



From little seeds
grow mighty trees

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body of Evenlode Primary School
held on Wednesday 3rd February 2021 at 5.30pm
Via Zoom due to the Coronavirus Pandemic**

Governors present: Stephen Burkitt-Harrington – Chair (SBH), Annie Williams-Brunt – Vice Chair (AWB), Ruth Foster (RF) – Headteacher, Hayley Hodgkins (HH) – Acting Deputy Headteacher, Jo Roberts (JR), Lisa Harris (LH), Cllr Kathryn McCaffer (KMC), Kay Bowring (KB), Jeremy Lewis (JL), Linsay Payne (LP), Siobhan Richards (SR), Daniel Cornelius (DC), Allun Thomas (AT),

Apologies received from: Cllr Ben Gray (BG), Sue Noormohamed (SN), Ryan Crimmins (RC), Sara Woollatt (SW),

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

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|-----------|--|-------------------------|
| 1. | Welcome introductions and apologies for absence. | |
| 1.1 | SBH welcomed and introduced the school's new headteacher RF and the governors present introduced themselves. | |
| 1.2 | SBH had received apologies from RC, and BG, HE passed on apologies from SW. | |
| 2. | Matters arising from and approval of the minutes of previous meetings. | |
| 2.1 | SBH reported that an initial Headteachers performance management meeting had taken place with RF – no minutes available as this process is documented by the school Improvement Partner at the Central South Consortium. Targets have been set for the current academic year, and agreed. RF happy with targets set. | |
| 2.2 | 2.10 - LED lighting update available and to be covered under item 6. | |
| 2.3 | 5.1 - governors interest forms – still some not received. All governors to complete a form and email to HE. HE to follow up. | HE &
ALL |
| 2.4 | 8.3 - Governors report was sent out as PDF at the end of last term to all parents. | |
| 2.5 | 10.2 - SN to provide update regarding training. AT has completed safeguarding and data training, as well as induction. | |
| 2.6 | 12.1 - to be covered under item 4. | |
| 2.7 | The minutes of the full governing body held on 9th December 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record. | |
| 3. | Update from the headteacher. | |
| 3.1 | SBH invited questions and comments in response to RF's update that had been previously circulated. | |
| 3.2 | KMC asked about the number of children invited to fill keyworker hub spaces. RF reported that the school is making good progress with this provision, communication with parents is good and some families have had calls to homes. RF said the guidance on availability of places has changed, in particular additional guidance provided for | |

children who can be safely taught at home is ambiguous. All circumstances are different which can be complex. The school office is feeding key information back to RF. RF said it is hard to remain fair and keep the numbers low. Operational guidance provided doesn't give maximum numbers of children allowed and the numbers are increasing. SBH pointed out that we need to ensure there are not more children in school than at home and that this only increases workload for teachers who are already under pressure. KMC pointed out that any decision regarding schools reopening is down to the Welsh Government not the Local Authority.

- 3.3 SBH enquired about staff welfare, how were they coping with workload, had there been any comments? HH mentioned that the workload has increased, lessons to be planned and recorded and rerecorded on occasions.
- 3.4 SBH asked if the teachers felt they should be vaccinated. Staff members said that by doing this there would be one less thing to worry about.

The Meeting was paused at 6pm so all in attendance could join in for the clap for Captain Sir Tom Moore.

- 3.5 Staff had an inset day at the start of term which was strange as social distancing guidelines were adhered to. Staff introduced themselves to RF. As part of the session, staff were asked to share their views on what the 'USP' of Evenlode Primary is and what an 'even better if' could be RF presented the results:

USP: what makes Evenlode special:

- Open door approach
- Focus on wellbeing
- Relationships across whole community of children and adults
- Staff knowing the community
- The 'can do' attitude of staff
- How staff work together and support each other

Even better if:

- Better/ fairer funding
- More resources
- Developing potential of grounds further
- Nursery on site
- Developing expressive arts and Welsh further
- Developing resilience- children seeing mistakes as part of learning

Next steps:

- RF to work with school community and stakeholders: vision, values, aims.
- RF and leadership team to audit curriculum practice: share best practice, develop curriculum and assessment approaches.
- RF to explore whole school curriculum map development: cohesion and progression.

- 3.6 **Blending learning** – RF shared the results of a parental survey that was completed at the start of term following a previous governors suggestion to ask parents what they prefer going forward. JL referred to Kirsty Williams MS, who said she would prefer schools to do more live teaching. RF commented she was unsure how much more could be available. Teachers are giving good feedback individually to families, with some parents requesting more teaching to engage the children more. HH – stated that the need for flexibility for teachers and parents prevents 'live' lessons from being practical.

LP agreed with HH, videos work much better as the children can pause and re-watch if they are unsure of the work set. HH said it does seem to be working better, with 98% of the school engaging with home learning work.

SR believed the school were being hard on themselves – live teaching isn't accessible to all children, she suggested to maybe focus more on the children's well-being.

SBH suggested a different approach across the age groups may be required, even 10 minutes of live interaction with their friends and their teacher at the start of the day helps parents get the children to focus. HH explained how it was difficult to get the balance right with each age group, weekly check ins have been discussed, however SBH pointed out there could be issues with the broadband quality at the school if every class logged on at the same time.

RF commented on how impressed she was with the level of teaching. JL suggested that if online numbers drop it could mean that the children are happy at home rather than becoming uninterested in school. RF said monitoring needs to be done all the time. LP pointed out that majority of parents don't expect work to be looked at of an evening and over the weekend, but HH pointed out teachers are reluctant to let it pile up and prefer to get it done and out of the way often at these times. AWB said we have to be mindful of everything falling to teachers and if governors could help out in any way then they would.

- 3.7 RF told the board that a health and safety committee had been formed, which consists of a mix of staff and governors, to meet Mondays at 2pm to go over risk assessments and keep updated. SBH, AWB & JL to be invited to join when they can. RF will add governors to the invite for this meeting. **RF, SBH, AWB, JL**

4. Proposal from the Chair on update to the school policies approval process.

- 4.1 SBH reported that he and RF had initially checked over all policies and confirmed that there is a policy that covers everything. However, some do need to be updated and made available on the school website, as not all are there currently.

- 4.2 SBH proposed that all policies will be re-formatted in the same way. Statutory policies should all match models provided by the VOG Council. As the last policy review was Sept 2019, all policies to be updated now as January 2021 and to ideally be on the website by February half term. SBH will undertake this work. **SBH**

- 4.3 SBH then proposed that a formal review process be introduced where each policy is assigned to a governor and a member of staff within the school. **SBH will allocate to governors based on their skills or interests. RF will allocate to respective staff.** Both will be named on the policy review page each year. **Every policy to be reviewed in detail collaboratively by these two individuals between April and September in 2021** (or during the Summer Term). This process can then be repeated over the course of the whole school year in future to ensure it is completed annually more easily. Policies will then be formally approved by the Full Governing Body at the AGM each September. This was agreed. **RF, SBH, ALL**

- 4.4 To assist with this process and to improve communication between governors, SBH has set up a new Evenlode Governors Network on the Hwb.Gov.Wales platform. All governors have access to this and there are a number of useful documents there already including governors business interests records, minutes of past meetings, governors reports to parents, and very soon all the school policies in a format able to be reviewed and edited as required. SBH asked HE to upload any updates to, or new Governors Interests forms to the network. SBH encouraged **all governors to familiarise** **ALL**

- themselves with HWB and the network** which can be found only accessible using governors secure logins to Hwb here: <https://hwb.gov.wales/go/wk79av>
- 4.5 AT told SBH he didn't have a Hwb email account. **SBH said that he would ask the school IT lead to set one up for him as soon as possible.** SBH SBH
- 4.6 SBH advised that the safeguarding officer for the VOG, Jason Redrup, has asked the governors to approve the VOG Council model safeguarding policy. It appears to be shorter than the school's current safeguarding policy, so **RF is going to check it covers all the requirements of the current one with the SLT.** SBH asked governors to approve it's immediate use once this is complete. Governors agreed. RF
- 5. Discussion on updates to the school website and prospectus.**
- 5.1 The website and prospectus of the school are now to be reviewed at this meeting each year and they haven't been discussed by governors for some time. It is intended that the website be reviewed and updated over the course of the coming year so that it can be approved by governors in February 2022. It is important that the website is accurate and key information like the names of the headteacher and chair are to be updated immediately regardless of any further planned changes to be made during the course of the year. RF
- SBH invited governors to give input into the updates. DC suggested asking people who would use the website what they would like to see. KMC expressed concern about the lack of information on the website as she believes it lets the school down at the moment. AWB would like to see the pupils featured more and for the website to be more exciting. She also suggested that the pupil parliament get involved. It was pointed out that the cost to update and maintain the website may be high, however, the general consensus is that it is doing the school more harm than good at the moment and the expense would be justified. RF said there is so much good stuff going on in school and it would be good for it to be shared. HH told the board that it is a big job to maintain the website and it's much easier for staff to post updates on Facebook. Suggestion was made to invite companies to advertise on it to cover costs. It was suggested that the PTA could use it as well, however, they have their own website. The PTA did pay for the school website originally but the specific parent who set it up is no longer associated with the school, it may be worth raising with parents to see if anyone has this particular skill set and could get on board. RF to action.
- 5.2 Likewise the school prospectus is very out of date. HH reported that many of the children in the photographs now have their own children at the school. It was agreed that this should be a priority for updating this year to include more recent photographs being taken but that much of the information is accurate and up to date and can be refreshed with simple formatting in school. RF to action. RF
- 6. Resources update on current budget position and other school resources.**
- 6.1 SBH noted that having signed off a budget with £44k deficit earlier in the year, the proposed budget outturn now shows a surplus of £8k. SBH expressed his thanks to the whole team and Sue Esseen in particular for her hard work on this document and getting everything balanced.
- 6.2 VOG council has allowed the school to make claims for loss of earnings for the usual Saplings income which has meant the school can use the saplings staff not furloughed as a resource at school and the school budget has benefited from this Saplings income which it usually relies on to balance the books.

- 6.3 SBH reported that governors comments at the last meeting had been taken on board. These were regarding any budget lines being cut this year to ensure they are reinstated in the budgets for years 2 & 3. This should ensure this money is still available when the school returns after Easter. Governors approved the amended budget.
- 6.4 SBH still hasn't received figures from the VOG for the LED lighting scheme, but he is hopeful they will be available for the next meeting. Work may need to take place during the Easter holidays.
- 6.5 Nursery provision – RF & SBH to meet with the 21st Century team to discuss the possibilities of the school taking on it's own nursery. Staff felt this was important, so that all children arrive in reception on the same level.
- 6.6 A tree surgeon has assessed the trees across the entire site and advised no children should be in the ropes course or fire pit area. There are a number of Ash trees there all with some signs of Ash Die Back which is slowly killing these substantial trees. Work is to be scheduled to resolve the problem, the trees need to be removed over the next few years. JL asked if there was any funding available for help with the costs of this. The report is to go to VOG so hopefully they will assist with funding the removal.

7. Safeguarding matters.

- 7.1 RF advised there were no safeguarding matters.

8. Governor training update.

- 8.1 SBH asked all governors to look through the hwb network and offered to assist with access if governors need any assistance. SBH also asked for Governors to complete any online training available. **ALL**
- 8.2 AWB has attended the blending learning drop-in session.
- 8.3 AT has completed safeguarding and data training, as well as all his mandatory induction training.

9. Complaints

- 9.1 There have been no complaints.

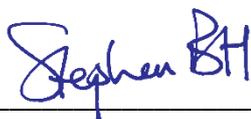
10. Any other business.

- 10.1 AT – asked for details on who was the safeguarding governor. SBH advised that AWB was safeguarding governor but RF is the 'Designated Senior Person Child Protection' as Headteacher. HH, Kirsty Mainwaring and Rebecca Shileds are also named as 'Deputy Designated Senior Persons Child Protection' in the school safeguarding policy.
- 10.2 AWB welcomed RF.
- 10.3 JL offered thanks to all staff which was echoed by all governors.

Please send any omissions or corrections via email to HE EvansH754@Hwbcymru.net

The next meeting of the full governing body will take place on Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 5.30pm.

Signed as a true and accurate record,



Stephen Burkitt-Harrington

Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr | Chair of Governors