



**Minutes of the meeting of Pulford Lower School Full Governing Board held  
on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 6.30pm via ZOOM**

| 1.     | <b>Registration, Apologies and Prayer</b>  | <b>ACTION</b> |
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|        | <p><b>Present:</b> 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), Mother Cate Irvine (CI), Mr Andrew Wood (AW), Mrs Emma Grimm (EG), Mr Edward Price (EP – Vice chair) and Mrs Lisa Jacobs (LJ), Mrs Beci Morley (BM), Mr Geoff Huskisson (GH), Ed Price (EP) and Mrs Katrina Grant (KG).</p> <p>Mrs Alison Quick (Clerk).</p> <p>Mr Alan Brandham was absent.</p> <p>Mother Cate opened in prayer.</p>   |               |
| 2.     | <b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests, Training and Monitoring Visits Update</b>   |               |
|        | No new pecuniary interests were declared.  |               |
| 3 & 4. | <b>Previous Full Governors Meeting Minutes</b>   |               |
|        | <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 were circulated to all governors in their pack prior to the meeting. The following comments were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EB has made site visit.</li> <li>- AQ amended wording in Admission criteria.</li> <li>- TR making necessary updates to Learning Support documents.</li> </ul> <p>The committee were in agreement that actions from the previous FGB meeting had been undertaken and that the minutes were a true reflection of the previous meeting. The verbal agreement of the committee and chair will replace the hard copy signature copy. This will be recorded and DH will file accordingly.</p>   | <b>DH</b>     |
| 5.     | <b>Chair’s Report</b>  |               |
|        | <p>PW thanked staff and governors for their hard work and continuing support. The children are settling well in to their learning routines. He made reference to the next steps as we head along the Government roadmap.</p> <p>Ofsted &amp; SIAMS – inspections are resuming from the autumn. The chair highlighted the importance of ongoing input from the board. On Ofsted training, PW noted that there may be questions regarding COVID and our response to the challenges.</p> <p>Reference was made to the Ofsted questions previously circulated (see paper from Michelle Geddes, our LA Schools Advisor). Discussions</p> <p>Subject Link Governors – The chair thanked the subject link-support governors and staff subject leads; this positive initiative is supporting the further depth of knowledge and understanding of subject link governors. PW emphasised the importance of these meetings; continuing to build good, open relations with the subject lead. PW would like to look back over the year in each subject, the impact of any changes and any learnings for next year. KG &amp; GH to organise a learning walk before</p> |               |

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|                  | <p>summer. Other subject links to organise an onsite visit in the new academic year.</p> <p><b>EYFS Framework</b><br/>There has been a change to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This is detailed in the C&amp;S report following. Overall this is a positive change and, in particular, has reduced the requirement on reporting which will allow greater time and focus on face to face teaching and learning.</p> <p><b>Schools for the Future (relates to SIP objective 4)</b><br/>The latest information from the Schools for the Future Team is that the whole project has been pushed back by a year. The reason given is due to the school places not being needed until a year later than originally planned.<br/>The public consultation will now not take place in June this year.</p> <p><b>Pulford Vision</b><br/>A great deal of work has taken place lately on the Vision, Values and Ethos for Pulford. DH reported on this later in this meeting. PW thanked EG as RE link-support and KG for taking part in this important work.</p> <p><b>Equality and Diversity</b><br/>DH has been running a group with parents to discuss diversity which has proved very positive. This has prompted PW to consider, further, the diversity of the governing board. EG has attended training on this recently, some of the highlights follow:<br/>Importance of a regular skills audit of the board and analysis of our strengths and what might be lacking (succession planning) ;<br/>Proactively seek people who are different from the majority of the current board in an effort to increase diversity;<br/>Use personal relationships and contacts to support this in a real effort to improve Governance by having a broader range of people who bring different things to the table;<br/>For parent governors, ensure we clearly explain the role so people who may never have considered it begin to, and make explicit our desire to have a diverse board to help us best govern a diverse group of children.<br/>PW thanked EG for her input.</p> <p>The governors were asked to continue to consider training and look out for the new list for next year. We should all aim to attend at least one training course every year. To book yourself on to training contact Alison first and then email: gov.training@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk and Joanna Brown from CBC will respond.<br/>Other resources • NGA Learning Link – free to sign-up and use. (Online training and other information) • “The Key for School Governors” – limited time access.</p> |  |
| <p><b>6.</b></p> | <p><b>Head Teacher’s Report</b></p>  |  |
|                  | <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.</p> <p>Attendance: 98.2% (3/9/2020 – 14/5/2021) Very good attendance continues.</p> <p>No exclusions.</p> <p>No disciplinary.</p> <p>Persistent Absentees - discussed at last meeting. The procedure for dealing with these instances takes place by Senior Leadership Team; they are aware of reasons for these cases. There are no serious concerns. The information is communicated with the chair.</p> <p>Vision, values and ethos - Thanks to EG and KG for their contributions to these discussions. The</p>  |  |

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|           | <p>ethos, vision and mission statements have been reviewed. The ethos statement comes from the Diocese, this remains unchanged. It was decided that we needed two short statements for vision and mission. The vision statement is based around St Paul's letter to Corinth. "Growing God's family through faith, hope and love, dedicated to realising the full potential of each other. The mission statement refers to Luke 18 verse 16 "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." This was chosen as it reminds us all that Jesus put the children first and as such we must keep the children at the centre of all we do.</p> <p>DH informed the board that SLT are looking at ways to develop/enhance our daily worship – encouraging the children to be more involved in our leading parts of our worship.</p> <p>Diversity Group – Pulford is now a multi ethnic school; DH considers the biggest single factor in this is the Christian faith. In the diversity group we are considering different aspects of diversity - race, gender, faith etc; even within the group itself there are different views which leads to helpful, healthy, open discussion. The group is putting together a meaningful questionnaire to go to parents. Respecting each other's opinions is the most important value.</p> <p>DH thanked governors for their ongoing support.</p> <p>DH also thanked the PTA and Trust for their financial support. Delivery of the school minibus is next week. Huge achievement. PW to write to the Trust to note our thanks.</p> | <b>PW</b> |
| <b>7.</b> | <b>Safeguarding Update</b>  |           |
|           | <p>EB checked signed the Single Central Record at her last on site visit 13/5/2021 and continues to be in regular contact with DH regarding safeguarding across the school during COVID.</p> <p>EB also met with TR regarding the ongoing impact of Covid; heightened numbers of safeguarding / social care / cases of concern. TR outlined the practical support currently being given from social services as they work with the children in school. Staff are tremendous and have given a substantial amount of time giving emotional support to families. Governors have been made aware and voiced their concern for those families.</p>   |           |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>Committee and Subject Link Updates</b>   |           |
|           | <p><b>Appeals and Admissions committee</b> – not met.</p> <p><b>Discipline Committee</b> – not met.</p> <p><b>Resources Committee</b><br/>EB brought the following Spring 2021 Report:</p> <p>Budget Review:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Committee approved the budget for 2021/22, which has now been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC).</li> <li>b. The budget for this year includes the surplus of £19,390 from last year, which was higher than expected partly due to a CBC's policy change, resulting in £2.7k more than anticipated for Free School Meals.</li> <li>c. Since setting the budget, the school has received an additional £1,300 from CBC to cover Covid-19 related costs. This will help to offset the cost of installing the external sinks that were put in last summer to facilitate the additional hand washing requirements.</li> <li>d. The biggest uncertainty within the budget relates to income from Little Saints income; the figures assume income from 50 paid hours per day. In the week prior to the Committee</li> </ol>  |           |

meeting this had reached 49 paid hours per day. The numbers in the afterschool club are steadily rising.

- e. The budget does not include any in year census adjustments, which usually work in our favour.
- f. The School is benefitting from some additional income from premises lets this year. Unfortunately, however, The Future Games will not now be using Pulford in May but the other bookings still stand.
- g. Salaries adjustments have been built in to the budget. The Government announced a teacher pay freeze apart from incremental rises and non-teaching staff will a 1% increase (this is still to be agreed by the Government).
- h. The overall budget gives a small surplus at the end of the year.
  - i) CBC requires the school to submit a 3 year budget. It was agreed to only add inflation for 2022/23 and 2023/24 due unpredictability of the current situation.

#### Pulford Trust Update:

- a. The board submitted an application of £29k to the Pulford Trust, which has been approved.
- b. BW has emailed the Trust to thank them for their generosity and it was agreed that PW will also write a letter of thanks on behalf of board.
- c. The funds will be used as follows:
  - i) £11k towards a replacement minibus. DH has sourced a suitable vehicle. This will be purchased in time for the Year 4 trip to Wales.
  - ii) £10.5k towards classroom technology upgrade – three whiteboards (one for each Early Years Class). The order has been placed; intended installation is in May 2021.
  - iii) £7.5k towards maintenance and repair within the building including new paint in the library, three classrooms and the staffroom.

#### Pre-School Charging Review

- a. Pre-school prices have remained unchanged since 2014. The prices have been periodically reviewed to ensure that they remain in line with other lower school settings
- b. At our last review in January 2020, we had intended to put forward a price, but it was agreed that the timing was not appropriate due to the pandemic.
- c. The committee agreed the proposal to increase the price of sessions for children aged 3 years to £13.95 per session. The cost for under 3's sessions will remain unchanged at £16.50. Lunches will be charged at £2.30 for both groups, which is the same as school lunches and care will cost £2.70 for over 3's and £3.50 for under 3's, resulting in increases from £4.30 to £5.00 and £5.05 to £5.80 respectively.
- d. Changes will take effect from September 2021 and the website will be updated accordingly.
- e. The School will continue to quietly support any families who may be struggling.

AQ

#### Policy updates:

The Committee briefly discussed the Diversities and Equalities Policy; however it was agreed that this should be referred to Full Governing Board in May. This would give DH the platform to share information regarding the newly formed parent diversity group, which gives families the opportunity to engage with staff, listen and consider our diversities.

#### Premises and Health & Safety:

- a. DH and the site agent continue to undertake regular site checks
- b. There have been no major incidents and Covid-19 measures remain in place e.g. all areas ensure good ventilation and a focus on hand washing continues. Good use is being made of the outdoor sinks which have been part funded by CBC (see above).
- c. CBC has also paid for the marquee to be erected in order to support the Y4 drama. This enhances safety of the children as we are maximising use of outdoor spaces.
- d. CBC is also providing funding to support the following:
  - i) Upgrading of some of the external play equipment identified in the annual inspection.
  - ii) Replacement of three benches in the playground that are no longer fit for purpose.

- e) Other works planned for over the summer are:
- i) Upgrading the PE cupboard, which is situated at the front of the hall, to support the new one way system for children that has worked well and will remain in place.
  - ii) Polishing the classroom and hall wooden floors
  - iii) Painting the early years' classrooms and the staff room are being painted.
  - iv) Boiler service, kitchen deep clean and all other annual services.
- f) EB proposes to undertake a site visit after half term and suggested that other governors may join her in a site visit. EB to organise with KG and LJ.

Schools for the Future:

- a) CBC has cancelled the last two Headteachers' meetings.
- b) The conversion date is now set at 2025 due to the latest forecasts in pupil numbers in the town and house builds
- c) DH/PW will keep governors informed of any further updates.

**Curriculum and Standards Committee**

BM brought the following Spring 2021 Report:

Early Years changes:

Mrs Kirk (Early Years Lead) gave an informative presentation regarding changes to the early years curriculum that will be happening from September. She gave a thorough overview of changes. Some differences include: more emphasis on vocabulary; more emphasis on music, performing, dance and observational drawings; some changes in expectations in maths (more about mastery of 1-10); more history and more specific geography; slight changes in reading approach; less paperwork for staff; only needing to report on emerging and expected. The school will follow Development Matters to look at children's development, which splits well into birth to 3years, 3&4year olds and children in reception class.

Mrs Kirk gave confidence that she understands and will implement the changes well, and that the other staff will receive appropriate training. Other 'early adopters' including Greenleas School should we need some peer support from another local school.

Overall, whilst planning a new curriculum comes with challenges, Mrs Kirk feels the approach, including the removal of emphasis on paperwork, is very positive. Baseline assessments will happen in September, moderation will happen locally and Good Level of Development (GLD) still remains for children at the end of reception.

Subject Link Governor Roles:

Notes and reports from meetings between governors and subject link teachers were circulated in the epack. It was noted that this approach is going well, bringing a greater level of connection between subjects, staff and the governing board. As Covid restrictions lift and as governors feel able to do so, face to face subject link visits can be organised. For anyone not in C&S subcommittee who has a subject link, please remember to pass your visit reports to the clerk so they can be circulated to all governors.

Q: Have governors found this process helpful?

A: Yes. Governors feel more confident in the detail of subjects. RH (as staff governor) will ask staff if they find this helpful/supportive/adding value. RH will feedback at the next meeting.

Data and Progress:

We interrogated data, and some of the stories behind it. As you would expect, lockdown has impacted on our children's achievement with writing taking the biggest hit. However, the data is not as low as the school staff were expecting which shows how much work the staff have put into adapting teaching and interventions both during lockdown and since they've returned. Impact on attainment has broadly been less on the older children than the younger ones. Teachers focussing

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|     | <p>looking at mastery and focus to embed knowledge.<br/>SEND/PP broadly showed that SEND or Pupil Premium children were achieving what the school had expected them to achieve and made good progress. These children are a key focus in middle leaders meetings where needs are identified. Staff look at provision maps for key stages and what interventions are needed to help progression. Pupil Premium spend is at the forefront of these discussions. Where 2/3 individuals did not make expected progress, external home factors were also impacting.</p> <p><b>Emergency/Catch up Funding:</b><br/>A proportion of the catch up funding has been used to focus on enabling maths to happen in smaller groups, in a Covid-safe way (maths taught in groups of 15 with DH teaching maths twice a day). Some money has gone to the temporary appointment of a Teaching Assistant to support catch up. Other funding includes: a local charitable trust who paid for 3 ipads; Covid exceptional grants which went towards things like outside basins, extra cleaning hours; small pots of money that supported SLT to do more reading comprehension groups, and staff training for three communications champions (speech and language).<br/>Mrs Rees highlighted that the school uses the advice of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), only using proven methods to improve learning.</p> <p><b>Other Items:</b><br/>We also discussed safeguarding, highlighting the increase in vulnerable families, and reviewed and approved a number of policies.</p> <p><b>Summary:</b><br/>The school is adapting well post lockdown, supporting the children to 'catch up' and progress. Hopefully, future statistics will demonstrate the positive effect of interventions further. Smaller maths classes are already paying dividends.</p> <p>BM asked for note to be made here of the immense effort made by staff throughout this last year. PW/RH to communicate this to staff.</p> | PW/<br>RH                  |
| 9.  | <b>Policies</b>  |                            |
|     | <p>The following policies were circulated prior to the meeting:</p> <p><b>Equalities and Diversities</b><br/>'Marriage and civil partnerships' – TR to make small amendment to wording. Discussion followed re the new Diversity Parent Group, which is led by DH. This is embryonic and DH will feed back at the next FGB. The group plans to send out a questionnaire to parents.</p> <p><b>Child Protection and Safeguarding</b> – 3<sup>rd</sup> update this academic year. Minor changes to format and small additions following CBC guidance.</p> <p>The policies were agreed virtually by all present, subject to minor update. The verbal agreement of the committee and chair will replace the hard copy signature copy. This will be recorded and DH will file accordingly.</p>  | TR<br><br>DH<br><br><br>DH |
| 10. | <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Saints Alive Articles for the remainder 2021</b><br/>If you are down to write an article this time around, please make a note of your deadline date.</p>  |                            |

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| July/August (by 15/6) | Year 4's / Pulford paper – Tess/Bill led |
| Sept (by 15/8)        | Paul Whittington – Chair of Governors    |
| Oct (by 15/9)         | Alison Quick                             |
| Nov (by 15/10)        | Luisa Borelli – RE lead                  |
| Dec (by 15/11)        | Beci Morley / Katrina Grant              |

TR  
PW  
AQ  
LB  
BM/KG

**Discuss Timings/Location of meetings going forward**

The Chair had received a request regarding earlier meeting times. Proposal for all meetings to move to 6pm. Discussion followed. All governors agreed the earlier start time for meetings going forward (sub-committee and FGB).

The Chair proposed sub-committees to continue virtually and FGB's to meet face to face from the autumn term. Sub-committees will be held on Tuesdays and FGB on Wednesdays. All governors agreed.

As and when we are next recruiting new governors, we must ensure they are aware of the expectations re timings and commitment.

Q: Are we having the October governor day this year?

A: Yes. If the Covid roadmap goes ahead as planned, the governor afternoon will go ahead on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Governors to visit classes then meet after school for the FGB meeting.

**11. Dates for meetings in 2021/2022**

- **Resources**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Wednesday 19th January 2022 (amended date)

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022

- **Curriculum**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Wednesday 26th January 2022 (amended date)

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022

- **FGB**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022

All governor meetings to start at 6pm. Sub-committees will remain on a virtual platform whilst Full Governing Board meetings will take place face to face in the school hall from the autumn term.

**12. The meeting closed at 7.45pm as Grace was said together.**