



Newnham Croft Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Wednesday 28 April 2021 at 6pm via Zoom

Governors present: Lucy Nethsingha (Chair –LN) ; Andy Matthews (Headteacher – AM); Dani Redhead (DR - *from item 8*); Edward Ferguson (EF); Kirsty McDougall (KM - *from item 7*); Hugh Clough (HC); Kate Fry (KF); Keren Sayir-Uziyel (KSU); Jason Palmer (JP); Tom Kendon (TK); Simon Hill (SH); Jean Glasberg (JG - *until item 7*)

Also in attendance: Helen Bracey (Clerk - HB)

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members. Belated apologies were received from Rachel Rosborough (RR).

2. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

3. Review and acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2021

A conversation arose about a proposal to spend sports premium money on a running track. It was agreed to cover this under item 5. The minutes were accepted as a true record and will be signed later by the Chair.

4. Matters arising and review of actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2021

- F0710:01 – Complete
- F0710:02 – Complete
- F0710:03 – Ongoing
- F0710:04 – Complete
- F0212:02 – Ongoing
- F0210:01 – Complete

5. The Instrument of Government

No amendments were made to the document.

It was noted that a co-opted governor can also be a member of staff; AM will enquire if any members of staff would like to join the governing body.

ACTION F2804:01 – AM to enquire if any members of staff would like to join the governing body

6. Reports from Committees

The proposed running track was raised at this point in the meeting as it had been briefly discussed at sub committee meetings. Some governors expressed their concern about this proposal, with particular emphasis on the following:

- The school's green space which should be regarded as a valuable asset; the running track should be considered as part of a vision for green space and not just for its educational value.
- Whether this project was the best thing to spend the SP money on given that children have missed out during the pandemic and would benefit from other activities that the money could buy.
- How many children would benefit from a running track.
- The use of SP funds should have a legacy element for the school; the EPC and TLC committees should look at their vision for the use of premises and outside spaces and the curriculum when considering this project.

Governors agreed to bring this to the July FGB, and requested that the SP coordinator and any other members of staff involved, present the proposal to governors, as well as explain the other areas where SP money is being used.

ACTION F2804:02 – SP coordinator and other staff members to attend the next FGB to present the running track proposal, and other areas where SP money is used.

- **Personnel and Finance** – Minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated. The following was highlighted:
 - The school's carry forward is higher than expected - £94000 including £20000 sports premium.
 - The SFVS has been reviewed and the normal processes and benchmarking review carried out. The audit may be formalised for future years. Questions were raised about the high teacher contact ratio and high staff costs. AM explained that this was due to the way the school releases staff covered by Premier Sport and himself. Teaching costs have been high due to a teacher returning from shared parental leave which has meant there has been an additional teacher of staff for the term. Asked whether the staff/pupil ratio is staff time allocated to teaching, he responded yes and that it will disappear next year.
- **Eco and Premises** – Minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated. The following was highlighted:
 - Following a Local Authority site survey, the boilers are to be replaced. Asked whether eco heated boilers could be installed, AM said that the LA are applying for some additional funding to support eco alternatives, but it was likely to be a like for like replacement. JP explained that there were financial constraints in finding alternative solutions with heat pumps costing 3-4 times the cost of gas boilers, but that the modern gas boiler replacement will be more efficient in terms of lower carbon emissions and an estimated 10% saving on running costs.
- **Teaching and Learning** – Minutes of the last meeting had been previously circulated. The following was highlighted:
 - Accessibility - TLC have considered this area as well at EPC, looking particularly at sensory access for example.
 - Discussed the learning over time visits which are due to resume.
 - The assessment data was discussed - there was a mixed picture but the school has a clearer idea of where the gaps are. Interestingly it was noted that there was a clear

difference between the progress of those in school who made more progress than children accessing schooling from home.

- The new curriculum was discussed and there will be a monitoring visit to look at the overall structure.
- The second part of the parent survey will be implemented this summer term.

7. Approval of the SFVS

HC explained he had worked on the document with the Finance Manager. It is largely the same as previous years but includes a new rag rating. The following questions were raised:

A governor asked for reassurance that the financial benchmarking will return to green in the duration of time. AM explained that the particular circumstances of a school can skew the ratings (ie St Albans having low rates as the school is built on church grounds so they don't pay rates), and that yes, he expected the rating to return to green next year.

A governor asked whether the school should be worried that pupil numbers are indicated as yellow/medium risk. AM explained that the projected pupil numbers were starting to rise again. The demographics of Cambridge schools has meant that overall pupils numbers are reduced due to low numbers of visiting academics, however NC expects to reach its PAN for Reception 21/22. It was noted that the school needs to keep an eye on pupil numbers and be aware of where catchment families are choosing to send their children. A governor also noted that this predicted indicator was the prediction for the next 5 years, so it will be important to see how resilient the school finances are.

The SFVS was unanimously approved by the Governors.

8. School Budget Ratification

Proposed Budget 2021/22

- At the pre-budget meeting the schools financial adviser was happy with the draft budget as assembled. The headteacher described the budget as prudent but positive.
- There has been an amendment since the meeting: following a recent LA monitoring visit the school is to buy the school's element 1 primary offer adding an additional £2500 cost.
- The automatic 2% pay rise for teachers may not be used if there is a pay freeze; this money will either go into an additional carry forward, be used as residual money in case of crisis or be spent in curriculum.

A governor asked how risky the income from catering funding lines are. AM explained that this was modelled on income two years ago and that pupil uptake of meals has been high and costs have come down and he is assuming a similar uptake will continue.

A governor asked whether given the curriculum changes costs might rise to support new resources. AM explained that the maths and English budgets had been doubled but the other subject areas had not yet been adjusted – the possible £11000 from the unspent 2% pay rises would be used in this area.

The Chair thanked the HT and Finance Committee chair for their work and noted that whilst it was good to have a healthy reserve, it should not be too high as the money is intended to be spent on learning. Following a formal vote of approval the budget was unanimously approved by Governors.

9. School Development Plan – governor contributions

The Chair explained that she would like governors to consider and contribute to the SDP for the following reasons:

- Following the pandemic it is important that governors have an idea of where the school is and how to get it back on track in a quick, effective and positive way, hence buying into the LA element 1 primary offer. It will be difficult for governors to carry out effective assessments and it will be hard to benchmark the school against previous years, so the primary offer will help with this.
- She has some concerns resulting from the staff survey which she said governors need to pay heed to.
- The recent monitoring visit flagged up some issues, such as the new curriculum and the new Ofsted framework.
- Whilst the SDP is detailed, there isn't a strong sense of vision for the school in moving forward.

A discussion followed about the best way to address these areas, and it was agreed that governors would like the following:

- Support in their link governor roles, which is something that the LA adviser can help with.
- More governor training, to include the new Ofsted framework to better understand how it works and what the expectations are. Training to be organised for later this term or early in the Autumn term.
- To hold a second staff survey (already under development by TLC).
- The chair will look at link staff/link governors and try to assign governors appropriately for September.

ACTION F2804:03 - AM to organise training for governors on the new Ofsted framework with Sue Bowman and to send out the link to the new Ofsted framework for governors to read.

10. Vision Exercise for Governors

AM explained that he would like every stakeholder group (governors, staff, pupils, parents) to articulate in 5-7 words what they think are the most important and critical values that the school should have at its core, which will eventually be incorporated into a vision statement. AM will send out a Google doc to governors initially.

ACTION F2804:04 – AM to send a Google doc to governors for submission of their critical values/principles words.

11. Re-launch and restructuring of the school website

The design format has been agreed by staff and will be launched before the end of May. The new website will have a more concise, slimmed down content and better signposting. The website will be updated and maintained by AM, EF and HB. eSchools will be asked to carry out regular checks to ensure that the website is Ofsted compliant.

12. Headteacher's Verbal Report *AM reported on the following:*

- Increase in the number of cases in the Cambridge area, particularly in schools. School staff cases have risen from 9 cases w/b 12 April to 57 cases w/b 19 April.
- Staff in school are closely following Covid restrictions and guidelines and are continuing to take the necessary precautions.
- At a recent LA Governor briefing, the LA were advising against swimming, residential trips and school sports which contradicts Government guidelines, making it confusing to know which advice to follow.

- Since 8 March 2021 attendance has been 97.96%. Attendance letters to be sent to the 3/4 families where attendance is below 80%.
- Reception numbers for September 2021 are likely to be at 34 (currently 32 offers made).
- I anticipated staff change but recruitment will not be necessary.

A governor asked that if there is a serious risk of bubble closures in taking the children swimming, was it worth the risk? AM responded that it is stated in the swimming pools risk assessment that that swimming remains safe to engage in if the correct protocols are followed and that the Chlorine in the pools kills Coronavirus.

Health and Safety

- H&S visit recently completed by NW. A wooden structure in the Reception play area has been removed.

Safeguarding

- 2 incidents reported to the LA for injuries sustained in the school grounds.
- LA monitoring review on 30 June.
- 4 incidents of CP concerns.
- A new risk assessment for tree climbing has been circulated to all users of the playground (school, after school staff and Scouts) to ensure all parties are adhering to the same RA.
- No bullying incidents this term.
- 1 prejudice related incidents this term.
- No exclusions.

Pupil Premium

- No LAC and 14 pupils eligible for PP and 14 eligible for FSM.
- PP governor monitoring visit carried out. Part of the feedback highlighted that the PP report should contain more detail. EF has been supplied with an exemplar which he will use to re-model the report.

13. Policies for Review: *the following had been previously circulated:*

- Attendance
- EYFS
- SEND
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children
- Educational Visits

14. Any other business

DR proposed that Mandy Swann, a member of the Cambridge University Education Faculty, be voted on to the Governing Body as an Associate Member, with a particular role on the Teaching and Learning Committee. Governors fully supported this proposal.

With no further business, the Chair thanked governors for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

ACTION LOG:

Minute Item no.	Action ref	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
5. Governance Matters	F0710:03	LN/AM to draft a letter to parents advertising the co-opted governor vacancies	LN/AM	Oct 2020 Mar 2021 Jun 2021	Ongoing
6. Governance 2021	F0710:04	Members to send written confirmation to the Clerk that they have read the Governor Code of Practice, KCSIE and Safeguarding and CP Policy.	HB	Oct 2020 Mar 2021 Jun 2021	Ongoing
6. Reports from Committees	F0212:02	TLC to analyse the results of the parent/carer survey and formulate a response to parents for delivery before the end of term.	KF	Jan 2021 Mar 2021 Jun 2021	Ongoing
5. Instrument of Government	F2804:01	AM to enquire if any members of staff would like to join the governing body	AM	Jun 2021	Open
6. Reports from Committees	F2804:02	SP coordinator and other staff members to attend the next FGB to present the running track proposal, and other areas where SP money is used.	AM	Jun 2021	Open
9. SDP	F2804:03	AM to organise training for governors on the new Ofsted framework with Sue Bowman and to send out the link to the new Ofsted framework for governors to read.	AM	Jun 2021	Open
10. Vision exercise	F2804:04	AM to send a Google doc to governors for submission of their critical value words.	AM	Jun 2021	Open

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____