

Shebbear Community School
Draft Minutes from the Part One Governing Board Meeting
held on the 4th December 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

17/2023 Welcome; receive and sanction apologies for absence:

Mr N Alford (Head Teacher)
Mr A Goode (Co-opted Governor) (Chair)
Mr D Hurley (Co-opted Governor)
Mr J Quance (Co-opted Governor)(re-appointed at this meeting).
Mrs A Fuller (Staff Governor)
Mrs P Kirby (Local Authority Governor)
Ms E Trace (Co-opted Governor)
Mrs S Woollacott (Parent Governor)
Mrs S Hawker (clerk).

The meeting was quorate.

There were apologies received from Mrs A Bernstone, Mrs T Brock and Mr A Skuse (all parent governors). These were sanctioned by governors present.

There is currently one Co-opted Governor vacancy.

Mr Goode requested all present to stand for one minute's silence as a mark of respect to Jo Dymond, our School Improvement Officer, who has sadly passed away.

18/2023 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest:

No new declarations were made. Existing declarations are:

Mr N Alford - on the ICO for Little Bears Pre-School
Mr A Goode - family member working in school
Mr J Quance - family member working in school
Mrs S Woollacott - parish clerk for both Shebbear and Buckland Filleigh parish councils.

STRATEGIC ITEMS

19/2023 Governor Recruitment:

Mr Goode welcomed Mrs Fuller to the meeting as the new staff governor to replace Miss Curtis, he commented that it was nice to have a member of the teaching staff back on the governing board.

He advised that Mr Quance's term of office expired on the 22nd November 2024 so, as at the beginning of this meeting he is not currently a governor. Mr Quance left the room at this stage. Mr Goode proposed that Mr Quance be re-appointed as a co-opted governor, seconded by Mrs Kirby and agreed by all present. Mr Quance was invited to re-join the meeting and advised that he had been co-opted on for a further four year period.

He advised that we currently still have one co-opted vacancy to fill, however we have had an expression of interest from a grandparent of children at the school. They are currently away, but hopefully we will be able to co-opt them at the next meeting.

MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

20/2023 Head Teacher's report:

Mr Alford's report had been put onto Governor Hub in advance of the meeting for governors to read.

He started by advising that numbers remained good and information from Little Bears Pre-School indicated that there would be ten pupils to join us in September 2024.

Safeguarding: He reported that there have been no incidents involving sexual behaviour or language, nor cases of harassment. We currently have five Looked After Children in school all of whom have settled well and are making progress, however we may be due to lose one of these shortly due to the placement breaking down. We are in the process of arranging for a piece of software to be installed on the various ICT devices which is a network monitoring system, as per KCSIE. This will allow us to ensure that inappropriate searches and sites are not been sought nor accessed throughout the school.

Q: Will the system alert you to this? JQ A: Yes. Additionally, we can set the parameters. NA

Mr Alford advised that we had received one complaint, which had been fully investigated by an external investigator (Karen Reeves, Head Teacher from Monkleigh Primary School), and this was found to be an unsubstantiated allegation.

Attendance: The Attendance Information Officer (formerly EWO) Kate Wilson is due to visit the school shortly. More responsibility has been devolved down to schools and we are now responsible for administering absence fines etc. Whole school attendance for this academic year so far is 96.1% .

School Development:

Pupil Progress: Mr Alford confirmed that the Baseline Assessments have been completed and sent to the DfE, however we do not have the results from these. There will be no KS1 SATs this year, but we will be doing our own assessments to monitor progress. He showed governors the SOAP (School On A Page) document.

Q: What does the Q3, Q4 and Q5 mean? A: They refer to the quintiles or which fifth we find ourselves in compared to other schools e.g. top 20% or bottom 20%. NA

Q: Is 5 good and 1 bad? ET A: No, 1 is good and 5 is bad. NA

He then showed governors the DfE progress scores, based on last year's KS2 SATs. These demonstrate that our maths and writing were both good, however the reading was below average, although not dreadful. He advised that Devon is one of the lowest performing authorities

Q: Why? DH A: We don't know, and neither does Devon at the moment. NA

Mr Alford added that we have been teaching maths in small cohorts for children who are below the expected level in an attempt to accelerate progress, which has worked. Particularly when you bear in mind that the current Y7 were the worst year group for engagement during lockdown. We are now going to employ the same strategy with reading. We have two things to crack: children getting to a higher level and lower ability children.

Q: Is this a problem because of the high number of disadvantaged children in school? A: In some cases. The current Year 2 have some children in that situation, possibly due in part to Covid. NA

Mr Alford then advised that 90 % of our current Year 1 children are on track to pass the Phonics test next summer - this is the best group that we have ever had; the five Year 2 children who did not pass last year continue to make steady progress but are not flying.

Q: What are you going to do about this? JQ A: extra repeat sessions with individual children. NA

Mr Alford confirmed that we did really well in the Year 4 Multiplication last year with us being above the national average (21.8 v 20.2), with 33% of our children getting full marks against 28% nationally. Interestingly, research indicates that your month of birth can make a big difference to how well you do.

Our predictions for KS2 SATs next summer are good and much better than last year, and should be in line or above the national average. However, due to small cohorts 2 or 3 children can make a big difference to our results. He concluded with:

* Julie Stevens (SIP) has yet to come in for her visit;

*we are looking at delivering Booster sessions again to the Year 6 children next term to help prepare for SATs.;

*there are lesson plans available on Governor Hub showing our new ICT curriculum which is going well;

*he has applied for £1200 funding from the DfE for Mental Health Lead Practitioner training;

*the SENDCo report is available on Governor Hub;

*the Ackland family are visiting on Friday morning with Sir Geoffrey Cox MP in the afternoon.

21/2023 Governors' Reports:

Ms Trace reported from her New Governor and Overview of the Primary Curriculum courses, with both reports available on Governor Hub. She found the New Governors course useful in terms of specific things, for example expectations of governors and resources available. The Overview of the Primary Curriculum was perhaps a bit generic, covering overall responsibilities and accessibility for all, and she would be interested to do one to aid her particularly in her role as Maths Governor.

Mr Skuse has also attend the New Governor course and his report is available on Governor Hub. As Mr Skuse was absent, he was unable to expand on how useful he found the course.

Both governors are booked on the virtual Visiting Your School course tomorrow.

Mr Goode, Mr Quance and Mrs Kirby recently visited to carry out a fire risk assessment, site security risk assessment and general health and safety walk around - this report is also available on Governor Hub. Following an incident when pupils left the building at another Devon school, they queried the safety of our current system, however after discussion it was agreed that it was more secure than perhaps it was being given credit for. Mr Alford commented that there is always the difficulty in finding the right balance between pupil security and fire safety. Generally, governors felt that the school needs a bit of a tidy up, and this had already been identified for action with the next non pupil day being used for this, together with an ICT equipment audit.

22/2023 Clerk's Report:

She confirmed that we have had no data breaches since the last full Governing Body meeting.

She continues to circulate weekly emails from Devon Association of Governors and the checklist from Devon Governor Services. She encouraged governors to let her know training needs.

23/2023 Financial Reports:

Final Audit Report: This was on Governor Hub ahead of the meeting. All categories have been given a green rating, which is a very good result. Points raised will be addressed throughout the year.

Capital Fund: As reported to the Resources meeting, this fund has a zero balance and remain so until the next financial year.

Extended Schools: As reported to the Resources meeting recently, this fund remains in credit in the sum of £1806, despite nearly £400 fees yet to be credited to our account. The clerk is currently tracking this down with Devon Finance. Forecasts going forward look viable.

School Fund: The most recent bank statement together with the reconciliation were tabled for governors, showing a current balance of £2155.93.

Budget Plan to support the SIP: This clearly indicates how the School Improvement Plan is to be funded to address the school priorities. The clerk reminded governors that this plan is 'fluid', and may well change slightly through the year, for example depending on training opportunities arising etc.

FRS: The FRS including month 8 data was circulated to Governors via Governor Hub before the meeting; this shows that we are now forecasting a carry forward of £39486 which is lower than before. However, this is mainly attributable to the staff pay rises and also the allocation of some additional time to ensure that there is adequate cover throughout the school day. We have also recently purchased some additional teacher laptops as we are having problems with some of our ones. There were no questions about this. The report will be sent to Devon County Finance Team.

ACTION: FRS REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED TO DCC BEFORE THE END OF TERM. SH

STRATEGIC ITEMS

24/2023 Approval of Committee Structure and terms of reference and membership:

25/2023 Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting(s):

The Part One minutes of the Governing Body annual general meeting held on the 9th October 2023 were agreed by governors present and signed as correct by the chairman. The Part Two minutes were read at the confidential section of this meeting.

The Pay & Performance committee minutes from the meeting held on the 9th October 2023 and reported verbally at the last meeting were tabled, agreed by governors present and signed as correct by the Chairman.

The Resources minutes of the meeting held on the 13th November were agreed by governors present and signed as correct by the chairman.

26/2023 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting(s):

Terms of Reference: These have all been updated and put onto Governor Hub.

School Oven: The clerk confirmed that the gas oven has now been removed and replaced with the electric one.

Water Management Plan: This has also been updated, following comments at the Resources meeting.

27/2023 Policy Adoption/Review:

The following policies were tabled before the meeting:

Equality and Diversity (Mr Alford has discussed this with the staff and is still in the process of setting the targets but is suggesting - narrowing the gap in attainment between boys and girls; improving knowledge to help the children's understanding; and improving the curriculum to make it more inclusive. These will come to the next meeting).

Health and Safety (updated model policy (the word model to be removed))

Offsite and Educational Visits (slight update)

Mrs Kirby proposed that all the above policies be adopted en bloc by governors, seconded by Mr Quance and agreed by all.

ACTION: STATUTORY POLICIES TO BE PUT ONTO THE SCHOOL WEBSITE (SH/NA)

Also tabled were the **Fire Risk Assessment** and the **Security Risk Assessment**, informed by findings during the recent governor visit. Mr Quance proposed that these be agreed, seconded by Mr Hurley and agreed by all.

The updated Business Continuity and Emergency Plan was also brought to the meeting, now updated with Bideford removed as a nearby by A&E.

28/2023 Items Brought Forward by the Chairman:

Cabin Opening: Mr Alford explained that the Ackland family would be visiting the school on Friday 8th December to see how their donation has been spent and to officially 'open' the log cabin. We have organised a plaque to go on the cabin and Mr Goode kindly volunteered to get this screwed on.

Term Dates 2023/24: Mr Alford has discussed this with the staff and proposes the 2nd September, 20th December, 6th January, 16th June and 23rd July as non pupils days, and the 24th and 25th July as occasional days. Mrs Woollacott proposed governors adopt these dates, seconded by Mrs Kirby and agreed by all. These to be put on the website and circulated to parents.

ACTION: CLERK TO PUT ON WEBSITE AND CIRCULATE TO PARENTS. (SH)

Little Bears Pre School: Please see Part Two minutes for this item.

Skills Matrix: The collated skills matrix was tabled on Governor Hub before the meeting. Due to a number of long serving governors, and also skills brought to the Board by the new governors, we seem to have a good spread of skills based across the matrix and no immediate training needs were identified as a result of completing this exercise.

Governor Christmas Donations: As is traditional at Shebbear, governors were invited to contribute towards the cost of the children's Christmas gifts. Any donations to be handed to the clerk as soon as possible.

Long Serving Staff Member: One member of staff has recently completed 30 years' service and it was agreed to send a letter of recognition from the Governing Board together with some flowers.

29/2023 Correspondence:

There was no correspondence for discussion, items requiring attention having been discussed elsewhere in the meeting. Items of correspondence from Devon Governor Services, such as the weekly Governance Alert and Maintained Checklist are on GovernorHub and have also been emailed to governors, as has information about the Partnership Open Week.

GOVERNANCE

30/2023 Impact from this meeting:

The governing body has:

- *continued to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place to safeguard all members of our school community via policies and procedures and a governor monitoring visit;
- *agreed policies to ensure that the children receive education on equality and diversity;
- *monitored the budget and school funds to ensure that we continue to focus on obtaining value for money to deliver the best possible education for the children at this school.

31/2023 Dates and Times of Next Meetings:

Clerk to upload the updated document onto GovernorHub. The next dates are as follows:

Full Governing Body: 22nd January 2024
25th March 2024
20th May 2024
8th July 2024

Resources Committee: 26th February 2024
24th June 2024

Pay Committee: 8th July 2024

Dates for the year to be circulated to all governors.

There being no further business to discuss in the Part One section of the meeting, Mrs Kirby proposed that we go into the Part Two section of the meeting, seconded by Mr Hurley, agreed by all present. The chairman thanked governors for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.