

## Governors of Fairisle Junior School

### Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Tuesday 20 October 2020, 3.30pm

Governors present:

1. Steph Thurston (Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Alison Powell
4. Katherine Minns
5. Phil Chapman
6. Brent Schwarz
7. Lloyd Viney

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Maria Hughes (Business Manager)

Sophie Lee (Clerk)

**This meeting was held entirely online.** AP chaired the meeting for the first four items.

#### 1) Apologies

Nikki Webb (Vice-Chair), Mike Dant.

#### 2) Declarations of Interest

Declarations relating to today's agenda: none. Changes to the register of business interests: none, but BB, BS and ST have yet to complete the form.

**Action A:** Email completed business interest forms to the clerk.

BB/BS/ST

#### 3) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 15 September 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 15 September are complete except those listed below.

AP conveyed the school's concerns on the shortage of covid testing to Peter Horne from the Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group. She was told it is a national problem and he has no influence on what happens locally, but he will raise it if it comes up at a national level.

The Headteacher reported that quite a few children and families have needed tests and the situation does seem better. Some staff have also needed testing and attended Marlborough Road centre. Results have returned more quickly from all tests.

The Head met Derek Wiles briefly last Thursday. He said teachers and teaching assistants have joined "tier 1" so they can now get a test couriered to their home or work when no other test is available.

#### Question from AP: Have you had any positive tests?

The Headteacher stated there have been none at FJS.

Assemblies and learners of the week celebrations are taking place via Zoom. We are following DfE guidance and it is probably not time for governors to come to assemblies.

BS completed a health and safety walk on 8 September and his report is on the Drive. He made positive comments and thanked all staff for the efforts they have made as he was very impressed with all the covid-safe measures in place. He noted the board should take assurance from that and there were no specific problems picked up.

We are waiting for a date to be set for the fire assessment and have paid £1045 in advance.

**Question from AP: Could we not pay when the report was complete?**

The Headteacher explained that the LA insisted we give them a code to pass payment to Penningtons before they come to the school.

Staff meetings are held via Zoom or only with the staff who need to attend. No governors have attended staff meetings this term. Last week was parent's evening so there was no staff meeting and we are finalising appraisals for year leaders this week. There are not as many staff meetings as usual this term and that is the case across lots of schools.

**Action B:** Invite governors to the next Zoom staff meeting.

BB

The leadership cycle was over-ambitious and we have done one learning walk only. The class bubbles are working so we are trying to have as few people in as possible. The leadership cycle has not been fulfilled as much as it should have been and will be looked at in half-term. Two NQT observations took place last week and appraisals will be finished by the end of this week.

Questions to Follow Up from Governor Visits

**Action C:** Investigate how subject leaders could be probed further to demonstrate the impact of their curriculum subject.

LV

**Question from NW: Are all parents made aware that all staff attend safeguarding updates on a yearly basis?**

The Headteacher said yes, they are told in the first newsletter of the year.

**Question from NW: Does every child with medical needs including asthma have a care plan?**

The Headteacher said yes. Some children have a simple sheet and some a thicker document. There is a care plan for every child plus short-term or long-term medical permissions. For an asthma inhaler parents sign a long-term plan which forms part of the child's care plan. For antibiotics given in school there is a short-term medical plan which is part of a child's record.

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

All govs

**Action E:** Write a health and safety report once a term.

BS

**Action F:** Confirm dates/times from leadership cycle and send to governors regularly.

BB/Clerk

*(ST entered the meeting.)*

## 5) Budget Review

Maria Hughes explained the slight revisions to the budget, including the impact of covid, which she has discussed with the Headteacher and Kieran from schools finance.

The code for teaching salaries has decreased by £6k, which includes cost of living and incremental point rises. This is because one teacher on a higher salary leaves in December, to be replaced by a teacher on a lower scale, plus the NQTs replaced higher paid teachers.

There has been a decrease in special assistants of £10k, educational support staff of £1700 and staff training of £2k. We have two new catch-up teaching assistants and we have more EHCP children so we have taken on new staff but received funding for this.

Repairs and maintenance are £20k down and we put £49k of direct revenue financing

into the capital budget. The photocopying and printing codes have reduced as they were not used as much in the last six months.

Under educational supplies and furniture the total increase of £1200 is to furnish the new classrooms and buy smartboards. Health and safety equipment includes all purchases for covid. A first covid catch-up claim up to the end of August was received for £3.5k and we can make a further claim in future.

**Question from AP: Have you accounted for that £3.5k income in the budget?**

Maria Hughes stated it is under code 9991.

New phone lines being installed have increased our telephone rental by £1200 but we have reduced mobile phone charges by £2.5k. Catering has reduced by £40k because during lockdown children received FSM vouchers and we are still not spending as much. Catering income will also reduce.

The school uniform code has decreased by £1500. Educational visits has dropped by £25k and may drop more depending on covid. AP discussed the budget with Maria Hughes yesterday.

**Question from AP: What is the predicted surplus for the end of the year?**

Maria Hughes reported the balance for the year is £108,368.

**Question from AP: Will the LA claw any of the surplus back?**

Maria Hughes stated the recommended surplus is 10% so she did not think they would. The plan is to use the money to upgrade tech in some classes as it is not up to the standard of other rooms.

Governors thanked Maria for her work and AP noted she is happy with the figures.

## **6) Reports from Governor Visits**

KM attended the September INSET day including safeguarding training.

**Question from KM: Last year you had dummy epipens which were really useful, will they be available next year if it is via Zoom? Does the school have their own?**

The Headteacher said they would be available if guidance allows trainers into school. The school does not have any and he has not seen any except when brought in.

**Question from KM: Trainers asked us to email questions to them, can we email a copy round of the answers?**

The Headteacher will find out as he has not seen any.

## **7) Safeguarding and Headteacher's Report**

The number of safeguarding incidents is not reducing. The number of children on child protection (10) has doubled since the start of the year and one more pupil is on child in need. Nine children are open to early help, where the parents agree they need support with for example parenting or non-violent resistance.

The re-opening of the whole school has been positive. The Headteacher has had very positive playground conversations with parents about how safe they feel we are keeping the children.

Every visitor checks in and we fully engage with the test and trace app. We have also had positive feedback from parents who have children in more than one school.

Attendance is at 96.1%. Since the start of term there have been 37 positive cases in schools across the city (21 pupils and 16 staff) which meant over 1300 children were

sent home for between a day and a fortnight. St Mary's Primary is closed completely. There have been no cases at FJS.

The Y5 residential has been cancelled as the government guidance is unchanged. We have booked Stubbington for four day visits (one day for each class) at around £12.50 per child.

The Headteacher has drafted a letter to be sent tomorrow if the government announce a two-week "circuit breaker" half-term, explaining that critical worker provision would continue, the access to work for children in the second week and information for parents of EHCP children.

**Question from PC: Were laptops returned? Could we send them to children again if we have a circuit breaker?**

The Headteacher reported they were only returned from Y6 children. Others are the property of the child until they leave for secondary school and then they are ours. We have two laptops we could give out and the other seven are with children already.

The SIP and SEF are complete and will be sent to our SIO Mark Lindfield. They are on the Google Drive along with the SIO review paperwork; please email any questions to the Headteacher. The SIO will visit us on 4 November.

Performance management and appraisal is almost complete for teaching and support staff. The figures in the budget are the new recommended salaries, including the cost of living rises and incremental points.

In September Derek Wiles asked FJS to support Shirley Warren Primary as the Headteacher had been signed off and has now resigned. We are providing full SLT support and spending quite a lot of time there.

The LA have advertised for an Interim Headteacher at Shirley Warren Primary who we are happy to support. The LA will meet four out of 12 applicants on Thursday and most could start immediately. At the moment we are giving daily support but less support would be needed once the Interim Head is hired.

**Question from AP: I think there is cash built into the budget to release your time?**

The Headteacher said yes, under code 9991 for "backfilling". We asked for three days per week supply to cover the work the two Assistant Headteachers were doing to release the four year leaders and two NQTs. Dawn Murphy is covering three days of backfilling and she has worked for us before on a long-term cover basis.

**Question from AP: Is Dawn Murphy shown on the supply cover line?**

The Headteacher said yes, under code 1030. We kept in £30k there but we had only spent £910 up until 5 October. We will get £482 per week from Derek Wiles for backfilling for as many weeks as we are at Shirley Warren.

Today the re-opening risk assessment was revised and it was also completely reviewed on 18 September. It will be sent with other paperwork to Mark Lindfield.

## **8) Policies**

The child protection and safeguarding policy is mostly unchanged and is in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018). Links have also been checked. The threshold documents are still valid.

The SEND policy has no major changes. It is still compliant with current law and guidance. It now references SEN *and* disabilities throughout. The SEND information

report has been updated to reflect the current law and reference SEN *and* disabilities.

The teachers' pay policy is a model policy which was received today and Robert Atkinson has looked at it. It has been agreed between the LA and teacher associations. It shows new pay spines and movement to upper pay range but nothing has really changed. It includes the new pay spine for the leadership group which is only the cost of living rises. It also includes salary ranges for the Head, Deputy Head and two Assistant Heads.

The debt management policy is unchanged and has worked well. Rules are tighter and we are quicker to intervene to prevent debts.

**Question from AP: Are we owed any debts?**

The Headteacher stated there is next to nothing owed.

The whistleblowing policy is unchanged. The dismissal and appeals policy was agreed with the LA, professional associations and the teachers' liaison panel (TLP); we adopt the LA policy. The disciplinary policy is unchanged and we adopt it from the LA.

The child protection, SEND, teachers' pay, debt management, whistleblowing, dismissal and appeals and disciplinary policies were all approved.

**9) Meeting Dates 2020-2021**

Governor meeting dates were set as follows, all at 3.30pm: 17 November, 15 December, 12 January, 9 February, 9 March, 20 April, 18 May, 15 June, 13 July.

There is not much guidance available on governor visits during the pandemic. Governors should not be coming in more often than they need to, but a volunteer was requested to do a safeguarding check and go through the SCR with Maria Hughes.

Governors should also look at wellbeing which is a target in the SIP. The SIP is built around closing gaps, catch-up for children, work-life balance of colleagues and health and wellbeing for children and staff.

Governors were asked to attend one visit each between meetings to look at their link areas plus wellbeing and covid measures. Please email the clerk to state several dates when you could visit and she will forward to the Head/Chair.

**Action G:** Send dates when you could visit school to clerk/visit once before next meeting.

All govs

**10) Governor training**

PC will attend the Schools and Academy Show online from 17-20 November. The clerk will send details of online training available to the Chair, including induction training for LV. KM and BS may also wish to attend as their own induction course could have been better.

**11) AOB**

**11.1** All new governors need a section 128 check. The Headteacher completed this check for LV and it was clear.

**11.2** **Question from AP: Did the possible additional pupils join us?**

The Headteacher reported they did join us and he was also asked to take another four after census day. He emailed the person in charge of school places because this means we miss out on around £20k but received no reply.

**11.3** **Question from LV: Is the plan to share the SIP with staff again and also let them know I am the staff governor?**

The Headteacher said the SIP will be shared. LV will let staff know of his role.

**11.4** The open evening this half-term was held virtually. Last year about 53% of parents attended and this year 80% took part. Teachers contacted parents of children in their class by phone. This took twice as long to do but was really useful.

**11.5** Question from PC: There have been changes forced on us during the pandemic, have some been positive?

The Deputy Head stated that breaks and lunchtimes have been far calmer and children are actually playing. There are many positive changes.

Question from KM: Could that be why Y3 settled in better?

The Deputy Head noted that we usually do many things for transition which we did not do for Y3 but they have settled in incredibly well.

LV reported they had concerns beforehand as children had not been at school, but they have embraced it better than adults almost and it is really impressive. It was lovely to speak to parents in detail as hall meetings did not happen and it was more beneficial than book-look style parents' evenings done in the past.

In Y3 91% of parents have been contacted so far. LV stated parents have massively engaged.

**12) This item is covered in a confidential minute.**

The Headteacher has contacted the external advisor who advised on his performance review last year but has not heard back so we may need to find someone else.

**13) Time and Date of Next Meeting**

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 17 November at 3.30pm.

*The meeting closed at 4.45pm.*

|           |  |                |                 |
|-----------|--|----------------|-----------------|
|           | <b>ACTION POINTS FROM 20 OCTOBER 2020</b>  |                |                 |
|           | <b>Action to be completed</b>  | <b>By whom</b> | <b>By when</b>  |
| <b>A</b>  | Email completed business interest forms to the clerk.  | BB/BS/ST       | 17 Nov 2020     |
| <b>B</b>  | Invite governors to the next Zoom staff meeting.   | BB             | TBC             |
| <b>C</b>  | Investigate how subject leaders could be probed further to demonstrate the impact of their curriculum subject. | LV             | 17 Nov 2020     |
| <b>D</b>  | Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.                   | All govs       | TBC             |
| <b>E</b>  | Write a health and safety report once a term.  | BS             | End spring term |
| <b>F</b>  | Confirm dates/times from leadership cycle and send to governors regularly.                                     | BB             | Ongoing         |
| <b>G</b>  | Send dates when you could visit school to clerk/visit once before next meeting.                                | All govs       | 17 Nov 2020     |
|           |  |                |                 |
|           | <b>Questions to follow up from governor visits</b>   | <b>By whom</b> | <b>By when</b>  |
| <b>NW</b> | Do governors know what they are looking at during book reviews and walking around school?                      |                |                 |
|           |  |                |                 |
|           | <b>Agenda Items for Future Meetings</b>  |                | <b>Date</b>     |
|           | Presentations from Robin Hayes/Holly Cleveley on SEND/more and most able                                       | Robin/Holly    | TBC             |
|           | Look at history from infant school to Y6   | All govs       | TBC             |
|           | 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         |