

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Potten End C of E Primary School

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Board held on

Thursday 19th November 2020

Held remotely on Microsoft Teams due to Covid 19 Lockdown

Present: Rob Dale (RD-Chair) Melanie Hall (MH)
Denise Kennedy (DK/Head) Jamie Lam (JL)
Emma Harris (EH- Vice) Joseph Roberts (JR)
Chris Eaton (CE) David Bowker (DB)
Marianne Barker (MB) John Slupek (JS)
Geraldine Salt (GS) Pam Kirk (PK)
Mandy King (MK)

In attendance: Vicki Ford (Associate Governor), Steve Cutler (Associate Governor),
Ann Hingston (Clerk)

Observing as candidate for Foundation Governor role: Beverley Hamilton

Meeting commenced at 7.35pm	ACTION
1. Welcome -The Chair welcomed the Governors to the meeting. He welcomed our new Governors: Jon Slupek, and Pam Kirk to their first meeting. He also welcomed Vicki Ford and Steve Cutler as Associate Governors. The Diocese are holding a meeting this evening which will hopefully confirm the appointment of Beverley Hamilton as our new DBE Foundation Governor.	
2. Apologies - No apologies were received.	
3. Conflict of Interest - No conflict of interest was declared.	
4. Approval of Previous Minutes 24/09/20 -Minutes from 24/09/20 were approved by all present.	
5. Matters arising from Minutes 24/09/20 - The Child Protection Policy was amended immediately after the last meeting. - Governors should maintain their personal details with any changes and let the Clerk know in case it needs changing on Edubase for DFE. - Clerk has asked HFL if it is possible to book the course requested- needs Chair to confirm possible dates so it can be booked. - As many Governors as possible to book Complaints training, as a Parental complaint may discount Parent Governors from being on a panel, as well as those being a resident of the	Chair FGB

village, if it is a resident complaint. MB, EH, JR and GS have all completed the training at present. ALL governors to complete the training please. • All current Governors have completed Prevent training on-line. Clerk to send the link to all the new Governors once their appointment paperwork is completed. • JS was recruited through a Parent Governor Election process. He was the only applicant so voting was not necessary and we are delighted to have him on-board with his finance background. • The advert wasn't sent because at the time we had possible candidates, however we still have a vacancy for a Co-opted Governor, so after the Christmas break we will begin recruitment again.	Clerk Clerk
<u>Other Business-</u> <u>Policies for Approval</u> • Disposals Policy- Approved • Inclusion Policy- Approved • Leave of Absence- Approved • SMSC Policy- Approved • Whistleblowing Policy- Approved (Clerk to ensure correct version of the Inclusion Policy is signed and filed, which uses SENDCO not INCO). <u>Head's Report</u> <u>School Information</u> We have got 10 children in Nursery at present. Although we budgeted for 15 we lost some for Covid 19 reasons. In Reception we started with 30 after admissions, with 3 on the waiting list. However we lost 4 and then had 3 join, so we are at 29. We gained a child in Class 1, so we are now up to full capacity of 30. Year 5 are still low in numbers. Q: As a new Governor please explain –do we get funding per pupil? A: Yes, the school has to complete a census 3 times a year and we get funding per pupil -so numbers are vital to the school's budget. <u>Attendance</u> Q: Is 96.6% above the national average? A: Yes, considering we are in a pandemic the attendance figures are really good. Q: Will the closure of the Nursery and Reception bubbles due to a case of Covid 19 affect the attendance figures?	

A: No, if a bubble has to self-isolate due to a case at school then they are marked with an “x” which means attendance figures are not affected. “x” is used at the beginning of term when EYFS are on staggered starts etc. This also applies to children who are having to self-isolate due to possible contact externally too.

Q: Have we had any children not return due to Covid 19?

A: Yes, we have one child who has not returned since the beginning of term and their absence will be affecting our figures. The school have been working closely with the family but have now passed the case over to the local authority.

CPD Training

DK: There has been a lot of CPD based around the recovery curriculum. Staff have attended a lot of webinars as shown in the report.

Q: How are you spending the catch-up premium?

A: We have employed Rosie Reid to come in and teach 2 days a week. She was the Year 5 teacher last year and is an excellent teacher. She is working with targeted children from Classes 1-6 who have been selected by their teachers as needing extra support to catch up. They are having 45 minute sessions in the main Hall. It is already having a very positive impact and for example in Year 6 they are covering subjects such as place value and punctuation.

Emily Drane, the Nursery Teacher, is also doing 3 extra afternoons for Year 1 and Reception, focusing on phonics. The Teaching Assistants around the school are also doing numerous interventions.

Q: How is Google classroom going?

A: (MH) It was challenging to begin with but we have received positive feedback after the initial hiccups. The staff have received a lot of support from Karen Sharpling and Vicky Ford, who both used it last year and Co-Ed have also been a support.

DK: The aim is to survey the parents in Reception when the children return, to see how they found it. Obviously the experience will be different for each year group as they will use it in very different ways. Reception have also been having small group live zoom sessions with staff over the 14 days isolation. As a school we are not obliged to give more than 4 hours of work a day, nor offer face to face contact, and a lot of school have only opted for pre-recorded session or uploaded work to a website. So we have gone over and above a lot of local schools.

Q: Do you think the Government will regulate how this new technology is being used going forward?

A: No, because each setting is so individual.

VF: Any child who is also self-isolating for any other reason is being set work by their teacher too, which mirrors the work happening in class.

DK: Very proud of how the staff are handling this as it is more pressure on top of an already increased workload. The staff are however finding it manageable at the moment.

Q: How many parents have paid for the Reading Eggs?

A: We have received back 60% of the cost.

Q: Is it worth putting it out again now that parents can see how fantastic it is for their children?

A: Yes, we can send out another request. It is still available on Wisepay but a reminder can be sent again.

Office

Staffing Profile

DK: There is a consistently “Good” profile, with some “Outstanding”. This is partly due to all the CPD that has happened since September 19. They have embraced new initiatives and this was commented on during the last HIP visit- see HIP report on the Hub.

Q: What is staff morale like at the moment?

A: VF: It is challenging at present but in general everyone is pulling as a team. If staff do have issues then they can get help from SLT and there has been a focus on well-being for staff.

MH: The whole situation has been hugely challenging but we are a supportive team who are mindful of each other. Staff who are self-isolating due to the bubble closure have been meeting on Zoom for catch-ups and so they can maintain contact with each other.

Q: Are staff embracing CPD?

A: Strategic decisions are being made so that they are attending courses which offer the most impact. Most of them at the moment have to be webinars. Subject Leaders are attending a lot but cover is being found for them to attend and they are doing them mainly from home.

Q: Your staff survey results show that there may be one or two members of staff who are more negative. Do you recognise who they may be and can you offer help?

A: The Key Stage leaders have good relationships with their teams, and we are very aware of who needs the extra support.

Q: Did the survey surprise you?

A: No, I was delighted with the results and thought it may have been lower. It is an incredibly challenging time. Staff are not getting the breaks they normally get out of the classroom environment. Teachers are doing their own bubble’s break duties daily and due to a reduced number being allowed in the staffroom -3 max- then some staff can’t eat lunch in there either. Also with extra parental anxiety there has been a significant increase in emails to reply to after the class leaves for the day. Staff workload is a key Ofsted consideration and the SLT are very conscious of it.

SEN/PPrem

Q: Pupil Premium attendance is 94%- Is there a different threshold for them?

A: No, the attendance expectation is the same for all children.

Q: Why is it so low?

A: There are 3 children on reduced timetables which has an impact. These children were refusing to attend and by working with them and outside agencies e.g. DESC, with personalised plans, it is improving. Also some SEN children are also Pupil Premium, so that is partly why it is lower.

Safe-guarding

Nothing further to add other than what is in the report.

Recruitment

Q: Are you planning to replace Mr Ahmed with another P.E. Coach?

A: There is not currently a need for a sports coach. Game On have been impressive, showing a high standard of coaching at a reduced cost. The role has been replaced by an experienced but more general Teaching Assistant, Mrs Salomo, who started this week. She will be working across the whole school.

EH: The feedback from parents is that the children are loving Game On.

DK: There have been positive comments from parents who are being supportive of the teachers. Parents seem pleased with the online parent consultations, and the Parent Forum feedback was taken into consideration, which is why we are trialling different start and finish start times next week.

Curriculum Committee- Minutes received and approved

- The committee terms of reference were approved by the committee.
- It was agreed that the SIAMS framework and SEF need to be embedded and the impact monitored.
- It would be beneficial for there to be a separate session for FGB to discuss the SEF and SIP.
- The role of the governors and how they can monitor the intent and impact was discussed.
- Covid 19 positives e.g. “in the minute feedback” was discussed.

Q: Is it worth rolling these positives out after we return to “normal”?

A: Yes, it is really helping the children with their independent learning and an improvement is evident. The feedback policy will be amended going forward to reflect these changes.

- **MB:** The FGB needs to be made aware that the pandemic has not had an impact on the standard of first quality teaching around the school, which is hugely positive.
- **JR:** It is worth mentioning that the SIP has strands of the SIAMS framework running through it. SIAMS and Ofsted go side by side.
- **DK:** This is new that SIAMS and Ofsted strands interlink. DK has an action plan for spirituality which she will share with JR.

Resources Committee- Minutes to be finalised

- **CE:** Parent–Giving will remain on hold for the foreseeable future due to lockdown.
- A proposed extension is planned outside the Year 5 classroom by the old kiln room. DK has asked an architect to draw up a

plan which has gone to the Diocese to review. If approval is given then quotes will be sought.

- There has been positive feedback from our long term letting who prefer the classrooms they are now using.
- Teachers pay was discussed and approved, which also included the Head Teacher's proposed increase.
- Health & Safety- new window locks and replacement windows were fitted at half term.
- Finance- FSS held the 6 month review with DK and the Office Manager. There is a lack of income from lettings due to lockdown restrictions. The Forecast variance is healthy, but there could be an increase in supply teacher and overtime costs to cover staff off through Covid 19.
- DK: There have been 9 members of staff not in this week, some due to bubble closure, others through self-isolating due to outside contact/track & trace.
- There is potentially a finance brokerage visit happening this term, but Head Teachers in Dacorum are pushing back on them.

Nursery

Q: What is the minimum viable number?

A: We have got 10 at the moment. We couldn't afford to go lower. If you go over 13, then another childcare qualified member of staff would need to be employed in Nursery.

Link Governor Roles

- See attached powerpoint presentation- includes a list of new Governors in each role. Each Governor had a discussion prior to FGB meeting with the Chair or Vice so they were comfortable with the decision.
- Governors need to triangulate data by asking questions and looking for evidence at school.
- Visits are on hold during lockdown.
- The process will re-start and DK will arrange for the Link Governors to meet (possibly remotely) with their subject leads. This will be a staggered process due to cover being needed for the teaching staff.
- RD & EH to update the Link governor role document to incorporate some changes in the roles.

RD /EH

SEN

RD: There is a changing landscape at school bringing different challenges. There has been a significant increase in SEN throughout the school and this has put a huge pressure on the space needed around the school. There is a lack of breakout areas, and children with SEN are

having to sit in corridors for interventions , which is far from ideal. Also not mixing bubbles has made logistics even harder.

DK: We currently have 33 children on the SEN register, 6 with EHCP'S, and 4 more being considered. However only 4 have received any funding. DK costed the 1-1 teaching assistants hours as £41635.00 and the funding we receive is £32047, so there is a shortfall which the school pays for out of our already tight budget.

In Herts the funding process has changed and what was Exceptional Needs Funding is now Higher Needs Funding, with a new set of requirements and bandings. We have children who are banded but have still not received any funding.

We are inclusive and want children to flourish, but this is coming at a cost to the budget and teacher/ T/A support. This is why we needed to recruit a strong T/A rather than a sports coach.

There are more Circle Therapy sessions happening, which need to be confidential, so they are happening in the Head's office as well as the staff room, which means no staff can enter. This is why we desperately need the extension-it would be used for many reasons, not just SEN, and therapy but by staff for meetings with children/outside agencies etc. The Haven is currently being used as a sensory room but can only accommodate one child because of bubbles mixing and distance between children.

The architect could only see the space by Year 5 as a viable place to build and recommended a room rather than conservatory for the long term.

RD: We hope to get costs to the FGB at future meetings so that it can go ahead next year.

DK: The catch-up fund won't last long so there is no quick fix, and most Teaching assistants at the moment are supporting SEN children.

Christian Distinctiveness

JR: The children are slowly coming back into church. The Armistice Day service was fed to the children in class via a video link so that they could be part of the community service. Year 3 made poppies to decorate the altar.

The school made a video of their Harvest celebrations which was shared with parents and is on the school website.

There is a refresher course on SIAMS on 8th Dec and JR recommended governors consider attending. A team of governors need to be able to talk about the Christian side of the school. A future FGB discussion will be on how we can strengthen this aspect of the FGB.

A.O.B

RD: There is a need to fully utilise fund- raising opportunities and asked for a team to investigate any opportunities locally. JS offered to start looking into this- please could other governors offer support?

Q: How would this be different from the fund raising the FOS do?

A: It would be more looking into grants from businesses, supermarkets etc

JS

MB: We shouldn't discount manpower offers either, e.g offers to go across to the field with a teacher to release the need for a T/A to escort them-if they have a DBS! VF: We have an extensive list of volunteers who would normally be coming in to listen to reading but that is on hold at the moment. RD: The Parish Council are in the process of developing a Parish plan to pull all the amenities in the village together. DK: Maybe a governor would volunteer to be the school representative at these meetings going forward? RD: This was a confidential item, but as of last night it has become public knowledge due to an email being sent out by the Pre-school to its parents and staff. The Potten End Pre-school may have to close in the near future. The Trust has reached out to the school, and talks are in the very early stages. The Pre-school are holding a meeting on 4th Dec when they will make a decision about their future. A small group of governors may need to meet to discuss any future plans. MB & MH offered to be part of this group. Meeting closed at 9.36pm Next FGB Meetings is on Thursday 28th January 2021 at 7.30pm.	FGB
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Summary of Actions

Action	Person	Deadline	Actioned
Book "Knowing your school" course-Chair to give Clerk possible dates	Chair/Clerk	Asap	
Book on to a Complaints Course	All Gavs who are not trained	Asap	
Send new Gavs the Prevent training link	Clerk	Asap	
Advertise the Co-opted Gov vacancy	Clerk	New Year	
Remind parents to buy Reading Eggs	Office	Asap	
Amend the Link Gov document	RD/EH	Asap	
Investigate fund-raising opportunities	JS /?	Going forward	
Volunteer to attend the Parish Planning Meetings	?	Next Parish meeting	