



Our inclusive school is a place of creative learning where all talents are developed, celebrated and enjoyed. We nurture all to be curious, passionate and resilient lifelong learners. As a community, we listen to, forgive and love one another so all can be confident in who they are. Inspired by Jesus we walk beside each individual in our family by understanding and responding to their unique needs. We have hope in all our children that they grow to be open, compassionate people of the world who stand up for what is right.

Compassion – Friendship – Forgiveness – Resilience – Hope

**Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting
Held at the School
Monday 27 November 2023**

In attendance:

Tom Bird, Headteacher, David Milham (Appointed/Chair), Steven Penny (Parent), Revd Sandra Marsh (Ex officio), Sarah Siddiqui (Staff) (attended remotely), Dan Sutch (Appointed), Rosaleen Burgess (Parent), Charles Low (Appointed).

Also, in attendance:

- Ros Golden (Assistant Headteacher) planned - due to technical issues did not attend remotely as planned
- Lorraine Bondzie-Mensah, Sarah Halliday (Trust Finance Team)
- Louise Barr, Local Governance Professional

Apologies accepted: Rob Norris (Appointed),

		Action
	Procedural	
1.	Welcome, Prayer, Introductions & Apologies 1. Governors & Trust visitors (LB-M & SH) were welcomed to the meeting 2. Apologies had been accepted from Rob Norris (Appointed), Governor SM led governors in a prayer. The meeting was quorate.	
2.	Declaration of Business Interests 1. Business / Conflicts of Interest Relevant to the agenda. None	
3.	Governor Body Business/Constitution None	
4.	Minutes of the last meeting of the Governing Body, Actions Arising and Chairs Actions 1. The minutes of the last Full Governing Body Meeting and confidential items held on 2.10.23 were agreed for content and accuracy and were signed off by the CoG electronically on GovernorHub. 2. Matters & actions arising from last meeting:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundation Governors – Chair to check scheme of delegation re ratios plus SM to give name/introduce potential foundation gov to LB-M - This would remain as an on-going item – ITEM CARRIED FORWARD. Further information/discussions were needed re: - What was the criteria for a foundation governor – needed confirmation from diocese - a practising Christian only or ok to uphold the values of the Church? - Were all governors expected to be foundation governors? - Do current governors serve their current term and then become Foundation Govs? - The GB was not up to full capacity re numbers. Chair wanted to recruit Co-Opted (2 x year term) – to run projects – how would this fit? - Governor SM (ex officio) had contacts within PCC and could possibly have someone to nominate to join the GB. - Exit interviews – what could be done @ local school level – LB-M - School values updated on agenda/minutes – clerk COMPLETE - Agenda item for next meeting: Risk assessment for residential trip COMPLETE - Safeguarding incidences log – comparison requested for this year versus last – H/T COMPLETE - Aspects of “matters arising” were confidential and have been reported on separately 	
School Improvement		
5.	<p>Headteacher Report including Pre-School Supporting papers: Headteacher report T2 was circulated to governors prior to the meeting (via GovernorHub) and the following was additionally discussed:</p> <p>1. Headteacher Report – T2</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>Staff growth had helped day to day operations with lunch times better managed (ie calm). There remained the frustration of illness amongst staff however.</p> <p><u>TA Recruitment</u></p> <p>The Headteacher informed governors of a trend that he had observed - that applicants for TA vacancies had all been parents of late. Far less “external” applicants were being received.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that this wasn’t in itself a problem – there were many benefits of parents becoming TA’s. However, confidentiality was the real issue. Governors supported the Headteacher – everyone, both staff & governors had to respect confidentiality. A member of staff who was a parent had to recognize that there was a dividing line. It was also how it was perceived by other parents and that confidentiality needed to be respected on all sides. Charing - was a small village primary school.</p> <p>Governors discussed with the Headteacher where did he recruit from? Kent Teach & social media mainly. It wasn’t a question of qualifications, some in fact would be considered over qualified for the role (which was another risk) and class teachers were happy with the level of TA support they were receiving. Pus the good thing about employing a parent as a TA was that they were already invested into the School. For the parent - working at the school didn’t incur travel costs if they were</p>	

already dropping off their children most mornings. **It was an issue around confidentiality for the School.**

Governors recommended that this was an area that could be repeated as a reminder to staff members not just part of their interview or as part of the induction process but perhaps it should be built in as part of the annual safeguarding training that all staff members were required to comply with.

Opal Play

Governors were updated with the Opal Play Project:

- £2K budgeted for this and part of sports premium budget will also be allocated.
- Assistant Headteacher RG – Lead & training for staff from Feb '24
- Basic premise: teaching children how to play properly using their imagination; outdoor play & learning whatever the weather; all age groups/years mixing and playing together eg mud kitchen
- Provision for outdoor clothing will be provided – wellies, wet weather gear etc
- Looking for donations for equipment – crates, tyres – to be sourced from local community/businesses
- It will be great for making better use of the school's asset – it's outside space.
- School will have a project mentor who will help the school start the project slowly and develop it over time.
- Governor volunteer needed – Rob Norris who whilst could not be at the meeting – had been approached and had agreed to be delegated - as the governor responsible – all other governors approved of this.

Pre-school

Governors commended the news that the pre-school was full and all those children attending had settled well.

How well Charing pre-school children (Rabbits) had settled into Year R – was a measure of the success of the pre-school ie the transition from pre-school into the main school. All the phonics and number work had set them up really well and impact of this early learning whilst at pre-school was being demonstrated.

Historically, pupils joining Year R had much lower starting points (baseline assessments). This was changing which Governors commended and was a solid endorsement of having created the pre-school.

Behaviour for Learning

Governors asked about “behaviour for learning” after the school improvement advisor (JAJ) NoV report in September (submitted & discussed at the last meeting)

H/T reported that the report findings had been taken on board and discussed with Angela Matthews (former EHT) who had also watched a PE lesson and observed concerted efforts being made to improve.

School Improvement Advisor (JAJ) was due to make another visit to the School in 2 x weeks time. The CoG advised Governors that behaviour for learning was good at the school and pupils were engaged but the last SIA visit had coincided with a school photo day and routines had been a little disrupted. CoG felt confident that it would behaviour for learning would be “good” on her next visit.

Attendance

Attendance was a big area of focus and a meeting planned for tomorrow with the Attendance Team from KCC.

It was agreed Governors CL & SM would monitor attendance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What the school was doing about improving attendance - Were there good days/bad days for attendance; were there patterns emerging? - Focus on celebrating good attendance and rewarding pupils for this. <p>The Headteacher informed Governors that he would encourage parents to make Dr's appointments after registration time and bring their children in for "marking in", before taking them to their appointments.</p> <p>Action: H/T to encourage parents wherever possible to book their children's Dr appointments after registration ie after 9.30am – so their child was marked "in" for the day.</p> <p>2. <u>Parking Situation</u></p> <p>Parking was getting worse as the School grew and cars a growing congestion issue - at the beginning and end of the day.</p> <p>The H/T informed governors that he was setting out a new system for a trial period of 3 x weeks to try and improve the situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KS1 children picked up at 3.05pm - KS2 children picked up at 3.15pm <p>Whilst some families had siblings in both KS1 & KS2 it was hoped that overall this could help alleviate the parking situation.</p> <p>Governors asked would this change impact on statutory hours legislation? No, it will increase by an additional 5 x minutes.</p> <p>Governors discussed the issue and suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parents could park in the Market Place and class teachers could walk the children down at the end of the day? - walk to school scheme? <p>Aspects of the Headteacher's report were confidential and so have been reported on separately</p>	
6.	<p>School Vision There were no items.</p>	
7.	<p>School Improvement Plan An updated SIP would be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p><u>SEF</u> The Headteacher made some reflections:</p> <p>With attendance figures going down, plus the FLO role having been lost – this was creating extra work for SLT and class teachers - but not a significant amount. Home visits (now being done by the H/T) also took up valuable time.</p> <p>However, the School wasn't where it needed to be in terms of attendance.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H/T to compare last year's attendance figures to this year's for Governors – looking at seasonal variations (impact of winter coughs/colds) plus highlighting any other trends or patterns <p>Governors supported the Headteacher – attendance did need focus and improvement. Some parental mindsets needed changing – ie those parents that were difficult to engage and these were the parents the School needed to target in terms of attendance.</p>	

	<p>Governors discussed parental coffee mornings and the need to change the dates of times of these regularly to try and widen the opportunity for a wider group of parents to attend. Those perhaps who wouldn't normally attend. Perhaps members of SLT and Governors could attend specific sessions to answer any questions they may have.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Finance <i>The following supporting financial supporting papers had been circulated to governors via GovernorHub for their review.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance Report Year T2 Governor Meeting - Governor Report Term 2 October 23 - Cash Flow Forecast '23 <p>Governors had received and noted the commentary re financial situation and the following was noted:</p> <p><u>High Needs Funding</u></p> <p>This was the biggest worry, Governors noted, and was a county wide issue, driven by the fact that the local authority had no money.</p> <p>The School would only receive funding for pupils with EHCP moving forward</p> <p>2 out of 5 pupils on SEN register had an EHCP which equated to 70% potential loss</p> <p>This impact would be felt in 2026 in resources such as 1:1 teaching assistants, learning materials but funding was protected for this year. The application process was expected to change in 2025. HNF was only allocated on a yearly reapplication basis and the School had already been seen a dip in claims being approved.</p> <p>For the 5 x pupils expected to receive HNF – last year, this had been successfully received. So far this year, only 1 x pupil had received this extra funding. The School will lose 37K if funding for the other 4 x pupils is not received. The Headteacher and Head of Inclusion would continue to chase this. It was hoped that funding would be received for at least 2 x pupils.</p> <p>Governors were agreed – it didn't change the fact the need was still there. It would be difficult for a child who was in receipt of this kind of support for it to be taken away.</p> <p>A teaching assistant position would be recruited for on the basis of wrap around care – but the Headteacher advised Governors they should be mindful that if the HNF was not received in full for the 5 x pupils – the school would out of pocket. Governors were agreed - continuing to monitor this situation was vital.</p> <p>Governors asked if there was anything that the School was not committed on?</p> <p>It will be difficult to plan financially next year with the worry regarding the future of HNF. As always, the budget was committed to staffing contracts and other commitments that were already in place.</p> <p>This was a problem for all Kent schools. Applications for high needs funding had also been traditionally backdated – with the idea that it could provide help for short term need, eg recovering from an operation. This was now in question.</p> <p><u>Economies of Scale – Trust Wide Contracts eg BT</u></p> <p>A meeting was planned next week for discussions to start regarding Charing joining the Trust wide contract with BT (a contract direct with BT avoiding use of a sub-contractor). This might include expenditure re re-wiring – Governors noted. Governor SP to monitor & oversee this initiative.</p> <p>Governors asked why were Electricity costs running above 50%?</p> <p>This was because a purchase order had been put on the system for the whole year. This should adjust & reduce over time</p> <p>Thanks. were expressed to both Lorraine & Sarah</p>	

9.	<p>Governor Monitoring Monitoring visits were planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance: CL & SM - Christian Distinctiveness: CL & SM - Reading: DM <p><u>Working in Monitoring Pairs</u></p> <p>CoG & H/T agreed to discuss & plan monitoring pairs schedule – for governors to do visits jointly which allowed for wider discussion/comparison & questioning plus a greater opportunity to “bounce” ideas off each other.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CoG/H/T to post a proposed Monitoring Pair Schedule on GovernorHub once finalised. <p>Governors asked about whether class assignment (governors) should be included as part of this?</p> <p>CoG said Governors should have 1 or 2 subjects to talk to subject leaders about re priorities that covered strategic vision.</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Meeting Reports & Visits The following reports were received by governors (posted on G/Hub) prior to the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NoV LP 20.9.23 H/T appraisal & EYFS Language project 2. NoV LP 5.10.23 SIAMS plus Book Scrutiny 	
11.	<p>Procedural</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Risk Management/Matrix Summary Report/GRC One Database</u> Risks for monitoring included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High Needs Funding - Attendance – both staff & pupils - Site perimeter 2. GDPR – No breaches. 3. Health & Safety Report – No significant incidences to report 	
12.	<p>Compliance (including website) <u>Risk assessment for Residential Trip (Kingswood) (end of Jan '24)</u> This would be shared with Governor SP- Risk Monitor – initially and then recommended to Governors. Governors noted that a large proportion of the risk assessment was created from Kingswood own knowledge & risk assessment</p> <p><u>Website</u> A volunteer was needed to monitor website compliance. DS agreed to be responsible for website compliance and to start his monitoring during T3 & 4.</p>	

13.	<p>Policies Governors were requested to approve the following local policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Behaviour Policy 2023 <p>Governors requested that the tracked changes be highlighted for all local policies and posted onto GovernorHub for their review. Approval to be agreed via G/Hub.</p>	
14.	<p>Governor Training <u>Aquila In-house Training</u> Governors were reminded that details of Aquila training were circulated via G/Hub.</p> <p>Plus, the usual reminder about the following information/training websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGA on line • The Key <p><u>Cyber Security Training</u> Action: H/T to post link to Cyber-Security Training onto GovernorHub and all Governors requested to complete it.</p>	
Other		
15.	<p>Any other business</p> <p><u>Governor Meeting Schedule 2024-25 (next year)</u> To be agreed in the Term 6 meeting of this year ie 15 July 2024 Action: Tabled as an agenda item - clerk</p> <p><u>Celebrating Pupils' Outside Achievements</u> Governors asked whether the School celebrated children's successes outside school eg gymnastics, football, karate? Yes, these things were always celebrated but perhaps more could be done. Getting them to lead on certain occasions, football or gymnastics coaching; incorporating their expertise within teaching & learning and celebrating in the classroom.</p> <p>A balance would need to be maintained, however, for those pupils whose families did not have a lot of extra cash to put towards outside clubs and interests, which Governors wholly supported.</p>	
16.	<p>Confidentiality There were 2 x items reported separately.</p>	
17.	<p>Closing Reflections A closing prayer was given by Governor SM, including "develop that child to what they can achieve beyond what they think they can...."</p> <p>Governors were thanked, and the meeting closed at 7.08pm. Next Meeting:5th February 2023</p>	