



From little seeds
grow mighty trees

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of Evenlode Primary School held on Wednesday 16th September 2020

Governors present: Stephen Burkitt-Harrington – Chair (SBH), Annie Williams-Brunt – Vice Chair (AWB), Hayley Hodgkins (HH) – Acting Headteacher, Rebecca Shields (RS), Jo Roberts (JR), Cllr Kay Bowring (KB), Lindsay Payne (LP), Ryan Crimmins (RC), Siobhan Richards (SR), Daniel Cornelius (DC),

Apologies received from: Lisa Harris (LH), Cllr Ben Gray (BG), Sue Noormohamed (SN), Sara Woollatt (SW),

Others in attendance: Hazel Evans (HE) - Clerk to the Governing Body.

- | 1. | Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence | Action |
|-----------|---|--------------------|
| 1.1 | SBH welcomed everyone and introduced Hazel Evans, the newly appointed Clerk to the Governing Body to the meeting. | |
| 1.2 | Apologies were received from BG, SN, SW, LH | |
| 1.3 | SBH welcomed HH to her first meeting as Acting Headteacher | |
| 1.4 | SBH also welcomed RS to her first meeting as Acting Deputy Headteacher and explained that we will normally have either one of the DHT's at Governors Meetings | |
| 1.5 | SBH explained that he wanted the governors to focus the work of governors now on the more strategic business and driving the school towards achieving excellence through our work. | ALL |
| 1.6 | SBH also noted that a new era existed post Steve Rees in that Siobhan Richards can now be abbreviated to SR instead of her previous SiR in the minutes. | |
| 2. | Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meetings held on 15th July and 22nd July 2020 | |
| 2.1 | The meeting held on 15 th July was to ratify the appointment of the new headteacher and as such there were no matters arising. | |
| 2.2 | The following action points were raised at the meeting held on 22 nd July 2020 | |
| 2.3 | 2.1 Governor online safeguarding training has been arranged for those who requested it. | JL, SN, SBH |
| 2.4 | 2.2 SBH noted that the relationships policy is still ongoing and under development. SBH asked the staff if this is being developed. RS said that a behaviour and relationships policy has begun and some work with pupils has been carried out. SR asked whether this would be more sensible for the new headteacher to be involved in. It was agreed that this needs to be given time in the new year and that all staff and pupils are involved in the writing of this policy. AWB added that policies in place are sufficient to cover the school until this can be done properly. SBH to address this with the new headteacher in the new year. | SBH |
| 2.5 | 3.3 SBH has written to the Vale about Covid funding which is covered in the agenda later. | |
| 2.6 | The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record. | |

3. Report from the Acting Headteacher

- 3.1 HH reported that the return to school plans have been well received. There are some issues to be ironed out but as far as the children are concerned they have all settled really well.
- 3.2 HH and JR reported that reception children had come in really well and the staggered starts organised by KM worked really well to settle the new children into school routine.
- 3.3 HH noted that all staff, teachers, LSA's and support staff were helping out with cleaning and handwashing procedures that have been established into the routine.
- 3.4 The school has employed two additional midday supervisors to deep clean the hall after lunchtime and to help with the bubbles of smaller children eating lunch. These have been claimed against the Covid grant so not permanent contracts.
- 3.5 Staff have planned work in two week grids prepared for home learning if required going forward. All homework will be carried out from now on using See-Saw which was well received during lockdown by parents.
- 3.6 Curriculum focus this half term has been on reading. All classes except reception have undertaken reading tests to assess where children are at.
- 3.7 An "accelerated learning grant" has been received to bridge any gaps that exist in learning as a result of lockdown. This is likely to be used to employ additional LSA's to undertake 1 to 1 interventions where they may be required.
- 3.8 DC asked whether there is a strategy for developing the home learning digitally in the event of further lockdowns. HH reported that there would not be live lessons but there will be pre-recorded instructions and demonstrations created.
- 3.9 KB asked what attendance had been like. HH noted that it was good and above 92%. Around 24 children have been off each day as a result of isolating or waiting for test results for themselves or other members of their family. A lot of children have colds and these are being kept off school by their parents. We have issued advice and a checklist for parents to use to help them make decisions better.
- 3.10 SBH asked HH to confirm that no children are off because parents were keeping them home on confidence or safety concern grounds. HH confirmed there were no children in this category.
- 3.11 HH reported that last Friday a section of the assault course had collapsed under the weight of several children jumping on it at breaktime. Luckily no children were injured. The broken piece showed signs of internal rot where it had broken which would not have been visible at any walk around assessment. All wooden structures have been cordoned off until they can be formally assessed and confirmed to be sound. This will be carried out in early October. The council H&S team have been advised and are writing a report too.
- 3.12 The year 3 shelter was ripped from the school in Storm Francis and caused some damage to the roof of HH's year 6 classroom as it crossed the school roof before coming to rest between the buildings outside Mr Francis' classroom. The council have visited and assessed the damage and repairs required. Consideration is being given to what will replace the structure in the future.
- 3.13 HH asked what would our position be on accepting student teaching placements in October. SBH asked governors for any comments. RC has some experience in his school and added that the process is positive for upskilling existing staff. Students are keen and bring in new ideas. It is also a great opportunity to recruit new staff. SR agreed and said that having extra pairs of hands at the moment would be helpful. LP asked whether there was any impact on existing staff time or resources. RS said that there are added hours but that there is support provided by the university which helps

significantly. RC added he didn't find it an onerous responsibility. AWB added that existing staff can draw personal professional development from the process too. KB said as a retired teacher that she wished she had a school like Evenlode to have learned from. SBH asked whether there was a financial incentive for the school. HH said that there was some provision.

3.14 A discussion was had about some staff contracts that need tidying up following the retirement of the Deputy Headteacher. HR at the council had advised against making any permanent changes ahead of receiving a new headteacher. It was agreed that the individual circumstances of staff members contracts would be discussed and addressed at a subcommittee meeting in the next week. **SBH, HH**

3.15 HH noted there had been no school trips to Porthkerry Park or in fact, anywhere.

4. To approve the school budget

4.1 SBH reported that the budget is changing by the minute at the moment. There is therefore not a budget ready to be signed off at the moment.

4.2 SBH highlighted the difficulties the budget was facing due to Covid. In that Saplings, the out of hours care facility run by the school, has not taken any income since the start of the financial year, and also the school PTA which has also been relied on to meet the shortfall in LA funding has also been restricted in its normal methods for fundraising for the school. Apart from a successful socially distanced bags2school collection there has been no ability to hold events this year or any sign for the remainder of the year.

4.3 Following the July meeting SBH had written to Trevor Baker highlighting the difficulties the school is facing. He asked him to consider writing off this year's budget due to Covid. Trevor has replied this week but avoided that specific question. He has identified Covid pots of funding for specific resources required to manage the pandemic, supply staff to cover staff off isolating or awaiting tests etc.

4.4 SBH requested delegated powers to sign off the budget if it is required before the next meeting in December. Governors agreed.

5. Update on Saplings

5.1 SBH asked HH how saplings numbers were getting on. HH said that some days were busy but these were based on reduced numbers each day to a cap of 75.

5.2 Saplings staff were increasing to manage keeping children in the same bubbles that they are in during the school day.

5.3 Governors were asked to approve the winding up of the Saplings bank account and the transfer of any remaining funds into School Fund. This will help the gap in the current year budget but is not significant.

6. Safeguarding matters

6.1 None.

7. Governor training updates

7.1 SBH noted that HE will now receive mandatory training to help her role as Clerk.

7.2 SBH highlighted new training opportunities now available to governors online and encouraged them to take up any relevant training and to let him know so it can be noted at the next meeting. **ALL**

8. Any other business

8.1 SBH asked governors for volunteers to fill vacancies on sub-committees following the departure of Donna Merrick. The following were volunteered:

Staff Disciplinary & Dismissal Committee – KB

Personnel Committee – RC

The Acting Deputy Headteachers were added to the invited list of members of the Resources Committee

8.2 SBH asked whether AoLE groups are meeting in school this term and whether Link Governors would be required to meet electronically. HH confirmed that the groups had not yet arranged meetings yet and that therefore Link Governors would not be required before Christmas. HH to contact if governors involvement is required / beneficial.

HH if required

8.3 AWB thanked the staff for all working together given the current circumstances. SR and KB echoed AWB thanks.

8.4 SR added that from her own experience in Cardiff schools that heads are advising that work on the new curriculum has to be put on hold at the moment behind managing the safe return of pupils which is taking up all the time and resources at schools.

Please send any omissions or corrections via email to SBH stephenbh78@gmail.com

The next meeting of the full governing body will take place on Wednesday 9th December 2020.

Signed as a true and accurate record,



Stephen Burkitt-Harrington

Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr | Chair of Governors