



Harwell Community Primary School

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Governors of Harwell Primary School
Held on 17th November 2020 via google meet starting at 7.15 pm**

Meeting held with full governors only

To review the vacancy on the FGB for a co-opted governor as Ann Parham has completed her term of office. Two candidates were being considered - Joanne Ray and Dan Wellstead. Both had completed skills audits. The FGB had also completed skills audits which had been analysed. Following a discussion, it was agreed that both candidates had skills which would support and enhance the governing board. After a vote, Dan Wellstead was appointed as a co-opted governor with Joanne Ray as an Associate Member.

1 Welcome and apologies

Attendees:

Aisha Nevers (AN) Chair	Richard Thompson (RT)	Frances Williams (FW) Vice Chair
Janice Markey (JM)	Kirsten Christensen (KC),	Tom Gowers (TG) Vice Chair
Chris Smith (CS)	James Thorne (JT)	John Dickens (JD)
Joanne Ray (JR) AM	Danielle Reilly (DR)	Sue Greatbanks (SG)
Dan Wellstead (DW)	Bryn Gibson (BG) Head teacher	

Apologies: all present

The meeting was quorate.

Present: Jane Moreton – Clerk,

Appointment of new co-opted governor: Dan Wellstead Mentor: Chris Smith

Associate Member: Joanne Ray

Action: advise governor services, update GIAS database

Procedural / Governor matters

2. Declaration of Interest on agenda items

None declared.

3. Approval of minutes of last FGB meeting held on 30th September 2020 and matters arising

Minutes were accepted by FGB and a printed copy will be sent to the Chair of Governors for signature.

Doc ref 3.1

Actions from the September meeting. All completed apart from:

SCR governor visit - booked for next week

Safeguarding training -some completed.

Action: all outstanding governor safeguarding training to be completed by FGB in February

Strategic matters

4. Policies for ratification

Headteacher - Behaviour, Anti bullying to be reviewed and brought to February FGB for ratification. Started reviewing this as a matter of urgency SLT and staff, liaising with OCC Learner Engagement to support with that.

Action: to be added to February agenda

Working party

Policies reviewed and recommended that they be ratified. Confirmed by FGB.

Resources committee

Policies reviewed and recommend that the FGB ratify the policies. Confirmed by FGB.

Pay & Performance

OCC model policies accepted and recommend that the FGB ratify the policies. Confirmed by FGB.

Educational Effectiveness committee

Remote Learning approved and recommended that FGB ratify the policy. Confirmed by FGB.

PPg

PE Premium

Both reviewed and agreed by the EE committee and recommended ratification by FGB. Confirmed by FGB.

Action: relevant policies to be updated on the website

5. Headteacher Report

Document available for governors to read and ask questions before the meeting (ref 5.1)

BG explained that since completing the report:

- the SLT is looking at a reallocation of TAs to support the children. There are three classes with a significantly higher level of need. SLT will be speaking to staff this week and the changes will be in place next Monday. The school can only make any staff changes after a weekend due to Covid restrictions.

- Recorded incidents - there have been more bullying allegations which involve a single child as the perpetrator. There is sufficient evidence of one confirmed case of bullying. As a result, there was a long meeting with parents discussing the seriousness of the issues, the parental cooperation required and the actions being taken by the school. The school has already put a lot of support into the class, but there is enough evidence to confirm that bullying has happened. The school are:

- Supporting the targeted children
- Supporting the child who is the perpetrator
- Supporting parents and staff

There is a need to change perceptions with restorative work to enable the class to move forward. This involves a child with very clear and identifiable special needs.

[Governor comment](#) (JR): recently completed safeguarding training included contextual safeguarding. There was a link to a TED presentation by a social worker which she will send to BG.

Headteacher report - BG discussed:

Safeguarding - several TAF have closed but there are quite a number of children identified as having social care involvement and their families are at assessment which is the level above TAF.

SEN - A number of children in FC have already been identified. However, it is early days and it is likely that there will be a few more identified as SEN. There have been additional children coming into school via appeals with identifiable SEN needs. The school level of SEN is considerably above local and national figures.

EHCP - recently a family had moved out of the area reducing the number of EHCP children in school but there are several applications in the pipeline. BG anticipates that EHCP numbers will be in double figures by the end of the school year. This is partly a reflection of lockdown plus the needs become greater as the children get older. This is reflected by the number of TAs being deployed across the school.

Attendance - all groups with an* is lower as takes into account Covid absences but in the overall school figure, the school is not penalised for covid absences. Without covid, the school is doing well for attendance.

RAP - please also see [HT report to EE committee](#)

Vision - quite a lot of work has been completed this year in reinforcing and reminding the children of the 4 Rs (Respect, Resilience, Resourcefulness and Responsibility). An example was given of assemblies, for remembrance, the service given by all aspects of the armed forces over time was remembered and respected. This has linked in with the new RSE curriculum. There has been good work across the school celebrating differences.

The Barn - this is working well in a covid safe way. Numbers have been impacted to a degree with lockdown with numbers down. Costs are being covered and The Barn is just about breaking even.

Premises remedial work - PE equipment inspection takes place next week. There has been some roof snagging work. External lighting around the school during lockdown has made a significant difference to the safety at the end of the day. Light fittings in the swimming pool enclosure have been replaced with waterproof fittings and LED lights.

[Governor Submitted Questions and Answers](#)

(RT) With 2020 having been very tough economically for so many, how confident are we that all potential PPG children are correctly identified and continue to be so? What measures (if any) are there in place to encourage parents of children who are new entrants to this category to make themselves known to the school?

This is a standard part of the data collection form for all new pupils including in year transfers. The school did a general email to all parents during the first lockdown and can do a follow up to include this in a parent weekly briefing. If teachers hear something which they feel might mean a family is having difficulties financially, they are asked to advise a member of SLT so that the parents can be sensitively approached.

(JT) How has the prolonged absence from school during the first absence affected behaviour in the classroom? Has there been a significant change from before March?

There has been a change in behaviour within some classes compared to pre-March.

The numbers of children identified with SEND has increased and the nature of their needs has deteriorated in some cases which has led to increased incidents in some classes.

SEND is an increasing priority across the school. It has been a focus of several staff meetings and additional resources have been directed to support children identified with SEND both in terms of provision and behaviour support.

The School's Oxsit support is being used to target the three classes with especially high needs SEND to support the staff in deploying effective provision.

With the high number of pupils with additional needs in year 4, how is the school approaching meeting their needs given the current staffing restrictions due to COVID?

Year 4 has been particularly affected post lockdown.

As a result of an increased need, additional support staff hours are being directed to support the class. In addition, both the HT and SENCO (past and present) have been supporting the class teacher to ensure the provision within the class reflects the need. Furthermore, additional external support has been brought in including Educational Psychologist time, Emotional Literacy Support, Behaviour analysis support. OCC Learner engagement team has been contacted to further support the school's efforts to support the class moving forward.

Additional governor questions?

(JD) SEN plans - finance lags behind - is there a challenge? *Yes, there is currently a lot of money being spent and longer term this is not. The school can support this in the short term as there was a financial carry forward - one year possibly two. An EHCP typically takes 22 weeks to process and any money agreed will help. Another EHCP request was submitted today.*

(JD) There has been a lot of additional work on top of covid - how are the staff? *If we get everything in place, children settled and well there will be a balancing impact. The more the children and their needs are supported, there is better behaviour, children are easier to teach, it is easier for staff wellbeing etc*

(AN) It has been an unusual year - are there enough resources? *The school can always do with more. BG commented that the SLT and all the staff have been tremendous and he is very grateful to them. They regularly go above and beyond. It is remarkably tough at the moment. Not being able to move staff around the school makes it very difficult to manage. It is also difficult for staff - e.g. SLT can't all be in the same room, staff can't socialise in the staff room etc. As Headteacher, BG is very conscious of staff wellbeing.*

6. Strategic Priorities Review

BG and SLT have reviewed the RAP. AN & FW have discussed having a meeting for governors to reflect on where we now are. To be able to step back and reflect on the vision, develop a monitoring plan following a strategic discussion. A virtual meeting for all governors and then break out to review differing parts of the RAP.

AN has had her first meeting with BG as Chair of Governors. She commented that it was good to listen to BG's view of the school.

Governor comment: (TG) the FGB needs to have a strategic overview also looking at longer term priorities as well as the shorter term priorities with the RAP. TG to send some methodology used successfully in his work to AN to consider.

The Education inspection framework with descriptors of what good and outstanding schools look like will be part of the review.

Governor question: (JR) Pupil Voice - School Council - can a vision for the school from the pupil's perspective be included? *School council meetings have not been held due to the difficulty of crossing bubbles. BG working with AN to 'capture the pupil voice'. Will be good for the children to have a view of governors and their role within the school. Potentially a survey for the children. AN attended yesterday's assembly and saw how the children participated virtually.*

FGB Workshop was agreed - December 9th

7. Link governors RAP priorities and remote monitoring

Action: Governors to look at the RAP in advance and let AN know which priority they would like to work on and she will allocate link governors.

In the breakout sessions, there will be more in depth discussions about the remote monitoring which is ongoing.

Governor comment: (JM) recently attended a training course on remote monitoring. Approximately 80% of monitoring is completed remotely under normal circumstances. Governor monitoring can be via a telephone call to staff or a virtual meeting. Preparation is key - have questions ready in advance. Some visits into school can be completed in a covid safe way.

Governor comment: (SG) EE Committee is heavily female and Resources heavily male. DW was assigned to the EE committee and JR to Resources.

8. Committee Updates

Educational Effectiveness

Minutes were available to all governors before the meeting. Ref 8.1

Q&A submitted in advance

(TG) Since the re-introduction of phonics within class bubbles, how have the children responded and how will progress be managed given the restrictions on moving between ability groups?

Feedback on data was given at the EE committee. Phonics has suffered and continues to be an issue as pupils cannot currently be ability streamed. The school is trying to provide 'catch up' within bubbles and tiers. Staff have been divided into tiers - KS1 tier (Years 1 & 2) allows a little flexibility but increases the covid vulnerability. In the forthcoming staff reallocation, the school will be deploying a TA with good phonics skills in the KS1 tier specifically to boost phonics. The school has also increased TA hours in KS2 for targeted phonics training. Lockdown has had a clear impact on both phonics and comprehension skills. External RWI support has been sought plus inhouse training.

Terms of Reference - agreed by FGB

Change from previous year is the monitoring of remote education during the pandemic

Action: ToR to be added to the website

Resources

[Minutes](#) were available to all governors before the meeting. Ref 8.2

[Terms of Reference](#) - agreed by FGB

Action: ToR to be added to the website

Pay & Performance

Teacher Salary recommendations review to be completed this week. Salary increases will be included with November salaries, backdated to 1st September.

Terms of Reference - to be reviewed and be brought to the next meeting

Action: to be included in the February agenda

9. Communication

AN sought feedback and suggestions from governors as the FGB are not interacting with school as they would do normally.

- Joining an assembly when possible
- Join the start of a staff meeting to keep in touch
- Virtual coffee with individual staff? **Action:** DR to talk to staff as this is a really nice idea. She will canvass staff views about how staff and governors can integrate with each other
- A regular opportunity to highlight an individual staff member. This could have some pupil input

General communication

Parent survey - 55 responses so far, survey ends on December 2nd and governors asked to encourage parents to respond. Governors agreed that a balanced view must be taken when analysing the responses. The last 9 months have been quite emotive for many people and so the responses will be taken in context. Governors will reflect on the comments but also ensure that the staff feel valued. Results and responses to the survey will form part of the strategic discussion on December 9th.

Governor comment: DR commented that when governors have personally thanked staff, this has had a massive impact on staff morale and wellbeing.

Governor question: (FW) Has there been any feedback from staff of how parents have responded to the Covid situation? This is an area of discussion at this week's staff meeting as virtual parent consultations have just been completed. Parents have been very understanding with the difficulties faced by the school.

Governor comment: (DR) Teachers have appreciated the positive interaction with parents. It is important for both staff and parents to have understanding.

BG advised that there is a very visible staff presence at the gates, both morning and afternoon.

Governor comment: (AN) Can governors give feedback at staff meetings? The interactions between governors and staff will also make monitoring easier and more effective. If staff have an understanding of the governor's strategic role this will help in creating common language. Perhaps align the coffee idea with link governors?

OTHER MATTERS

10. Health & Safety

JT reported that on 14 October, he had completed a face to face governor visit in a Covid safe way. This was reported fully to the Resources Committee.

For the Action Plan 2020/2021, only 1 item was carried forward - work related stress. **Action:** FW to meet with BG to discuss taking this forward.

The OCC annual audit was completed yesterday. The report is due in a couple of days which will support the Action Plan.

11 Safeguarding

RT completed a virtual visit to complete the annual safeguarding return. He also looked at the LADO audit which had some recommendations for best practice. Nothing of any significance was revealed in the annual audit but a few minor items to consider. Some numbers need to be added to the annual return and this can then be submitted.

SCR review - remote visit with SBM booked for next week

Governor training - TG and AN need to renew their generalist safeguarding

DW and JR to completed safeguarding training

Action: governor safeguarding to be completed before February FGB meeting

12 GDPR

No SAR, FOI or Educational Record Requests since the last FGB meeting.

The school has added a banner to the website re cookies and policy.

The Key are updating their list of what maintained schools must publish online

13 Governor Effectiveness

AN reminded governors that there is a lot of virtual training currently available and urged governors to take advantage of this. This is quicker than face to face training as there is no travel time and there are no restrictions on numbers attending.

Governor self evaluation - AN is updating the questions from last year. **Action:** this is to be shared and be completed asap

14 AOB

OGA - details of a virtual meeting were included in today's School News - JM to attend

Open Morning - thanks were given to all the governors who had volunteered to help with this. The current lockdown and PHE advice has meant that the face to face virtual tours have been cancelled.

This has been replaced by a google meeting. AN to take part as Chair of Governors.

Covid catchup spend - can governors have details of how this is being spent? This will be discussed fully at the next round of committee meetings. Work thus far includes the targeting of individual children, exploring different tutor organisations, staff working within tiers to provide booster work.

Meeting finished at 9.17 pm

Next meeting - Wednesday 9th December - link to be sent

ACTIONS

Ref	Action	Responsibility
1.1	Advise OCC Governor Services of new governor appointment	clerk
1.2	School to update DfE governor database	BG
3.1	Approved minutes to be added to the school website	BG

4.1	The Behaviour and the Anti Bullying policies - review to be completed and brought to FGB in February for ratification	BG
4.2	Policies ratified by FGB to be added to website as appropriate	BG
7.1	Governors to look at the RAP and let AN know which priority they would prefer to review before the workshop on December 9th	ALL
8.1	Educational Effectiveness committee Terms of Reference to be added to the website	BG
8.2	Resources committee Terms of Reference to be added to the website	BG
8.3	Pay & Performance Terms of Reference to be added to February agenda	Clerk, AN
9.1	Discuss the virtual coffee idea with staff - how can staff and governors integrate?	DR
10.1	Meet to discuss a plan on staff work related stress	FW, BG
11.1	all outstanding governor safeguarding training to be completed by FGB in February	FW, AN, TG, DW, JR
13.1	Governor self evaluation questionnaire to be completed and sent to governors	AN
14.1	Link for RAP workshop to be sent to governors	BG

Key Dates for 2020-21

	Autumn Term			Spring Term		Summer Term	
FGB	Wednesday 30 September	Tuesday 17 November	Wednesday 9 December	Tuesday 9 February - afternoon		Wednesday 19 May	Wednesday 7 July 6pm start
Educational Effectiveness		Tuesday November 10th 6:30 pm start		Wednesday January 20th	Wednesday 24th March		Wednesday 7th July combined with FGB
Resources	Wednesday 14th October			Wednesday 13 January		Wednesday 21 April	

JEM 17.11.2020

Signed:

Pay & Performance	Wednesday 23 September HT - PM (tbc)	18 November Teacher Salary review			Tbc March HT - PM		
Gov-staff breakfast		Thursday 17 December cancelled			Wednesday 31 March tbc		
Governor staff joint meeting - RAP priorities							Wednesday 7 July 3:30 start
Open Morning and evening		Google meet Saturday 21 November					
Meeting for new FC parents							tbc
Clerk to Governor Appraisal	tbc						