

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 9 March 2021, 3.30pm

Governors present:

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

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Sophie Lee (Clerk)

This meeting was held entirely online.

1) Apologies

Steph Thurston (Chair), Brent Schwarz, Mike Dant.

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 9 February 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 9 February are complete except those listed below.

Question from NW: Have any more laptops been donated?

The Headteacher reported three laptops were donated in all, one from a governor and two from parents. One of those parents raised some money which will pay for books.

We ordered vouchers for February half-term through the covid winter fund, paid for by the LA. At Easter holiday we can order the same vouchers through Edenred for all FSM children.

Question from AP: Do we need more laptops?

The Headteacher noted we have 130 chromebooks from the DfE. Last week we ordered 100 more paid for by us after the Vice-Chair signed off a quote as it was over £5k. The chromebooks are £180 each so about £18k total. We will buy another locker for each classroom as there will be 15-20 chromebooks in each class.

Question from AP: Will laptops arrive before the 31 March, in this financial year? How will they be allocated?

The Headteacher explained they have all arrived (out of this year's budget) and will be in classrooms. A few pupils brought their chromebooks back but we have not asked for them back yet as we may need to isolate a bubble or go into lockdown. We still have about 30 from the DfE to go into classrooms, plus all the laptops children bring back which are FJS property.

Question from AP: Had you planned to buy them in the next financial year or is it a new purchase?

The Headteacher said he had thought of buying them and brought the purchase forward.

Question from AP: Has the ceiling and lighting work been completed?

The Headteacher said no. The asbestos team advised we need the licenced asbestos people to dismantle the ceiling and vacuum tiles so they can be disposed of as general waste. Economic Insulations has a backlog and the new ceiling and lights cannot be put in until the asbestos is removed. It will be done in the Easter holiday if possible.

Question from AP: Does the £12,600 quote include asbestos work?

The Headteacher explained this is an additional cost. That quote included the cost to dispose of the ceiling but Economic Insulations need to do the asbestos work. The ceiling/lighting quote has reduced but there will be a cost for asbestos.

Question from AP: Will that be funded from the new financial year?

The Headteacher said yes but we cannot hurry it up.

Question from AP: With £18k spent on chromebooks and £12,600 put into the new year, the net impact on the budget should be minimal?

The Headteacher said £18k was on chromebooks, plus 16 new lockers at £500 each.

The Deputy Head emailed the new cycle of events with governors invited to staff meetings; please email BB to attend. BS should contact the Head about the health and safety report. BS was sent the updated risk assessment before school re-opened.

We asked some parents to take training for National Online Safety so we could become certified; thanks to KM for completing this.

Subject leaders will be asked to make contact with link governors before the end of term, even if just to touch base.

Action A: Ask subject leaders how they would prefer to meet link governors.

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

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

Action D: Write a health and safety report once a term. Clerk to email a reminder.

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

BB

BB

All govs

BS

BB

(LV entered the meeting.)

5) Update on Full School Re-opening

It was brilliant to welcome everyone back. All staff had a chance to comment on the risk assessment after which we made some changes. The LA also sent us an RA so we updated our own again after receiving it. The RA will be a live document and was driven by the DfE operational guidance from 23 February.

The controls have been updated to include staff lateral flow testing. There is also new guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable and pregnant staff.

The Head wrote to parents on 21 February on topics like preventing spread, responding to infections, symptoms in households, face coverings for children and consistent groups with no ability subject groups. The groups are an advantage for relationships as class teachers know children well. There was an incident today with a parent who came into school and raised their voice.

Question from PC: Did the parent have a planned meeting? Are parents routinely allowed on school premises?

The Headteacher said they are not but this was a planned meeting. There are very few parents coming in to the school building and they engage with test and trace. The only parents who have come in are a parent of a new child and the parent today.

The Deputy Head confirmed parents can only come in if invited.

Question from PC: Do parents wear masks in the playground?

The Headteacher stated we ask them to.

The Deputy Head noted government guidance says children should be left at the gate. Stopping parents gathering at gates is hard.

Governors were shown the parental protocol which covers saying goodbye at the gate, distancing, masks and appointments.

Question from NW: Should governors book a time if coming in?

The Headteacher asked governors to email, text or call beforehand.

Question from KM: Many parents are going out the wrong gate and do not seem to understand the one-way system?

The Headteacher noted there are clear signs on the gate. He likes to think parents could challenge others as it is about everybody's safety. There are exemptions for mask wearing but some parents are now wearing one after being asked to.

Question from AP: In the RA (page 5) the impact score is 5 but likelihood is 3, is that the wrong way round?

The Headteacher explained that the likelihood of the event is lower, but if it happens it is likely to have a huge impact.

Governors were shown the risk assessment which is on Google Drive. It includes the impact and likelihood of events with levels of risk. The system of controls is new from the operational guidance.

Question from NW: Have you identified a room for isolation?

The Headteacher said it is his office. It is cleaned immediately afterwards and has access to toilets.

The Deputy Head noted the music room is the reserve room. Parents were using toilets and taking in younger siblings to toilets but cannot do that now. Our pupils are asked to use the toilet before home time so they do not come back in.

Action F: Contact infant school about children using our toilets.

BB

Governors agreed to adopt the risk assessment.

6) Schools Financial Value Standard

The SFVS was discussed. One governor is an experienced education finance practitioner and governors receive a budget report at least six times per year. A live financial document will be put on the Drive so governors can access it at all times.

Governor business interests are checked at every meeting. We use LA financial expertise and have a realistic financial strategy in place, using numbers from the infant school to predict our numbers.

Question from AP: Do we have a three-year budget plan?

The Headteacher said yes, but it is impossible to know the funding per pupil. It is £3600 per pupil but this changes every year.

We have a business continuity plan. The budget is signed off by the full governing body and we have no deficit. The budget is sent out before a meeting and often discussed with AP first.

We are realistic in pupil number projections. Governors are given updated predicted

outturns throughout the year. Our surplus is large and we have plans to invest it.

The Head reviews the staffing structure annually, including when staff leave. We use professional independent advice and now ask the external adviser for Headteacher reviews to attend the interim performance management meeting.

We benchmark the size of the SLT annually using DfE and Arbor reports and benchmark income and expenditure. There are tight purchase procedures and the governing body reviews all service level agreements. A complete list of all contracts with renewal/review dates will be available to governors soon.

Question from AP: Will that include purchasing contracts, eg: for photocopying?

The Headteacher said yes, Maria Hughes is producing a list of all contracts.

We share some purchasing and employ some staff across schools such as the HR manager. Non-staff expenditure is compared to DfE national deals. We maintain the premises well with condition surveys made, the last one about two years ago. We have invested heavily in the site including tarmac outside 3LV for extra playground space.

Question from AP: When will the next survey be done?

The Headteacher explained they occur about every five years.

There are no outstanding matters from audits, with systems to follow up any items raised. We manage conflicts of interest by keeping a governor business interests register and there are no related party transactions. The Headteacher is a trustee on the LA catering board as a result of FJS being a member.

There are anti-fraud and theft arrangements with no instances of either. Whistleblowing arrangements are highlighted to staff annually and during induction. We use Business World and SBS software from the LA and software from school business services tied into consistent financial reporting (CFR).

Our unofficial account is audited every year although was not in August 2020 due to covid. The Business Manager is ensuring this takes place.

Agreed actions in the SFVS are for the Business Manager to produce a live financial document for governors to closely follow the budget and she will also produce a list of school contracts and review dates.

Question from AP: Why is our teacher-contact ratio (0.72) labelled as amber for "lower than recommended"?

The Headteacher believes this should read "higher than recommended", as 1.0 would mean every teacher is in front of the class all the time. Green ratings are 0.74 to 0.8. We have a non-teaching deputy and two assistant heads with a smaller teaching load, plus year leaders who are given time and PPA/subject leader time.

Question from AP: Has the contact ratio impacted on progress scores in reading and maths, which are also amber?

The Deputy Head stated she did not think so as scores will change with cohorts and progress is askew due to covid. We will see where children are this term, do assessments for learning and look at our curriculum for the summer term. The Headteacher said no. For the four years before 2019 we had positive progress data. There is no progress data for 2020 and there will be none for 2021 as there are no SATs. We provide teacher assessment data but there is no accountability measure.

Question from AP: Is the data based on results for the 2019/20 year?

The Headteacher stated the data currently being used for accountability purposes is

from 2018-19 as that is the last set of full SATs results.

Governors approved the SFVS.

7) Reports From Governor Visits and Questions to Follow-Up

NW attended a music Zoom on 11 February which was really good and the teacher was very mindful of the fact children were at home. She gave precise instructions with a recap at the start on the previous lesson.

She explained musical rhythms well and it was thoroughly enjoyable and well done. NW emailed the teacher to say how much she had enjoyed it. There was not too much screen sharing so the teacher was watching the children.

NW also attended Y5 and Y6 Zoom assemblies on reading on 4 March. Some pupils dressed up for World Book Day. Y5 talked about what books can give you. They had a shared screen with lots of information on, possibly too much on one slide. Y6 discussed books they liked and teachers reported their favourite books.

LV noted that in remote education the teaching and relationships are completely different. It has been a real strain for everyone and he is glad all children are back.

Question from NW: Do the SLT give feedback to teachers on their Zoom classes?

The Deputy Head reported there have not been official teacher observations apart from NQTs but they do give verbal feedback. NQTs have had proper observations and official feedback on their Zooms which were written up. It has been hard for teachers. The Headteacher reported that members of SLT spent time every day in teachers' Zoom lessons and catch-ups with the children and gave verbal feedback where this was needed.

Governors stated they are very grateful to all staff for their hard work over the year to maintaining the education of our children.

8) Safeguarding

From 2 February to 7 March there were 163 unique incidents and one more child is on children in need who joined us from a city school. Thank you to our team of DSLs who continue to check on all vulnerable children, some of whom are contacted every day. This is all-consuming and can be very hard.

DSLs have provided their own supervision and looked after each other. The Head is the local head delegate and met Derek Wiles and Rob Henderson to ask what CIN and CP children can expect from their social worker. The only reply was about statutory timescales for visits which did not change during the lockdown or covid. Schools felt they were providing the support and making sure children were safe.

We have a list of about 40 children who were contacted regularly. The LA also asked us to give them details of families we could not get hold of so they could do check-ins.

FJS has achieved certified school status and remote education accreditation from National Online Safety. Thanks to the staff and parents who helped.

Maria Hughes will be our educational visits co-ordinator and has taken training. She will do an initial look at paperwork and risk assessments for off-site activities. The card reader is now in the admin office to take payments. There is no update on the Tucasi data incident.

9) Pupil and Staff Questionnaires

Two reports give questionnaire results. Pupils were asked about lockdown learning with

213 replies (55.61% of pupils). Of those 169 were at home and 44 in school.

Only two pupils in school said they did not feel safe and staff spoke to them both. When asked how much adults were helping with learning most pupils were positive and staff spoke to those who replied negatively, who said it was more to do with lack of friendship groups in school than the adults.

When asked what they enjoyed about being in school they said being with friends, having more adults to help them learn and smaller classes.

When asked whether there was anything they did not like there were 35 answers with 10 saying there was nothing. Some missed their friends or normal school. Some mentioned extra staff pressure or said they were worried about getting covid.

From the children at home 136 said they liked home learning. Negative replies talked about wanting to be back in school. When asked if they learn as well at home the responses were mixed.

When asked whether they understand what to do and when lessons are most said they did most/always/some of the time. A small number said they did not understand what to do so daily Zoom rooms have been added so children can ask questions. Staff also call EHCP children.

Asked about devices 8% said they used a smartphone and they were the next targeted group to get a chromebook. Twenty-three pupils said they shared a device and were targeted for a device. If pupils had internet problems we gave them a 4G dongle.

When asked if they knew how to stay safe online zero said no but a couple said they were not sure. LV noted that early on they held an assembly to reiterate lock it, block it, show it, tell it and have since held internet safety day.

When asked if learning is inspiring some said Oak Academy lessons are not as good as those from FJS teachers. The staff questionnaire is on the Drive with 22 responses.

10) Policies

On p16 of the health and safety policy words were removed accidentally and the Head will add back in "member of admin team to contact parents" under 3iii.

There are no changes to the complaints policy, the managing medicines and first aid policy or the business continuity plan. All policies were approved.

11) AOB

We have applied for money from the holiday activities fund for four days of activities in school with bubbles of no more than 15, offered to FSM children first. Depending on numbers there may be chargeable places for non-FSM children. It will happen in the first week of Easter holidays with a deep clean in the second week.

Question from AP: Is that additional money?

The Headteacher said yes, at 50% of FSM children at £20 per child. We had 150 FSM children in the October census so that is £1500.

12) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Thursday 22 April at 3.30pm.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.

	ACTION POINTS FROM 9 MARCH 2021		
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Ask subject leaders how they would prefer to meet link governors.	BB	22 April 2021
B	Invite governors to the subject leader Zoom staff meetings.	BB	TBC
C	Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.	All govs	TBC
D	Write a health and safety report once a term. Clerk to email a reminder.	BS	End spring term
E	Invite governors to Zoom elements of leadership cycle.	BB	Ongoing
F	Contact infant school about children using our toilets.	BB	22 April 2021
	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