



Newnham Croft Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Wednesday 24 March 2024 at 6pm at school

Governors present: Dani Redhead (Chair–DR); Edward Ferguson (Head–EF); Matt Day (MD); Hugh Clough (HC) *from item 10*; Simon Hill (SH); Eleanor Toye Scott (ETS) Emma Smith (ES); Katy Holliday (KH); Razia Mangera (RM); Keren Sayir-Uziyel (KSU); Annie Hanekom (AH); Jason Gellis (JG); Yudan Ren (YR) *from item 10*

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

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members. Apologies received from NW and AW. 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 14 February 2024

4. Matters arising and review of actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2024

- F0612:03 – Ongoing
- F1402:01 – Closed
- F1402:02 – Ongoing
- F1402:03 – Closed

5. Reports from Committees

- **Teaching and Learning** (minutes previously circulated) – No comments were raised.
- **Personnel and Finance** (minutes previously circulated) – No comments were raised.
- **Eco and Premises** (minutes previously circulated) – The garden designer’s ideas for the front garden was discussed and will be presented to the children to get their vote.

6. Governance

- Governors agreed to reduce all committee meetings to 4 each year. FGB meetings will remain at 5.
- Members were reminded to book in monitoring visits. KSU will be stepping down at the end of the summer term; ETS will take over SEND monitoring; MD will take over English and website monitoring; ES will take over art and design.
- MD will attend cyber security training.
- All Governors have attended Getting Ofsted Ready training. Governors were encouraged to read through document FGB07b. Training updates were received from governors who had

attended the Annual Conference, Cambridge Chairs Network and training on Handling Allegations, Ofsted and New Inspection Framework and Safer Recruitment.

- Governors will be able to access the same level of CC training support through 2024/25.

Governors had questions around SEND monitoring. The SEND governor reported that SEND support is in a much better place than it has been for a long while, with more consistent and comprehensive coverage and more children have been placed on the SEND register.

How is the SEND budget allocated? There are clear stipulations on the expectations of support for children with an EHCP, who generally have a high level of need. Other children who need support are identified and help is put in place, though no money is attached to such children. It can be hard to explain to families that support is given that doesn't generally involve spending lots of money.

Do children on the SEND register have a formal support plan? SEND children do have a support plan. In addition, those with lower needs are also supported but it is not as explicit. The communication channels with teaching staff to discuss children's needs has much improved, which is due largely to having a SENCo working 3 days per week. She also holds SEN surgeries where staff can talk to her.

In terms of reassuring parents, where is the disconnect?

A governor said that parents are aware that schools are underfunded but maybe have a frustration about the way the funding is distributed and the lack of resources, which drives parental anxiety. From the staff perspective, the school might see who needs support, but they may not have the advocacy of parents behind them.

Is there anything the school would like to do but are not able to because of finance/resource constraints? Raising LSA salaries would be a start, as human expertise, particularly at LSA level, is what the school needs more of.

The SEND monitoring governor was thanked for her leadership in this area.

- With regard to pupil voice, governors were reminded to ask children some questions from the suggested list on page 9 of the monitoring visits form such as, Do you enjoy this subject? or Which piece of work are you most proud of? Ideally, children should be selected randomly from the register, and should not be grilled on a subject!
- Skills audit – members were encouraged to complete the skills audit if they haven't already done so. The main premise is for each member to write down what skills they might have that aren't already used yet.
- The Chair will be looking at succession planning, especially in light of governors who will be leaving at the end of the summer term.

ACTION F2403:01 – MD to present skills audit at the next meeting.

7. Policies for Review:

Instrument of Government – approved.

8. Headteacher's Written Report (previously circulated)

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

Can you clarify how the reduced PAN will work throughout the school before the first wave works through the school given the size of some classes in KS2? How do we expect the deficit to work out in subsequent years once the initial adjustment with the reduced teacher headcount is complete?

I am planning to address this at the FGB as it is complicated. Personally, it seems to me that once the PAN reduction has run all the way through the school, we will have a larger loss to income than we will save on salaries. Roughly, the figures are that the PAN reduction, from 2030, will cost us £120,000 per year and our salary savings from losing a class are only £70,000. As you can see, that doesn't seem to add up. I emailed Ray Byford with these figures but his response, although reassuring, was vague and didn't address my concerns in detail. He is on holiday for the next week. This is definitely an area we will need to think carefully about as we go forward. As I indicated, it will be discussed in more detail at the FGB.

On the first page, SLT is described as the Head, two Deputy Heads and SENCO. There is no mention of the finance manager. I thought it had been agreed that the previous finance manager would be part of SLT but only attend meetings that were relevant or required a vote. Is this still the case now that the new Finance Manager is in the role? This is still the case, she is a member of the SLT, but only attends when needed.

It is great to see where you have described the impact of CPD e.g. for First Class at Number. Has there been any impact in school of other training e.g. the ADHD training that and LTS went on? The training has increased SG's understanding of ADHD. With the Subject briefings, the impact is felt through increased awareness of current pedagogy, discussions with leaders from other settings and then this information being shared with the relevant staff. Often the training is helpful for highlighting what we are already doing well and that our provision and support is good.

I appreciate writing assessments have become more stringent, but is it a concern that 50% of the Year 6 cohort are at 'working towards'? It is a concern and a lot of support is in place to try and accelerate their progress. The cohort have high SEN, including several children with dyslexia. Handwriting is also an issue and is decisive for some being able to get the standard. As usual, writing will be a significant focus for the class after SATS week (13th-17th May).

For the example pupil progress form, were there any pupil premium or SEND children in this class? Pupil Premium and SEND are referred to in the main section (PP are also flagged in the relevant box). Teachers use the form in different ways. In this case, all the children were talked about and support options looked at in the 'Any concerns' section. Other teachers use all the boxes. PP and SEND are always looked at, whichever method teachers use to record. Thank you for flagging up the name and the location on the Pupil Progress form which I have blanked out. I am comfortable that the rest is anonymous enough for GDPR requirements.

- MyConcern continues to be used effectively. No obvious patterns emerging. Families of higher concern continue to be closely monitored and supported.
- No Prevent reports made.
- 2 prejudice related incidents have been reported.
- No incidents of Child Protection.
- No Looked After Children.

Attendance

- 95.54% for the term to date.

Finance

- The LA financial adviser met with the HT and Finance Manager to set the 2024/25 budget.

SEND

- The SEND register has 20 children on the register.

Pupil Premium

- 20 pupil premium children on roll. The SENCo continues to work with PP children on Tuesdays, often in groups. In one session, she supports children in class. For morning and afternoon sessions, she runs groups based on needs - both social and academic.
- PP meetings took place at the end of the Autumn term and included information from the assessments. The teachers, SENCo and HT reviewed provision and support for each child.

Sports Premium

All funding to date has been spent.

10. School Budget Ratification

The HT outlined his concern about the loss of income that will be incurred when KS2 classes start reducing their PAN to 30, which will result in an eventual loss of £120k. He has spoken to the school Financial Advisor who has assured him it will be okay, but he has set up another discussion with him to clarify the matter further. If possible, the school will look to over-admit in KS2, but this would only be possible with in-catchment children. The worst case scenario will be the loss of some LSAs in order to balance the budget.

A governor asked how many over-admitted children would be needed to cover this deficit? 12 children would cover it, though a governor pointed out that rather than assume the school could fill with over-admitting, a robust budget needs to be set.

The rationale behind the budget:

The initial budget set had a cushion of £3k. Two alternative budget scenarios were prepared – one cutting curriculum areas, the other staff redundancy. Redundancy would be a last resort, but savings were made from the library budget (£4k), supply (£1.5k) and all curriculum subjects. Lettings income is conservative and will hopefully be increased by £7/8k.

A governor asked if lettings income is higher than expected, would it be given to the library, or kept as carry forward? It would be used for c/f; the library has been very well stocked during 23/24.

Governors were reminded that this year was always going to be the worst in the process, with the loss of 8 children but still four KS1 classes. Despite the loss in income, the LA had not been happy with the KS1 provision, so a change in class structure had been necessary.

Governors were asked to vote on whether the budget presented is a reasonable one, which will run at a deficit - the budget was supported unanimously.

The HT and FM were thanked for their work on achieving the budget as it stands.

11. Staff Wellbeing Survey

The Chair presented the findings, which had been previously circulated. There were 22 respondents. She said that the outcome was significantly more positive, noting that wellbeing measures are still well above those in a recent TES survey, and that this is reassuring given the staff have been asked to do such a lot, following the LA review. She also thanked the HT and leadership team for running a happy ship. The governor who conducted the survey was also thanked for her discussions with staff. Highlights noted were:

- Compared to the TES survey where only 20% said their workload was manageable, while our result is 55% for teachers and 68% for all NC staff (2 members disagreed, 1 member doesn't have enough time).
- The school culture is positive overall; 2 members said they were worried about being treated fairly.
- 1 member of staff is negative overall, yet says they are proud to be a member of staff.

- School development is very positive.
- The face to face staff survey was generally constructive and staff engaged. There was consistent recognition of the HT.

The HT said he would like to be able to discuss the concerns of the member of staff who was generally negative. In order not to expose who that person is, it was suggested that he sends out a general message to staff about the survey, and offer an opportunity for anyone to come and talk to him.

ACTION F2403:02 – HT to send a message to staff in response to the staff survey

12. Pupil Survey

The survey response was generally positive. The following was highlighted:

- One question highlighted was the 92% response that children feel able to talk to adults. This drops slightly in KS2 – around 10/11 children. The SENCo’s open sessions have been really helpful – some children want to drop in every week!
- Not enough challenge – next year’s SDP will include a more explicit objective of challenge across all subjects

A governor asked if there is a way that children can ask a question without speaking to an adult?

Yes, there is a box for placing questions in, and some classes have a worry box.

The Chair thanked all staff that most children felt happy in school.

13. SDP 2024-25

A couple of areas still to be covered are presentation; taking risks and writing for purpose. Writing in the newsletter is a great example of writing for purpose.

14. Any other business

With there being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.59 pm.

ACTION LOG:

Minute Item no.	Action ref	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
18. AOB	F0612:03	EPC to explore funding applications for a school decarbonisation plan.	JG/EF	Jan 2024	Ongoing
6. Reports from Committees	F1402:02	HT/NW to investigate possible volunteers to take on the management of the Croft Plot	HT/NW	June 2024	Ongoing
5. Reports from Committees	F2403:01	MD to present skills audit at the next meeting.	MD	July 2024	Open
11. Staff wellbeing survey	F2403:02	HT to send a message to staff in response to the staff survey	HT	Jun2 24	Open

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____