

MERTON INFANT SCHOOL

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held in person on Monday 14th October 2024 at 6.00 pm at the school

MINUTES

Present Board Members:			Attended:
	Larissa James	Headteacher	Y
	Lee-Ann Dirienzo		Y
	Carly Jones		Y
	Jan Beard		Y
	Gaye Dove	Chair	Y
	Rachel Hill	Vice Chair	Y
	Janel Richards		Y
	Sajish Tom		N
Also in attendance as non-governors:	Laura Relf	Acting Deputy Headteacher	Y
	Paula Bennett	School Business Manager	Y
	Mark Livesey	Clerk	Y

The meeting started at 6.00 pm.

		ACTION
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence Apologies: Received & accepted from ST.	
2.	Update Register of Pecuniary Interests (the Clerk will circulate the forms for completion) There were no declarations of pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest.	
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2024 Agreed.	
4.	Matters Arising 161023_24 Submit a concise pen portrait (self-portrait) for inclusion in the Governor Information section of the school website (JR): Action completed & closed. 290124_4_2 Confirm to GD that she has received GD's email containing New Governor Induction Training course dates (JR): Completed & closed. 090724_11 Include a reference to Young Interpreters in the Equalities and Inclusion policy (LJ): Action completed & closed. 090724_13 Include election of the Vice Chair in the agenda for the next FGB meeting (Clerk): Action completed & closed. 090724_15_1 Check how many consecutive FGB meetings have been missed by governors during the current academic year (Clerk): the Clerk verbally provided the required information on meetings missed by governors. Action completed & closed. 090724_15_2 Check whether the GB must have 3 Parent Governor posts, as documented in the Instrument of Government, or whether one Parent Governor post would suffice (Clerk): the Clerk advised that the GB must have 2 Parent Governor posts and that it would be possible for the GB to discuss the possibility of reconstituting the GB and altering the Instrument of Government to reduce the number of Parent Governor posts by 1 to 2 and to increase the number of Co-opted Governor posts from 6 to 7, keeping the total number of governor posts at 12. It was then agreed that the Clerk will include an item in the agenda, specifically to discuss the possibility of reconstituting the GB as just described, for the November FGB meeting. ACTION. Original action completed & closed. 090724_27 Produce a list of FGB meeting dates and Governor Monitoring Day dates and send the list to the Clerk (LJ): Action completed & closed. 090724_29 Add the new date for the June INSET day to the List of FGB Meeting Dates & Governor Monitoring Days, for the next academic year, when he has received the list from LJ (Clerk): Action completed & closed. There was a discussion about start times for FGB meetings.	Clerk

	Agreed that: GD may contact the governors and ask them about their availability to attend the next FGB meeting at a start time in a range between 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm, if she chooses to do so.	
5.	Approve Pay Committee Recommendations LJ advised several points, as summarised below: - she has sent her pay recommendations to the Pay Panel who have approved the recommendations - the School Business Manager will prepare the salary statement letters - the new Pay Policy is still a model policy, which Hampshire have recommended that GBs should adopt - salary letters only apply to teachers; the school is awaiting confirmation of pay rises for support staff	
6.	Monitor spending against Budget Plan and consider budgetary implications of NoR (Number on Roll) PB talked the GB through spending against the Budget Plan, as summarised below: D Budget (Pre-School) - she has discussed the budget with Kelly (Finance Manager); the comments at the side of the budget document reflect what is likely to happen to each line at Budget Revision - the 'Other Training Courses and Qualification' line will be increased to £300 as a member of staff will be undertaking SEN training - the Professional Subscriptions line will be reduced from £300 to £200 - the 'Other Employee Expenses' line contains a cost that was not included in the original Pre-School budget, however the Infant School was charged £194 for DBS checks relating to the Pre-School and therefore this cost was moved to the Pre-School budget - she will check with Kelly before putting the Pre-School budget forward as Kelly's revised budget Y Budget - there is currently an increase in the number of children attending the Breakfast and After School clubs, as confirmed by JB, and hopefully this will continue; as the cost of the clubs was increased, there is no scope for increasing the cost at present - the budget does not change a great deal; there is expenditure on food and resources for the Breakfast and After School clubs - as some additional resources are needed for the Breakfast Club, there will be some expenditure relating to this - the budget generally appears positive O Budget Expenditure - she has had to make changes to the budget since it was reviewed in April - Supply Teacher Agency costs have increased as the school had been unable to recruit an LSA via the usual route and therefore the school had to do this via an agency - she will be increasing the General Maintenance budget line to cover the cost of additional drain work needed; there is also the need for yearly gutter clearance and the cost of the latter is being looked into - there are a few transactions highlighted in the budget document which came about by virtue of the school credit card having been stolen on line; the school will receive refunds for the amounts charged to the card - expenditure on the Fire Equipment line has been reduced; she had planned to swap out a number of expired extinguishers, which she thought that the school would have to pay for although it later transpired that there was no charge for the expired extinguishers - expenditure on the Catering line will reduce significantly; having received the first invoice for catering services, she does not believe that expenditure on catering will cost more than £50,000 until the end of March - she has a query about Catering with regard to line 5931; she believes that the £21,360 amount that appears in the line only needs to be £4,740; she is hoping that this will be another saving; it has come about because GL codes were being moved around and she will query it with the school's finance adviser Income - she has questioned why the school was credited with income of £1,850 and has been advised that this amount was additional income from a discretionary grant from a few years ago - the 'Fund Raising and Sponsorship Income line' was estimated at £9,500 and currently stands at £6,051 in the 'Actuals YTD' column; there are a few more arranged events which will hopefully generate significant further income	

	- regarding the Additional Allocations line, this figure will increase by approx. £23,000 as it relates to the Wraparound Care Grant and the Core School Budget Grant, the latter representing government help towards funding pay rises for teachers - she had calculated that the budget as it stands will move to a reduced deficit situation, and then if the income from the Breakfast and the After School clubs is taken into account in addition to the positive income from the Pre-School, she believes that the deficit looked to be approx. £70,000; this deficit figure will be further reduced, potentially to approx. £60,000, if the pupil numbers for the Breakfast and After School clubs increase and if more EHCP funding is received Q(LR). Asked if the Pre-School Manager will be undertaking leadership training. A. LJ confirmed this is being planned. Q(LD). Asked how the arrangement, of every school having a Breakfast Club, will affect the Y budget. A. PB advised that the Infant School currently has a Breakfast Club and that the school has been given a Wraparound Care grant as the school has had to extend the After School Club by 15 minutes (as Wraparound Care has to be provided until 6.00 pm, and the After School Club used to finish at 5.45 pm); the school had applied for the grant, which over this year and next year amounts to approx. £3,000. She also advised that apart from this, the school should not be affected. Q(GD). Asked if there are vouchers available for the school clubs. A. PB advised that parents can pay for their child's attendance at school clubs via government childcare vouchers. LJ advised some information: - at the beginning of the year, she, PB and GD met with the Head of Finance who queried what the school was going to do to address the deficit; she had asked him not to ask her to look at a staffing restructure as the school needs the staff in order to support the needs of the children - she believes that the school's efforts to reduce the budget deficit may possibly result in the school not being a priority for attention by Finance - the majority of infant schools are in a budget deficit situation PB advised several points as follows: - falling pupil numbers contributed to the deficit - additional LSA support was provided to deal with the children with distressed behaviour, which also contributed to the deficit; the school has not replaced the LSAs that left and is therefore trying to minimise expenditure - the school will have to produce a deficit budget and a plan - she will meet with the school's finance adviser in a few days' time	
7.	Monitor spending of Devolved Capital allocation PB advised the following information: £4,379 remains in Devolved Capital; there are no definitive plans for the remaining Devolved Capital; the school may carry this over as it will be necessary to carry out some redecoration, replace carpeting and possibly install new carpeting or flooring in the back room adjacent to the hall	
8.	Review Staff Absence The GB discussed staff absence. <i>PB left the meeting at 6.58 pm.</i>	
9.	Receive Headteacher Verbal Report LJ talked the GB through her report, the main points being summarised below: - performance management (PM) is being completed for teachers, with PM for the majority of LSAs to be carried out tomorrow afternoon, leaving PM for the admin staff to be done; she is generally ensuring that objectives reflect the activities that staff are already undertaking, rather than including objectives that represent 'over and above' activities from previous years - the first lesson observations have all been completed, with all lessons securing good progress for most groups of children - the school has been notified that it can start work on the model Pay Policy, so she will work on the policy and present it, together with the Performance Management Policy, at the next FGB meeting - a SEND team has been established, consisting of LJ, CJ, LR, SB (ELSA), JG (HLTA) and LK (Wave 3 LSA) which is currently working well - this term the school is trialling something different with regard to parent consultations, with an evening session, an afternoon session during PPA and one morning session - in the Prejudicial Language & Behaviour return there was one incident, this being a factual	

	observation from an ethnic minority child to another ethnic minority child and as such did not appear to be a matter of concern; she regarded the return as a good one - the percentage of Pupil Premium children is 10% less than it was last year; as the Pupil Premium amounts to £1,400 per child, this means that the school is not receiving as much Pupil Premium; she has established that the school is as proactive as the parents in encouraging the parents to check their eligibility - regarding the SEF that she had circulated, she had not included the YR SEND children as the school was still observing them and obtaining their notes from the nurseries and pre-schools; there are probably 12 YR children on the SEN Register, being 20% of YR, and overall there are approx. 35 SEN children representing 17% of the children (as compared with the national 2023 figure of 14%) - she would like to look back at the identification of children being entered in the SEN Register; in the past the school has entered children into the register if they have had ELSA support or 'Thrive'; many schools are not entering such children on their SEN register; she will look at producing guidance for staff on which children the school should be entering into the SEN Register - also regarding SEND, none of the infant schools are carrying out DEST tests for YR; this test was for early signs of dyslexia which is not normally diagnosed until junior school, probably in Y5; it takes a lot of time to put all the children through the test and it is not telling the school anything that they did not normally know about a child; she believes that if the school recognises signs of dyslexia, the school puts the support in anyway and she is therefore making the executive decision that Merton Infant will not carry out DEST tests for YR - she and LR have joined the Mastery for Maths hub, along with a number of the local schools - LR advised that there are 6 schools within their cluster; activities include a Mastery teacher advisor coming into school to work with LJ and herself in agreeing an action plan; she and LJ will also visit the advisor's school and join their group work; it has been shown that this will improve outcomes - LJ advised that the school receives a grant for Mastery for Maths, to cover supply costs for LR and herself being out of the school; she has put herself down as the second person for Mastery, and Mandy, YR teacher, might also be involved - pupil numbers are predicted to fall by between 5 to 6 per cent between this academic year and 2028/29; pupil number reductions will not fall evenly across the county, resulting in challenges for certain areas of the county and the possibility that the model of funding for schools could change - EHCP numbers have increased by 215% nationally since 2015, the Hampshire increase being 192%; the increase in EHCPs for children coming into school is being seen in the age bracket 2 to 5 years - from 2025 the performance management for teachers process will no longer be related to pay; the expectation will be that staff will ascend their pay scale by one incremental point each year, and that they will only not receive a pay rise if they are on Capability; the school is awaiting further information, possibly including the reason for having a performance management process if it is not related to pay - she believes that the term has started quite well, with everyone having stepped up - LR led the new staff induction Q(GD). Asked if any further training required can be provided in house. A. LJ advised that at present, any further training needs are being provided in house, the INSET days having already been planned. The school has started the 'Transforming SEND' module. Q(GD). Asked about private diagnosis for SEND. A. LJ advised that a private diagnosis does not result in the parents obtaining a private EHCP, as it is necessary to apply to county to obtain an EHCP.	
10.	Discuss reports from Governor Visits GD advised that the governors had visited the school on the Governor Monitoring Day held on 2nd October. LD advised that during her visit on 2nd October she went in to the school hall at lunchtime, when she noticed that many of the children were unable to cut their food up and as a result of this they were throwing their food away. LJ advised that when the YR children start at the school they have a knife, fork and playdoh so that they can practice food cutting skills; this topic is also discussed at the YR welcome meetings; she also advised that the lunchtime supervisors encourage the children to cut up as much of their food as they are able to.	

	Additional information: The Governor Monitoring Day was attended by LD & GD, with GD having written 3 reports on different topics, as follows: i) SCR, ii) Attendance for which GD had met with Juliet to look at data and percentages, iii) monitoring interventions & small groups as well as seeing school councillors' presentations and elections, all 3 reports having been submitted to LJ.	
11.	Safeguarding, including confirmation that the Safeguarding Report has been submitted to the LA and reminding governors of the need to read the KCSiE 2024 document LJ confirmed that she had submitted the online Safeguarding Report to the LA. LJ asked if the governors had copies of the KCSiE 2024 document and if they had signed for a copy of the document. As not all the governors had received a copy of the document, copies of the document were made available to these governors who were asked to sign for a copy if they took one. LJ advised some information: - all the teachers have received a copy of the KCSiE 2024 document; the staff have discussed the document during Safeguarding training - LR has attended the Safeguarding refresher training - Sarah Bird is due to attend the Safeguarding refresher training in November; PB has also updated her refresher training - CPOMS training has been carried out with the Pre-School staff Q(RH). Asked if there is a DSL in the Pre-School. A. LJ confirmed.	
12.	Review Policies according to schedule – Child Protection, Safeguarding, Allegations of Abuse against Staff, Disciplinary Procedure for Employees, Staff Acceptable Use of IT, Managing Staff Sickness LJ talked the GB through the policies, as summarised below: CP - is the model policy Safeguarding - is the model policy Managing Staff Sickness (also known as Staff Absence) - a new Staff Absence policy has been issued. The Clerk advised that the version that he had placed in the meeting folder was the policy that he had obtained from the GB's 'Policies' folder in HSS, i.e. it was what is now the old version - in view of the above the GB should disregard the version that was in the HSS meeting folder and also the version that had been sent to them; she will localise the new version of the policy and circulate it ACTION Staff Acceptable Use of IT - an attendee advised that in Section 4 (Communication with parents, pupils and governors), sub-section 4.3, the document incorrectly states that "where pupils are submitting work electronically to school staff, this must be undertaken using Google Classroom and not via personal email" Allegations of Abuse against Staff - is the MOPP version that the school adopts each year Agreed: - to approve all the policies above except the Staff Absence policy, and the Disciplinary Procedure for Employees which had been included in the agenda in error, subject to LJ amending sub-section 4.3. of the Staff Acceptable use of IT policy ACTION	LJ LJ
13.	Elect Vice Chair RH was elected as Vice Chair. As she will be stepping down as a governor at Christmas, an item for the election of Vice Chair should be included in the agenda for the next FGB meeting. ACTION	Clerk
14.	Review specialist and link governor roles, currently allocated as follows: Safeguarding (including Prevent)*: RH Attendance: GD Safer Recruitment*: LD Inclusion (EAL, SEND and Pupil Premium): LD Health and Safety: JB Training Link Governor / DTG: The Clerk	

	Forum Representative: GD Nominated Governor to liaise with the LADO regarding allegations against the HT*: RH Mental Health: CJ * indicates Key Roles Following discussion it was agreed that the specialist and link governor roles are now allocated as follows: Safeguarding (including Prevent)*: LD Attendance: GD Safer Recruitment*: GD Inclusion (EAL, SEND and Pupil Premium): LD Health and Safety: JB Training Link Governor / DTG: The Clerk Forum Representative: GD Nominated Governor to liaise with the LADO regarding allegations against the HT*: JR Mental Health: CJ * indicates Key Roles	
15.	Discuss GB Membership Agreed: that there is a need to continue trying to recruit new governors	
16.	Monitor any parental complaints LJ advised that there had been one parental complaint which was addressed according to the Complaints policy.	
17.	Discuss Governor Training, including WGBT if necessary The Clerk advised that the GB is eligible to receive a new WGBT session during the next calendar year. LD advised that she had booked a place on the following training: "Supporting success with pupils' experience with vulnerability and safeguarding children". GD advised that she is booked on 2 courses on Finance which she will be undertaking soon.	
18.	Approve SIP (School Improvement Plan) including Governor Action Plan (as arranged at FGB held on 04/12/23) Agreed: to approve and adopt the SIP.	
19.	Annual Collaboration Agreement – confirm that St. Annes Primary School has confirmed that they wish to renew the Agreement Confirmed.	
20.	Review HTPM Committee Terms of Reference Agreed: to approve the HTPM Committee Terms of Reference.	
21.	Notification to the GB & Clerk of any events (i.e. the name of the event and start time) during the current academic year for which some governor presence is required Agreed: that JB will produce a Calendar of Events which will be circulated to GB members; if any governors are able to attend they should let the school know, although governors should not feel that they have to come to every event ACTION	JB
22.	Adopt HCC Governors Good Practice Guide Agreed: to adopt the Governors Good Practice Guide.	
23.	Agree delegated powers The Clerk advised that Governor Services had advised that the powers originally delegated to committees, such as the original Resources and Curriculum committees that no longer exist, should be brought back to the GB. Agreed that: LJ will add a statement to the FGB Terms of Reference, at the top of the document, to document that the GB has no committees and that by default the GB brings back to itself all powers, and all responsibility for those powers, previously delegated to the Resources and Curriculum committees which no longer exist ACTION	LJ
24.	Correspondence None.	
25.	Any Other Business None.	

26.	Date of next FGB Meeting – Monday 18 th November 2024 at 6.00 pm online via 'Teams'	
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The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

These minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed _____ Chair Date _____