



**Minutes of the meeting of Pulford Lower School Full Governing Board held
On Thursday 17th October 2019 7.30pm at Pulford Lower School, Leighton Buzzard**

1&2.	Registration, Apologies and Prayer	ACTION
	<p>Present: Mr D Heather (DH), Mr Paul Whittington (PW - Chair), Mrs T Rees (TR), Mrs Emma Birtles (EB), Mr Bill Webb (BW), Mrs Rosie Horsfield (RH), Mr Jon Chadwick (JC), Mr Alan Brandham (AB), Mother Cate Irvine (CI), Mr Andrew Wood (AW), Mrs Bex Howe (BH), Mrs Emma Grimm (EG), Mr Edward Price (EP) and Mrs Lisa Jacobs (LJ).</p> <p>Mrs Alison Quick (Clerk).</p> <p>Apologies were received from Ms Beci Morley (BM).</p> <p>Mr Webb opened with prayer.</p>	
3.	Welcomes and Resignations	
	<p>The Chair accepted the resignation of Mr Dave Farlam and thanked him in his absence for all the work he had done as a governor over the last two years.</p> <p>The Board welcomed Mother Cate Irvine as an Ex-officio governor and Mr Ed Price as Foundation (PCC) governor. Emma Birtles was re-elected to the Governing Board by the PCC.</p>	
4.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests, Training and Monitoring Visits Update	
	<p>No new pecuniary interests were declared. Updated forms were signed by all present and were passed to AQ to file accordingly.</p> <p>AQ passed out the training certificates to those who had attended various governance courses run by Central Bedfordshire Council. These courses have been added to the governor matrix which AQ holds centrally.</p> <p>The governor monitoring visit feedback reports that have been received over the last 12 months have proved most helpful. Therefore we will continue with this format. Below is the timetable for the 2019-2020 visits. Governors to complete reports after their visit, and return to AQ for filing.</p> <p>Autumn term - Beci Morley - English / SEN - Ed Price / Rosie Horsfield - Reading - Paul Whittington - ICT</p> <p>Spring term - Bex Howe - EYFS - Mother Cate Irvine - RE Worship</p> <p>Summer term - Emma Grimm - RE - Bex Howe - Maths</p>	<p align="center">AQ</p> <p align="center">AQ BM EP PW</p> <p align="center">BH CI</p> <p align="center">EG BH</p>
5.	Terms of Reference	
	<p>AQ advised the Governing board that they need to review any changes to the members of the relevant committees. It was confirmed that the committee members are now as follows:</p> <p>Disciplinary Committee – PW, LJ, BM</p> <p>Resources Committee – EB (Chair), AW (RO Vice-Chair), AB, DH, JC, BW, PW, AQ (Clerk)</p> <p>Curriculum and Standards – BM (Chair), BH (Vice-Chair), RH, EG, LJ, TR, DH, AQ (Clerk)</p> <p>Pay Review Committee – EB (Chair), AB, EP, BM</p>	

	Admissions and Appeals Committee – PW (Chair), DH, TR (Clerk)	
6&7.	Previous Full Governors Meeting Minutes	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2019 were circulated to all governors in their pack prior to the meeting. The following comments were noted: BW has presented the updates for the new OFSTED framework to staff and a number of governors on 2nd September 2019. PW confirmed the CBC (Central Bedfordshire council) next training updates for the new framework are on 11th February 2020 and 11th June 2020. Governors should inform AQ if attending either of these. PW has completed his safer recruitment training (EB is yet to complete the safer recruitment training). EB has undertaken a site visit and will present the Health and Safety report at the next meeting.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding the All Saints monthly magazine Saints Alive. The following governor's / PTA contribution was agreed for 2020: April – AW; May – PTA; September – PW. Articles are to be sent to All Saints by the 15th of the month prior to its publication.</p> <p>The committee were in agreement with the previous meeting minutes, which were signed by the chair and passed to DH for filing.</p>	<p>EB</p> <p>AQ</p> <p>DH</p>
8.	Chair's Report	
	<p>The chair's report was circulated as part of the pack, prior to the meeting. PW highlighted the three core functions of the governing board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the school, pupils and management of staff. Overseeing the financial performance of the school making sure its money is well spent. <p>Critical Friend - PW asked us all to think about support and celebration of the school and its staff. We should be having the challenging discussions within our meetings and committees but we should also take time to celebrate the great work that the school is doing. Indeed, the governance afternoon (of which the majority of our governors were able to attend) did just that. The Board agreed unanimously that the afternoon had been a great success. The experience was Informative and enlightening for governors, staff and children alike as they interacted together in class, enjoying conversation, learning and fun together in a relaxed atmosphere.</p> <p>Ofsted Readiness – Nationally, 23% of 'outstanding' schools haven't been inspected in over 10 years, due to the exemption. Of those outstanding schools which were re-inspected, more than half lost the top grade. There is a new Ofsted Inspection Framework in place now and we need to be looking with the school at all areas that can be improved. Inspectors may undertake a 'deep dive' on a subject or other aspect of the school such as safeguarding or SEND provision. We know that book scrutiny is something they will look at, as is Leadership and Management. For our part in this we should review books on monitoring visits and learning walks.</p> <p>Training / Learning Walks – PW highlighted the importance of each governor taking part in on-going training and development as well as the learning walks.</p> <p>School Improvement Plan Governors met at the Curriculum & Standards meeting and reviewed the SIP (School Improvement Plan). The governors had the opportunity to work with the school and strategically develop the plan prior to this evening's FGB. As a result of that meeting the SIP now includes details of Governor monitoring for each of the objectives. It is our responsibility as governors to support the school by reviewing these items throughout the year, through learning walks and monitoring visits, to show how the SIP is being implemented and how the results can be seen in the school.</p> <p>Gathering Opinion - As mentioned in my last chair's report, it is our responsibility to know what parents, pupils and staff think of our school. We do this via parentview, staff and pupil surveys. The parentview is a live document. The chair asked governors to encourage parents to add their</p>	

views via the school website. Results from last term’s children’s survey will feed in to school council where these and other ideas can be taken forward. PTA are looking to raise money for the minibus this year.

There have been two staff surveys run recently – one at the end of last term and one at the beginning of this term. Results are very positive and there are no striking areas for concern. However, one area that we can work on is how staff view the governors support of the school. I would like us to take this as an opportunity for reflection and improve. In our role as governors we must remember the following key behaviours in order to foster a culture of support to the school and the staff. This means:

Outward communication: Present a united front with the school, maintaining a consistent positive message

Internally as a board: Use the FGB, sub-committees and working parties to get into the detail, to have more challenging discussions where necessary, and to drive the improvements together with the school.

To be a “Critical Friend”: To ask questions, to allow time for responses and to review the action
There are two places we must be particularly careful as indicated by the survey comments – the playground and on social media. In these places we can not only be individuals, we will always be perceived as governors and therefore as representatives of the school. Dealing with parents approaching us in the playground can be difficult – this is discussed at governor induction training. If parents approach us then they should always be directed to the school office.

Points of discussion must be raised first with the school and then work on them together. This can be a chat with a staff member, the senior leadership team or raising an item at a governor meeting where healthy debate and discussion can take place.

I believe that on the whole we are getting it right. Since receiving the comments I have met with the Staff governor who will let us know if there are any concerns going forward.

Shared Responsibility - It has been my intention from the outset that every Board member should have a valuable role to play in the school and that the work should be shared equally.

We have in place link governors as follows:

Safeguarding Link – Emma B

Finance Link (Responsible Officer) – Andrew W

Curriculum & Standards Link – Beci M (C&S cttee)

SEND – Beci M

Health and Safety – Emma B

RE – Emma G

We no longer have a PTA link governor but TR attends PTA meetings and will be our conduit to what is happening.

Links for other areas are being considered. For example, Pupil & Sports Premium link. I welcome thoughts on this and please get in touch if you would like to take on a link role.

Maths Mastery Maths has been an area of focus for the school over the past year and is an objective on the SIP for 2019/20. We will hear more about this in the Curriculum and Standards sub-committee report.

Working Parties SEND Working Party

A great deal has been achieved by this group over the past year. One of the new objectives in the SIP for this year is a ‘Strategic review of whole school SEND practice’ and this working party will continue in order to monitor progress. It was noted that more able children will not be included in the review.

Schools for the Future Working Party

There is no news on this issue right now but we remain ready to work on this as soon as we have further information. At the moment the majority of schools in the town, including us, have agreed in principle to move to a Primary / Secondary model. The next step will be a public consultation which the local authority intend to begin towards the end of this year.

Q: Following on from a really positive governance afternoon, can governors please send some feedback to the clerk which can be sent through to staff?

A: Yes. (Subsequent note: Thanks to the governors who sent these through. They were very much

	appreciated by the staff team.)											
9.	Head Teacher's Report											
	<p>DH confirmed that the distribution of functions is working very well. To that end, a large amount of information that would usually be held in the Head Teacher's report is covered by the committee reports that are noted later in the minutes. The statutory information that is not brought forward anywhere else is as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Number of pupils currently on roll</td> <td>271</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage attendance (2018/19) - pupils</td> <td>97.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage attendance (2018/19) - staff</td> <td>97.7% (This excludes one staff members long period of sickness which would reflect an overall figure of 97.2%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Exclusions</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resignations</td> <td>0 (Note: RJ/cleaner will be retiring mid October 2019.)</td> </tr> </table> <p>The SEF report is the summary of what we achieved last academic year. The SEF was brought to the Curriculum & Standards meeting – curriculum focussed.</p> <p>Discussions followed regarding whether or not a different advisor should be used next year as we had used our current advisor for a number of years now. DH noted that we have already booked the advisor visits up until the end of this academic year. DH has requested another visit from Mr Simon Crosby (LA advisor). His previous visit, earlier in the year, was extremely informative, helpful and confirmed that we are on track. He looked at books and spoke with staff. However, Mr Crosby has only been able to visit once due to other pressures on his time. We are currently awaiting confirmation of his next visit.</p> <p>The SIP report is the overview of what is planned for this current academic year and is written with input from DH, the Schools Advisor and the School Leadership Team. The report was considered at the Curriculum & Standards meeting last month. After discussion, the amendment shows how governors will support and evaluate the targets on the report. The updated SIP was circulated in the pack prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Discussion followed again, regarding Mr Crosby in his advisory capacity and the possibility of a 'mock-sted'. DH will speak to Mr Crosby regarding this matter and will feedback to the Board.</p>	Number of pupils currently on roll	271	Percentage attendance (2018/19) - pupils	97.4%	Percentage attendance (2018/19) - staff	97.7% (This excludes one staff members long period of sickness which would reflect an overall figure of 97.2%)	Exclusions	0	Resignations	0 (Note: RJ/cleaner will be retiring mid October 2019.)	DH
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10.	Safeguarding Report											
	<p>Following her recent meeting/termly visit with DH, EB found all Safeguarding matters to be in order. A written report will follow. This will include any Health and Safety improvements. Her findings were that the pastoral needs of the families are growing; this may impact on learning. A larger number of families are struggling (balancing low income/work/family life) but are very proud and so school are not always able to tease out those who need support (emotionally or financially). DH highlighted that it is important to keep staff ratio's as they are as this helps supports families which in turn helps learning.</p> <p>Safeguarding - EB has checked and signed the Single Central Record. Governors are invited to join staff on Friday 3rd January 2020 at 1.30pm for the Safeguarding Training which is being undertaken in the school hall. Governors to pass names to AQ if able to attend.</p>	EB ALL										
11.	Policies											
	<p>The two updated Governor Allowances and Child Protection policies were circulated before the meeting.</p> <p>Q: Is there a specific social media policy or just mobile phone policy? A: Mobile phone only; guidance only for other areas of communications.</p>											

	All policies were agreed and signed by PW and passed to TR for filing.	TR
12.	Sub Committee Reports	
	<p>Curriculum and Standards Report</p> <p>We had a busy, but productive evening with Senior Leaders presenting excellent results for last academic year. (See curriculum minutes for data highlights and questions/answers around data).</p> <p>Mr Heather and team were also able to express that they are pleased with how these results have compared well across the town, noting that the financial status of children in Pulford has a very broad range (from those in poverty to those able to go on to fee paying schools). It was also noted that Pulford is the most ethnically diverse school in town.</p> <p>There is no gap in achievement for those students in receipt of Pupil Premium, demonstrating that Pulford is a school for the whole community.</p> <p>It is good to see the staff not rest on their laurels and throughout all future plans they continually strive for ongoing development in teaching and learning. For example, staff are looking more closely at case studies of pupils who are not making expected progress, to find ways of supporting progress and articulating the story behind the progress or challenges faced by individuals. Mr Heather is also challenging teachers to think about the worst time of day to be observed/inspected, to help draw out areas that could be developed further.</p> <p>We discussed the current SIP, and the minutes go into detail on this.</p> <p>The governor day on 17th will provide an excellent opportunity for governors to consider different aspects of the school, including considering a broad range of subjects.</p> <p>A big thank you to EG for the RE Learning walk and BH for the Maths Learning Walk in the summer term. We look forward to governor visits and reports over the coming year.</p> <p>If any governors wish to observe a data meeting with key school staff, the senior leadership team are always very welcoming of this.</p> <p>Resources Sub Committee Report</p> <p>The Resources Committee met on Thursday 26 September. The key points discussed were as follows:</p> <p>1) Budget Review</p> <p>a) Income/Expenditure – Overall expenditure was 42% at the end of August (as at end of September, the mid-year point, it was 52.4%). Expenditure, therefore, is roughly in line with budget projections and a small surplus is projected for the end of the financial year.</p> <p>b) Teacher Pay Review - The initial budget was based on the assumption that the settlement for 2019/20 would similar to last year: 3.5% for Main Pay Scale, 2% for Upper Pay Scale, and 1.5% for Leadership Pay Scale. In late July, the School Teachers Pay Review Body recommended a 2.75% increase across the board, which the Government has now accepted. This will be implemented from 1 September and will have negligible impact on the budget.</p> <p>c) Teachers’ Pension Employer Contribution Grant – There has been an uplift in the scheme employer contribution rate increase from 16.4% to 23.6%, which will be reflected in the revised budget due to be submitted to CBC in October, but effective from effective 1/9/19. It has been confirmed that the government grant, based upon pupil numbers, for the remainder of the 19/20 financial year will be increased (approx. £2,800 p.m.) to cover this, but is will not be received until November, although the increase takes effect from September.</p>	

d) Capital Projects – Various work were completed during the summer holidays (see below for further details). The total cost was £43,500. Which was funded by donations and grants with generous donations from the PTA of £5,000 and £26,955 from the Pulford Trust. The balance came from the St Albans Diocese LCVAP scheme.

2) Capital Works Completed during Summer Holidays

- a) The outside staging – This will be used for outdoor worship including Forest Church, outside performances and shelter for parents during the Saturday football practices. The Archdeacon led an outdoor whole school worship in September.
- b) Brickwork – along our Western boundary, the brickwork has been treated for damp, and has also been clad in order to provide extra protection on that external wall. No leaks have been reported since the work has been completed.
- c) Pre-school – the interior has been redecorated.
- d) Main foyer – the interior walls have been redecorated.
- e) Steps – the exterior steps (in between Silverbirch classroom and the playground) have been replaced.
- f) Fire proofing – The Fire Officer’s recommended small works have been completed. g) Fire door – The main hall interior door has had the hinge changed so it opens to the left, which now helps the flow of the footfall during the school day. It has also had an automatic closing mechanism installed, in case of fire.

3) Pay and Performance Policy has been updated to include the new teacher pay rates as noted above and was approved at the meeting.

DH and the Board would like to thank the PTA and Pulford Trust for their very generous donations.

Q: Where is the Sports Premium and Pupil Premium picked up? Can this be looked at every 6 months?

A: Yes. This will be discussed at Resources.

Appeals and Admissions – not met.

Discipline Committee – not met.

13. Working Party Summaries Updates

Schools For The Future (SFTF)

Public consultation is the next step. DH confirmed there is no date for this as yet. No further information. DH will keep the Board apprised as and when any updates happen.

SEND WP Update

At present, SEND pupils make up approximately 10% of the whole school population.

Pre-School	Stage 1 (meet criteria for support)	Stage 2 (SEN support plan)	Monitored	Statement /EHC (Education and Health Care Plan)	Pupil Premium	LAC (Looked after child)	EAL	More Able (previously G&T)
1 x stage 2 1 x stage 1	11 stage 1 pupils 9 stage 2 pupils		23	1 EHC plan and 1 agreed in principle, 1 in progress	11 (including 2 previously LAC)	0	14 inc. 1 with no English	21 (inc 4 pre-school)

Updates since last meeting

The school has received news of the success of a new EHC plan. There is another EHC Plan in

assessment stage. An unsuccessful application last term for a child now in middle school has been appealed and accepted for assessment.

The governor SEND working party has met. Key points:

- Next half term parents of children with SEND will have a meeting and receive a folder about SEND and their child's SEN Support plan. Keyworkers for each child will be allocated (normally the TA in their class).
- When asked about regular communication with parents, governors were told that members of staff are on the playground every day for queries. A small percentage of children with SEND will have a little book that gives parents information on the day (this is normally specific to individual children often with Autism).
- The school has provided some examples of provision maps and anonymised case studies. This helps governors to see progress for those not making expected progress.

Staff skills and training and impact on quality teaching and learning

Completed: Cache Level 2 in child mental health or autism or challenging behaviour was a success with both staff and parents. ASD training for staff was completed and well received.

Current training/support:

- "Lift off to language" training still ongoing.
- Mrs Rees is refreshing her understanding of Speech Sounds through training.
- Staff attending phonics training.
- The Educational Psychologist is still visiting providing useful insights and suggestions for interventions for specific children.
- Mrs Rees has met the school nurse to do relevant plans such as Asthma plans.
- There is a new school nurse programme where nominated staff members get trained on specific aspects of first aid, such as using EpiPen's. This includes dinner staff, TAs and after school staff.
- A member of staff from a special school attends on a needs basis to offer support and advice for specific children. She is due to attend after half term.
- LC2 family support worker is still coming most weeks to support 2 children with play therapy type of activities. The school is working closely with CHUMS following a bereavement (loss of a mother) at the start of term.

School interventions beyond class teaching:

- A lunchtime intervention group currently runs primarily focused around understanding.
- Other interventions take place during future games time. GN is running interventions around emotions using House of Emotions and Box of Feelings. Mrs Rees is running Speech Sounds interventions
- A maths intervention is running mainly for those needing to catch up. Two other teachers also running Maths Mastery at this time.

These interventions happen across a key stage and are staggered to ensure all children still engage with future games.

- Work experience students include those working towards TA Levels 2&3. These support 1:1 reading. Whilst they are not necessarily focusing on pupils with SEND they support class teachers.

Pre-school

There is 1 child on stage 1, 1 on stage 2 and several being monitored. Mrs Major holds the SENCO role for Pre-School.

More Able (previously Gifted and Talented)

There is a responsibility to report to governors on data including those achieving highly. The data shows that children at Pulford are achieving level 3. The school has a More Able policy and publishes its report on the website.

The school differentiates appropriately for its higher ability students. Some of the support it offers includes activities that broaden and ensure a child is well rounded, in addition to challenged in areas

	<p>that they excel. Forest school can be very useful for those who are very academic but maybe not as strong socially or want to develop leadership skills, for example. In the rare example of a child capable of working significantly above the 'above average', the school seeks support from the middle school to teach year 5 & 6 syllabus, when appropriate. The school is confident that More Able children have their needs fully met through Quality First Teaching. One governor expressed opinion that MA students could be further challenged. Some interventions that used to be focused on those who were More Able (for example Pulford Paper) are now being open more widely. Parents of More Able pupils are often signposted to the Potential Plus website.</p> <p>The school is updating its policy to say that it will not send letters out to parents for pupils who they class as More Able, as it raises a range of expectations. The school still keeps a More Able list and do ask parents for any talents that are relevant from out of school. Parents are welcome to talk to class teachers and Mrs Rees with specific concerns, suggestions or questions about their child.</p> <p><u>Pupil Premium pupils</u></p> <p>Overall Pupil Premium are making expected progress. There are 2 PP pupils (who also have SEN) who are not achieving 'expected' but are making progress due to their specific needs. In these instances, the provision map demonstrates the smaller stages of progress that these pupils are making. (One of these was shared anonymously with the SEND working group).</p> <p>There is one child who raises significant challenges. This child is a new EAL pupil who has no English. The school have had to search for specific schemes to support their progress and have challenged Central Bedfordshire for their limited support in this area. Interventions are being put in place to best support this child.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding whether or not to change the name of the SEND WP Report as it covers SEND, Pupil Premium, English as Additional Language and More Able and Talented. It was agreed that this will now be called the Inclusion Report.</p>	BM/ ALL TO NOTE
14.	Dates for meetings in 2020	
	<p>FGB – 13th February & 21st May</p> <p>Resources – 16th January & 30th April</p> <p>Curriculum – 21st January, 5th May</p>	
15.	The meeting closed at 8.50pm as Grace was said together.	