

Fairisle Junior School Whole Governing Body Meeting

Tuesday, 14 November 2023 at 3.30 pm

Venue – Fairisle Junior School, Fairisle Road, Lordshill, Southampton, SO16 8BY

Minutes

Attendance:

| Name | Role | Attended | Apologies accepted | Absent |
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| Nikki Webb (NW) | Chair | X | | |
| Gary Natella (GN) | | | | |
| Phil Chapman (PC) | Vice Chair | X | | |
| Peter Howard (PH) | Headteacher | X | | |
| Alison Powell (AP) | | X | | |
| Bev Bessey (BB) | Staff Governor/ Deputy Headteacher | X | | |
| Brent Shwarz (BS) | | | X | |
| Also in attendance: | | | | |
| Carol Donnachie | School Business Manager | Arrival indicated | | |
| Liz Irving (LI) | Clerk | X | | |

Agenda items were taken in the order shown.

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| 1. | Apologies for absence |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The Chair opened the meeting at 15.35.ii. Apologies were accepted from BS.iii. GN has tendered his resignation. PH has updated GIAS and the school website. |
| 2. | Declarations of interest: a) to declare an interest in any item on today's agenda b) governors to complete the business interests register for 2023/24. |
| | None declared. All governors have completed a Declaration of Interests for this academic year, subject to in-year changes. |
| 3. | Minutes of the meeting on 19 September 2023 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision: the minutes from the meeting of 19 September 2023 were approved. |
| 4. | Matters arising including action points |

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| | <p>Please refer to the Summary of Actions table following the minutes for updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. School Improvement Officer (SIO): PH advised that the school's SIO is no longer in post. PH has arranged a meeting with Derek Wiles to discuss SIO support going forward. ii. Managing Allegations Against the Headteacher: PH advised that this is with Alison Philpott to arrange a training session for Chairs. |
| 5. | Budget Review 2023-2024 – CD |
| | <p>CD joined the meeting at this point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CD is completing the mid-year revision of the school budget, which includes a column with the April 2023 figures for comparison, as per governors' request. ii. The budget has been reviewed by the SCC Finance Officer. iii. CD highlighted the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Some unexpected income has been received in respect of teaching salaries and Sports Premium. This amounts to an additional £17k. b. Income from school trips has reduced, as has expenditure in this area. c. Budget share: the DfE insurance RPA (discussed at a prior meeting) is deducted from the budget share. The insurer requires that a number of checks are undertaken as a prerequisite, e.g. boilers, lifts. The school covers that cost of these, which CD is in the process of arranging. d. SEN top-up funding is higher than budgeted. This is because the level of SEN need was not fully known at the point of drafting the budget. e. Teachers' salaries: the original budget assumed an increase of 5% as per LA guidance, but the final award was 6.5%. f. Support Staff: the final award is largely in line with budgeting assumptions. g. Agency staff: expenditure has increased on teaching assistants (TA) and decreased for teaching supply as a long-term supply teacher is now employed. CD advised that TA recruitment continues to be difficult, with many preferring to work via an agency. PH advised that the agency TAs are of very high quality. h. Utilities: CD reported that the school has not received an electricity bill since March 2023, and no gas bill since September. Utilities are arranged through the local authority. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: are the school's utility bills expected to fall in line with domestic utilities? • Response: CD said that this was not known at present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Minibus: expenditure is down in this area as the new minibus was not available until September. j. Premises: some rooms have been refurbished, including Medical. k. FJS has signed up to an SLA for Language and Educational Psychology support. The former is much needed due to high levels of English as an Additional Language (SLA) in the current pupil cohort. l. Grounds maintenance: BB is overseeing a project to revamp some of the outdoor space. The pond will be removed and new fencing is required. Further decision |

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| | <p>about how to utilise the space will be made once it has been cleared. Costs may increase.</p> <p>iv. Equipment repairs and maintenance: the annual inspection of outdoor equipment confirmed that the Trim Trail has reached the end of its life and must be removed. All other outdoor equipment was very low risk on the report. PH shared two designs for a replacement Trim Trail on a safe surface. These have also been shared with four pupil representatives. The preferred option, in which the surface is wholly mulched with rubber, is £12k more than the alternative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: will drainage be installed as part of the build? The lower part of the field is waterlogged and unusable at present. • Response: PH said that the new all-weather trail will be on a layer of stones for drainage and will be in the higher part of the lower field which does not get waterlogged. • Question: will weed suppression be installed? • Response: Yes. The estimate for groundworks is £10k, and it is designed to be low maintenance, e.g., no grass that would need strimming. <p>PH advised that the negotiated cost is £75k, plus £3-4k for green metal fencing.</p> <p>PH reminded governors that the c/fwd figure in April 2023 was in excess of £300k and will still be more than £300k when the Trim Trail work has been accounted for.</p> <p>PH advised that it was not possible to complete due diligence and obtain three quotes as there are not enough companies building this sort of equipment in the area. The chosen provider also built the gym and climbing equipment in the playground. PH was confident that the quotation represented good value and would not be matched by other providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: is the removal of the existing equipment an additional cost? • Response: no, this is included in the quote. • Decision: the board approved the spend of £75k to install a new Trim Trail. <p>v. Surplus: PH highlighted that a recent change to the budget of an additional £2000 Sports Premium takes the c/fwd figure into 2024 to at least £313k.</p> <p>The Chair thanked CD for her update.</p> <p><i>CD left the meeting at this point.</i></p> |
| 6. | Trim Trail Upgrade |
| | This was covered under agenda item 5. |
| 7. | Self-Evaluation Summary – 2023-24 |
| | PH encouraged governors to carefully read the SEF before the SIO visit in March. It will be revised as it is every term but represents an up-to-date summary at present. |
| 8. | Cycle of Events (Autumn Term 2) - BB |
| | <p>Please refer to the Cycle of Events which is stored with the papers for this meeting.</p> <p>i. BB gave an overview of the development and function of the Cycle document, the purpose of which is to help leaders hold themselves to account. BB uses it at SLT meetings to keep track of actions.</p> <p>ii. From the spring term, the document will include an Evaluation & Impact section.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. The document includes Governance meetings and actions. iv. Governors were invited to attend the forthcoming Pupil Progress meetings for years 3 and 6. v. The board reviewed the calendar of activities planned for the last week of term, which includes the Christmas production on 12 December, a craft day on the 13th, and the Christmas assembly and lunch on the 14th. Governors were invited to attend any of these activities. |
| 9. | Prejudicial Language & Behaviour Survey Outcomes |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. PH reported that the Prejudicial Language and Behaviour Survey was conducted by PH after half term with years 4 – 6. BB and PH are both very happy with the outcomes, which were shared with governors. ii. It was noted that the pupils who were unable to name protected characteristics were children who had not been at FJS for long. iii. The results of the survey were published to parents in the first November newsletter. iv. Question: have the results also been shared with pupils? v. Response: this was covered in a Friday assembly. PH told pupils they should be very proud of the results. vi. It was noted that pupils were less confident about recognising stereotyping, which will be given further consideration. PH and BB also highlighted that pupils reported seeing more prejudicial jokes and “banter” online than in school. |
| 10. | Storm Closure Day – 2nd November 2023 |
| | <p>Context: At the instruction of the local authority, all maintained Southampton schools were closed on 2 November 2023 due to a severe storm warning issued by the Met Office. Many local academies also closed in line with the LA guidance. In the eventuality, Southampton was not severely affected by the storm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. PH advised that prior to the decision to close being issued by the LA, the Bridge Trust headteachers had met and decided to close all schools in the Trust. ii. Tasks were assigned to all teachers and support staff, with the exception of 1-2-1 TAs. Work was set for all children and published on the website. PH advised pupils that he would be monitoring use of TTRockstars. Subsequently, all those who logged into TTRockstars on 2 November received a round of applause in assembly. 25% of pupils logged in on the day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: How did participation rates in online learning compare to lockdown? • Response: Participation rates were not as good. • Question: Were any complaints received from parents? • Response: No. SCC’s instruction to close was published in the local news and the school shared it on social media. A tree fell against the school building during the last big storm so the decision to close was appropriate. iii. PH asked that the Governing Board decide whether school should be opened for an additional day during school holidays to make up the day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Are you satisfied that the school took the steps necessary to ensure appropriate education was available for the day? |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response: PH said that this was the case. Letters were given out in each class, pupils were advised of what they needed to do and what staff were going to do to support them. The decision to close balanced a duty of care to the school community with the provision of education. <p>iv. PH showed governors where remote learning was held on the school website and advised that FJS has ten days-worth of remote learning fully planned. These are all tasks that would normally be done during the year as part of the curriculum, and SEN Pink Group provision has also been put in place.</p> <p>v. The Chair observed that a great deal of hard work had been done to prepare this and asked that thanks be passed to the relevant staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision: the board agreed that there was no requirement to open the school for an additional day to compensate for closure on 2 November 2023. |
| 11. | Reports from & Questions to follow up from governor visits |
| | <p>Please refer to the visit reports stored with the papers for this meeting.</p> <p>i. Spanish visit - AP</p> <p>AP reported on the implementation of the Language Angels Spanish scheme and software, which AP considered to be impressive and good value for money. PH noted that the reporting obtained from the software can help identify teachers who need more support to be confident teaching Spanish.</p> <p>AP observed that both teachers and pupils are enjoying Spanish lessons.</p> <p>ii. Behaviour walk - NW</p> <p>NW reported that behaviour throughout the school was excellent during the visit. Pupils said that teachers respond quickly to behaviour incidents in the classroom. NW observed that pupils are not distracted by classroom visitors and get on with their work.</p> <p>Children were wearing uniform and took pride in this. BB noted that the uniform is a readily available colour scheme and plain sweatshirts can be worn to ensure it is affordable.</p> <p>NW commented that children were polite.</p> <p>PH shared some very positive feedback received from Fishbourne Roman Palace, who had recently hosted a visit from Year 4.</p> <p>iii. INSET day - AP</p> <p>AP noted the following common themes covered:</p> <p>Mislearning due to Covid, particularly affecting Years 5 and 6.</p> <p>Staff feel they are struggling to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum in their classes, leading to some subjects being condensed.</p> <p>The links between subjects were noted, e.g., RE, History and PSHE.</p> <p>AP observed that the school environment was clean, tidy, and safe.</p> <p>iv. Maths - AP</p> <p>Leaders shared the Maths action plan with AP and explained that this is closely monitored to ensure the whole curriculum is covered.</p> <p>A Teaching and Learning walk took place on 28 September, the results of which were used to update the action plan.</p> |

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| | <p>AP was advised that more able pupils were given more tasks at their current expectation level rather than tasks for the next year group, in order to give greater coverage.</p> <p>Year 4 multiplication test results were excellent (as covered in the Summer 2 meeting). Subject leaders attribute the improvement in results from previous years to closer adherence to the White Rose maths scheme.</p> <p>AP liked the use of a notebook for recording concerns where children are not achieving as expected; this is used by TAs for focused individual attention. BB said this is used in Maths in all years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: is anything similar in place for English? • Response: BB was not sure if a notebook was in use, but pupil progress was regularly discussed. <p>The time between SATS and the end of the year is used to cover practical application of maths in everyday life.</p> <p>Subject leaders suggested there could be more curriculum links between maths and related subjects such as Design & Technology.</p> <p>v. Geography - BB</p> <p>BB met with the Geography leader to review the targets discussed at the previous interview.</p> <p>BB noted that more adaptation of the curriculum or SEN was still required, and the subject lead needs to work with teachers on pupil recall and explanation.</p> <p>It was agreed that more liaison with the Infant school would be useful.</p> |
| 12. | Policies: |
| | <p>i. Teachers' Pay</p> <p>PH advised that the policy was up to date, barring the salary scale information that has not yet been provided by SCC. Teachers have received their pay increases as per the Teachers' Pay and Conditions document.</p> <p>ii. Whistleblowing: no changes</p> <p>iii. Dismissal and appeals: no changes</p> <p>iv. Disciplinary: no changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: does FJS have to follow these HR policies, and are they used across the Trust? • Response: PH said that the school does not have to adopt these policies, but as they have been negotiated with all appropriate professional bodies it is sensible to do so. <p>v. SEND: this has been reviewed by the SENCO and only minor changes made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: does this policy apply across the Bridge Trust? • Response: No – the policy must be individual and appropriate to each setting. <p>vi. Child Protection & Safeguarding: the extensive changes were highlighted in the document, including the online safety and mobile technology requirements of KCSIE 2023, and the responsibilities of governing bodies with regard to filtering and monitoring.</p> <p>vii. Attendance: PH advised that this may become a Bridge Trust policy in future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Year 5 attendance is notably worse than other years. Why is this? |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response: there are two Year 5 pupils not currently attending school. These cases are open to the Education Welfare Officer. The impact of these two pupils is a 2.4% reduction in attendance figures for Year 5. • Decision: all policies were approved. <p>viii. SEND Information Report</p> <p>The report is published on the school website here. PH felt that the SENCO has created a good report that is easy to understand and useful for parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: all governors to read the report and raise questions. |
| 13. | Any other business (AOB) |
| | <p>i. National Tutoring Programme: PH has received confirmation that nothing will be clawed back for this programme, as it has been in the past.</p> <p>ii. Parent survey: PH will be asking all attendees at Parents Evening to complete the survey to ensure as many responses as possible.</p> <p>iii. Pupils on roll: PH advised that two new starters on 15/11/23 would take the number of pupils on roll above 400 for the first time in the school's history. When PH was appointed as Head in 2007 there were 267 pupils on roll. There have been 22 new starters since September.</p> <p>FJS has one year of four classes, and three years of three classes, leaving a spare classroom for interventions. PH does not anticipate any staffing or budget problems arising from the increase in numbers and cautioned that the number may not stay at 400 going forward.</p> <p>PH said that the increase in numbers has been due to a lot of hard work by key people.</p> <p>iv. SIO visit: the next SIO visit is due on 5 March.</p> <p>v. Clerking: the Chair thanked LI for the clerking support provided over the last year. LI has stepped down due to lack of capacity and personal reasons.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 17:38.</p> |
| | Date and time of next meeting: Tuesday 9 January 2024, 3.30pm |

| | Action to be completed | Who | By when |
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| Agenda item | ACTION POINTS FROM 24 NOVEMBER 2023 | | |
| 12. | All governors to read the SEND Information report and raise questions. | All | Sp 1 |
| Agenda item | ACTION POINTS FROM 19 SEPTEMBER 2023 | | |
| 2 | LI to issue a Declarations of Interest form for all governors to complete in order that the Register of Interests can be updated. | LI | CLOSED |
| 6 | PH and NW will liaise on the formation of a formal pay committee, to have a written terms of reference and to be included in the Pay Policy. | PH & NW | End of year |

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| 7 | PH to signpost governors to the exit survey responses. | PH | Closed |
| 9 | PH to asked Jemma Swann (LADO) to contact NW re training on managing allegations against the headteacher. | PH | Closed |
| 10 | All governors to review the SIP for 2023-24. | ALL | Closed |
| 12 | AP and BS to complete reading of KCSIE 1 & 5, & signing as needed. | AP & BS | cfwd |
| 13 | Equalities update to be included on the next meeting agenda. | PH | Closed |
| ACTION POINTS FROM 2 May 2023 | | | |
| 1 | BB to send sample pupil questionnaires to PC. Update: subject leader questionnaires have been sent to governors, but c/fwd pupils | BB | Closed |
| 2 | BB to book a debrief meeting after governors have met with subject leads. BB has met one. NW still to do. PC still to do. | BB | cfwd |