



**Sussex Road Community Primary School  
Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body  
held on 17 October 2019 at 6.30pm at the School**

	<b>Present:</b>	Nicola Furlonger (Chair) Sarah Bowles (SB) (Headteacher) Andrew Chesworth (AC) Alison D'Alton (ADA) (SBM) Vanessa Lines (VL) Emma Sangster (ES) Michael Webber (MW) Jo Winker (JW)	
	<b>In attendance</b>	Lesley Hardwick (Clerk)	<b>Action</b>
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Apologies from Des O Dwyer, Carla Thompson and Clare Robertson (childcare), Andrew Pembroke (family commitments), Louisa Rowlands (Open evening at another school) and John Tomlinson (unexpected work demands) were received and accepted. The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate. The Chair commented that, although the Governors concerned all had genuine and understandable reasons for their non-attendance, it was nonetheless disappointing that attendance was so low. Governors discussed the importance of attending all FGB meetings, which are part of each Governor's commitment to the role, and agreed that repeated non-attendance was not acceptable. A Governor pointed out that the decision to vary the days of the week on which meetings were held had been intended to ensure that all Governors were able to attend a greater number of meetings, but that this did not seem to have been successful. The Clerk noted that Governors could claim for childcare costs under the Allowances Policy and Governors should be reminded of this. <b>The Chair agreed that she would remind Governors of their commitment and the availability of expenses during her 1:1 meetings.</b> A Governor questioned whether holding meetings during the day would improve attendance, although it was noted that Governors might then not be able to attend due to work commitments.		NF
2.	<b>DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS</b> No declarations of interest were received in respect of any item on the Agenda.		
3.	<b>MINUTES OF LAST MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING</b>  <b>Minutes of FGB meeting held on 16 September 2019</b> <b>The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2019 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.</b>  <b>Action Points</b> Governors reviewed progress against outstanding actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Safer Recruitment Training</u> – <b>This action was still on-going. The Vice Chair confirmed that he would be undertaking the NSPCC online course.</b></li> <li>• <u>Safeguarding Training/Term 2 Governor Day</u> – <b>The Chair advised that she would arrange a bespoke session for Governors who had not attended either of the previous sessions.</b> A Governor suggested that a session could be held as part of the Governor Day in November but it was agreed that time limitations would not allow this and that the safeguarding training must happen before the Governor Day. In this connection she confirmed that the Governor Day and FGB meeting would take place on 29/11/19, <b>and agreed to follow up with any Governors who had not yet replied to the Doodle invitation.</b> A Governor remarked that it would be</li> </ul>		MW NF NF

	<p>frustrating for those Governors who had made the effort to attend the Governor Day and who regularly attended meetings if others did not attend, and commented that it could also lead to resentment that a small group of Governors carried out most of the GB's work. ES agreed to help the Chair plan for the Governor Day, and the Chair asked Governors to send through suggestions as to what they would like to see covered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>H&amp;S Monitoring Visit</u> – <b><i>There had been no further progress in completing this action, although the Chair confirmed that she had asked the Health &amp; Safety Governor (DoD) to contact the SBM to arrange a monitoring visit (with DoD).</i></b></li> <li>• <u>1:1 Meetings</u> – <b><i>These visits were still ongoing.</i></b></li> <li>• <u>Chair's Appraisal</u>- <b><i>The Clerk agreed to send reminder emails to those Governors who had not yet returned their appraisal forms.</i></b></li> <li>• <u>Staff Survey Questionnaires</u> – The Clerk advised that she had not been able to find any exemplar questionnaires apart from the Ofsted survey form.</li> <li>• <u>Code of Conduct/Terms of Reference</u> – The Clerk confirmed that she had updated the two documents <b><i>and would bring individual copies of the Code of Conduct to the next meeting for signature.</i></b></li> <li>• <u>Governor Role Descriptors</u> -The Chair advised that the Clerk had uploaded Role Descriptors and potential monitoring questions to Sharepoint, although the Role Descriptors would need to be updated in line with the new Ofsted Framework.</li> <li>• <u>Request to Visit Forms</u> – <b><i>The Clerk advised that she had not yet had the time to create a new folder on Sharepoint for Request to Visit Forms.</i></b></li> <li>• <u>Potential new Governors</u> – VL advised that she had made contact with several potential new Governors, one of whom had safeguarding experience. <b><i>It was agreed that these contacts would be followed up following discussions with Governors as part of the 1:1 meetings.</i></b></li> </ul> <p>It was confirmed that all other 'due' action items had been completed or were covered under other agenda items.</p> <p><b>Other Matters Arising</b> There were no other matters arising from the minutes.</p>	<p>DoD NF LH  LH  LH  NF</p>
4.	<p><b>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p><b>Approval of Strategic Plan 2019/20</b> The HT advised that she had made no substantive changes to the version of the Plan which had been discussed with Governors at the review meeting on 24/9/19. Governors confirmed that they would accept this document, subject to the Milestones and detailed actions being completed and shared with Governors. <b>The Strategic Plan 2019/20 was approved, subject to the amendments agreed above.</b></p> <p><b>Headteacher's Report</b> The HT discussed some of the key points raised within her report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Contextual Trend Data</u> – The HT advised that there had been no significant changes in demographic trend data, with a slight increase in the number of EAL students and a fall in Pupil Premium students, commenting that the EAL children at Sussex Road usually had a good level of English. She confirmed that attendance, including PPG and SEND attendance and the level of persistent absence was good</li> <li>• <u>Safeguarding Information</u> – <b><i>A Governor commented that it was surprising that so few families had open Early Help referrals, when the School spent so much time arranging support.</i></b> The HT explained that some families were disillusioned with the Early Help service that other failed to engage, and added that some had indicated that the support they received from the School was better than the support they would receive from the Early Help team. She also advised that the LAC child was also subject to a S47 notice.</li> </ul>	

- Complaints – The HT reported that no complaints had been received since the last meeting.
- Exclusions – The HT advised that she had issued a half day fixed term exclusion following a physical assault on a member of staff.
- Staffing:
  - DHT - The HT advised that DHT interviews were taking place on 18/10/19. This would involve herself, the Chair and JW. There had been a very healthy response to the advert, from which five candidates had been short-listed. In response to a question she confirmed that there had been no internal candidates for the role and commented that she would appreciate having a full-time DHT in post.
  - Teaching Staff – The HT confirmed that a teacher had been appointed to cover maternity leave.
  - Support Staff – The HT reported that the Caretaker post had been filled. She advised that only one support staff vacancy had been filled, despite the school having received 25 applications and added that it was consistently difficult to find staff of the appropriate calibre. **In response to a question she advised that this resulted in classroom teachers being without class TAs.** She confirmed that funding had been allocated in the budget for these posts, despite cuts having been made elsewhere and added that the School had received additional High Needs Funding since budget setting.
- EYFS – The HT confirmed that EYFS priorities for the year would be confirmed once the baseline data had been completed. She reported that EYFS staff from another local school would be visiting EYFS in Term 2 to observe good practice and also advised that the cohort included a LAC child and another with ASD and a high level of need. One of the EYFS Governors reported on the monitoring visit that had taken place in July (report of visit including in FGB papers). She reported that the discussion with the EYFS leader had included a review of the year and her plans for 2019/20. She noted that feedback from the LA moderation process had been very complementary in respect of the Quality of Education in EYFS. The Governors who had carried out the monitoring visit had also discussed the transition from EYFS to Year 1, when specialist support would be engaged, if necessary, to support children who had been monitored throughout EYFS.
- Safeguarding Monitoring – The Safeguarding Governor referred to the report on his visit when the Governors had completed the annual self-assessment that would inform the Safeguarding Report to Governors. He commented that the two Safeguarding Governors had noted the daily pressure on the HT due to the amount of time spent dealing with Safeguarding issues and asked whether the appointment of a new DHT would help to address this. The HT confirmed that she currently attended all after-school safeguarding meetings, due to the DHT's working hours, and suggested that appointing a full-time DHT might help to share this load. A Governor noted that the newly appointed TA had previously worked with families and asked whether she might be able to assist in providing advice to parents.
- Successes – The HT reported that Sussex Road had come second in the Summer Reading Challenge for the second successive year and that EYFS, KS1 and KS2 data was very strong. She advised that Forest School was now providing 18 sessions a year for Sussex Road children, and that the Reading Partners initiative had started well. **In response to a question, she confirmed that it was too early for teachers to see the benefits of this initiative in class.**
- Challenges – As mentioned, the HT confirmed that it was extremely difficult to recruit new TAs of an appropriate calibre and added that accessing Specialist Settings was challenging. In this connection she commented that she understood that places were available, for example in Nexus's Special School's satellite provision at Wouldham, but that the Special School would not admit them because it claimed that it would not be able to match the quality of provision provided at Sussex Road. **A Governor asked if this issue had been discussed with**

	<p><b>Governor Andrew Pembroke, who was also a Governor at Nexus.</b> Another Governor confirmed that the issue had been raised with AP at a recent monitoring visit, and that she understood that Nexus was being cautious in its first intake at the new Wouldham Hub, and needed to train staff before admitting more children. A Governor remarked, from his work with a charity in London, this was an acute problem where children with ASD were concerned, and frequently led to exclusion from school. <b>In response to a question, the HT confirmed that there was an appeals process with regard to admission to Special Schools, but it was difficult to appeal because schools were not given information about the grounds for an application being refused. It was agreed that AP should be asked if he could provide further advice on the appeals procedure. VL advised that she had a contact who worked at the Wouldham Hub and would also ask her for advice.</b> The HT commented that the argument regarding the quality of provision at Sussex Road, compared to provision at Special School was based on the fact that she was providing 1:1 support, whereas the Special School would be providing a lower level of support (typically 1:3). However, she pointed out that she needed to provide 1:1 support because staff at Sussex Road did not have the same level of specialist training as staff working in a Special School. Another governor pointed out that the movement from a 1:1 to 1:3 support would be progress to be encouraged. <b>In response to a question, the HT advised that Term 1 had been particularly difficult in respect of the amount of time taken up in dealing with children exhibiting physical aggression, and that this was having a significant impact on staff. A Governor asked if the School would consider relaxing its requirements in respect of TA recruitment if applicants had particular skills in managing challenging behaviour.</b> The HT confirmed that she would consider this option if an appropriate candidate came forward, although she pointed out that TAs needed a 'baseline' level of knowledge to enable them to be deployed across the School. She also pointed out that children with ASD were often demonstrated a high level of ability, and can also employ manipulative strategies; adults working with them needed to be very careful in the language they used. She added that ideally these children needed to work with qualified and experienced teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Collaboration</u> – The HT advised that the collaboration of Tonbridge schools was meeting monthly. In response to a question regarding the EEF Schools Partnership Programme, she confirmed that Sussex Road would receive a review meeting under the arrangements with Cage Green and Woodlands schools during Term 3. The Assistant Head Teacher and another member of SLT are involved in this programme.</li> <li>• <u>Kaizen Teaching Alliance</u> – The HT had nothing to report.</li> <li>• <u>LIFT</u> – The HT advised that the next LIFT meeting would take place on 18/10/19 and that the SENCO would be raising the issue of admission to Special Schools at this meeting.</li> <li>• <u>LA Visits</u> – The HT reported that the next SIA visit would take place in Term 2.</li> </ul>	<p>NF/AP VL</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>FINANCE</b></p> <p><b>Six Month Financial Monitoring Statement/Finance Governors' report</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that she and the Vice Chair had carried out a financial monitoring visit to review the six-month position and referred to their report and to the SBM's notes which explained the variances against the approved budget. Broadly speaking, this showed a healthier budget position over that seen at budget setting, with revenue funding being increased. This had allowed some budget areas that had been tightly squeezed to be increased.</p> <p>Governors noted that the projected rollover was now £123,945, against the budget estimate of £103,575.</p>	

	<p>The SBM advised that the most significant variance related to additional High Needs Funding, and that the shortage of TAs had resulted in a positive variance in Support Staff costs. <b>A Governor questioned the extent to which PPG and Sports Premium could be used to fund access to extra-curricular clubs.</b> JW confirmed that she had received advice that Sports Premium funding could be used. However, the HT pointed out that the School would encourage PP children to attend clubs and activities, but would not want to create clubs specifically for them.</p> <p><b>Pay Committee</b> It was confirmed that the Pay Committee would be meeting in the week commencing 4/11/19. The Committee comprises MW, AC and AP.</p> <p><b>HT's Performance Management Outcomes</b> [The HT left the meeting whilst this item was discussed]</p> <p>The Chair of the HTPM Panel reported on the outcome of the HT's Performance Management Meeting (reported within the Confidential Minutes). <b>The recommendations of the HT's Performance Management Group were approved.</b></p>	
6.	<p><b>PREMISES</b> [The HT returned to the meeting]</p> <p>The SBM reported that the roof works should be completed by the beginning of Term 2, and that work would be carried out to the lower playground, including the building of a retaining wall to prevent water ingress from the Judd site.</p>	
7.	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING/HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding Monitoring Report</b> This report had been reviewed under item 4.</p> <p><b>Annual Safeguarding Report for Governors</b> This report was not yet available. <b>The HT agreed to complete the LA template report and send it to the Clerk for uploading to Sharepoint.</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding issues</b> The HT had no urgent safeguarding issues to report.</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety Monitoring Report</b> Governors noted that the monitoring visit was outstanding, as discussed under Item 3.</p> <p><b>Health and Safety Issues</b> The SBM had no health and safety issues to report,</p>	SB
8.	<p><b>POLICIES</b></p> <p><b>Child Protection Policy</b> The Chair confirmed that she had approved this policy by Chair's Action, in accordance with the delegation given at the previous meeting. Governors noted that the policy had been updated in line with the latest LA model policy, itself updated to be compliant with KCSIE 2019. <b>The Chair's Action was ratified and the Child Protection Policy approved.</b></p> <p><b>Pay &amp; Reward Policy</b> The SBM advised that the Pay and Reward Policy (subject to any KCC revisions) had been uploaded to include the recommended 2.75% increase in teachers' pay. <b>The Pay and Reward Policy was approved.</b></p>	

	<p><b>Finance Policy</b> The updated Finance Policy was approved.</p>	
9.	<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p><b>Governor Training</b> The Vice Chair reported that he had undertaken a NSPCC online Safeguarding course, commenting that this had been a very in-depth course and had highlighted the finely balanced decisions that staff and safeguarding leads were required to make.</p> <p>The Chair commented that the Governor training log was somewhat 'light' currently and pointed out that the FGB had previously agreed that Governors should all participate in training, as part of the review of the Code of Conduct. The Vice Chair remarked that he could not access the CPD online site currently. <b><i>JW agreed to investigate and resolve this problem.</i></b> The Clerk commented that the NGA offered a wide range of online training through learning links and agreed to send out information on accessing these courses. <b><i>It was agreed that the training on the new Ofsted Framework led by the HT in Term 5 should be recorded on the Governors' training log, and that the forthcoming Governor Day would also involve some Governor training.</i></b></p> <p><b>Monitoring Reports not discussed elsewhere</b> There were no further monitoring reports to review.</p>	<p>JW LR</p>
10.	<p><b>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p> <p><b>Notes from SFS Finance Briefing</b> The SBM circulated a copy of notes outlining changes in the Financial Compliance framework. These changes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Changes to the SFVS return</u> – the SBM advised that the March 2020 return would be completed through a spreadsheet, which was to be completed by Governors, using financial information provided by the School.</li> <li>• <u>Consultation on DfE funding</u> – The SBM advised that the DfE was consulting on options for schools funding from April 2020. She explained that the options included one which would bring more funding into schools, but would remove the LA's discretion to 'top-slice' a proportion of schools' funding to support the High Needs budget. She added that the outcome of the consultation would be discussed by Schools Funding Forums, but that the ultimate decision would rest with the Secretary of State.</li> <li>• <u>Increase in financial reporting to Governors</u> – The SBM advised that schools had been advised that in depth financial reporting would be required three times a year (in line with the formal financial monitoring deadlines), with interim reporting being the responsibility of finance governors, who would be required to access the most up to date financial monitoring information, discuss or seek clarification with the School and report back to the FGB, who would need to note and minute the projected rollover.</li> <li>• <u>Budget setting timetable 2020</u> – The SBM reported that the budget-setting process would not begin until after the Easter holidays, although the submission date of 31 May had not changed.</li> </ul> <p>There was no other urgent business.</p>	
11.	<p><b>CONFIDENTIALITY.</b> It was agreed that the discussion regarding the HT's Performance Management meeting should be recorded in the Confidential minutes.</p>	

12.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>          It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on 29 November 2019 (time to be confirmed)</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.15pm</p>	
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Signed.(Chair).....Date .....

APPROVED

## ACTION LOG

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Details	Deadline	Responsibility	Status
18.3.19 13.5.19 8.7.19 16.9.19 17.10.19	4 3 3 4 3	Governors to complete Safer Recruitment training	End T4	MW	MW to undertake online training
18.3.19 13.5.19 8.7.19 16.9.19 17.10.19	8 3 3 4 3	The GB to receive updated Safeguarding training	End T5	ADA	Training to be arranged for remaining Governors
13.5.19 8.7.19 16.9.19 17.10.19	8 3, 7 4 3	A H&S monitoring visit to be arranged for Term 6	End T6	DOD	Still outstanding. DOD to contact ADA to arrange
13.5.19 8.7.19 16.9.19 17.10.19	8 3 4 3	1:1 meetings to be arranged with Governors before the end of the current academic year	End T6	NF	In progress
8.7.19 16.9.19 17.10.19	3 4 3	Anonymised Chair Appraisal Forms to be sent to the Vice Chair once received	Beginning of T1	LH	A further reminder to be sent where forms not returned
8.7.19 16.9.19 17.10.19	4, 7 4 7	The Annual Safeguarding Report to Governors to be presented in T1 following a further S/G Monitoring visit	End T1	CT/MW	Report to be completed and circulated to Governors
8.7.19 17.10.19	9 3	A Staff Survey to take place during Term 2	End T2	SB/NF	To be reported to T2 meeting
16.9.19 17.10.19	5 3	Governors to contact the Chair if they are aware of a potential governor with Safeguarding experience	End T2	All	Ongoing
16.9.19 17.10.19	5 3	A folder to be set up on Sharepoint for Request to Visit forms to be shared	End T1	LH	Not yet completed
16.9.19 17.10.19	8 3	The Term 2 FGB to be incorporated into a whole-day Governor visit to school and monitoring session	End T1	NF	Meeting to be held on 29.11.19
17.10.19	1	Governors to be reminded of the importance of attending FGB meetings that they can claim for childcare costs	End T2	NF (during 1:1 meetings)	
17.10.19	4	Further advice to be sought on Special Schools' appeals procedures	End T2	AP/VL	
17.10.19	7	Problems with accessing the CPDonline training site to be investigated	End T1	JW	
17.10.19	9	The internal training on the new Ofsted Framework and training elements of the Governor Day to be added to the Training Log	End T2	LR	