



**Sussex Road Community Primary School
Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body
held on 18 March 2019 at 6.30pm at the School**

	Present:	Nicola Furlonger (Chair) Sarah Bowles (SB) (Headteacher) Andrew Chesworth (AC) Alison D'Alton (ADA) (SBM) Vanessa Lines (VL) Andrew Pembroke (AP) Clare Robertson (CR) Emma Sangster (ES) Carla Thompson (CT) Michael Webber (MW) Jo Winkler(JW)	
	In attendance	Lesley Hardwick (Clerk)	Action
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies from Louisa Rowlands and Des O Dwyer (childcare) and John Tomlinson (work commitments) were received and accepted.		
2.	DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS No declarations of interest were received in respect of any item on the Agenda.		
3.	<p>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Minutes of FGB meeting held on 22 January 2019 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2019 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Action Points Governors reviewed progress against outstanding actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Slope outside main gate</u>– The SBM explained that the materials used to create a slip-resistant surface could potentially cause a more serious injury if anyone was to fall and that it was not possible to create a step rather than a slope as this would prevent vehicular access. She agreed to paint the area to draw attention to the potential hazard. <p>It was confirmed that all other action items had been completed or were covered under other agenda items.</p> <p>Other Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>HT's Mid-Year Review Meeting</u> – The Chair confirmed that this meeting had now taken place. • <u>Housing Development at Hayesden</u> – The Chair advised that she had been in contact with the Area Education Officer regarding the inclusion of a new two-form Primary School within the application for the development of 125 new homes on land adjacent to Hayesbrook School, given the proximity of this development to Sussex Road. The AEO had suggested that the development of a new school on this site would take some time to deliver. However, Governors expressed noted the potential implications for Sussex Road, and also that other schools in Tonbridge were currently carrying vacancies. A Governor advised that he would raise the GB's concerns with the Leader of the Council, who was also a South Tonbridge Councillor, as the planning application would be determined by the T&MBC, unless called in by the 		ADA

	<p>Secretary of State, In response to a question, the HT advised that the School had secured 60 first-choice allocations for the 2019 Year R entry, and that the catchment area was currently 0.36 miles. A Governor pointed out that the whole of the Molescroft estate (immediately opposite the site of the proposed development) was excluded from the School’s catchment area on this basis, and that she was aware that children from that estate had been allocated places at Longmead or Cage Green schools in North Tonbridge. The HT expressed concern that parents would prefer to send their children to a school in a new building, and noted that any new school would also be an Academy. A Governor remarked that brand new schools were not always popular with parents initially, as many would prefer a school with an established track record. The HT commented that she did not believe there was sufficient demand to support two two-form entry schools in such close proximity, although she questioned whether there would be any potential to build a three-form entry school to replace the current Sussex Road buildings, given the expense of maintaining them and the lack of space on the site. Governors agreed to monitor the situation and to continue to seek the involvement of the School in plans for future school place provision.</p> <p>There were no other matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
4.	<p>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT/HEADTEACHER’S REPORT</p> <p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>The HT commented on a number of issues raised within her report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Attendance</u> – The HT advised that attendance was good overall, but that the attendance of PPG children was an area of concern, due to the impact of two children (one of whom was a PPG child) who had not attended school since the end of Term 2. She advised that enforcement action was being taken in one case, but that in the other the situation was complicated because the child was on a part-timetable, and because on this basis absence of 40 days would be required to trigger external support and action. • <u>Exclusions</u> – The HT reported that she had excluded one child on two occasions (one half-day and one full-day FTE), as a result of damage to school property and ongoing assaults on school staff and provided further details (recorded within the Confidential Minutes. • <u>September 2019 admissions</u> – The HT advised that, although the overall number of applications had been slightly lower this year, but less so than other local primary schools, reflecting the local demographic. In response to a question, the HT advised that 45% of the allocated places were for siblings, including four Looked-After children. A further comment regarding these places is recorded within the Confidential Minutes. • <u>Staffing</u> – The HT reported that two candidates had been interviewed for the EYFS Leader position and provided details about the outcome (reported within the Confidential minutes) The Chair advised that she had been involved in the recruitment process and confirmed that it had been rigorous and robust. It was agreed that MW would complete a Safer Recruitment Training course. A Governor asked what progress had been made in developing middle and subject leaders and measuring their impact. The HT explained that there had not been an opportunity to take this matter forward, due to sickness absence and SATs preparation. • <u>QTLA</u> - The HT confirmed that current QTLA priorities included feedback to pupils, personal development and PPG attendance. She commented that the SLO service was under pressure to close attendance cases as quickly as possible, with the result that their input tended to be spasmodic and was not sufficient to change patterns of behaviour. 	MW

- Behaviour Policy - Governor questioned the current status of the Behaviour Policy, which had been discussed with Governors at the most recent QTLA monitoring visit.** The HT reminded Governors that the philosophy behind the Policy had been discussed at the last FGB meeting, and that the Policy had been developed through discussions at staff meetings since that time. She commented on the need to balance children's wellbeing against the need for behaviour to have consequences, to support positive behaviour and to provide pastoral support, in line with the Policy's ethos of 'Positive, Personalised and Consistent'. **A Governor suggested that the Policy should include a flow chart indicting how sanctions might be applied.** The HT commented that this would conflict with the ethos of the policy. **In response to a question, the HT advised that the audience for the policy would include parents. A Governor commented that staff needed to have a policy that provided them with a consistent approach to dealing with behaviour and another Governor added that parents would also expect to see this.** The HT confirmed that staff had spent a long time discussing what they would want to see in the Policy, recognising that normal sanctions would not work for some children. A Governor proposed that the Policy should include a link to the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions, as this clearly set out the criteria that the HT needed to follow when considering an exclusion. **Other Governors commented that parents did not like inconsistent dealing, and that all teachers needed to adopt the same approach and that some parents would see bad behaviour as a 'crime' to be punished.** It was also noted that if a parent felt the School had now applied the Behaviour Policy incorrectly, in respect of their own child, they had a right of appeal. In response to a question, the HT confirmed that the Behaviour Policy did not need FGB approval, **but agreed to review the Statement of Behaviour Principles that underpinned the Policy and which required Governor approval, and to upload the new Policy to the website.** She commented that a large proportion of behaviour issues within the School arose as a result of children's experiences outside school, or because they needed specialist provision that could not be provided within a mainstream school. In this connection, the HT commented on the amount of support that the School provided to create personalised curricula but pointed out that there was a limit to what could be done in school, especially as parents needed to engage with other agencies, such as Early Help to receive more intensive support, and funding cuts led to cases frequently being closed if a parent failed to engage. She added that it was now more difficult than had previously been the case to access information on the progress of a referral through a third party and remarked that discussions with other schools suggested that they were facing similar issues.
- Art Club** – The HT advised that this Club was extremely popular, despite the relatively high cost.
- Circle Time** – The HT commented that the children were increasingly taking ownership of Circle Time and determining when it should take place.
- EYFS** – The HT reported that the Care Home visits had continued and were very positive for children and for the Home's residents. The EYFS monitoring governor commented that she had been discussing how the relationship with the Care Home would be progressed, but remarked that it was clear that it was having a very positive impact.
- Outdoor Learning Environment** – The HT confirmed that the outdoor learning space was being used more effectively and that the EYFS indoor learning environment was also improving.
- Outcomes** – The HT advised that the RAG-rating in her report would be amended as necessary once the Term 3 data was analysed.
- Successes** – The HT commented that the School was doing as well as possible in the current difficult financial climate. She pointed out that it was now very hard to secure High Needs Funding, even for children with EHCPs, and that

SB/
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increasingly schools were in a position of only being able to use their TAs to support individual students, rather than being classroom based. **A Governor questioned the position for the next financial year.** The HT advised that the School was in a good position financially, but that, given the number of children who needed specialist provision but were unable to find a place, she questioned whether it would be able to continue to deploy classroom TAs. **A Governor asked how the current situation was impacting on teachers.** The HT confirmed that dealing with a larger number of children with severe special needs impacted upon workload, in terms of lesson planning to ensure that there was sufficient differentiation and that all children's needs were addressed. **A Governor asked if the School was able to offer support to teachers to release stress, and another questioned the impact on morale.** The HT remarked that the situation at Sussex Road was similar to that faced by many other schools and that increasingly this was the nature of teaching. **A Governor commented that focussing on the minority of children who needed intensive support could be detrimental to the remaining children, and also to the staff who needed to deal with extreme behaviour.** The HT advised that, in cases such as the one that she had referred to earlier, the Leadership Team and TAs were the staff most likely to be assaulted and added that, although staff were upset by these incidents, this was mainly because they knew that the child was also suffering and that the School could not meet their needs. **A Governor commented that the current situation was unlikely to change and questioned whether the School should explore an alternative approach, for example by an in-school 'unit', which would reduce the workload for other teachers in respect of planning and preparation.** The HT commented that it would be difficult to plan and deliver teaching to children with such a range of different ages and needs, all needing 1:1 support. **Another Governor commented that there were already schools that incorporated units for children with special needs, such as the Nexus Hub at Wouldham, but advised that these units worked on the basis that children would be taught and supported in mainstream classes, with the Special School rooms being used for respite care and specialist support, as teaching children in a separate unit could be seen as a form of 'internal exclusion' and would not comply with DfE guidance.** One of the Safeguarding Governors confirmed that the concerns that had been raised would be discussed at the next Safeguarding monitoring visit, expressing concern at the amount of leadership time which was being spent on safeguarding issues. **A Governor asked if the situation at Sussex Road was worse than in other local schools.** The HT advised that she believed that all local schools were facing similar issues.

Progress against 2018/19 Strategic Plan Priorities

The Chair asked the HT for an update on progress against the two Strategic priorities for 2018/19.

To embed a dynamic, outcomes based, immersive curriculum and progressively build on skills whilst developing strong learning behaviours

- A wide range of clubs/extra-curricular activities were held in school, mostly by external organisations, although further work needed to be done to ensure that these were being accessed by PPG children.
- Display boards around the School showcased non-core subjects and activities.
- Subject Leaders were gaining a good understanding of skills across year groups, and progress was discussed during staff meetings. **In response to a question the HT advised that there was no end date to this process, but that the intention was that leaders would have gained a good understanding by the end of the year.** She confirmed that the topics that were covered would be reviewed and would evolve, but added that care would

	<p>need to be taken to ensure that all required skills would be covered if the order of topics changed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DHT would be leading less from the beginning of Term 5, with the Subject Leaders taking the lead in their respective subjects and having greater ownership of them. • <i>It was suggested that the Teaching and Learning monitoring governors should talk to subject leaders at their next visit.</i> The Chair advised that she is exploring changes to monitoring arrangements that would relate more directly to the strategic priorities and mirror the broader curriculum, but allocating Governors to monitor individual curriculum areas <p><i>To ensure pupils are able to develop resilience as confident individuals with high levels of well-being.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PE curriculum was to be revised • Resilience-building would be covered during PSHE lessons, and Circle Time included games. • The HT advised that she was to attend a presentation about the Thrive approach – a whole-school approach to track and monitor student wellbeing. She commented that schools were increasingly taking on the role that had previously been the LA’s responsibility with regard to ‘lower level’ safeguarding, for example by providing guidance or training on parenting strategies. She remarked that the package offered by Thrive would train staff to give them the expertise needed to in turn provide training and support to parents. • Seven applications had been received for the Forest School Leader vacancy, including four from former teachers, • Children were now more active, although the HT advised that it would not be possible to use sports funding for playground games in future. A Governor suggested that it might be possible to use funding for some of the most active playground games. <p>Governor Monitoring Reports The Chair reminded Governors that the FGB had received verbal reports from monitoring visits at its last meeting, and confirmed that the reports on these visits had been uploaded to Sharepoint with the meeting papers.</p> <p>LA Notes of Visit The HT advised that the new SIA had not yet carried out a monitoring visit but would now be coming into school at the beginning of term 5 for a ‘familiarisation’ visit.</p> <p>Other issues arising from the Strategic Plan No other issues were identified.</p>	<p>T&L Mon Govs</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>SFVS The Chair reminded Governors that SFVS was the Governing Body’s confirmation that the School’s financial practices were sound and robust. Governors congratulated the SBM on preparing such a full and comprehensive report and were satisfied that it provided an accurate representation of the school’s financial practices. The 2019 SFVS was approved and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>LA Feedback to the 9-Month Financial Monitoring Report Governors noted that the LA had not raised any issues within its Feedback report.</p> <p>Financial Monitoring Report Governors noted the monitoring report from the finance monitoring team, which had focussed on the nine-month financial monitoring statement.</p>	

	<p>Year End Outturn Position</p> <p>The SBM confirmed that there had been no significant change to the Outturn predicted within the nine month financial monitoring statement (£102,365), although she advised that she had received a number of late funding payments, and the final outturn figure might be in the region of £120,000, which she confirmed would still be with the BCM limit. She also advised there might be a small Capital rollover, as some of the additional ‘little extras’ funding might be unspent at the year end. The HT noted that despite the positive rollover figure, the School was still looking at a very low outturn surplus by the end of Year 3 of the 3-year financial plan.</p> <p>A Governor commented that it was always difficult to make long term projections, and noted that the Year 3 year-end position always improved over time. The SBM commented that this would be particularly true this year, as there were so many variables. As an example she advised that no information was available with regard to the implementation of the ‘hard’ National Funding Formula, and that there was no confirmation that the PE grant would continue. She reported that schools had received confirmation that the teachers’ pay increases would be funded for the next three years (although on a per-pupil bases rather than on actual costs), but that funding for the teachers’ Pension contribution increase was only guaranteed for one year (at cost). A Governor asked if this additional funding could be accounted for separately, to enable it to be monitored. The SBM advised that this funding would be paid as part of the formula funding, and would therefore be difficult to separate out. The SBM also advised that, although KCC had not issued any formal guidance to schools, it had previously stated that they should be implementing the National Living Wage of £9 per hour, which would effectively remove KR2 and the majority of the KR3 scale points.</p> <p>A Governor questioned the comments in the Governors monitoring report regarding the cost of boiler replacement. The SBM confirmed that the total cost of all the work would be £12,910, with the replacement of the boiler itself being £7,500, and advised that the cost of the replacement boiler would be met by KCC.</p> <p>Nourish Kitchen Proposal</p> <p>The HT advised that Nourish had approached her previously regarding proposals to install a kitchen at Sussex Road, offering to part-fund the investment, but that she had rejected the proposal as the School was not in position to match-fund. Nourish had now come back with a further proposal. She provided further details, and commented on potential benefits for the School (reported within the Confidential minutes, together with the subsequent discussion).</p> <p>Following the discussion recorded within the Confidential Minutes, Governors agreed in principle that the School should contract with Nourish. It was agreed that a working group comprising the Chair, MW and ES should meet to review the terms of the contract.</p> <p>Other Financial Issues</p> <p>There were no other financial issues to discuss.</p>	<p>NF/MW ES</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>PREMISES</p> <p>The SBM reported on a number of premises issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hot Water/Heating</u> – The SBM confirmed that the boiler had now been replaced, and that the heating was now working in all areas of the School. • <u>Decking</u> – The SBM confirmed that the decking had been replaced with a composite material, rather than wood, which should be much more durable. • <u>Replacement of Flat Roof</u> - The SBM advised that the date for the work had been pushed back, but that contractors had been on site and confirmed that she believed that the proposal was reasonable. She commented that the contractor 	

	<p>had suggested that the project would involve a significant amount of work, as pipes at the back of the school had been fractured and needed to be replaced, and had indicated that it would take at least the length of the Summer holidays to complete. In response to a question, she confirmed that the entire cost of the work would be met by KCC.</p>	
7.	<p>SAFEGUARDING/HEALTH AND SAFETY</p> <p>Health and Safety Monitoring The Health and Safety Governor referred to the report that had been uploaded to Sharepoint and remarked that a number of issues discussed at the meeting had already been covered under other agenda items. He confirmed that the visit had also included a review of records and certificates, which were all up to date. In response to a question the SBM advised that the fire extinguishers were checked annually by KCC and that between three and four were replaced each year. She also confirmed that KCC would be carrying out a fire risk visit before the end of April.</p> <p>Safeguarding Monitoring Governors noted that two reports had been uploaded to Sharepoint. The Safeguarding Governors suggested that the timing of the self-evaluation monitoring should be adjusted, so that the information reported to Governors was more current and it was agreed that in future the GB should receive the Annual Safeguarding Report, which was compiled using information from the Self Evaluation tool, at the Term 1 meeting each year. This proposal was agreed</p> <p>One of the Safeguarding Governors reported that she had asked that the self-evaluation proforma should include information about Early Help involvement, in addition to the questions about Social Services involvement, reflecting changes in the LA's processes. The Chair asked Governors if there was any other information that they would like to see included through the self-evaluation proforma. Governors were satisfied that all information was covered. One of the Safeguarding Governors commented that safeguarding at Sussex Road was only of such a high standard because of the HT's work. The HT agreed that safeguarding was extremely time-consuming for the leadership team, and also for teachers who needed to gather evidence to prove that the threshold for external agency/LA involvement had been reached. She also commented on the time taken by staff in talking to parents to explain what they needed to do at home. One of the Safeguarding Governors remarked that in her professional experience parenting advice was needed across all socio-economic groups.</p> <p>A Governor noted from the Safeguarding Monitoring report that some of the Policies referred to within the Proforma were out of date. The SBM confirmed that these policies had been reviewed but now needed to be uploaded to the website.</p> <p>Other Health & Safety/Safeguarding issues The HT had no Safeguarding or Health and Safety issues to report.</p>	ADA
8.	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>Joint Panel Agreement The Chair confirmed that she had sent the draft Joint Panel Agreement to Woodlands School and that the School's Chair and HT were supportive of the proposal and would take it to the March FGB meeting, on 29/3/19.</p> <p>Monitoring Arrangements The Chair confirmed that she did not want to change the monitoring arrangements mid-year, following the decision to merge the PDBW and Safeguarding monitoring groups. MW confirmed that he and CT were happy to include PDBW within their remit. AP,</p>	AP

	<p><i>previously a member of the PDBW monitoring group offered to join the Safeguarding monitoring group for at least one visit to provide continuity.</i></p> <p><i>The SEND Governor confirmed that he would carry out a monitoring visit at the beginning of Term 5. ES confirmed that she would join this visit.</i></p> <p>The Chair asked Governors for their views on how to adjust monitoring so that it was better aligned with the Strategic Plan. She confirmed that statutory monitoring would need to continue, but suggested that the curriculum could be monitored by subject area, covering issues such as teaching and learning and PPG. <i>It was agreed that a working group of the Chair, MW, VL and ES meet to carry out a self-evaluation and develop proposals for monitoring for 2019/20, which would align with the Strategic Plan and ensure and monitor curriculum delivery.</i></p> <p>Governor Training AP confirmed that he had attended very useful Pupil Premium training. MW confirmed that he had taken the online Home Office Prevent training course. <i>The Chair noted that the Safeguarding proforma had identified that the GB as a whole needed Safeguarding update training.</i></p> <p>The Clerk reported that she had attended the recent Governor Briefing session, which had included guidance on preparing for a 'no deal' Brexit.</p>	<p>AP</p> <p>NF/MW VL/ES</p> <p>NF/SB ADA</p>
9.	<p>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS There was no urgent other business.</p>	
10.	<p>CONFIDENTIALITY. No items of confidentiality were identified at the meeting. It was subsequently agreed with the Chair that details regarding the exclusion, September 2019 admissions and the EYFS interviews (all in the HT's report (Item 4)) and the discussion regarding the proposal from Nourish (Item 5) should all be reported within separate Confidential minutes.</p>	
11.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 13 May 2019 at 6.30pm The meeting closed at 8.30pm</p>	

Signed.(Chair).....Date

ACTION LOG

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Details	Deadline	Responsibility	Status
11.9.18 6.12.18 22.1.19 18.3.19	5 10 9 8	Consideration to be given to entering into a joint panel arrangement with another school/schools	End T2	NF	Waiting for approval by Woodlands FGB
6.12.18 22.1.19 18.3.19	8 3 8	Governors to discuss how joint Safeguarding/PDBW monitoring is to be delivered	End T3	AP/MW/CT	AP to join MW & CT at the next S/G mon visit
22.1.19 18.3.19	7 3	The slope outside the main gate to be treated to make it less slippery in wet weather	End T3	ADA	Slope to be painted to highlight the potential hazard
18.3.19	4	Governors to complete Safer Recruitment training	End T4	MW	MW to undertake online training
18.3.19	4	The Statement of Behaviour Principles to be reviewed and brought back to the FGB if necessary	13.5.19	ADA	
18.3.19	4	The Behaviour Policy to be uploaded to the School website	End T4	ADA	
18.3.19	5	A working group to meet to review the terms of the contract with Nourish	13.5.19	NF/MW/ES	
18.3.19	6	Non-statutory Safeguarding-related policies to be uploaded to the website	End T4	ADA	
18.3.19	8	A SEND monitoring visit to be carried out in Term 5	13.5.19	AP/ES	
18.3.19	8	A Working Group to meet to undertake a self-evaluation and develop proposals for monitoring in 2019/20	End T6	NF/MW/VL/ES	
18.3.19	8	The GB to receive updated Safeguarding training	End T5	ADA	