



Newnham Croft Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Wednesday 5 July 2023 at 6pm at school

Governors present: Dani Redhead (Chair–DR); Edward Ferguson (Head–EF); Matt Day (MD); Hugh Clough (HC); Jason Palmer (*JP Associate Member*); Simon Hill (SH); Keren Sayir-Uziyel (KSU); Nick Whitehead (NW); David Carmona (DC); Eleanor Toye Scott (ETS); Yudan Ren (YR); Annie Hanekom (AH *to item 12*)

Also in attendance: Helen Bracey (Clerk - HB);

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members. Apologies were received from Ave Wrigley (AW) and Katy Holliday (KH). Lucy Nethsingha (LN) did not attend.

2. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

3. Review and acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023

The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising and review of actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023

- F0802:01 – Closed
- F2604:01 – Closed
- F2604:02 – Closed. The Chair reminded governors to submit any outstanding visit reports. She thanked them all for conducting the visits over the year. One governor asked whether governors' had found evidence of teacher's reporting on skills progression. The HT responded that this is still something that needs to be fully embedded.
- F2604:03 - Ongoing

6. Reports from Committees

- **Teaching and Learning** (minutes previously circulated) – the Committee discussed an issue with the handwriting scheme as raised by a parent. The provider has been unable to resolve the technical glitch but the school has found a solution around the problem. Both the HT and Chair of TLC have corresponded with the parent. A governor asked whether the scheme covers left handed writing, which the HT was unsure about. Another governor asked if there is guidance for children to hold pens correctly. The HT confirmed there is and it is taught.
- **Personnel and Finance** (minutes previously circulated) – The Chair reported that a recommendation from the LA is that all governors should have up to date knowledge of the

school's financial situation. The monthly finance papers will be circulated to all governors and loaded on to the Drive.

- **Eco and Premises** (minutes previously circulated) – Most targets from the SDP have been achieved. Some remaining issues are due to delays from contractors or the County ie the asbestos survey and obtaining quotes for roof repairs. Some health and safety requirements for a new child starting in Reception are being installed around the school. The Chair of the EPC and associate member are going to meet to discuss a school decarbonisation plan and grants for green projects. From September, the Eco Committee will contribute ideas too. Future H&S walkabouts have been scheduled for the start of each term rather than the end.

ACTION F0507:01 - The monthly finance papers will be circulated to all governors and loaded on to the Drive.

7. Headteacher's Written Report (previously circulated)

The following written questions had been raised following early circulation of the report:

Teacher absence is very low, which is great. What do you think has helped staff to take less sick leave? I think the positive, more settled environment has been more motivating - it has allowed the teachers to focus on their practice and delivery, meaning their mental health is better than previously.

In the staffing structure, a TA supports Year 5 on Thursday and Friday together with another TA, but doesn't appear on other days. Does she work other days for the school and if so, in what capacity? The TA works Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, supporting Y5 on Mon/Tues and fulfilling her EAL role on Wed mornings. In the afternoons, she covers classes to give subject leader release time across the year groups.

In what ways is writing in Year 4 not consistently up to standard and how many children does this affect? What support is proposed for these children, the class and the teacher? My apologies. I should have been more precise with my description. I have since amended the report (with strikethrough of original phrasing). What AP and KH observed was that CK (y4 teacher) was not consistently applying the 3-phase writing structure that had been demonstrated by AP in a training session in the spring term. This was in contrast to the evidence of this seen in the Y3 books.

If a teacher pay award of 6.5% is awarded and not fully funded by the government, what impact will this have on the school finances next year? Very roughly speaking, each 1% increase for teachers equates to £5000. With this in mind, if the full 6.5% is awarded but unfunded, the school will have to fund an extra £22,500. As we have just appointed an ECT, this would be affordable, although removing a lot of our cushion going forward. I have contacted LS (finance officer) to verify this approximation.

Prior to moving to MyConcern, how many concerns were typically being logged? Is the 19 incidents for 15 children typical, or an increase/decrease compared to the previous system? Logging of concerns has increased since moving to MyConcern. I would expect this trend to continue as staff become more familiar with it. Due to the ease of use, it offers the possibility of recording much more of the children's 'journey' than the paper system.

Where would you say we are with our cultural capital offering following the work done this year, and what can governors do to support the monitoring of this objective going forward? The

cultural capital element of our provision has improved over the previous year. The curriculum is more diverse (although this is still an area we are keen to keep developing).

We have had visitors who have shared their expertise (in coding, for example), the local MP leading a Q&A assembly, a representative from the Houses of Parliament explaining the ins and outs of democracy, assemblies about philosophy and thinking, as well as the usual culture capital that is embedded in PSHE, the current Healthy Me topics and access for all pupils to the school council.

This continues to be an area to keep our focus on. There are already two trips booked in the autumn term for KS2 classes, and we need to make more effort to use the venues and resources available in Cambridge.

What is the explanation for the relatively high level of absence amongst support staff (10%)?

This is mainly due to the member of kitchen staff who has been on long term sickness leave since September.

What is the Kapow scheme? Kapow is a company that produce a variety of subject scheme of works that we have been looking into. This is due to dissatisfaction with the scheme we have based our Geography on and the desire to find the best possible scheme to support the teachers to deliver clear progression in a subject throughout the year groups.

What is the ECT-based CPD? How does this relate to the standard of writing in Y4? This is provided by the ECT Appointed Body, which is a LA group that supports ECT development, county wide

What is the recruitment plan if the interview on the 26th isn't successful? Recruitment has been successful! The plan was to look at agency teachers for the autumn to give us more time. Luckily, this is no longer needed.

Can you expand at all on the threatening behaviour to parent and child at their home incidents (within the obvious constraints)? A child disclosed to an adult in school that they had had police at their house the evening before. The school adult came and spoke to me about it and recorded the incident on MyConcern. I called the child's parent and they explained more fully the situation, including outlining how they had kept the child safe by sending them to their neighbour's, chaperoned by an older sibling. The parent was able to reassure me that this was an isolated situation that had a backstory and that they were not worried it would re-occur. We have been in regular contact since then and there has been nothing more to report.

Questions raised during the meeting:

A governor enquired what the complaints regarding Y1/2 class allocation had been about? The HT responded they had mostly been about friendships and some parental anxiety. He tried to allay parental anxiety by explaining the process of and decisions made over class allocation, explaining that it was discussed over two teacher meetings. Governors acknowledged that it was good to know the process and that due diligence is given to this issue.

Related to the Safeguarding Audit, a governor asked about Prevent training. The HT said it is now possible for anybody to do Prevent training on the Government website, but he will be covering it at the staff/governor training on 1 September. Some TA's accessed a National College Prevent course on the teacher strike day. He will share the link for the Government website training. A governor suggested the Audit should go to individual committees to discuss relevant areas.

ACTION F0507:02 - Chair to share Prevent link.

The school has decided to buy into the local authority School Improvement Service Primary Offer for another year.

A governor raised his view that the HT report should be presented verbally at FGB meetings. He felt that circulating it as a written report deprecated the whole process, saying it is the major foundation and communication between the HT and governors. Other governors didn't feel this was the case, and in fact preferred having the report circulated early, with one governor saying she read the report before and after FGB meetings, and found it useful to send questions to the HT following a meeting.

The following was also reported:

Safeguarding

- **Safeguarding Audit:** The auditor was overall positive about the school's safeguarding, whilst highlighting a few areas to develop - for example, the level of concern we record as a school and HT's understanding of H&S (though he is very well supported by the Site Manager). Have introduced an 'any and all' reporting of concerns to the end of the term.
- There have been 19 incidents recorded on MyConcern since February, involving 15 different children.
- One of these revolved around concerns we have for the level of parental support in place. A child had medical needs that the school was not made aware of. Upon hearing about it, the concern was recorded and the parent asked to ensure that the required medication was in school as soon as possible.
- 2 concerns involved threatening behaviour to parent and child at their home. The school was informed and the concern recorded
- No incidents of Child Protection
- No Looked After Children.
- No prejudice related incidents.

Attendance

- 95.3% for the term to date.

Finance

- Due to the LA transferring over to a new school budget system, the HT and finance have had limited access to the budget. However, working from previous records, tabs are being kept on spending.
- Two big question marks are over the teacher pay award (which has been recommended for 6.5% - the budget included 3%) and whether it is fully funded by the DfE and where the new teacher is on the pay scale.

SEND

- The SEND register has been updated. All IEPs are in place and interventions established.

Pupil Premium

- 23 pupil premium children on roll. Our ongoing provision continues as before - 1:1 tutoring for those most in need, funding of clubs, music lessons, trips, swimming, residentials and after school activities.

Sports Premium

See P&F minutes.

7. Governor Impact Review and Actions

This document is for reflecting on what has been done and governors' impact on the education provision for the school. The final document goes on to the school website. Governors were asked to review the document and send comments to the Chair.

A governor asked if the balance between strategic and operational divisions is right. The HT responded that where the line is drawn is not always clear but that the strategic side is very good and he is fine with balance at the moment.

8. Governor Roles and Meeting Dates for 2023/24

The Chair discussed the importance of succession planning, for example sub-committee chairs who have been in post for a while might step down; members might prefer to move to a new committee and link governors may like to change subject. A document was circulated for members to stipulate areas of interest, or a preference to remain where they are. The role of FGB Chair will be renewed in December to members were asked to think about whether they would like to take up this post. The challenge for the next Chair will be to continue effectiveness. The current Chair has been well-supported by the LA to prepare for the anticipated Ofsted visit, so would be willing to be co-opted if the school has not had the inspection before the end of her tenure and governors felt that was in the best interests of the school.

Future meeting dates will be circulated shortly.

9. Training Updates

The Chair highlighted the importance of training for effective governance, noting in particular Governor Hub and The Key and urged those governors that had not yet taken advantage of this resource to speak to her or the deputy chair if they are having trouble logging on. Safeguarding and Ofsted training are vital. The document circulated shows areas highlighted in yellow for individual governor priorities, and those areas that have not been covered by any governor and should be prioritised, in particular developing the school vision, which was highlighted at the recent non-staff governor meeting.

ACTION F0507:03 – Chair to share the email on CC updates from Jon Lewis.

10. Governor Monitoring Visits

The Chair requested governors to upload any outstanding papers to the Drive and reminded committee Chairs to include any outstanding visits from 2022/23 to the first committee meetings of next year. Governors were asked, going forward, to ensure reports are submitted as soon as possible after a visit, and ideally within a week, so that feedback to staff and governors via the appropriate committees can occur in a timely fashion.

Geography – the school is changing to a new scheme – Kapow – which the teacher lead says is primarily activity and project based. He hopes that the new scheme will raise the profile of this subject and is closer to the curriculum criteria.

EAL – the EAL teaching assistant lead illustrated how she assesses the needs of EAL children and the platform she uses with them. The Governor met some of the children she works with, who seemed to enjoy their time with her.

ACTION F0507:04 – The Chair requested governors to upload any outstanding papers to the Drive.

11. Parent Survey

- Historic data (starting from 2016) is included in the document, to illustrate the trajectory the school is on.
- 101 respondents this year.
- Overall the situation is more positive.
- This is the first year that 100% of respondents said the school is well led and managed – thank you to the HT and SLT.
- The results are a good record of endorsement for the enormous amount of work over the year.
- Behaviour and communication have improved.
- 11 respondents said their child is being bullied, but 55% said the school is dealing with it well.

A governor asked the HT if he was aware of the 11 bullying cases? He responded that apart from one case in particular, he was not aware. He has had conversations with some parents about individual cases and the dynamics in certain classes. The governor noted that a question asking ‘Did you raise it?’ should be added, noting that if it is not raised, it can’t be dealt with. The HT also noted that he will ask parents to speak to the school rather than other parents. Teachers are available outside three mornings per week from 8.35am for parents to talk to them.

A governor asked if bullying is logged on MyConcern. The HT responded that it is currently not, however there is an option to do this.

A governor enquired whether there might be an opportunity to run an event for parents on behaviour management – to talk about the school’s approach and how to manage difficult situations. It would also be an opportunity for the school to reiterate the procedure for reporting an incident (ie 1 teacher/2 headteacher/3 governor). The HT thought this a good idea and proposed it could be incorporated with the Online Safety workshop for parents.

A member asked how governors can support leadership with complaints. Suggested ideas are for governors to have a presence at parent/teacher events. It was noted that all governors should be clear on how to manage complaints if approached individually (ie to encourage the complainant to raise it with the teacher first if they have not, then the headteacher and only then to direct it to the Chair).

12. Scheme of Delegation

The document had been previously circulated and governors were encouraged to read through the main responsibilities for governors.

13. School Self Evaluation and Development Plan (SEF)

The document had been previously circulated. The SEF is now a more manageable document and is used to inform the SDP (areas for development) for next year; it is continuously updated. The document is shared with SLT, teachers then staff. The Governor Grab Bag contains the SEF.

14. Grade Descriptors

This document had been previously circulated.

The Chair drew governors’ attention to the minutes from the non-staff governor meeting (also circulated) and suggested it might be useful for the HT to address the elements governors feel they

are lacking evidence for in subsequent meetings e.g. whether the school is meeting its Prevent duties.

15. Governor 20 Questions

This document had been previously circulated.

The Chair highlighted some of the questions, in particular the 5 year vision, saying it would be useful to have a five year HT vision and for governors to know more about the staff performance management system.

16. Policies for Review:

Charging and Remissions – this policy was approved by the majority.

RSE – this policy was approved by the majority.

The following had been previously circulated for information only:

- Lone Working
- SEND
- Lettings
- Charging and Remissions
- Management of Sickness Absence

15. Any other business

Owlstone appeal – The deadline for objections is 27 July 2023. The Chair noted that options of writing a letter of objection, or applying for Rule 6 status, which would give the school the opportunity to be an active participant in the enquiry. The main concern for the school is pollution (noise and particulate). A member of the school community with a level of understanding of the effects of pollution has offered to represent the school.

A governor felt that the school shouldn't focus on the key issues (pollution) and he said some parents are upset that some parents, who are not in favour of the development, are not representative of the whole parent body. Another member noted the importance of understanding Rule 6 properly. He himself has some expertise in this area and would be well placed to represent the school. Another governor said she wasn't clear that within the governing body whether it is talking about mitigating or stopping the proposal at all costs. A member said the role of governors is to consider the children and their welfare.

The Chair proposed applying immediately for Rule 6, and to update the objection to make it more specific. Members voted in the majority with two abstentions. The Chair will keep members updated.

Chair 360 degree review – Following on from the 20 Questions work the governors did, the Vice Chair circulated a form from The Key for each governor to complete, evaluating the Chair's effectiveness and asked for forms to be returned to him.

Action F0507:05: Report on Chair's 360 to be brought to the next FGB

With there being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.10pm.

ACTION LOG:

Minute Item no.	Action ref	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
14. Policies for review	F2604:03	Responding to Critical Incidents to be reviewed at the next PFC meeting, with the Chair of the EPC at attend	HC/JG	June 2023 Sep 2023	Ongoing
6. Reports from Committees	F0507:01	The monthly finance papers will be circulated to all governors and also loaded on to the Drive.	LS	Sep 2023	Open
7. HT report	F0507:02	Chair to share Prevent link	DR	July 2023	Open
9. Training updates	F0507:03	Chair to share the email on CC updates from Jon Lewis.	DR	July 2023	Open
10. Governor monitoring visits	F0507:04	The Chair requested governors to upload any outstanding papers to the Drive.	Govs	July 2023	Open
15. AOB	F0507:05	Report on Chair's 360 to be brought to the next FGB	Govs	Sep 2023	Open

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____