



HILLMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, 216, BISHOP'S STORTFORD

MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

Tuesday 14th December 2021 at 7.00pm

Present: Michelle Shenston (MS) (Head) *(until 9.15pm)*, Philip Middleton (PM) (Chair), Alison Mully (AM), Gillian Lawson (GL) *(until 9.00pm)*, Laura McMillan (LM) *(from 7.25pm until 9.00pm)*, Jacqui Oliver (JO), Gareth Lewis (GLE), Titi Akerele (TA) *(from 7.25pm)*, Dan Morgan (DM), Farisai Dumbura (FD)

Apologies: Anne Winship (AW)

Absent: Ulrike Kadritzke (UK)

In attendance: Sarah Lilly (HfL Clerk)

No.	Item	Action by Whom	Action by When
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies for Absence The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from AW and were accepted. UK was absent and her absence was not approved. PM noted that Hannah Draper had resigned.</p>		
2.	<p>Declarations of Conflicts of Interest Governors were reminded of the need to declare any conflict of interest, either pecuniary or other, with any item on the agenda. No governors declared a conflict of interest.</p>		
3.	<p>Notification of Items of Any Other Business None notified.</p>		

<p>4.</p>	<p>Minutes of the Meeting of 28th September 2021 (Parts 1 and 2) and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (Parts 1 and 2) were approved. PM signed the minutes ready for filing in school.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Governors to review and agree to the Code of Conduct.</p> <p><u>AMENDED ACTION:</u> MS to provide privacy notice text for the clerk, for creation of confirmation button on GovernorHub.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Governors to confirm agreement to the Privacy Notice.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> PM to distribute Skills Audit forms for completion to governors.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Governors to complete Skills Audit form and return to PM.</p> <p>ACTION: PM to update governors on document sharing solution for sharing comments – PM reported that using Google Docs was not practical as all governors would require a Google account and GL reported that he had researched use of Sharepoint, but that this would cost the school a fee. It was agreed that governors would continue to submit questions to MS via email.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to book all monitoring visits for week commencing 18th October 2021 - CLOSED</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> PM and MS to upload key documents to GovernorHub once available. PM reported that he proposed to reorganise the GovernorHub folders and governors agreed that a folder for 2021-22 would be created for FGB meetings, each Committee (Finance, Curriculum and Pay), and that Monitoring Visit reports would be filed in the Curriculum folder, with HIP reports. In addition the SIP and SEF would be filed in a Reference Document folder and a Policies document would be created.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>LM arrived 7.15pm</i></p> <p>ACTION: PM to issue July FGB minutes for governor 7 day online review - COMPLETE</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> PM will sign the March minutes and take them into the school office for filing CARRIED FORWARD.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> GLE reported minutes from last F&P committee meeting not yet distributed CARRIED FORWARD</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> All committee chairs to ratify the terms of reference at the next FGB meeting</p>	<p>FD, AW, GL, DM</p> <p>MS, Clerk</p> <p>All</p> <p>PM</p> <p>All</p> <p>PM</p> <p>GL</p> <p>GL</p>	<p>Jan 2022</p> <p>Jan 2022</p> <p>Jan 2022</p> <p>20Dec21</p> <p>01Feb22</p> <p>Jan 2022</p> <p>Jan 2022</p> <p>Jan 2022</p>
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<p>ACTION: PM would like to explore the possibility of moving from three committees to two. PH to arrange a meeting between GLE and chair of curriculum to see how this could work - COMPLETE</p>		
<p><u>ACTION:</u> PM to circulate safeguarding report for the GB to read and respond - CARRIED FORWARD</p>	PM	Jan 2022
<p>ACTION: PM to circulate Year Planner draft to the GB - COMPLETE</p>		
<p>ACTION: PM to send out calendar invites for 2021-22 meetings to governors - COMPLETE</p>		
<p><u>ACTION:</u> PM to collate the content of each safeguarding form submitted by governors into summary report - no further information received – CARRIED FORWARD</p>	PM	Jan 2022
<p><u>ACTION:</u> Governors to seek evidence of all children being valued during monitoring visits.</p>	All	Ongoing
<p>ACTION: AM to arrange safeguarding monitoring visit - COMPLETE</p>		
<p><u>ACTION:</u> PM and AM to assemble staff survey questions and circulate to governor for review. PM reported that he would assemble a staff survey in a format that could be used over a number of years. MS reported that a well-being survey was due to be issued to three weeks into the Spring term as part of the Well-being Kitemark work. MS agreed to liaise with staff leads on questionnaires.</p>	MS, PM	Jan 2022
<p>ACTION: Governors to review finance reports and send questions to GLE - COMPLETE</p>		
<p><u>ACTION:</u> PM to arrange “Meet the Inspector” training with HfL. PM reported that he was awaiting availabilities from DM, FD, AM and GL. Once these were available he would contact HfL to arrange the course.</p>	PM	Jan 2022
<p><u>ACTION:</u> Governors to consider individual training needs once outcomes from Skills Audit were available - CARRIED FORWARD</p>	All	Feb 2022
<p><u>ACTION:</u> PM to place advert for governor candidates on LinkedIn. PM to use JDs for governors in Knowledge Section of HfL GovernorHub tab.</p>	PM	Jan 2022
<p><u>ACTION:</u> TA to explore advertising for governor candidates on ICIC – CARRIED FORWARD</p>	TA	Jan 2022
<p>ACTION: PM to revise wording of Communication Protocol for parents to present to governors- See Item 19</p>		

	<p>ACTION: PM to research potential templates for a Parent Charter to present to governors – see Item 19</p> <p>ACTION: PM to explore External Review of Governance with HfL and Matt Miller – COMPLETE see Item 11</p> <p>ACTION: MS to discuss governor visits pro-forma with Helen Jones – CARRIED FORWARD</p> <p>ACTION: PM to explore benchmarking/quality assurance of governor visits with Kathy Dunnett at HfL – CARRIED FORWARD</p>	<p>MS</p> <p>PM</p>	<p>Jan 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
5.	<p>Reports/Minutes from Committee meetings</p> <p><u>Finance and Premises Committee</u> <i>Meeting due in January</i></p> <p><u>Curriculum Committee</u> JO reported that the Committee had met on 7th December 2021 and that the minutes were available on GovernorHub. She highlighted that the next meeting would take place on 1st February 2022.</p>		
6.	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>MS reported that she had provided an update on the costs of managing Covid-19. For the Autumn term 2021 she reported that the school had spent Confidential on supply cover due to Covid-19 absence, and Confidential on supply cover due to other forms of sickness. She noted that that over the half the school workforce had been absent at some point over the term.</p> <p>Governors conveyed their thanks to MS and asked her to thank all staff for their efforts to maintain teaching and learning during such challenging times.</p> <p>MS reported that if the attendance of any pupil was poor (below 96%), the school wrote a letter to the parents if the absence was due to a cause other than Covid-19.</p> <p><i>Q: Are letters being sent to parents of pupils of 5 years old and above or 4 years old and above? A: We try to encourage good attendance behaviours early, so we write to all parents.</i></p> <p>Governors discussed whether it was appropriate to send letters to parents as the school had encouraged parents to keep pupils off if they were unwell. MS agreed but explained that it was important to evidence that the school had done all that was possible as early as possible, in case the attendance issues escalated in future. She</p>		

confirmed that she was happy to receive comments from parents and discuss attendance with them.

Q: Have there been instances of pupil or staff absence as a sequelae to a Covid-19 infection? A: Some staff are still struggling following contracting Covid-19. Most staff have returned and are working normally.

Q: Is there anything that governors can do to support the school? A: Not currently thank you.

Q: Is attendance low principally due to Covid-19 or are there other reasons? A: The attendance is low not only due to Covid-19. But there are 4 families whose attendance is poor, and we are now insisting that the absence is not authorised unless a medical certificate or proof of medication is produced. We have dealt with most of these families over a long time, but one family is new to us. However, there is now a D&V bug sweeping through the school.

Q: What is the status of the Covid-19 outbreak currently? A: We now have a low number of cases (2 or 3) with a small number awaiting test results.

Q: Has the school tracked down the cause of the outbreak? A: We experienced an outbreak in Y6 in September and we suspect that this was after a cinema party prior to the start of term. The second outbreak occurred after the school disco, but we do not consider that that disco was the spreader event as there were only a small number of cases following this.

Governors thanked MS and her team for managing both outbreaks during a very challenging time.

Q: Are those pupil who are classified as Persistent Absences (PA) categorised as Disadvantaged (DA)? A: No, not those absent with Covid-19.

Q: What are the key actions required to improve attendance of DA pupils by July 2022? A: We will review the data and the reasons for absence and will be sending out letters next week. We will then take a view on further strategies.

ACTION: MS and TA to discuss attendance challenges for DA pupils.

Q: You refer to the Behaviour Team in your report, who are they? A: They are specialists who improve outcomes for pupils with behavioural difficulties. They observe pupils in the classroom and note how teaching is being delivered. They then suggest how practice could be adapted to manage behaviour.

	<p><i>Q: How serious are the behavioural issues if the school is seeking support from external professionals? A: A number of local schools seek the help of the Behaviour Team for specialist advice. In our school we see mostly low level disruptive behaviours.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Was the curriculum briefing by the English Lead Joel Evans useful? A: (JO) Joel appeared very knowledgeable. Much of the detail is in the Curriculum Committee minutes and we discussed the Oracy programme which is ongoing. We also reviewed the impact of the spelling projects. All leaders are keen to ensure the QoE is at a high standard. We also discussed monitoring by SLT and how Joel will monitor the English provision next year.</i></p> <p><i>Q: What is PPA? A: Planning, Preparation and Assessment time for staff.</i></p> <p>Governors thanked MS for the Catch-up funding documents which were useful.</p> <p><i>Q: Why has the member of staff decided to resign? A: She has worked for the school for 16 years and has decided she would like more time at home.</i></p> <p>Governors noted key diary dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25th January 2022 – Helen Jones virtual or F2F training session • 8th February 2022 – Learning Walk to implement training to include pupil voice groups. 		
<p>7.</p>	<p>Education</p> <p>MS reported that the HIP visit for the Autumn term had been postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak.</p> <p>MS then highlighted the four actions from the recent CSV review on governance and DA provision, noted that governor training was up to date and that the school already used the three year strategy format in the PPG strategy document. One key recommendation was that governors develop a local network of governors, and to identify questions and answers clearly in visit reports.</p> <p><i>Q: How does the school compare the achievement of the small number of DA pupils with the non-DA pupils? A: This would usually come from the statutory data assessments, but we can review the outcomes data in January. The PPG Report is based on the data from the last academic year, but there is no statutory data with which to compare achievement.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Is there already a local governor network? A: No.</i></p>		

	<p>PM reported that he was already in discussions with the Chairperson at Windhill21, and would propose networking with them. <u>ACTION:</u> PM to propose networking to Chair of Windhill21.</p> <p><i>Q: How does Commando Joe's benefit the DA pupils? A: This helps build resilience, ability to teamwork, and communication skills.</i></p> <p><i>Q: How do staff measure the impact? A: We measure using pupil voice, and have completed a baseline assessment which we will complete once the programme completes. Pupils also express their views on what areas they have improved in and why.</i></p> <p>MS highlighted that the progress for Y6 in Maths still remained a challenge, and that staff were aware, with strategies in place.</p> <p>With regard to the SEND update, MS confirmed that the SENCo had provided update reports and MS undertook to upload these to GovernorHub. <u>ACTION:</u> Governors to review SEND Update reports.</p> <p>MS reported that she was monitoring the SIP priorities, and that she would evaluate the impact of the SOS Spelling project and consider whether to roll this out to Y5 or Y6. She highlighted that another priority was to upskill all staff in the Oracy project. <u>ACTION:</u> Governors to review Autumn term achievement data.</p>	<p>PM</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Feb GB Meeting</p> <p>Feb GB Meeting</p> <p>Feb GB Meeting</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Governor Monitoring Visit Reports</p> <p>MS and PM highlighted that visit reports from English, Science and Computing were missing, and that monitoring of these would now be deferred to the February learning walk. PM noted that Hannah Draper's resignation left a vacancy for Art Link Governor.</p>		
<p>9.</p>	<p>Finance and Premises</p> <p><u>Financial Monitoring</u> GL confirmed that the Period 6 monitoring report had been posted on GovernorHub and that there were no areas of concern. He reported that the Committee would meet in January 2022.</p> <p><u>SFVS</u> <u>ACTION:</u> GL to lead SFVS submission preparation.</p> <p><u>Premises</u> MS reported that the hot water cylinder required replacement. She reminded governors that the school experienced low hot water pressure and that one plumber had thought that only the pipework would require replacement, and estimated a cost of £2K, while a second plumber had stated that the cylinder required replacement</p>	<p>GL</p>	<p>Jan 2022</p>

	<p>and quoted £10K. She agreed to raise this at the F&P Committee meeting in January.</p> <p><u>Personnel</u> See Headteacher's Report.</p>		
10.	<p>Safeguarding – standing item</p> <p>MS reported that there were ongoing protective measures according to the Risk Assessment and outbreak management plan in place in school. She explained that some Covid-19 measures had been lifted but some would remain in place into January.</p> <p>MS reported that the school had become aware of a significant safeguarding concern and had referred this to Children's Services. As a result she noted that it was likely that a number of pupils would face a fixed term suspension from tomorrow.</p> <p>AM had provided a Safeguarding report and governors were pleased to note that all staff had completed training and pupils seemed to understand the reasons for maintaining bubbles. Governors agreed it was important to talk to pupils to obtain a broader view of safeguarding across the school, but agreed that there was a need to ensure that appropriate open-ended questions were asked, such as "What happens to bullies at your school?". MS highlighted that this would support pupils to communicate with Ofsted Inspectors if governors were to ask this type of question.</p> <p>AM reported that some comments from pupils were concerning, and MS was unsurprised that there were some comments of this nature. AM reported that pupils had talked about fiddle toys and fidget toys, and all five pupils said that these helped them feel safer. AM emphasised that there was a need to obtain a broader perspective from other pupils. She reported that all pupils knew from whom to seek help and when to try to deal with matters themselves.</p> <p>Governors discussed the need for pupils to be clear about the behaviours that constitute bullying and how to help them articulate this, following a pupil voice comment that teachers did not deal with bullying issues.</p> <p><u>Car parking</u> Governors raised the issue of poor driving and parking outside the school, and one governor had witnessed this and fed back to the school. MS confirmed she sent an email to parents that day to remind them of appropriate behaviours. She confirmed that she and the Site Manager had been outside the school monitoring driving and parking. She reported that the Travel Plan would be further developed in January 2022. ACTION: GL to research audit comments on parking around the school.</p>	GL	Jan 2022
11.	<p>Review of Governance</p> <p><u>CSV Review</u></p>		

	<p>JO reported that the reviewer had commented on many strengths within the Governing Body. She described the four key actions of governor networks, clarity in visit reports, ensuring training was up-to-date and to use a three year PPG strategy. Governors thanked JO and TA for attending.</p> <p><u>External Review of Governance</u> PM and MS reported that they would meet to discuss the report prior to circulation. PM reported that there were many positive areas highlighted, and while there were some areas to work on, there were no areas of serious concern. <i>Q: Was there a concern regarding the school web page? A: This was scored lower, which we felt was harsh.</i></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Governors to provide pen portrait and head and shoulders photo for website to MS.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> PM to lead discussion on ERG Action Plan.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>PM</p>	<p>Jan 2022</p> <p>Feb GB Meeting</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>School Improvement Advisor Package</p> <p>MS proposed that the school move from the service provided by HfL to use Helen Jones as the SEA. She explained that the school was using both HfL and Helen Jones to source educational advice and while she was happy with both services, she felt it was time for a change of provider. She confirmed that the experience of Helen Jones outstrips that of the HIPs, and that she had experience of working in Hertfordshire, Essex and Bedfordshire. MS noted that Helen Jones was also an Ofsted Inspector, and had worked very effectively with the SLT. Therefore she proposed to cancel the HIP contract in April and continue using the services of Helen Jones.</p> <p><i>Q: What is wrong with the current service from HfL? A: We wish to use someone who brings the world of education to our door, and reaches beyond Hertfordshire.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Who provides the reports? A: Helen types these up as she is working in the school and sends the final version to us.</i></p> <p>Governors voted on whether to change the education advisor service to use Helen Jones, and the proposal was passed by a majority vote.</p>		
<p>13.</p>	<p>Government White Paper on Academisation</p> <p>PM reported that this topic had originally been discussed in 2016 and at that time it had been decided that academisation was not appropriate for Hillmead School. However, given the recent White Paper, PM highlighted that it was important that the school remained ahead of the curve. He explained that he had reached out to Windhill21 with regard to a proposal to form a MAT. MS explained that it was important to take charge of the strategic direction of the school and examine the offers from potential partners. PM explained that he was waiting for the Chair of Windhill21 to contact him and that there was a potential to form a working group to examine academisation.</p>		

	<p><i>Q: Is there any easy way to seek partner schools? A: Not really, it is important to read the ethos and vision statements of each school on their websites.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Do we have any guidance from HCC on this? A: No, but HfL do run their own MAT, so we could consider researching this.</i></p> <p>ACTION: Governors to read Academisation White Paper and consider potential partner schools.</p>	All	Feb GB Meeting
14.	<p>Governing Body Administrative Matters</p> <p><u>Status of declarations and confirmations</u> – see Matters Arising</p> <p><u>Skills Audit status and outcomes</u> – see Matters Arising</p> <p>Governor Recruitment -</p> <p><u>Website status report</u> – see Item 11</p> <p><u>Governor Development Plan progress review</u> – see Skills Audit action</p> <p><u>Location of key documents</u> – see Matters Arising</p>		
15.	<p>Governor Training and CPD</p> <p><u>In House “Meet the Inspector” training date</u> – availabilities awaited – see Matters Arising.</p> <p><u>Personal training planning</u> – pending Skills Audit findings</p> <p><u>‘GREAT’ Pathway</u> - carried forward to February 2022 GB meeting pending Skills Audit findings.</p>		
16.	<p>Policies and documents for ratification</p> <p><u>Grievance Policy</u> – approved</p> <p><u>Child Protection Policy</u> – approved</p> <p><u>Behaviour Policy</u> – approved</p> <p>Governors agreed that the policy was very thorough and contained useful examples for staff to follow. MS confirmed that these had been included to support staff understand the appropriate consequences for certain behaviours.</p> <p><i>Q: Have all staff received Safer Handling training? A: Yes.</i></p> <p><i>Q: Are there class values accessible in all classes? A: Yes, each class has a Class Charter on the wall.</i></p>		

17.	<p>AOB <u>Nursery Admissions</u> MS proposed a last minute change to the Nursery Admissions policy, to include the criterion that in the priority order below sibling applications, an application from a child repeating Nursery would be prioritised.</p> <p><i>Q: If a child does not repeat Nursery, would the same rules apply to Reception admission? A: Reception admissions are governed by the HCC Code so the school does not decide this.</i></p> <p>Governors agreed the change in the Nursery Admissions policy regarding a child repeating a Nursery year.</p>		
14.	<p>Date of Next Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29th March 2022 – Remote – to include ERG Action Plan, GREAT Pathway • 24th May 2022 – Remote • 19th July 2022 - Remote 		
15.	<p>PART 2 CONFIDENTIAL See separate Confidential Meeting Minutes of the same date.</p> <p>A - Communication Protocol - (all present – taken at start of meeting)</p> <p>B - Bulge Class – staffing update</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>LM and GL withdrew from the meeting 9pm</i></p> <p>C - Pay Decisions Report</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MS withdrew from the meeting 9.15pm</i></p> <p>D - Headteacher Performance Management Report</p>		

The meeting closed at 9:17pm.