

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 17 November 2020, 3.30pm

Governors present:

1. Steph Thurston (Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Nikki Webb (Vice-Chair)
4. Katherine Minns
5. Phil Chapman
6. Alison Powell
7. Lloyd Viney
8. Mike Dant

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Sophie Lee (Clerk)

This meeting was held entirely online.

1) Apologies

Brent Schwarz.

2) Declarations of Interest

Declarations relating to today's agenda: none. Changes to the register of business interests: none.

3) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 20 October were agreed and will be signed by the Chair at the next meeting held in person.

4) Matters Arising, Including Action Points

All actions from 20 October are complete except those listed below. The next Zoom staff meetings will be for subject leaders and governors will attend for their linked subject. BB is changing the subject leaders and will email the leaders' names and meeting dates.

LV investigated how subject leaders could be probed further to demonstrate the impact of their curriculum subject. He has added a follow-up box on the governor visit form so governors can go back to staff and ask what action was taken and the impact of it. We may need to discuss whether the form is working. The clerk will email the amended form, plus the list of governor specialties.

Governors will be invited to all staff meetings. Governors know the curriculum was modified due to covid but do not know how so they should ask about the changes.

The leadership cycle has been changed as it was unmanageable for staff to do learning walks every week. We have cut down on going into class due to covid cases. Holly Cleveley has been going into class with the Deputy Head using Zoom. BB will invite governors to any element held via Zoom.

All governors should conduct their link roles via Zoom or phone as they cannot visit school at the moment. Monitoring can be done through curriculum subjects and speaking to appropriate staff.

Our SIO provided a document on governance in turbulent times and stated our board is doing the right things. Governors should commit the same amount of time to Zoom monitoring as they would usually to school visits.

Question from NW (Visit Follow-Up): Do governors know what they are looking at during book reviews and walking around school?

The Deputy Head stated that if staff have a visualiser they can share their screen with governors to show books. The SLT cannot look at books currently so teachers are marking and SLT need to find a way to look at books too. Governors can prepare questions in advance. They can ask to see a book with good progress and one with not so good progress, ask why it is not good and what the next steps are.

Action A: Invite governors to the subject leader Zoom staff meetings.

Action B: Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.

Action C: Write a health and safety report once a term.

Action D: Invite governors to Zoom elements of leadership cycle.

Action E: Arrange one Zoom meeting with your linked subject leader before next meeting.

BB

All govs

BS

BB

All govs

5) School Improvement Officer Visit

We are really pleased with SIO Mark Lindfield's report. His virtual visit on 4 November was rigorous and he found the school continues to work on areas that need addressing. He found two main areas to develop which were already in our SIP. It is about drawing on the best practice across the school.

We talked about foundation subjects and he stated our progression of skills documents were very well-detailed. We need to ensure we use our knowledge of the children and their outcomes to adapt our medium-term planning. He was impressed with the rigour with which we looked at learning gaps from the summer term and the plan to address them.

He looked at changes the school made due to covid and asked us to consider how to draw on these to find more effective methods, using what we have learned as a way forward.

He recommended that FJS does not need a termly/monthly follow-up review as there was no cause for concern. He stated we have a strong and cohesive team and focus on pupils' personal and emotional development.

He looked closely at our risk assessment and the fact that it had been reviewed. The Headteacher has amended the original version each time it has been reviewed and he showed the SIO this document.

Mark Lindfield found that children were very talkative and spoke about coming back to school and outcomes of which they were proud. We have moved from separate ability groups in English and maths to whole-class bubbles which has perhaps led to better relationships between children and teachers. Pupils are also not walking around school changing groups.

Mark Lindfield was very complimentary about the governing body and spoke to the Chair and a group of governors. His report stated we are category B although we did not get a letter this year from the school monitoring group assigning us a category; their last letter stated we were category B with elements of A.

6) Reports from Governor Visits

None.

7) Questions To Follow-Up From Governor Visits

None.

8) Safeguarding and Headteacher's Report

A report shows safeguarding incidents for 18 October to 13 November. One child has moved down from child protection to child in need. Nine are on child protection and five on child in need. There are a range of looked after children and nine children open to early help.

The SIO pressed staff on what they do if they are unhappy with a referral outcome and how they escalate it. Staff cited examples of escalation and where they had provided professional challenge to the LA. The LA are rated Requires Improvement currently and were expecting a review of this judgement from 10-12 November but it was cancelled due to lockdown.

The new Director of Children's Services is Rob Henderson who the Headteacher has met at various Zoom meetings.

9) Governor Training

LV completed The Key induction course. NGA online training is about £150.

Action F: Buy access to NGA online training. Clerk to email details to governors.

(ST left the meeting.)

10) Policies

The charging and remissions policy is mostly unchanged.

Question from AP: Do we have more or fewer pupil premium children now?

The Headteacher noted we have a similar percentage but more PP children as we are now a bigger school.

Question from AP: Have redundancies due to covid affected the PP numbers?

The Headteacher reported that he did not think so yet but they may do in future.

Question from AP: Does the policy include different treatment for PP parents?

The Headteacher stated the policy does not give a percentage. Activities during teaching time can only be contributed to by parents on a voluntary basis. We never prejudice a pupil's place. We have never had to cancel due to lack of money and always put in a contribution from the school's unofficial fund.

We have taken a more strategic view on how we contribute to each year group. For Teach Rex in Y3 yesterday we contributed about half the cost taking it down to £4.50 per child (from £8.50). One Y3 class is self-isolating so will receive their money back.

AP noted we have a larger than expected surplus and that would be a legitimate use of PP if necessary. The only change in the policy is on peripatetic music on page 2 as charges for instrumental tuition are now paid directly by parents to Showcase Music and we do not do the admin.

The freedom of information policy was written with the Data Protection Act 2018 in mind. The law is unchanged and so is the policy.

The recruitment and selection policy now cites the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 document but there are no other changes.

There are slight changes to the child protection and safeguarding policy. We received the A3 self-evaluation sheet that talks about harmful practices as laid down in the Southampton policy. This is a summarising of honour-based and family feud violence and our policy has been updated to take that into account.

PH/Clerk

The charging and remissions, freedom of information and recruitment and selection policies were approved.

11) AOB

11.1 The Headteacher will send the safeguarding self-evaluation form to NW and they will discuss it via Zoom.

11.2 The Headteacher gave an update on the school re-opening. There was one covid case in Y6 last week and the class are self-isolating. We reset every child's email password and they took work packs home. The teacher called all parents and spoke to children. Staff have also been emailing children. Pupils have participated in Zoom PE, music and celebration assemblies.

Everything has been done in line with guidance and the Head contacted Derek Wiles, the DfE, parents in that class plus all parents.

At the weekend one PE coach and his wife tested positive so a Y3 bubble is self-isolating with all procedures followed as above. Today one child in that class tested positive and the Head spoke again to Derek Wiles. All decisions taken have been rubber-stamped by Derek Wiles, the LA and the DfE.

Two looked after children tested positive and are self-isolating. They were not in the city and are receiving lessons over Zoom.

Question from AP: Did you need to hand out the spare Chromebooks? Do we need to budget for more?

The Headteacher reported he has ordered more Chromebooks and received 18 on Friday. Y6 children will be back in school on Thursday.

The Deputy Head reported that Y3 children have been asked if they want one but no-one she spoke to did.

Lockdown boxes have been sent to the Y6 FSM children self-isolating and 13 have been ordered for Y3 and will arrive tomorrow. We ask if parents want the box from city catering and they are delivered directly to parents' homes. The LA have £900k for hunger clubs and to prop-up free school meals over Christmas and half-term.

Question from AP: Will we make a claim for that?

The Headteacher stated it will be a hybrid of FSM vouchers and lockdown boxes. The LA do not know how many FSM children are in the city as academies do not have to give information to the LA.

Lots of parents have been very complimentary about our strategies to keep children safe. There have been a few Facebook issues, with one parent asking why Y3 were put into a different classroom and implying we did not clean after each class. The Headteacher tried to ring the parent to explain that we completely cleaned the classroom after each class and we also cleaned handles, taps and used spray disinfectant. Our strategy is working. The Head will speak to that parent.

LV noted that all furniture was removed from that class so children sat on the floor. The carpet was sprayed with disinfectant. A lot of work went into the logistics of the Teach Rex visit and the majority of the conversation was about keeping children safe. We also saw their risk assessment.

Other parents have come to the Head and have been very supportive. One Y3 parent said she knew exactly what we are doing, it is very clear how we are keeping children safe and she saw a teacher cleaning a classroom.

The Deputy Head noted that every single teacher until two weeks ago cleaned tables and chairs as the extra cleaners were not in school yet. Since before September every teacher was cleaning chairs and tables and lunchtime staff cleaned tables at lunch. There are four classes in the hall each day and after each one every single table and stool is wiped with disinfectant.

Governors thanked staff for all their extra work which goes above and beyond their normal roles. The Headteacher noted his prime role is to keep children, staff and the school community safe and secure.

11.3 The fire risk assessment has been done and the report awaited.

11.4 The Stubbington trip will go ahead if lockdown is over. Both Southampton and Hampshire councils are happy for day trips to go ahead so each class will go for one day. We hope the Isle of Wight trip during the week of 22 March can run but it will depend on the guidance.

11.5 Results of the Y3 settling-in survey were absolutely brilliant. A total of 89% agreed that "work in class is just right, not too hard or easy" so the Y3 leader investigated. She has changed the way maths planning caters for the more and most able to challenge them.

Because of the lack of Y2 transition we changed the text in the first half-term to ease children back in and it may have been too easy. They are now studying the more challenging text of Iron Man.

LV noted that we have changed from sets to class-based learning; teachers can tailor the difficulty in sets but in mixed ability classes you are playing around with it a bit more. The text was more accessible but the work was actually quite challenging. He is confident we are where we need to be, with no children falling behind or trying to race ahead. We do a lot of going over Y2 objectives so they are familiar with the work.

We set comparative judgement writing work which was a bit disappointing but was in line almost to the month with Y3 writing nationally. Comments from children in the survey included "I love Mr Howard". One child did not like going to either Mansel or Fairisle.

11.6 Senior staff worked with Shirley Warren Primary for about five weeks which was a really good experience and taught us about our own school and the special relationships we have with FJS children. The school now has an Interim Headteacher and we are still supporting them from afar.

11.7 The Christmas lunch (not in the hall) will be on Wednesday 16 December.

11.8 Governors will undertake the Headteacher's performance management review on 19 November.

12) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 15 December at 3.30pm.

The meeting closed at 4.35pm.

	ACTION POINTS FROM 17 NOVEMBER 2020		
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Invite governors to the subject leader Zoom staff meetings.	BB	TBC
B	Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.	All govs	TBC
C	Write a health and safety report once a term.	BS	End spring term
D	Invite governors to Zoom elements of leadership cycle.	BB	Ongoing
E	Arrange one Zoom meeting with your linked subject leader before next meeting.	All govs	15 Dec 2020
F	Buy access to NGA online training. Clerk to email details to governors.	PH/Clerk	15 Dec 2020
	Questions to follow up from governor visits	By whom	By when
	Agenda Items for Future Meetings		Date
	Performance against SIP targets	All govs	Ongoing
	Agree newsletter updates on the budget, decisions made and governor roles	All govs	Once a term
	Safeguarding (standing item, to include CPOMS reports, safeguarding meeting summaries and accident reports)	PH	Ongoing