

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held online on Monday 13th May 2024

MINUTES

Governors Present:	Lee-ann Dirienzo		
	Larissa James	Headteacher	
	Carly Jones		
	Jan Beard		
	Gaye Dove	Chair	
	Rachel Hill	Vice Chair	
Non-governors in attendance:	Sophie Durbajlo	Deputy Headteacher	
	Paula Bennett	School Business Manager	
	Mark Livesey	Clerk	

PLEASE NOTE – those persons that attended the online meeting that are governors are listed under the ‘Governors Present’ title above. Those persons that are listed above under the title ‘Non-governors in attendance’ were present at the meeting but are not governors. The names of the governors that gave apologies for the meeting are included under agenda item 1.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm.

		ACTION
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence Apologies: ST, JR (both accepted).	
2.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests or Conflicts of Interest Declarations: None	
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2024 Agreed as a true record.	
4.	Matters Arising 161023_24 Submit a concise pen portrait (self-portrait) for inclusion in the Governor Information section of the school website (JR): in JR's absence and JB's temporary absence. ACTION C/F. 180324_4 Send JB a concise pen portrait (CJ): CJ advised that she had sent JB a pen portrait. Completed & closed. 290124_4_2 Confirm to GD that she has received GD's email containing New Governor Induction Training course dates (JR): carried forward in JR's absence. ACTION C/F. 041223_12_3 Check to see what Safer Recruitment courses are currently available (GD): GD advised that she is still seeking a course held at a venue that she could easily travel to. ACTION C/F. 290124_10_1 Give a presentation on school finance to the GB, on a date to be arranged (PB): PB had given a presentation. Completed & closed. 290124_12 Consider the logistics of providing a Mental Health Welfare Day on staff members' birthdays, such as providing cover for the LSAs and any areas of uncertainty that occur to them (ALL): Completed & closed. 180324_10 Circulate a link to the DfE online course on Prevent (the governors need to complete Course 1) (LJ): Completed & closed. 180324_15 Change the date of the SEN Information Report (LJ): Completed & closed. 180324_16 Edit her copy of the GB Self Evaluation Form, to reflect the overall feedback from the GB, and circulate the updated Form for everyone to view before it is brought before the GB for approval at the May FGB meeting (LJ): Completed & closed.	JR JR GD
5.	Monitor spending against Budget Plan PB talked the GB through the monitoring of spending against the Budget Plan, the main points of which are summarised below: D Budget – Merton Pre-School	

• she has circulated the new Pre-School D Budget produced by Kelly • as the original Pre-School had made a number of purchases shortly before it came under the control of the Merton Infant GB, their purchases this year will probably be minimal • the Pre-School has been set up on the Finance Planning Tool; Kelly has been set up on SAP so that she can monitor the budget in conjunction with her • the bottom line figure under code 7511 is the Pre-School funding that has been received, although this has not shown any increase year on year in the Finance Planning Tool • Year 3 will therefore be unlikely to show a deficit in reality as hopefully the funding received by the school will increase each year • contracts have been issued for the new staff • the budget is reasonably healthy Y Budget – Merton Infant School • there has been very little expenditure, most of the expenditure having been spent on educational supplies for the ASC and B/C and on food for the Breakfast and After School clubs • the fees for the Breakfast and After School clubs have been increased, as discussed at the last FGB meeting, the fees now being as follows: Breakfast Club £4, After School Club £9; it is therefore hoped that the income from these 2 sources will increase this year • the budget is reasonably healthy O Budget – Merton Infant School • the GB has been aware that there would be a budget deficit in this budget at the end of the current financial year, although officially Merton Infant will not be a deficit school until 31st March 2025, when the school will have to go through the necessary process with Education Finance to monitor the budget • A lot of infant schools in Hampshire are in a deficit situation, if not this year then even those schools that have a Carry Over will be in a deficit situation during the next financial year; Hampshire are aware of the situation and the school will have to wait until March when it can look at addressing the situation, by which time there may be changes in school financing, e.g. new grants that may be made available to the school • when Education Finance and Hampshire look at the bottom line figures, they will look at the income that is generated by the Pre-School and the Y budget; although the O budget 'Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) C/Fwd' figure is approx. £224,000 deficit, approx. £80,000 will be taken off this figure when the school's finances are looked at overall • Staffing constitutes approx. 80% of the budget; the current staffing structure is set with 12 Lunchtime Supervisors, 7 Cleaners, and 13 LSAs; the school has decided to run with 6 Teachers (2 Teachers per year group); the school has also decided to keep the Supply Teacher for 3 days per week to provide cover and carry out group work; if necessary the staff structure can be revised in November • after considering whether or not to have 3 YR classes, LJ decided to have 2 YR classes; in September there will be 60 children joining YR • the school does not have a great deal of control over many of the expenditure items, although it has tried to reduce training costs • the school has taken on a new grounds maintenance company which is performing the work in a more satisfactory way, and at a more reasonable price, than the previous company • the Fundraising line has been estimated at £9,500 for this year • the Commission / Concession Income line relates to sales of school photographs • Income on the 'Day Trip Charges' line has been increased for this year as the school has decided to arrange a trip to the Winchester Science Museum, which will increase the school's expenditure on day trips • the 'Additional Grant for Schools' is the PE funding • the Pupil Premium Funding is based on the number of FSM children • the Budget Share figure is shown, based on the number of FSM children, this figure being less than last year • the 'HCC Schools – Additional Allocations' line is a grant given by the government for an increase in teachers' pensions and for teachers' salary increases • the 'Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) C/Fwd' figure for the end of the current financial year is (£224,512) (deficit) • there is a caveat on the budget sign-off document that reads as follows: "The Governing Body is aware of the year end deficit, as shown on the Budget Plan, and will take actions to address it" • she has been asked by the school's finance consultant to produce a 'Zero Budget', i.e. look at the budget and take out of the budget what she believes would leave a balance of zero;

	she will carry out this exercise when she has uploaded the budget to the system PB then advised some additional information as summarised below: • some of the costings relating to the new catering contract are not currently known accurately as the school does not know if all the staff employed in the kitchen will come over to Merton Infant; the school has budgeted for the worst case scenario • there will be an assembly, before the school breaks up, at which a chef from the catering company will speak to the children with a view to interesting them in the meals that the company can provide Q. A governor asked if the low expenditure on Educational Supplies was due to the Pre-School purchasing these supplies before coming under the control of the Merton Infant GB. A. PB confirmed that this was the case. Q. A governor asked if the Pre-School has a waiting list for next year and whether there will be 30 children joining, or whether this is unknown at present. A. LJ advised that this is unknown at present; she has a Pre-School management meeting on Thursday and she will therefore provide an update to the minutes providing this information. She also advised that the best thing that can be done for the future is to recruit more two- and three-year-olds who will generate more funding in any event, and in addition, if the school keeps to a model of having 2 YR classes, as it will in September, there could be an option of having some of the younger four-year-old Pre-School children in that YR unit. Q. A governor asked how diverse the food that will be on offer from the new catering company will be, as it is possible that some of the EAL children will not have experience of the some of the food served. A. LJ advised that the Junior and Infant schools have to choose from 4 menu choices and that the possibility of children ignoring food that they do not recognise is an important point; she also advised that the 'taster sessions' that will be arranged will provide the children with an opportunity to try tasting any food that is unfamiliar to them. PB left the meeting at 7.06 pm.	
6.	Discuss predicted pupil numbers and their budgetary implications This had already been discussed under the previous item.	
7.	Approve draft budget (input on SAP by May) The O Budget figures were as follows: Total Expenditure: £1,493,252 (One Million, Four Hundred and Ninety Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty Two Pounds) Total Income: £1,262,231 (One Million, Two Hundred and Sixty Two Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty One Pounds) In Year Surplus/(Deficit): (£231,021 deficit) (Two Hundred and Thirty One Thousand and Twenty One Pounds deficit) Surplus/(Deficit) Brought Forward: £6,509 (Six Thousand, Five Hundred and Nine Pounds) Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) C/Fwd: (£224,512 deficit) (Two Hundred and Twenty Four Thousand, Five Hundred and Twelve Pounds deficit) <i>Agreed to:</i> • approve the O Budget	
8.	Approve Y budget The Y Budget figures were as follows: Total Expenditure: £33,677 (Thirty Three Thousand, Six Hundred and Seventy Seven Pounds) Total Income: £43,053 (Forty Three Thousand and Fifty Three Pounds) In Year Surplus/(Deficit): £9,376 (Nine Thousand, Three Hundred and Seventy Six Pounds) Surplus/(Deficit) Brought Forward: £67,259 (Sixty Seven Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty Nine Pounds) Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) C/Fwd: £76,635 (Seventy Six Thousand, Six Hundred and Thirty Five Pounds)	

	<i>Agreed to:</i> • approve the Y Budget The Pre-School Budget figures were as follows: Total Expenditure: £144,204 (One Hundred and Forty Four Thousand, Two Hundred and Four Pounds) Total Income: £148,114 (One Hundred and Forty Eight Thousand, One Hundred and Fourteen Pounds) In Year Surplus/(Deficit): £3,910 (Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ten Pounds) Surplus/(Deficit) Brought Forward: £0 (Nil Pounds) Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) C/Fwd: £3,910 (Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ten Pounds) <i>Agreed to:</i> • approve the Pre-School Budget	
9.	Monitor spending of Devolved Capital allocation PB advised that the total balance, bar £27, in Devolved Capital during FY 2023/24 had been spent during that financial year; this year the school has received a Devolved Capital allocation of £6,284 which is currently held in the Devolved Capital budget and is currently unspent; she and LJ will discuss what this money could be spent on in due course.	
10.	Presentation by Maths Curriculum Manager Laura Relf gave a presentation on the teaching of Maths.	
11.	Receive Headteacher Verbal Report LJ talked the GB through her verbal report, the main points being summarised below: • 60 offer letters have been sent out by the school, which has 15 feeder nurseries and it is understood that there are no EHCPs • the main feeder schools are The Lighthouse Pre-School and Merton Pre-School; visits by children from these Pre-Schools to Merton Infant will be planned for the Summer Term • 3 teachers are leaving the school at the end of the academic year • the initiative to look for a new catering company was undertaken in consultation with the Junior School • there is an article in the Basingstoke Gazette about the Ofsted report on Merton Infant School • the School Council has a trip to the Houses of Parliament tomorrow • Attendance is good at 96%; Persistent Absence is 13.6% which is particularly pleasing as the national figure is 16.8% • regarding Safeguarding, the school has sent off 3 interagency referral forms this half term; child and family assessments are being completed • the new play equipment, including a gazebo, has been installed at the back of the school	
12.	Receive update on the Age Down process from the Headteacher LJ provided an update on the Age Down process, the main points of which are summarised below: • the Age Down process has been fully completed and she has a first meeting on Thursday with Clare, Pre-School Manager ; CPOMS training is required for Safeguarding purposes and therefore a date for this training will be booked • all Pre-School staff have received their new contracts • all Pre-School staff are now on the SCR (Single Central Register) • the finances for the Pre-School are all in place and Kelly Leadbetter is seeking additional grants for the children; the plan should be to increase the number of two-and three-year-old children • the school now needs to be regarded as an 'all through' school for two- to seven-year-old children, rather than a Pre-School and an Infant School • Ofsted have been notified of the completion of the Age Down process and no potential problems are foreseen at present Q. A governor asked how a governor or governors could go about carrying out an informal visit. A. LJ advised that she believes that the Pre-School would welcome a visit and they are also aware that on Governor Monitoring Day some governors will pop in for a visit; she recommended leaving any visits until Thursday and she will advise the Pre-School that the first governor visit will be on the Monitoring Day. She also advised that if any governors wish to carry out any additional visits to the Governor Monitoring Day then the governors are more than welcome to do this.	

13.	Discuss reports from/review Governor Visits LJ advised that she has received and read all the Visit Reports, except for one report that she has received but has not yet had time to read; she also reminded all governors of the need to submit Governor Visit Reports in the correct format as used for previous Reports. Q. A governor advised that she had written some other Reports and asked LJ if she should send them to her. A. LJ asked the governor to send them to her and then upload them to HSS after she had read them. A governor advised that she was having difficulty uploading documents, e.g. reports, to HSS. The Clerk advised that he believes that he has created a Header for Governor Visit Reports and a few other headers for other items, so that it should be possible to add Governor Visit Reports to HSS by accessing 'The Board' and then locating the 'Documents' window where documents can be added. He will double-check for the presence of the Header just described and either send a link to LD or guidance on how to navigate to the correct location for adding Governor Visit Reports. ACTION.	Clerk
14.	Review Policies according to schedule – Exclusion of Pupils (adopting MOPP) Exclusion of Pupils Agreed to re-adopt the MOPP version of the policy. Staff Absence and Anti Bullying Agreed to approve.	
15.	Safeguarding, including discussion of the arrangements for completion of the Annual Safeguarding Return (to the LA by 30th September) which is due to be approved at the July FGB meeting LJ advised a couple of points as follows: • she will stay on the lookout for any changes that may be made to the version of the Safeguarding Return form that was used for last year's Safeguarding Return • she will complete and circulate the Safeguarding Return form, using the latest version of the form available at that time, in preparation for approval at the July FGB meeting; the form will include responses to any new questions that may have been added to last year's version of the form There followed a short discussion regarding the fact that the terms of office for all current GB members, except the Headteacher, are due to expire in 2027. It was generally felt that there was little that could be done about this at present although it was also felt that it would be beneficial if GB members could be encouraged to provide a declaration of their intent, regarding whether or not they would like their term of office to be renewed, shortly before their term of office expires in 2027.	
16.	Discuss GB Membership GD advised that the GB is still short of governors. LJ advised that she has added some text to the Newsletter about the shortage of governors and believes that this should be an ongoing inclusion in the Newsletter. GD also advised that she had delivered leaflets and a poster about the shortage of governors to St. Gabriel's Church and will seek to deliver to other places where she believes people may be interested in being a school governor.	
17.	Monitor any parental complaints None.	
18.	Discuss Governor Training, including WGBT if necessary There was a discussion about governor training, during which it was agreed that GB members should try to avoid booking places on the same individual training courses as other GB members, with a view to achieving a breadth of training in various topics across the GB membership. Some governors advised that they are currently looking for training on, have booked training on, or have completed training on the following topics: Researching available training at a convenient location Safer Recruitment – GD Booked on training Performance Management - GD Effective Use of Pupil Premium, Monitoring & Evaluation Safeguarding – RH Several training courses (to be advised at a later date) & will be attending the SEND conference at the end of June – LD Completed training Policies - RH	

	The GB discussed WGBT. <i>Agreed that:</i> the Clerk will contact HGS with a view to arranging WGBT during the next academic year, preferably in September or early October on a Monday (preferably) or a Wednesday at 6.30 pm, on the topic of Finance ACTION	Clerk
19.	Approve the GB Self Evaluation Form produced following the GB Self Evaluation carried out at the March FGB meeting Agreed to approve the GB Self Evaluation Form.	
20.	Discuss Governor Monitoring Day – scheduled for Wed 26th June at 9.00 am LJ asked the GB for information about the format that they would prefer for the next Monitoring Day on 26th June. The following was then agreed: - the governors would like to visit the Pre-School - to see different subjects being taught, as most learning walks have usually tended to focus on Literacy or Maths; e.g. one or two of the foundation subjects - to talk to some of the Young Interpreters and School Council, with a view to talking to these pupils informally and asking them to explain what they do - LD would like to look at Attendance and also the SCR (Single Central Register) - GD would like an update on Attendance, as she had done previously at a Governor Monitoring Day; she also believes that it would be nice to spend some time outside and see how the children use the outdoor equipment LJ advised that she will draft a loose agenda for the Day and that hopefully ST and JR will attend the Day; she also advised that she will check which curriculum managers should be giving a curriculum manager presentation.	
21.	Discuss the possibility of storing archive copies of GB signed minutes, related documents and other GB documents on the school system (as a precaution against any loss of files from any third-party organisation in whose care the minutes & documents are placed) The GB discussed the possibility of storing archive copies of GB electronically signed minutes, related documents and other GB documents on the school system. It was agreed that the school will create a new folder on the school secure drive, for storage of electronically signed minutes and possibly any other documents related to those particular minutes and the particular FGB meetings concerned, and that when the minutes of a meeting have been electronically signed the Clerk will send those electronically signed minutes and any other related documents to JB who will place those documents in the new folder. SD created the new folder on the school secure drive as discussed.	
22.	Correspondence None.	
23.	Any Other Business Q. A governor asked if the 4th July Pupil Progress meeting was scheduled for the morning or the afternoon. A. LJ advised that the Pupil Progress meetings are now scheduled as follows: Tues 2nd July (after school) – Y2 Pupil Progress, Mon 1st July (after school) – Y1 Pupil Progress, Mon 24th June INSET Day (1.00 pm) - YR Pupil Progress.	
24.	Date of next FGB meeting Scheduled for Tuesday 9th July 2024 at 6.30 pm via 'Teams'; RH gave her apologies for the meeting.	

The meeting closed at 8.13 pm.

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

Signed _____ Chair Date _____