff safety always comes first.
- This current version of this year's budget is yet to be approved. Some items were 'shaved' by SV and Suzette. This will be agreed in FGB5.
- Next year's budget needs to be addressed. County will flag the projected imbalance. The forecast will be studied and options discussed.

**ACTION: LH to bring current budget to be agreed at FGB5.**

### **4.7 SDP**

- *Governors asked how the SDP is progressing.*
  - LH explained that the SDP is currently on hold due to the school closure.
- LH had a meeting with the School Improvement Partner (SIP). The SIP reviewed the website; catch up programme; and relevant policies. The SIP noted that the mental health and wellbeing of the pupils is being handled well.
- There are twice daily ZOOM meetings for all pupils which are being well attended.
- The catch-up programme is on hold due to time constraints. The teacher who has been employed for catch up has not got time to individually call children.
- Vulnerable children, including children struggling to access the online curriculum, are being offered places in school.
- The school is fully DFE and PHE compliant. All staff feel safe and know what to do.

- The school is addressing diversity by having the classes study the same areas of focus, every two to three weeks covering different abilities.
- *Governors asked how full the school currently is and what is the capacity.*
  - LH explained that in the beginning it was 35%, nearly 40 places. Following a communication, explaining concerns for the safety of both staff and pupils with the high pupil numbers, it is now 20% - 25%, which is far more manageable. Many parents initially expected their children to be in full time.
  - There is room for 1 or 2 more pupils per class.
  - This increase in numbers from the previous closure was expected as the list of keyworkers is longer than before.
- *Governors suggested that TN and LH should amend the SDP to take the current closure into account.*
  - LH agreed. This will be prepared for FGB5.
- *Governors asked how many of the pupils are currently in school full-time.*
  - LH stated that there are 8-10 pupils in full-time, across all classes. Following the communication regarding the concerns of numbers, parental cooperation was good.
- *Governors asked if the school feel confident that all of their vulnerable children are being supported adequately.*
  - LH explained how any pupils not participating in the ZOOM lessons are phoned by the school and any child that is struggling with their work is invited into school. An example was given of a family who have very poor internet reception and it has been arranged their child comes into school twice a week.

**ACTION: LH and TN to amend the SDP and bring to FGB5.**

#### 4.8 Skills Audit

- MH will send out the questionnaires again from the Babcock model skills audit.
- Governors were requested to reply send the replies back to MH as soon as possible so that results can be gathered in time for FGB5.

**ACTION: MH to facilitate skills audit.**

### STATUTORY REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

#### 4.9 Headteacher's Report

- See 'Headteacher's Report document.
- Additional items include:
  - Staff COVID testing is starting on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January.
  - The DfE have allocated the school 13 Chromebooks, meaning the school now has a total of 44 Chromebooks.
- Attendance rates were good.
- *Governors asked how the school having 11 pupils with an EHCP compares locally.*
  - LH explained that this figure is very high and is expected to rise up to 13-14 pupils with EHCPs.
  - The SEND register has many pupils with significant needs. 2 more children on the register are awaiting EHCPs.

- The school is meant to contribute £6000 towards support for pupils with an EHCP, however this figure was reduced to £2450 for the last 2 EHCPs perhaps due to the high number within school and the effect on the budget.
- There have been issues accessing speech and language support due to repeated rejections, despite educational psychologist recommendations.
- *Governors asked how many more EHCP pupils there can be before general teaching is impacted.*
  - LH explained how she does not know as this is a new situation. Their needs are met by first quality teaching and extra support.
  - Each child is different and requires different levels of support. A child on their own cannot sustain focus. Some children are disruptive whereas others are not.
  - Autumn data showed pupils making great progress throughout the school.
- *Governors asked if there is any indication of SEND levels in the upcoming September intake.*
  - It was explained how there are currently several with speech and language issues.
- *Governors asked if the Early Year testing was going to be carried out (following an article explaining that this was not mandatory but encouraged).*
  - LH and AF explained that this has already happened. The results are good, it enables a comparison to take place later in the school year to show the pupils progress.
  - *Governors asked if there were any 'red flags'.*
    - AF explained how it is difficult to tell as it was completed so early in the year. This will be picked up over time. Early Years is largely about social development.
- *Governors asked what extra steps are being taken to help staff morale during this closure.*
  - LH explained that nothing extra has been put in place. Staff have been stating that coming into work has given them a sense of normality and has been a grounding experience for them. Staff child care issues are being worked around. There are no extra pressures being loaded onto staff and everything is discussed at staff meeting to allow points of view to be aired.
  - *Governors challenged this not matching the low morale mentioned in the headteacher's report.*
    - LH explained how this is a tough situation and it will be reviewed if any staff member is really struggling.
    - AF explained how staff are good at supporting each other. The current lockdown and reduced numbers of pupils and staff in school means that socially distanced staff interaction has actually increased.

#### 4.10 Staff Survey

- This is the first time the staff survey has been produced in this format, therefore there is no comparison. It is not clear whether the quartiles mentioned are local or national.
- The favourable results are in the following areas: purpose and direction; local line management; safeguarding; and overall satisfaction.

- Training satisfaction is lower. It was noted how much percentages can be skewed by one staff member.
- Communication has been highlighted as an area for development.
- Strategic management (governance) is ok but could be developed.
- *Governors asked if there was any follow up regarding the hygiene result.*
  - LH explained how before the closure, unions were saying that it was not safe to be in school. A staff meeting was held where risk assessments were shared. Staff were asked if they felt safe and they all said they did. Some staff have needed to be reminded to keep 2 metres apart.
- Governors discussed what the next steps should be following the survey results.
  - TN will write to staff to introduce himself as chair.
  - The draft minutes from the FGB meetings will be circulated around staff, so they can raise any key points or flag concerns.
  - *Governors asked AF, staff governor, if she felt that this is something staff would be interested in.*
    - AF explained how some staff may be interested whereas others will not be.
    - It was suggested that staff are reminded that the confirmed minutes are available on the website.
    - It was noted that sending them in an email will make them feel more involved and could encourage commitment. It would also make the governors more accessible.
- Governors stated how they were conscious that they are currently not being seen at the school. It was stated how governors are welcome to observe staff meetings.

**ACTION: TN to send a communication to staff introducing himself as the new chair of governors.**

CJ and AH joined the meeting.

### **AOB Literacy and Maths Subject Lead Reports**

- CJ and AH were welcomed to the meeting and asked if they could talk through their subject reports.

#### **Literacy - CJ**

- See 'Literacy Report for Governors - January 2021' document
- These assessments were carried out during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of term, following the full reopening of the school. They give a good indication of how far they had slipped during the closure.
- Year 3 has not shown the same levels of improvement as the other year groups. This is largely due to the high numbers of SEND pupils in this year group. There is only one child who is not at 3 or more points below ARE. There is the capacity for some of the pupils to achieve ARE, however a majority will not. Most of these pupils have made progress.
- Writing is good across the board. There is room for improvement.
- Actions being taken include: learning walks; investing in resources, including reading materials to encourage good writing; targeted spellings; pupil premium support being accessed (due to a majority of pupil premium pupils being behind); and a programme of support that is ready for roll-out when schools reopen.

- The aim is to get both year 2 and year 6 closer to national average by the end of the school year.
- There will be another baseline assessment carried out when schools reopen.
- Literacy home learning has received good engagement so far.
- *Governors asked how the targets are set.*
  - CJ explained how they are looking at pupils who can make a terms progress. It is dependent on the pupil. The target is set at children being one point behind, to achieve ARE.
- *Governors asked if he is comfortable with where the highest achieving pupils currently are.*
  - CJ explained that he is. The best readers are the ones who read all the time anyway. The more children read the better they are at literacy due to its links with writing and spelling. Some pupils that were at greater depth have slipped to just below due to being out of practice.
- It was noted how the March targets will most likely not be met due to it being anticipated that school will not have reopened by then.

#### **Maths - AH**

- See 'Maths Report for Governors - January 2021' document.
- AH has completed mastery training and is now training to become a Mastery Specialist.
- AH explained how all teachers are engaged with the mastery programme and as pupils progress up through the school there should be no need to plug any gaps due to solid foundations of understanding.
- The timing of the closure was unfortunate due to items about to be rolled out.
- AH was planning lessons with individual teachers, however this has paused due to closure.
- Parents struggle to support pupils at home due to difference in the way maths is taught. The White Rose package is very good quality and should help with home learning.
- All years groups made great improvement in the autumn term.
- Year 5 were not scoring as well as expected due to gaps in learning. A daily 'mini maths lesson' has been introduced for all classes, in an attempt to plug these gaps. This is separate from their usual maths lesson.
- *Governors asked about the large March target for year 5.*
  - AH explained how some of the results of the September assessments were much lower than they should have been. Some children do not perform well in assessments. These pupils have made great progress. It was also noted that the tests have a wider range of material in them, than the children had been taught at that point in the year.
- It was noted how it is good to see the progress in the Early Year class.
- Governors thanked CJ and AH for their attendance and stated how impressed they are with their progress.

CJ and AH left the meeting.

#### 4.11 Lead Governor Reports

##### 4.11.1 Personnel - MB

- MB had a meeting with LH in December.
- The Pay Policy is complete.
- All appraisals are complete.
- The SDP was going well.

##### 4.11.2 Premises - RD

- There is nothing new to report.
- The new windows are due to be fitted during February half term.

##### 4.11.3 Curriculum - AJ

- Two learning walks have been carried out.
- The RSHE curriculum was heavily revised in September. The school used external resources to adhere to this. This area is developing well. Linda Williamson (RSHE lead teacher) is currently off work, a supply teacher is covering this. It was suggested that BW follows this up in the summer term.

##### 4.11.4 Safeguarding & Inclusion - KT

- There is a new appendix to the Safeguarding Policy that needs to be agreed.
- KT attended training last week (see 'Some Points of Interest following Jon Galling' document). This training raised many points acknowledged in the new appendix.
- The 2 major areas covered in the training were the challenges of safeguarding in rural areas; and the 70% increase in 'violent child abuse' in the South West was particularly concerning.
- Safeguarding Appendix 3 to be agreed by governors.
  - Proposed by KT. Seconded by MB. Agreed by ALL.
- KT has been in touch with the SENDCo and will meet with her soon.
- *Governors asked if KT has been able to view the Safeguarding Log recently.*
  - KT explained that she has not been able to attend school due to COVID restrictions; this will be picked up next term.
- *Governors asked if there are currently any issues within the Safeguarding Log.*
  - LH explained that there are not. All remote contact with pupils is logged on CPOMs.
- *Governors asked if LH has received the new Devon Threshold Tool.*
  - LH has not received one recently.
  - KT has the newly updated Devon Threshold Tool, this will be sent to LH.

**ACTION: KT to send LH to new Devon Threshold Tool.**

##### 4.11.5 Community & Parental Links - EB and BW

- A learning walk was carried out in December regarding pupil wellbeing.
  - Governors commended staff for the feeling of 'normality' in school (while adhering to restrictions).
  - The pupils seemed happy to be back at school.
- Parents are struggling. There is nothing we can do to support them, without further burdening staff. The daily ZOOM meetings are helping ease the pressure.



#### 4.11.6 Finance

- The finance audit results have arrived. The result is good. There are a few flags, one red, but generally reassuring.
  - The red flag is regarding a subscription for the Beano award that is run as an annual direct debit from a credit card. This is considered against financial guidelines and classes as a non-compliance, and therefore needs reporting to FGB.
  - *Governors asked why the direct debit is coming out of a credit card.*
    - LH explained it is due to the school not having a bank account.
  - An action plan is being prepared and carried out. The audit then needs to be resubmitted and presented to FGB.
- The SFVS needs to come through FGB. It has been drafted and is currently with LH and SV.
- The SFVS skills audit will need to come through the RES committee, due to TN being both Chair of Governors and Finance Governor.
- The Finance Policy has asked for changes to be made, however there is nowhere to input these changes. The County policy is very out of date. A new one is expected and will need to be adopted when available.

#### 4.12 RE/PSHE Curriculum

- The policy and plan needs to be presented on website for parents to view. Parents need to understand that they can withdraw their children from this part of the curriculum.
- Parent consultation will involve directing parents to the website.
- It was questioned whether this was RE, PSHE or both.
  - It was explained how there was an overarching policy for all to go onto the website, which will articulate which elements will be taught.

**ACTIONS: 1. LH, AJ and BW to ensure that the relevant information is presented on the school website.**

**2. AJ to look at other local school websites to see how they present the information.**

#### 4.13 Finance Audit

- See item 4.11.6.

#### 4.14 Training

- EB has postponed her NGA Development for Chairs course due to time commitment pressures in current lockdown.
- BWs Induction for New Governors has been rebooked due to her being unable to attend the previous one.
- BW will look into booking introductory curriculum training.

#### 4.15 Policies

##### 4.15.1 Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions

- There are no changes to this policy.

**ACTION: MH to ensure that 'Track Changes' is turned off on this document.**

##### 4.15.2 Pandemic Policy

- There are no changes to this policy.

#### 4.15.3 Finance Policy

- There are minor changes to this policy, including some changes in responsibilities and finance limits.

#### 4.15.4 Record of Individuals with Authority

- There have been minor amendments made.
- The amount of money reflected did not match with the Finance Policy.

#### 4.15.5 Information Security Policies

- Carried forward.
- These are currently being worked on.

#### **ACTION: MH to add Information Security Policies to FGB5 agenda.**

- There is a new version of the Lettings Policy. There are currently no lettings so this will be picked up when it next appears in the annual cycle.

4.15.1 Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions; 4.15.2 Pandemic Policy; 4.15.3 Finance Policy; 4.15.4 Record of Individuals with Authority:

- Proposed by AJ. Seconded by KT. Agreed by ALL.

### **COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNICATION**

#### 4.16 Bow Times

- Notification of new Chair of Governors.
- Message regarding Finance Audit.
- A thank you for ZOOM lesson participation to both parents and teachers.

#### 4.17 Website

- Policies
- Update all documents relating to chair.

4.18 **Date of the next FGB meeting** is Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 at 6pm.

Governors agreed to cancel the T&L2 meeting due to school closure meaning there is little to discuss on agenda.

#### AOB Meetings

- It was noted how the agendas are full with lots of papers.
- TN and MH are to agree a process to ensure all correspondence comes through MH with a deadline for meeting papers.