



WALTON & LEES HILL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS MEETING

MINUTES OF THURSDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2019

1. Apologies for Absence

Action

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs L Irving.

Present:

Mrs M Alston (MA-Chair), Mrs K Lamb, Mrs F Ritson (FR), Mr G Lamb (GL), Mr G Shaw (GS), Mrs F Stobbart, Mr P Cronin (PC) and Mrs T Mitchinson (Clerk).

Also present was Lindsey Slater, LA General Adviser.

Mrs Alston began the meeting by introducing Mr Paul Cronin, new Foundation Governor and Mrs Stobbart introduced Lindsey Slater from LA.

2. Declaration of Interest in an Agenda Item

Mrs Stobbart declared an interest in Item 12 Timetable for Performance Management & Pay Review.

3. Minutes of Meeting Held on Wednesday 3rd July 2019

A change to the date stating the next Parish Council meeting was not until September 2020 was made, changing to September 2019, and then the minutes of Wednesday 3rd July 2019 were signed as a true and correct record.

4. a) Matters Arising from Wednesday 3rd July 2019

Item 4a (July 2019) – Matters Arising

Mr Shaw reported that the Parish Council did not consider requests for monetary donations until their November meeting and that they would need to have something formal, in writing in order to discuss and agree any outcome. Mr Lamb agreed to get quotes for signage etc. required and put together a formal application; Mr Shaw said the PC would need this mid-October.

GS/GL

It was agreed that the article in the Cumberland News on Friday 6th September 2019 more than made up for our disappointment with the previous editorial 'School of the Week'.

Clerk confirmed that an official letter had been sent to Mrs Rooney, confirming the offer of a temporary full time contract with 0.6 MPS and 0.4TLR.

Item 4b (July 2019) – Outstanding RAIL Items

Ofsted Workshop Session with David Salmon has been arranged for 16/10/19, 6.30pm.

Item 7 (July 2019) – Health, Safety, Buildings, Premises, Pupil Progress & Discipline Committee Report

Signed as true and Correct

The committee structure audit will take place at this meeting; see Item 6 of this agenda.

All governors were sent the Monitoring Visit document and this has now been included as part of the New Governor Induction Pack.

Item 8 (July 2019) – Headteachers Report

All Governors present indicated that they had received and reviewed the updated SIP at the end of the last school year and have contacted Mrs Stobbart with any observations.

Item 12 (July 2019) – Link Governor Report

New GST Training Schedule 2019/2020 has been issued to all governors.

Item 13 (July 2019) – Safeguarding Issues

Clerk provided everyone with the Prevent radicalisation link for Governors to complete if they hadn't already.

Item 17 (July 2019) – Governors Prizes

It was noted that Mr Shaw had attended the end of year Leavers Assembly on 18/07/2019 on behalf of the Governing Body.

b) Outstanding RAIL Actions

3rd May 2017

The '10 Things Financial Audit' is still to be completed by the Finance & Personnel Committee.

**F&P
Comm**

17th May 2018

Collective Worship Monitoring review has now been completed; see Item 15 of this agenda.

The agreed updates to the History Policy and Inclusion Policy are still outstanding until the respective policies are reviewed. This is on-going.

6th December 2018

As previously discussed under Item 4a Mr Lamb is to get quotes for the agreed signage and put together a request for a monetary donation towards these from the parish council.

GS/GL

27th February 2019

The Ofsted Readiness audit will be arranged with Clare Render from Rural Learning Alliance once Mr Salmon has delivered the planned Ofsted session on 16th October 2019.

FS

Clerk confirmed that she was still waiting for skills audit returns from Mrs Irving and Mr Shaw; Clerk will email them copies again for completion and also to Mr Cronin.

**Clerk/
GS/LI/
PC**

8th May 2019

Clerk confirmed that she has had no further correspondence with H&H King on the level of rent on similar houses in similar locations so a decision can be made on a rent review; Clerk to chase this up.

Clerk

A temporary banner with the new school name on is in place on the outside fence and Mrs Stobbart will obtain some quotes for permanent signage from AST Signs who have been recommended. Mrs Lamb asked if changes would be made to the large school entrance gates as they also have the name on; it was thought that we could look into the possibility of adding the wording 'Walton' over the top but this was not a priority at present.

With regard to the proposed change in HR provider Mrs Stobbart is to check with Mrs Lyons as to when the contract ends with our current provider, Capita HR.

FS

Mrs Stobbart is also to check through Mrs Dalglish' files for the CEFEL resources that were discussed in the Summer Term.

FS

It was noted that the new Parent Handbook had been completed and issued to all parents as from 5th September 2019; it was agreed by all that this was well put together and provided all relevant information parents would need.

5. Election of Officers

Clerk took over the Chair at this point in the meeting and nominations were invited for the various offices resulting in the following appointments -

Chair – Mrs Mary Alston

Vice-Chair – Mr Graham Lamb

Link Governor – Mrs Tracey Mitchinson as Clerk

The following were appointed as Chairs of the sub-committees for the year –

Finance & Personnel Committee – Mr Graham Shaw

Health, Safety, Buildings & Premises Committee – Mr Graham Lamb

Pupil Progress & Discipline Committee – Mrs Fiona Ritson

Headteachers Appraisal Committee – Mrs Mary Alston

Parent Liaison Governor – Mrs Laura Irving

The Clerk then handed the Chair back to Mrs Alston.

6. Governing Body Membership

As welcomed at the beginning of the meeting, Mr Paul Cronin has been appointed as Foundation Governor on behalf of the incumbent as from 9th September 2019.

Clerk confirmed that a nomination has been made to the LA for an LA Governor but we are still awaiting official confirmation of the appointment from the Council; Ms Slater agreed to chase this up on our behalf.

LS

There would be a vacancy for a Staff Governor going forward until a permanent decision has been made as to the future leadership of the school, but it was asked if we could make a temporary appointment in the interim, to which it was agreed we could.

Signed as true and Correct

Mrs Stobbart said she would like to give Mrs Rooney the opportunity to stand if she wished and this was agreed by Governors; Mrs Stobbart is to discuss this with staff.

FS

Mrs Alston was appointed as mentor governor for Mr Cronin.

Clerk issued all Governors present with a copy of the new Instrument of Governance.

Now that the Governing Body was nearly up to full capacity again it was decided to carry out an audit on the committee structure to which it was agreed that they would split the Health, Safety, Buildings, Premises, Pupil Progress & Disciplinary Committee back to the original two committees of Health, Safety, Buildings & Premises and Pupil Progress & Discipline.

Decisions were made as to members of the committees and the Clerk to issue all Governors with the updated version.

Clerk

7. Finance & Personnel Committee Report

There had been no meeting of the Finance & Personnel Committee since the last FGB meeting. Mrs Stobbart reported that she had just received the report from Kim Brown prior to this meeting so has not had the time to read this in-depth but glancing over it, it all looked positive going forward; this will be discussed in more detail at the next committee meeting.

A meeting has been scheduled between Kim Brown, Mrs Stobbart and Mrs Lyons to go forward with the budget.

Balance carry forward for the year at present is approx. £11,108.00

Governors Account Balance as at 11th September 2019 is £16,231.68.

8. Health, Safety, Buildings, Premises, Pupil Progress & Discipline Committee Report

There has been no meeting of the Health, Safety, Buildings, Premises, Pupil Progress and Discipline committee since the last FGB meeting but Mrs Ritson reported that she has carried out all the statutory health and safety checks for coming back to school at the start of the school year in September; there had been some minor issues arising but they were all either completed or in hand.

One major issue that has come to the fore again is the condition of the septic tank located in the school playing field; Rod Hind Drainage Ltd has assessed its condition and has deemed it as beyond repair but would need more information as to future usage etc. before they can provide a quote as to the full cost implications.

Mr Shaw asked who owns the septic tank. *The school does but it does also service the school house.* This led to the proposal to ask about the possibility of getting some aid from the Diocese.

Mrs Ritson suggested that the possible costs could be in the region of approx. £20,000 and that maybe the Governors should consider funding towards it; this is a possibility out of the School House fund.

Ms Slater advised that we should also contact the LA maintenance team to see what help they could provide; she will send the contact details to Mrs Stobbart.

Mr Shaw pointed out that if the tank does become completely unusable prior to any maintenance work/replacement being conducted then surely that would make this a priority within the LA as the school may have to close as a consequence.

The Health and Safety Audit for the Autumn Term is to be conducted; Mr Lamb and Mr Cronin agreed to liaise on this.

GS/PC

9. Acting Headteachers Report

Mrs Stobbart provided a written report prior to the meeting and also issued a copy of the school newsletter.

Educational Excellence

- School name change and promotion of this
- Bronze Green Tree School Award achieved
- Forest School learning and OAA days to start 12th September for 5 weeks
- Topic this half term is Out and About
- Hens coming!
- Hospice at Home make £5 grow fundraiser teaming up with Ian Blair

Strategic Leadership

- INSET days July and September
- H and S refresher for all staff
- Job descriptions reviewed and signed with informal discussions with staff ahead of the new school year
- Staff and parent handbooks completed (attached)
- Parent drop-ins September well attended
- Cumberland News name change promotion

Operational management

- Lynn Rooney 0.4 Lead Teacher and 0.6 KS2 Teacher
- Chris Howard newly appointed NQT full time – signed up with RLA
- Fiona Ritson TA hours increased to 24.5
- Louise Lyons admin hours increased to 18

Extra-Curricular

- Clubs starting 3 nights pre week – sports, Lego and outdoor
- Gilsland Show entered by many pupils
- New toddler group posters made and promotion through Facebook
- Laura Irving happy to continue running toddlers which is very much appreciated
- Tullie House visit planned
- Hospice at Home fundraising throughout this year
- Breakfast club – not running at the moment but available

Upcoming events

- Precision Teach training 9.9.19
- School Photos 16.9.19
- LISH mtg 17.9.19
- Meet with Jane Bewcastle 20.9.19
- BASC 24.9.19

Signed as true and Correct

- CH Paediatric First Aid 25 and 30.9.19
- Future of leadership meeting 26.9.19
- FS and CH NQTs and Mentors 27.9.19
- Tullie House visit
- RE week 7th Oct
- LR First Aid 9/10/19
- SG monitoring Bewcastle to Lees Hill 14.10.19
- CH and FR New to EYFS raining 15.10.19
- Ofsted Review mtg 16.10.19
- Harvest Supper 17.10.19
- Pyjama Party 18.10.19
- Beamish Trip

Transition

- 2 children in nursery Sept 2019
- 3 children in reception Sept 2019

Health and Safety

- Tree trimmed above school gate
- FS to communicate with gardeners regarding improvement of many areas including Nature Area and pond area
- Septic tank issues to discuss
- Tree Survey work to commission

Since the report was compiled Mrs Stobbart has met with both David Salmon and Lynn Harrison from Irthington School separately to discuss the level of support which may be required in her post of Acting Headteacher; it was agreed by the Headteachers that a weekly phone call and ad-hoc meetings as and when required would work at present for them. In addition to this Mr Salmon has informed Mrs Stobbart that the school does need to have a named full time Headteacher in place i.e. Mrs Stobbart 0.6fte and AN Other 0.4fte and that by the end of their meeting it was agreed that a weekly arrangement of 0.2fte from Lynn Harrison would happen and that she would also be available at the end of the telephone should Mrs Rooney, as Lead Teacher 0.4fte, need support.

The Governors questioned this new approach as they did not feel that this was what was agreed at the meeting in June when the arrangements were put in place, to which Ms Slater explained why the change in arrangements had come about; mainly to protect Mrs Stobbart and also that this was a legal requirement. Mrs Alston questioned the need as a legal requirement as she has had experience of this situation in the past.

Mr Ritson asked, Why couldn't Mrs Harrison be the named head on the end of the phone, as was thought to have been originally agreed, as she, and other Governors, felt that we were being pushed into a corner as this is not what they felt they had agreed to. It was felt that this arrangement could lead to potentially undermining the leadership of the school should another Headteacher come in above the appointed Acting Headteacher and Lead Teacher.

Clerk asked for clarification on what Ms Slater meant by a Named Headteacher, where / how are they named? *On paper / school website as a joint Headteacher.*

As a figure of £300 per day has been suggested for this additional support Mrs Stobbart has brought concerns to the table that we cannot afford this situation and that financially we would be better off employing a full-time Headteacher.

Ms Slater advised us to save all our concerns and discussions for our meeting with Mr Salmon and Mr Mill on Thursday 26th September 2019.

Mr Lamb stated that he felt the Governors needed fundamental advice on the situation as some friction was detected between the LA and the Diocese as to how they see the future of the school going; this was agreed by all. As Governors we need to know exactly what we are paying for, what we are getting and where we stand legally.

Mrs Stobbart and Ms Harrison are also to meet to discuss what they expect from the arrangement.

The Governors agreed that they wanted to meet prior to the meeting on Thursday 26th in order to research all their options and agree what they want as a Governing Body to make sure that they gain all the answers that they need in order to go forward from this meeting. This has been arranged for Monday 23rd September 2019, 11am at school; if anyone is unable to attend they should pass any information/questions on and they will be briefed prior to the meeting of 26th.

Mrs Stobbart added that she is loving her role and that there is a lot of momentum behind the school and in the broader community and the school don't want to lose this; all agreed.

10. Attendance

Attendance statistics between and including 03/06/2019 and 19/07/2019.

Total school percentage attendance: **96.01%**

Total school percentage authorised absences: **0.83%**

Total school percentage unauthorised absences: **3.17%**

Total number of students with one or more authorised absence: **3**

Total number of students with one or more unauthorised absence: **3**

There have been **70** sessions

Number of students on roll: **21**

11. SATs Feedback

Mrs Rooney had produced a report for the Governors which Mrs Stobbart used to feedback on the SATS results of 2019; this will also be emailed to all Governors.

FS

The strengths that were derived from this year's tests were the attitude to learning of the whole cohort and that the reading incentives that were used have really encouraged and stimulated them.

It was felt that areas of development for the future would focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) along with a continued focus on challenge reading, i.e. shorter texts rather than full books.

Mrs Ritson commented, that with last year's focus being on maths, does the school feel that this has made a difference this year? *Mrs Stobbart said that although the figures don't show the difference this has made, knowing the children well she feels that it did.*

The SIP will be updated to reflect the progress made and also the areas identified for development.

12. Timetable for Performance Management & Pay Reviews

It was agreed, if possible, to continue with Chris Boucetla to conduct Mrs Stobbart' Headteacher Performance Review as it was felt that she knows the school and the Governors.

Mrs Stobbart is to ask and arrange dates and confirm with the Headteachers Appraisal Committee; it was agreed this will take place before the next meeting on 5th December 2019 where the committee will report back to the full Governing Body on the outcome.

**FS /
Heads
Appr
Com**

Mrs Stobbart will carry out the appraisals of the teacher and support staff at school but it was noted that Mr Howard will not undergo performance management through the school as this is part of his NQT year assessments with the Rural Learning Alliance.

Mrs Stobbart reported that she had met with all the staff on the recent Inset days to discuss their job descriptions and how they see their roles within the school.

13. Link Governor Report

Clerk reported that a new training programme from GST was now available for 2019/20 and this has been forwarded to all Governors with the agenda papers for this meeting; should anyone wish to attend any training they were encouraged to and to let the Clerk know so she could make the arrangements.

Everyone was reminded that we also have the subscription to the NGA E-learning modules and to use this tool. Clerk is to issue Mr Cronin with all the information.

Clerk

14. Safeguarding Issues

There have been no safeguarding issues since the last meeting.

Mrs Alston confirmed she had carried out the annual safeguarding checklist in July 2019; a copy of which was provided to all Governors prior to this meeting with no areas of concern, but it was noted that although the DBS check for the new Governor had been started it was still in progress. Clerk is also to provide details for the new governor, Mr Cronin, to Mrs Lyons so she can set up the process for him.

Clerk

Mrs Alston and Mrs Stobbart are meeting with Bewcastle School in the near future to discuss safeguarding and monitoring with their Governors in order to share good practice.

15. Governor Monitoring Reports

Collective Worship – Mrs Alston has completed her monitoring visit on the various acts of collective worship held both within school and the local community, the report for which was issued to all Governors prior to this meeting.

Key actions were –

- Some of the school hymn books needed replaced.
- Renew 'Come & Praise' CDs
- An allocation of money from the annual budget should be identified in the policy document to support collective worship.

Recommended actions following the GB meeting are -

- Review policy document for inclusion of annual allocation of funds for collective worship.
- Delegate funding for hymn books and CDs.

FS

Signed as true and Correct

Prior to the meeting Mrs Stobbart had provided all governors with a draft timetable that she had drawn up to aid the governors with the timings of monitoring visits throughout the school year and this was discussed at length. Mrs Alston proposed that this needed to include the annual Safeguarding Audit in June/July and also a yearly focus on collective worship and spiritual ethos given that we are a church school; this was agreed.

Names were allocated to the up-coming monitoring visits but it was stressed that this was a working document and could be amended at any time to fulfil the requirements of the school and Governing Body.

The termly Health and Safety audits are also to be included in the timetable.

16. Policy & Procedure Updates

The following policies were adopted/re-adopted at this meeting:

- Code of Conduct for Staff & Other Adults (v3)
Noted changes from Kym Allan.
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedures (v3)
Noted changes from Kym Allan.

Statement is being added to hard copy policy file stating users to 'read Mrs Dalglish as Mrs Stobbart and Lees Hill CE Primary School as Walton & Lees Hill CE Primary School until all policies have been through the review process'.

Following the decision under Item 6 to split the committee the Clerk will also update the Terms of Reference for the Health, Safety, Buildings & Premises Committee and the Pupil Progress & Discipline Committee.

Clerk

17. Promoting School Including School Website and Change of Name Updates

Mrs Stobbart reported to the Governors that the school are doing everything they can to promote the school at every opportunity and everyone agreed that the recent Cumberland News article was fabulous.

Posters are going up all over the area showcasing what the school has to offer and, as discussed previously, new signage is in hand.

Mrs Stobbart talked of the 'Grow a £5' initiative that the school are involved in alongside local business, Ian Blair Undertaker who is celebrating 25 years in business and giving all pupils £5 to 'grow' with all profits being donated to Hospice at Home. This is looking at possibly finishing with a grand finale involved the community and the Old Vicarage Brewery.

Mr Shaw reported that the parish plan, which was drawn up in 2007 and reviewed in 2012/13 was agreed to be reviewed again by the Parish Council who sought to ask the parish where they could go next and involve all stakeholders including the school; which wasn't involved last time. This is to be discussed further at the next PC meeting and Mr Shaw will liaise on this on the schools behalf.

Plans are also in the pipeline as to how school should celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the merger of Walton School and Lees Hill School in 1970.

18. Confidential Items

No confidential items discussed.

19. Upcoming School Events

- Visit to Tullie House
- RE week w/c Monday 7th October
- Harvest Supper, Thursday 17th October 2019
- Pyjama Party, Friday 18th October 2019
- Trip to Beamish

20. Date of Next Meeting(s)

Full Governing Body –
Thursday 5th December 2019, 7.30pm at Walton & Lees Hill School

Committee Meetings –
Thursday 21st November 2019, at Walton & Lees Hill School
2.30pm – Health, Safety, Buildings & Premises
3.30pm – Pupil Progress & Discipline
4.30pm - Finance & Personnel

Extra-Ordinary Governors Meeting (To review and discuss future structural leadership) -
Thursday 26th September 2019, 7.00pm at Walton & Lees Hill School

FGB Ofsted Session –
Wednesday 16th October 2019, 6.30pm at Walton & Lees Hill School