



**Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting for Pulford Lower School, held on 8th February 2023
6pm, school hall**

1.	Registration, Apologies and Prayer	Action
	<p>Present: Mr D Heather (DH), Mr E Price (EP - Chair), Mother Cate Irvine (CI), Mrs R Horsfield (RH) Mr G Huskisson (GH), Mr A Perrott (AP), Mrs B Morley (BM), Mrs E Birtles (EB), Mrs S Haines (SH), Ms A Parish (APa), Mrs E Smith (ES), Mrs T Rees (TR), Mrs N Barnett (NB) via Zoom, Mrs M Akin Esho (MA-E), Mr B Webb (BW)</p> <p>Mrs J Gudgeon (Clerk)</p> <p>EP welcomed SH, APA, ES and JG to their first Board meeting.</p> <p>Mr Heather opened in prayer.</p>	
2.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests	
	<p>New governors: ES and APa submitted their Declarations of Pecuniary Interests to JG prior to the meeting. SH provided her completed form at the meeting.</p> <p>No new pecuniary interests were declared by existing board members.</p>	
3.	Matters arising from the last meeting's minutes	
	<p>A matter arising from the Committee meetings was the need to regularly review the terms of reference. It was agreed that these would be reviewed next meeting and going forwards this should be added to the agenda annually for the FGB, and for the Resources and Curriculum and Standards Committees.</p> <p>The terms of reference for the smaller committees will be reviewed annually, by email.</p> <p>The finance manual has been updated and uploaded to the Google Drive.</p> <p>The safeguarding report has been uploaded on to the governors Google drive.</p> <p>Ed has circulated the OFSTED 'Cheat Sheet' following discussion at the last Board meeting. This was prior to the induction of SH, APa and ES as governors, so EP will forward to them following the meeting, and upload to the Google Drive.</p> <p>Staff performance: this has not been reviewed and will be carried forward to next meeting.</p> <p>Fire risk assessment updates: not yet reviewed by DH so carried forward. DH advised that this is likely to be reviewed when the policy is due for renewal.</p> <p>EP confirmed that the Peer on Peer Abuse policy has been updated in accordance with the agreements made at the last meeting.</p> <p>EP requested that the minutes of are distributed promptly following meetings, both FGB and committees. With the lack of a Clerk in position, this has not been happening recently.</p>	<p>JG</p> <p>EB,BM</p> <p>EP, JG, DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>JG</p>

4.	Agree and sign last meeting's minutes	
	The board agreed that the minutes were a true reflection of the previous meeting. EP signed the hard copy of the minutes and DH will file accordingly.	DH
5.	Chair's Report	
	EP confirmed that he had not been required to undertake any emergency measures without consultation since the last meeting.	
	<p><u>Governor Training</u></p> <p>EP emphasised the importance of governor training. Central Beds and the Diocese both offer governor training which is conveyed to EP by email. He will forward emails to the Board, who can consider which courses are suited to their personal role.</p> <p>EB has been looking at training opportunities. 'Governor Hub' offer a two hour online session for governor induction. They offer a wide range of training opportunities, as each governor has their own individual needs. If we need training on a particular matter as a governing body, they also offer bespoke training. The cost of signing up as a board was £706 last year. The costs this year have yet to be released. The board agreed that with finances tight, it needs to be considered on a cost v value basis, and they need to ascertain whether there would be sufficient uptake to make it worthwhile. EB will distribute the program to the governors. The board need to review what is needed as a whole and what there is interest in. There are also options from other providers available.</p> <p>EP and JG will work together to create a log of the training done by governors in order to easily assess whether there are gaps which need to be filled.</p> <p>ES is booked on to the CBC Governor Induction training in March. APa and SH will aim to attend this too.</p> <p><u>Google Drive</u></p> <p>EP highlighted the creation of the Governors Drive on Google. It is a great central place to enable all governors can access all necessary documents as required. All governors should have a Pulford school email address, with which they can access the drive. APa and ES haven't received theirs yet, EP will contact IT to facilitate this.</p> <p>EP and JG will keep the drive up to date.</p> <p>BM mentioned that NB has offered to provide her training as she is not familiar with Google Drive, and NB extended this offer to any member of the board. AP suggested screen recording this, which can then be saved for future new governors, NB agreed.</p> <p><u>Website</u></p> <p>Lisa Jacobs (LJ) was in the midst of reviewing the website when she resigned as a governor. APa offered to continue with this. APa will correspond with Alison Quick, who holds responsibility for the website, to see where they had got to. DH advised that the local authority do an annual audit of the website, on which any failure to meet statutory requirements would be highlighted.</p>	<p>EP</p> <p>EB</p> <p>JG, EP</p> <p>EP</p> <p>JG, EP</p> <p>NB</p> <p>APa</p>
6.	Headteacher's Report	
	<p>DH advised that much of the information upon which he would report is contained within the Sub Committees reports, which will be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p>Attendance is down since COVID, partly due to parents choosing to take holidays during term time, and increased illness.</p> <p>Attendance of 97% is considered 'exceedingly good'. Current attendance is 95.3%. Senior</p>	

	<p>leadership team have reluctantly taken the decision to introduce fines for non-attendance as the breaches were increasing and blatant.</p>	
	<p>There have been no fixed term or permanent exclusions. However, there are more behavioural challenges than ever. Discussions show this is in line with other schools. The time spent by teaching and support staff on pastoral matters is increasing weekly. Mental health is currently having a big impact.</p> <p><u>SIAMS</u></p> <p>An inspection by SIAMS is due every 5 years. Pulford was due an inspection in 2021. This did not go ahead, it was advised that it would happen in 2023, but DH has recently been informed that it will not.</p> <p>SIAMS framework for inspection is changing with effect from July 2023. Their areas of inspection remain as Collective Worship, RE, and school ethos, but the judgements are changing. Previously they used OFSTED bandings of Outstanding, Good, etc, but from July schools will be awarded J1 or J2.</p> <p>DH is attending training with the Diocese (9th May, 7 – 8 pm on Zoom) and any governors are welcome to attend. DH will report back.</p> <p><u>SIP</u></p> <p>Objective 1: there have been two external audits of phonics. Michelle Geddes from CBC reports that good progress has been made with the new phonics curriculum and the standard of teaching has improved. There is a National phonics check in June, children need to achieve 32/40 in order to achieve ‘as expected’ level. Data thus far is promising. APE queried whether this phonics check should be added to the SIP as a measurable target. DH advised that we don’t know the figures until later and it is subjective per year group. The inspection regime is moving away from numerical targets. Teachers do regular internal checks to monitor progress. Training on the new curriculum has now been completed by all teachers and regular updates are scheduled. Objective 2: DH advised that this is a widespread point on school SIPs. It has been severely impacted by COVID. Discussions are ongoing with local schools about the best strategies for improvement, but writing is not at pre COVID levels.</p> <p>Objective 3: This is an ongoing challenge and there is no quick fix. Particularly in EYFS, young children spent the first two years of their lives with little social interaction being taught not to share for contamination reasons and are now being taught they must share. It has had a huge impact. More time is being allowed for pastoral care, but no-one knows the long-term challenge.</p> <p>Objective 4: Mostly covered by the Curriculum subcommittee. Subject leads have generated their own improvement plans within their subject. Subject Link governors can request these.</p> <p>Objective 5: DH reported that he is pleased with the progress made, and the meetings have been very positive. A further meeting is scheduled for 6th March 2023 at 6pm to which all are welcome. Discussion is ongoing about whether the uniform has an impact, and if any positive changes could be made to this.</p> <p>Objective 6: No changes. The deadline for the change in structure to a primary school has been repeatedly delayed.</p>	<p>DH</p>

<p>7.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Report</p>	
	<p>EB confirmed that all is OK per her own checklists.</p>	<p>EB</p>

	<p>The Single Central Record had one sheet missing, which EB will sign off.</p> <p>There have been no external referrals, but the school have had to make a few low level interventions. There are no major concerns at present and EB is happy that all necessary documents and procedures are in place.</p> <p>EB mentioned the need to be conscious of the drain on staff time where safeguarding measures need to be taken.</p> <p>EB also highlighted that statutory services are stretched and can be patchy when called upon. TR advised that in urgent cases they do attend reliably, but for non-urgent issues it can be a very long, drawn-out procedure.</p> <p>Succession planning: EB's term comes to an end in September. EB has a lot of experience, and safeguarding is a critical role, both for the school and for OFSTED, so needs to be handed over carefully. SP and SH will both shadow Emma going forward, with a view to taking the role, potentially jointly.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Appeals and Admissions Committee has not met.</p> <p>Admissions Criteria</p> <p>The Admissions Criteria for 2024/2025 was shared with the board prior to the meeting. DH confirmed there were no changes, and it was ratified by the board. APa commented that being a public document, the formatting could be tidied up and offered to take this on. APa queried whether it would be possible/beneficial to highlight the criteria for a full year of Church attendance being required in order to gain admission on grounds of faith. CI highlighted that a number of people arrive at the Church later in the year unaware of this. It is regularly advertised at the Church.</p> <p>DH advised that it is brought to the attention of prospective parents by staff if they apply to preschool and again if they attend a school visit prior to application.</p> <p>It was agreed that the school is taking reasonable measures to advise people of this and that there are a large number of things it would be nice to prioritise on the website but it's not possible to have them all front and centre.</p> <p>DH informed the board that although the official figures have not been released to the public, the school is significantly oversubscribed this year.</p> <p>Resources Committee</p> <p>No governors had any queries regarding the Resources Committee report.</p> <p>APe has observed that the payroll process is administered by one person and queried whether there should be an additional check. He recommended this should be undertaken by the headteacher. DH confirmed that now he does a number of spot checks on the payroll data each month prior to completion and signs off the final report.</p> <p>An Application to the Pulford Trust for funding was approved before Christmas and a response has been received. Further information has been requested regarding the funding for an IT upgrade and the trust is going to take a closer look.</p> <p>The Application was ratified by the board.</p> <p>For the benefit of new members DH gave a brief explanation of the Pulford Trust: it is a Trust fund created in the Will of Joshua Pulford, for the purpose of educating the children of the Parish. The school receives additional funding from the Diocese, the Pulford Trust and fundraising. BW advised that the school creates a 'Capital Wishlist' in one document as careful consideration is taken regarding where to apply for funds. The Pulford Trust is able to offer funding for a wider range of uses than the Diocese.</p> <p>BW advised that in the current year, the school has managed to break even on a cumulative basis, however there will be an in-year debt due to significantly higher than predicted pay rises.</p>	<p>APa</p> <p>EP</p>

	<p>Curriculum and Standards Committee</p> <p>EP thanked BM for her comprehensive report and presentation of information. The board agreed that it is very helpful to have reference to the SIP.</p> <p>It was queried how the achievement targets are set. They are set internally – leaders have a data review meeting half termly, in which they review last years data and use it to set targets going forward. Each child has an individual target set.</p> <p>BW has previously created a data video. EP will add this to the governor’s drive.</p> <p>Subject Links</p> <p>Each subject was taken in turn for comments.</p> <p>English: EP praised the clear measure for improvement.</p> <p>PE: EP is to meet the new PE teacher soon.</p> <p>Art & DT: EP noted the link to SIP points on diversity within the subject.</p> <p>Geography: GH is interested to revisit when there will be more information on progress made within KS1. It is hard to monitor when they are unable to write sufficiently to feed back what has been learnt.</p> <p>Science: EP agreed that the financial considerations highlighted within the report were a good point. ES to liaise with BW.</p> <p>Mabel has done governor visits for Maths and EYFS but hasn’t yet written up reports. Subject Link Governors were reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● APa will be the new ICT link. ● Library is no longer a separate subject, but has been combined within English. ● BM is responsible for three subjects. BM felt English and SEND should stay with an experienced governor. ● ES will shadow BM on SEND, it was felt it is substantial enough to warrant more than one governor so could potentially be a shared role. ● SH will take on Art & DT but will do a joint visit with BM as it her first visit. 	<p>ES MA-E</p>
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9.	<p>Policy Updates</p>	
	<p>Learning Support</p> <p>APa queried if, being a public document, it would be beneficial to add referencing for some abbreviations which are likely to be unfamiliar to most. TR agreed to update re ‘HIVE’ but advised that there is an additional SEND document which goes into more depth on the terminology. EP queried if the terminology ‘his/her’ should be replaced with ‘they’. TR agreed to make the change.</p> <p>The policy update was signed by EP.</p>	
10.	<p>Any Other Business</p>	
	<p>GH queried if the school has had any concerns regrading the recent and forthcoming teachers’ strikes. DH confirmed that there has been no impact of Pulford yet, but it remained open to teachers to decide as and when further strike dates arise.</p>	

11.	Upcoming meeting dates	
	Resources: Tuesday 25 th April (via Zoom) Curriculum: Tuesday 2 nd May (via Zoom) FGB: Wednesday 24 th May All meetings start at 6pm	
12.	Mother Cate led the Grace to close the meeting	