



**Harwell Community Primary School**

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Governors of Harwell Primary School**

Held on 9th February 2021 via google meet starting at 7.15 pm

The meeting was held during a national lockdown with the school partially open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children. All children were accessing learning delivered remotely by class teachers.

**Harwell School Vision:** At Harwell School our vision for your child is to help them to develop a love of learning, along with the skills and the ways of thinking to excel at whatever they choose to do in the future.

**1 Welcome and apologies**

**Attendees:**

Aisha Nevers (AN) Chair	Richard Thompson (RT)	Tom Gowers (TG)
Frances Williams (FW) Vice Chair (joined 7:37)		
Janice Markey* (JM)	Kirsten Christensen (KC),	John Dickens (JD)
Chris Smith (CS)	James Thorne (JT)	Danielle Reilly (DR)
Sue Greatbanks (SG)	Dan Wellstead (DW)	Joanne Ray (JR) - AM (joined 8:33)
Bryn Gibson (BG) Head teacher		

\*Janice was simultaneously in a FGB meeting at Long Furlong School  
Apologies: all governors present

The meeting was quorate.

**Present:** Jane Moreton – Clerk

AN welcomed governors to the meeting and explained that with the current lockdown and the additional pressures on the school, the agenda was concentrating on critical and statutory items only.

**Procedural / Governor matters**

**2. Declaration of Interest on agenda items**

None declared.

**3. Approval of minutes of last FGB meeting held on 17th November 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 Action:* Minutes to be added to the website

## **Approval of minutes of last FGB RAP Review meeting held on 9th December 2020**

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

*Doc ref 3.2*

Actions from the November meeting. All completed apart from:

Behaviour and anti bullying policy review - **Action:** carried forward

Virtual coffee meeting staff and governors - meetings being kept to a minimum at the moment

Work related stress meeting - **Action:** carried forward. RStaff wellbeing is regularly discussed at SLT meetings. This is taken into account when planning activities, trying to take a little pressure off all staff.

Safeguarding training -some completed.

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

## **Strategic matters**

### **4. Covid Working Party Report**

The Covid Working Party met on 3rd February 2021.

The document was shared with all governors to read and ask questions before the meeting (ref 4.1)

It was confirmed that all governors had read the document. SLT had answered all questions and provided as much information as possible.

#### **Additional governor questions?**

**(AN) Does the school anticipate numbers of children in school increasing further?** Yes, more children were added today in response to wellbeing concerns for the children concerned. There are also a number of parents asking for spaces who are finding it really challenging to juggle remote learning and working from home themselves. The school has identified some children who will benefit from a short time in school e.g, one day a week. These children would come under the heading of those the school would consider vulnerable.

**(JD) Is there a limit to the number of children the school is able to manage with the staff available?** The school is trying to keep to no more than 15 children per class. This is the maximum manageable and is then also helping to reduce the transmission of Covid.

Effectively, there are two schools, the large number of children in school and the online school.

At some points, the operation of the school has been precarious with staff illness. Fortunately, the school has had student teachers from Oxford Brookes at a crucial time. The school was just able to keep open.

**(TG) How do the numbers attending school compare to other local schools?**

The Oxfordshire average is 20% whilst Harwell is at 35%. The local average varies due to the breadth of school types within the partnership. Talking to other schools, some have slightly more and others have significantly less. In Didcot, some have high number of vulnerable children rather than children of critical workers

**(RT) Are all parents claiming to be key workers actually key workers?**

The current definition is very wide and the guidance is clear that it is one worker in the household. The school has taken parents on trust. Experience in the last lockdown was that employers will provide a letter confirming key worker status. The school can appeal to parents' sense of moral purpose but don't try and make parents feel guilty. A few classes are at capacity on some days and the school is

using part time provision to try and share out the load e.g. have asked questions like which days parents need to have or why are they asking now, having managed thus far. The school has also said no when necessary.

#### Governor comments

(AN) Governors are conscious that the school has done a phenomenal job in getting up and running to be able to provide online learning within a day. So much work going on behind the scenes and the remote learning is still aligned closely to the curriculum.

(DW) - The Remote Education policy was in place at the time of the November FGB and this forward planning was impressive enabling the school to cope with the current lockdown.

BG responded that the school had reflected after the last lockdown. The Leadership team and staff worked together. The introduction of google classroom on a regular basis got the children used to using the technology. Year 4 had to close for a positive case for a 2 week period and they trialled the system - tested the model well and gave the school further feedback and an opportunity for reflection. This enabled the school to roll it out on a large scale in January very quickly.

The school has also listened to both parents and staff making tweaks and adaptations where possible to try and make things smoother for both staff and parents.

#### 5. Strategic Priorities - affect of Covid on the school

The governor meeting on the RAP in December started a monitoring plan for the remainder of the academic year. However, this was prior to the current lockdown. The Covid effect on the school's priorities has been an impact on the ability to meet RAP priorities.

This had been discussed by AN and BG as part of their regular meeting.

Priority 1, 2 and 3 are being concentrated on as the most important areas to focus on.

**Priority 1:** Quality of education

**Priority 2:** Behaviour and attitudes

**Priority 3:** Personal development

A range of pupil assessments were carried out before Christmas and this will be repeated when all the children are back in school. The school will then be able to assess what the impact of the lockdown has been. The phonics screening check for Year 2 (they had missed this at the end of Year 1 due to a previous lockdown) had been completed. All children reached the required level - 100% . The school has been able to keep a form of phonics teaching going throughout lockdown.

Parent feedback on the remote learning was captured in a recent google form sent out. This exercise will be repeated if the school is not fully back on 8th March. Olf the school is fully open then there will be a slightly different form to get parent reflections on the lockdown to try and make improvements for any future remote learning.

Pupil feedback will be provided by Year 6 (both those in school and those accessing remote learning from home) Using an afternoon google meet, governors can have a conversation with the pupils enabling children to give direct feedback on remote learning and breadth of curriculum. Governors will also be able to assess wellbeing of children.

Virtual meetings to be held in the week of Feb 22nd possibly - depending on the government announcements:

SG and DW - meet support staff during their regular google meet on Thursday afternoon (25th)

JT, FW and JR - meet teachers during their regular staff meeting on Wednesday after school (24th)

RT and KC - Year 6 google meet (flexible on which afternoon)- tbc. AN and JT indicated that they will both be available if work commitments do not allow for a google meet for link governors.

AN to create a google document for questions from governors so that BG can share these with staff ahead of the meetings.

**Priority 4:** Leadership and management - meeting with SLT focussed on wellbeing of staff and personal development. Then to meet with subject leaders later in the year.

## **6. Committee Updates**

### Educational Effectiveness

No meeting held since the last FGB meeting due to Covid

### Resources

[Minutes](#) were available to all governors before the meeting. Ref 6.2

(CS) The agenda for the meeting was scaled back to concentrate on the critical aspects.

It was confirmed to the FGB by CS (link finance governor) that the SFVS had been submitted to OCC in line with the original deadline of 31st January. The document was examined thoroughly by the Resources Committee - there were no issues that gave governors cause for concern. The DfE had subsequently delayed the deadline to help schools until May.

### Pay & Performance

Terms of Reference - had been reviewed and were agreed by the FGB

**Action:** To be added to the website

BG advised governors that mid-year reviews for teachers have been postponed due to lockdown.

## **7. Communications - parent survey review**

The results from the survey and an analysis had been prepared by JM and FW and made available to governors before the meeting. There had been good engagement from parents.

Breakdown into sections made analysing more straightforward. FW highlighted key findings to governors.

Positive comments/feedback from parents in the current lockdown had been shared by the school with governors.

Next steps: Governors decided that a summary of the analysis should be communicated to parents and a plan for actions following the survey. This will include responses on what the school is not able to do. There is a weekly communication to parents on a Friday. **Action:** FW to prepare a summary of findings or a brief thank you with detailed analysis to follow to the school by Friday 12th February.

### Governor comments and questions

[There is always continuous improvement but generally parents are happy. There were concerns raised about bullying?](#)

The school was supporting some children with a bullying issue that was happening at the same time as the parent survey in November. This was around one class and had magnified the results. The school is

continuing to work to support other children as well. The SLT is looking at the behaviour and anti bullying policies as the school approach needed updating and they are working with OCC Learner Engagement on this. A restorative approach is being introduced. The school works with children regularly to identify what bullying is and what it isn't. Unkind behaviour is not acceptable either. There needs to be a personalised and individual approach, centered around a restorative approach, fixing and modifying behaviour rather than purely punitive. This is not excusing behaviours but restoring a working relationship with the individuals. There was whole staff training held on the 27th January. There will be a follow up and BG is working to establish a 'restorative champion' in the school.

(JD) [Were there any surprises in the survey?](#) Communication always comes up - too much for some parents whilst for others there's not enough. SEN was a challenging area - changes of staffing and the Covid period has meant that it has been difficult to support the children as effectively as the school would have liked. County SEN is under pressure. Locally in Didcot, interventions and provisions have closed - e.g. The Den, Art therapy. There are areas that the school needs to continue to work on.

(JD) - [improved responses from previous years and the comments were generally very positive.](#)

(RT) [What percentage of families does the 77 responses represent?](#) This figure will be shared with governors

## **8. Governor visits and training**

Governors to update documents with any virtual visits and urged to take advantage of virtual training opportunities.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

### **9. Health & Safety**

(JT) - the OCC audit has happened since the FGB meeting in November. The report had only 3 minor issues which have been added to the H&S action plan. One action has been completed.

The minor items from the H&S governor visit have all been completed.

The school is pressing forward with plans for residential trips for Years 4 and 6.

Confirmation has been received from OCC H&S that the school swimming pool can be used in the Summer Term for lessons for our own pupils. No decision yet on letting out of the pool.

### **10. Safeguarding**

(RT) The Annual report to the Local Authority has been finalised and submitted.

A Single Central Record (SCR) review visit has been completed virtually. All was in order and up to date.

The SCR has been reformatted into a spreadsheet which is readily understandable.

#### [Governor questions](#)

(RT) [will a LADO review visit be arranged this year?](#) BG has contacted them to try and arrange an audit -potentially April but they are currently waiting to see what the government announcement about lockdown is on 22nd February.

(JD) [Safeguarding in remote education - how is this being handled?](#) The school is mindful of staff having 1:1 google meets - safeguarding with Teaching Assistants in the c classroom. The school did have to remind some children about the appropriateness of their behaviour. The E safety aspect of remote learning has gone well.

### **11 GDPR**

No SAR received.

## 12 AOB

DW has suggested a governor 'whatsapp' group - it was discussed and decided that this would be useful - e.g. reminders of meetings, quick conversations, team building. These are not to be used for discussions/decisions which need to be properly minuted **Action:** DW to set up for committees and FGB

Governors expressed their gratitude to all the staff at the school for their continuing hard work during the Covid pandemic. BG will share this with staff and also thanked governors for their support to the school.

Meeting finished at 9.04 pm

Next meeting - Wednesday 19th May 2021 at 7:15pm

## ACTIONS

Ref	Action	Responsibility
3.1	Approved minutes November FGB to be added to the website	BG
3.2	Review of behaviour and anti bullying policies	BG
3.3	Work related stress meeting	FW, BG
3.4	Outstanding governor safeguarding training	AN, DW, JR
6.1	ToR Pay & Performance committee to be added to the website	BG
12.1	Whatsapp groups to be established	DW

## Key Dates for 2020-21

	Autumn Term			Spring Term		Summer Term	
<b>FGB</b>	Wednesday 30 September	Tuesday 17 November	Wednesday 9 December	Tuesday 9 February - afternoon		Wednesday 19 May	Wednesday 7 July  6pm start
<b>Educational Effectiveness</b>		Tuesday November			Wednesday 24th		Wednesday 7th July

JEM 09.02.2021

Signed:

		10th 6:30 pm start			February		combined with FGB
<b>Resources</b>	Wednesday 14th October			Wednesday 13 January		Wednesday 21 April	
<b>Pay &amp; Performance</b>	Wednesday 23 September HT - PM (tbc)	18 November Teacher Salary review			Tbc March HT - PM		
<b>Gov-staff breakfast</b>		Thursday 17 December cancelled			Wednesday 31 March tbc		
<b>Governor staff joint meeting - RAP priorities</b>							Wednesday 7 July 3:30 start
<b>Open Morning and evening</b>		Google meet Saturday 21 November					
<b>Meeting for new FC parents</b>							tbc
<b>Clerk to Governor Appraisal</b>	tbc						