



**Minutes of the meeting of Pulford V.A. Lower School Governors held  
On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at Pulford V A Lower School, Leighton Buzzard**

1.	<b>Registration and Prayer</b>	<b>ACTION.</b>
	<p><b>Present:</b> Mr D Heather (DH) (HT), Mrs S Marchant (SM), Mrs T Rees (TR), Mr Gary Hargreaves (GH), Mrs Emma Birtles (EB), Ms Beci Morley (RM), Dr Stephen Burge (SB), Mr Andrew Wood (AW), Mr Bill Webb (BW), Mrs Bex Howe (BH), Mr Dave Farlam (DF) and Mr Paul Whittington (PW).</p> <p>Ms Vicky Lerego (Clerk).</p> <p>Apologies were accepted from Canon Grant Fellows (GF) and Mr Jon Chadwick (JC). Mr Alan Brandham (AB) was absent.</p> <p>The meeting opened at 19:31 with prayers led by BW.</p>	
2.	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</b>	
	No interests were declared.	
3.	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Meeting</b>	
	<p>GH advised that he has completed a risk analysis on the finances and is now happy that sufficient work is being completed to check these. This matter is now closed.</p> <p>It was noted in a recent newsletter that pupil attendance dropped especially on the Friday prior to the recent bank holiday. DH advised that the school expects a small rise of absences so this should not be taken out of context as the actual figure of un-authorized holiday does run at less than 1%. It was asked at what percentage this starts to become an issue, DH advised that outstanding attendance is anything over 97%, which the school are currently slightly under.</p>	
4.	<b>Actions required from the Previous Meeting</b>	
	None outstanding	
5.	<b>Agree and sign the Previous Meetings Minutes</b>	
	The committee were in agreement with the previous meeting minutes, which were signed by the chair and passed to DH for filing.	
6.	<b>Chairs Report: GH</b>	
	<p>The chair's report had been distributed prior to the FGB meeting and the chair advised of an error on this document, where it should read Linslade Middle School joining the trust and not Leighton Middle.</p> <p>The FGB discussed these changes and it was noted that Cedars will be in the only school in the trust with a 6<sup>th</sup> form college. Overall the chair believes that the</p>	

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	changes to the 3 tier system is a case of when, not if. There were no further comments or questions from the FGB.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Head Teachers Report: DH</b>	
	A short report was circulated in advance of the meeting. DH provided a summary to say that the school had a good term, the highlights being a great residential trip, great drama production and leading RE across the county including the school's work with All Saints Church promoting high quality RE to the town.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Safeguarding Report; EB</b>	
	EB advised that the document sent is in the same format as last time and that everything is still going well. GH stressed that all Governors do read the whole document to ensure they understand the work that EB is doing and he thanked EB for her work. Health and Safety is also all ok and has been helped by the fact that a site agent for the school is now in place. It was asked if before Governors arrange a school visit, if they should have a brief introduction beforehand. EB advised Governors to read the safe guarding policy and it was agreed that DH & EB will provide an overview and update in the next FGB Meeting in October.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>GDPR: BW</b>	
	BW provided the updated policy in advance of this meeting which is a combination of 4 different policies. This has been updated in-line with the GDPR requirements and BW has used the base points that the Department for Education recently published. This will then be updated again once the new data protection bill passes through parliament, as it will override the 1998 act. The FGB were advised that the school are working with their suppliers to ensure they are GDPR compliant and have been receiving acknowledgements back. The school has appointed an external Data Protection Officer, BW is responsible for this as of 25 <sup>th</sup> May. It was questioned how parents will receive a copy of Appendix A – This was included in the newsletter to parents on 11 <sup>th</sup> May and new parents will receive this in the new pupil pack. It was also asked of BW if the staff need to sign for appendix B – BW advised that this is a notification rather than requesting consent. Data protection training for Governors was discussed as this is specified in the policy and it was questioned how this should happen. VL to check with Jo at CBC if any training is available for governors on GDPR and when the training schedule for the next academic year be issued. It was questioned if DH should be appointed as both the data controller and the supervising officer as this should be used for escalation and some organisations have external person for this. GH said the school couldn't afford external costs. BH also raised the point that for safeguarding purposes, GH should have some training as any notifications of breach would need to be raised to him as chair of the governors. BW advised that new timelines are included for requests on how the school use people's data and that the school cannot charge for that.	<b>VL</b>

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10.	<b>Committee Reports</b>	
	<p><u>Appeals and Admissions Committee</u> – DH advised that there are 3 or 4 pupils on the waiting list for new academic year, for entry into EYFS. A lower birth rate has meant there are not as many children starting in September 2018 and very few schools in the town are over-subscribed or full, in fact there are a number under subscribed.</p> <p><u>Curriculum and Standards Committee</u> – BM ran through this report in detail with the FGB as it was sent out earlier on today. BM has been working closely with DH and the school’s leadership team to ensure the data that the school provide is meaningful and provides the information that the FGB need.</p> <p>A meeting took place on 1<sup>st</sup> March, where representatives from this committee discussed the information that the FGB need, to really track progress through the school. The next meeting is scheduled for on 12<sup>th</sup> June, all members of the FGB are welcome to attend anytime between 4-7pm.</p> <p>Data sheet included in the pack, which BM explained is the information that the sub-committee looked at on 1<sup>st</sup> March and is slightly different to the data that was seen at the C&amp;S committee meeting. BM ran through the headlines for each year-group, beginning with EYFS, then KS1 and KS2. One point raised in the recent committee meeting, asked how parental support and homework can help to increase the performance in maths. BM advised that the committee will track where the school gets to over the next half term and discuss early in the next academic year. DH is already working with Mary Bassett school on this as well as Leighton Middle to which BM added that anything the committee had raised, the school were already aware of which is reassuring for the FGB.</p> <p>The chair asked BM if she was happy with the progress in the committee meetings to which is advised the FGB that she is.</p> <p>BM continued to review the SEND report, which she has met with TR to discuss in more detail. She stressed that TR is doing an amazing job managing the balance for the pupils as they move up, to build pupils confidence and self-esteem to make the transition. The school are offering a lot of on-going training and support for the pupils and BM is confident the school is working with individuals on their needs to ensure that they are supported correctly.</p> <p>GH thanked the staff for the amount of work they have put into producing the data that the FGB have requested.</p> <p><u>Finance and Resources Committee</u> – PW, chair of this committee provided a report in advance of the meeting and advised the FGB that the overall message is that finances remain tight. There are some areas of risk, for example it is unknown what the overall pay increase percentage will be, but this will affect all schools. The committee had been working to keep an amount in the budget as a contingency, but this has not been possible for the next academic year, however, he did advise that on a positive note, the budget comes in zero.</p> <p>The FGB was then made aware by PW of the plan for Financial Management</p>	

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	<p>Improvement and advised that he meets monthly with DH to check actual payroll costs against the budget.</p> <p>In the recent audit, the school was awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest rating, but would not have been eligible to achieve the highest rating as the school finances were in deficit at the time.</p> <p>PW thanked the PTA for their fundraising and stressed that all FGB should think about how they can raise more money for the school. BH raised the question as to whether a separate discussion should take place about how the FGB can fundraise. PW has agreed to arrange an additional meeting to bring together ideas.</p> <p>DH requested the FGB's assistance in finding the balance between amount of time FGB spend on fundraising for the school v the time discussing money that has been brought in by others. As part of the strategic governors role, he believes it would be helpful to re-address that balance.</p>	<b>PW</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Finance Management: GH</b>	
	<p>GH addressed the committee regarding the Financial Management of the school and stressed to PW, DH and BW that this situation is correctly managed as soon as possible. He discussed how the school can improve upon expenditure, how this is managed, how he feels that this should reduce the time spent for Governors focusing on the school's finances and also reduce the time and stress on this for DH and his leadership team. GH stressed that he would like to see a School Bursar in post by September if possible and handed a specimen Job description and required qualifications and personal attributes for potential candidates to DH and BW.</p>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>All Weather Play Area: GH</b>	
	<p>GH advised the FGB that he was invited to go to trust meeting where this was discussed and he got the clear impression that trust did not want to grant £50k in one year, as their income is around £50-£60k a year, but were open to 50/50 split over 2 years. A discussion took place led by the chair to look into funding options over 2 years and consider the possible size of the pitch.</p> <p>DH advised the FGB that he had received contradicting information from The Trust who advised him that the funding is in place, which he has double checked with the Clerk to the trust. They have confirmed the funding subject to a breakdown of the £25,000 that the school are providing and where this is from.</p> <p>A discussion took place on whether moving forward with the all weather play area would impact on the finances and could this be used elsewhere in the budget, however, DH stressed that £16,000 of the £25,000 provided by the school has been raised by the pupils and parents through fundraising for this specific purpose and it was agreed that it would not be morally right to use the money for anything else To this end, DH requested the FGB support him to pass the resolution to move forward with the all weather pitch as ultimately this is about what is important to the children.</p> <p>Now funding is in place, a resolution has been passed to proceed with the project. Unanimously agreed by the FGB at 21:01 on 18<sup>th</sup> May, all 12 FGB members present at the meeting agreed. DH to follow-up with the trust regarding the funding. The Trustees requested a breakdown of the £25,000, which DH can send to them and in addition they would request that an independent project manager be appointed to manage the process. DH suggested to the FGB to appoint Stewart Seymore, who is town centre schools sports coordinator and works at Vandyke School. His previous role at Wolverhampton Council saw him oversee the</p>	<b>DH</b>

	implementation of these pitches and he would be happy to help. The FGB agreed that this would be beneficial and this would be included in the work he already does with the school with any additional administration costs being picked up by the trustees. EB did ask DH if the school have approached LA for any funding and will provide DH with more details for his review.	EB
<b>13.</b>	<b>Strategic Role – EA Report</b>	
	This is due to take place on July 3 <sup>rd</sup> and SB will be attending. An invitation was extended to all members of the FGB to attend also. The meeting will begin at 8:30am and will last probably 3 hours, Governors are welcome to attend for all or as much of the meeting as they can.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Strategic Role – Governor Training and Development Report</b>	
	No updates from SB.	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Strategic Role – Governor Visit Report: DF</b>	
	DF provided an overview of his recent visit to the school, where he had a lovely morning observing a KS2 maths lesson as this was raised at the recent Curriculum and Standards Meeting. His impression was that the class was very engaging, started with a video singing 8 time stables, which energised the pupils. This was followed by a times table test, the pupils had 5 minutes to complete and the teacher made the atmosphere relaxed. The class had mixed abilities so test itself was quite challenging in some respects, pupils took different views on how they completed them which stretched both ranges of abilities.  The 2 <sup>nd</sup> part of the class involved a problem-solving activity - all pupils were given same exercise, which was a fairly complex group activity. DF noted how it was good to see how the pupils engaged with each other and working together. The feedback from DF was that the pupils seemed to find it an enjoyable experience, they were engaged and their perseverance was praised. The pupil's left the lesson feeling rewarded and the feedback DF heard from parents of those children was very positive. He would encourage other FGB members to make the time to visit the school if possible.  SB reminded the FGB that one of recommended points that Ofsted like to see in Governor reports are asking 'are children happy?' and 'do you feel safe?'.	
<b>16.</b>	<b>Accountability Role – Correspondence: Clerk</b>	
	VL advised governors essentials is circulated every month and it's also available on the website.	
<b>17.</b>	<b>Accountability Role – Review New and Existing Policies: Governor Principles</b>	
	GH advised that this policy is reviewed every few years, TR has completed this document which is a standard document and there are no changes.	
<b>18.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	SM has been part of the FGB for 18 years and tonight is her last meeting. The Chair thanked SM for all of her work as part of the FGB and presented her with a card and present.  SB stressed the importance to the FGB of Governor access to DH and the teaching staff, which has been discussed before. He reminded the board that they must give advance notice for any governor visits and that these must not interrupt TR and DH if they are teaching, as the children are the most important thing.	

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	<p>GH then announced to the FGB that he will be stepping down as Chair of the FGB at the next FGB meeting and will more than likely resign from the board too. He will remain in post until the next meeting and means the FGB will need to find a candidate, or candidates, to replace him. GH stressed he has enjoyed his time as chair, that it has been a pleasure for him to be here at a very good school and being at Pulford has meant he has learnt what ethos means which both the FGB and teachers should be proud of. He finished by wishing the FGB all the best in the future and requested that all FGB members think about whether they would like to stand. In addition, the Staff election to take place after half term for SM's replacement, DH advised that he has no indication on who this might be.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>19.</b>	<b>Date and Times for next academic terms meetings</b>	
	<p>FGB:  Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 7:30pm  Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 7:30pm  Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 at 7:30pm</p> <p>Finance &amp; Resources Committee:  Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 7:30pm  Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 7:30pm  Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 7:30pm</p> <p>Curriculum &amp; Standards Committee:  Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018 at 7:30pm  Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 at 7:30pm  Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 7:30pm</p>	

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