



Newnham Croft Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Wednesday 1 December 2021 at 6pm via Zoom

Governors present: Dani Redhead (Chair – DR); Andy Matthews (Headteacher – AM); Lucy Nethsingha (LN - *to item 10*); Edward Ferguson (EF); Shantha Baalham (SB); Hugh Clough (HC); Kate Fry (KF - *to item 7*); Keren Sayir-Uziyel (KSU); Jason Palmer (JP); Simon Hill (SH); Matt Day (MD); Eleanor Toye Scott (ETS); David Carmona (DC); Aleks Jach (AJ)

Also in attendance: Helen Bracey (Clerk - HB)

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members. There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

Additional item – the Chair reported that LN was stepping down as Vice-Chair due to her heavy work commitments; MD has offered to replace her. DR proposed MD, EF seconded and all were in favour of the proposal. LN has agreed to mentor MD together with SB.

3. Review and acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2021

JP highlighted an inaccuracy on page 3 under agenda item 8. Second paragraph, the wording of the last line should read ‘...the windows do not need to be opened as far’. Members also agreed that the first paragraph on page 5 should be made a confidential minute. With these amendments recorded, the minutes were accepted as a true record, to be signed in due course by the Chair.

4. Matters arising and review of actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2021

- F0610:01 – Closed
- F0610:02 – Ongoing
- F0610:03 – Ongoing
- F0610:04 – Ongoing

The Chair recommended that tighter deadlines for actions are put in place where possible, to help move the work of the governing body forward.

5. Governance documents 2021/22

EPC Terms of Reference – with an amendment to the wording to item 7.7 to be changed to ‘Review and monitor...’ rather than ‘Create and review...’, the ToR was adopted.

PFC Terms of Reference – the annexe referred to in the document is missing; the ToR was adopted subject to the document being added.

TLC Terms of Reference – adopted with no amendments.

6. Reports from Committees

- **Eco and Premises** – A request was made for a governor to volunteer for a new link gardening volunteer governor role – DC offered to take the role. The problem with the malfunctioning boiler in the Community Room was highlighted.
- **Personnel and Finance** – A question was raised about the uptake of school meals which had dipped for a while but is now high.
- **Teaching and Learning** – As the SDP is so big, especially the curriculum items, the Committee had decided to prioritise key points for discussion.

8. Headteacher's Written Report and Key Facts (previously circulated)

The following points/questions were raised:

A governor enquired whether the school was expecting new Covid guidance from the LA. AM responded that new measures introduced have been established.

A governor asked whether the outgoing Year 4 teacher has been asked if he would like an exit interview. AM said that EPM have advised him that an exit interview is optional and is carried out by the line manager. EF said he would ask the teacher if he would like an exit interview and extend the offer for a governor to attend.

A governor asked what the term of the temporary contract for the teacher vacancy will be. AM said it would be to the end of the school year with the option to extend it for another year. A governor noted that the advert did not state that the position is temporary. AM said the candidates had been informed. A governor suggested that AM might need to take advice from EPM, because if it is not clear that the contract is fixed term it could be seen to be misleading.

A governor asked for clarity on the number of applicants for the Year 4 job. AM said that two had been received.

In relation to CPD, a governor asked how many teachers so far had visited other schools. AM responded that 2 visits had been made; one school visit to look at phonic screening had been delayed due to Covid.

A governor enquired if there was any training on the national curriculum or curriculum construction. AM replied that the national curriculum 'is what it is' and can be accessed and read from the web, but regarding curriculum construction, he is being guided by staff's experience of what currently works well and the schools processes for curriculum construction are being supported by the LA Advisers. EF reported that following the most recent LA Maths visit, the feedback was positive with noticeable improvements having been made to displays showing reasoning and elements of reasoning. He said that the Advisor has yet to recommend a model school that has all the elements that she has recommended.

A governor noted that the Headteacher has some big targets following his HTPM, but he doesn't get a sense of the timeline. He asked what the project plan is and whether it was possible to have something to show that it is on target. AM responded that there are 2 elements: the LA plan in place which will feed into the SDP and when the school self-evaluation tool (SEF) is introduced, SEF will be populated with feedback from classroom visits, governor monitoring and feedback from the Advisors. Some will look good, but others may need slightly more time to get right.

In terms of Ofsted grading, a governor asked what rating the school was aiming for, and whether staff have some sense of what the next Ofsted grade might be. AM responded that the school is aiming for a

confident good. The school would need to be much further down the line than where it is at the moment to gain an outstanding. If the curriculum is not seen to be robust and well sequenced the grade could go down. He also reported that a recent Ofsted briefing had made clear that a lot of demand will be placed on middle/subject leaders to present very succinctly and for it to match what inspectors see in books and feedback from children.

A governor added that the assessment from the school Advisor is that the school would not currently attain good, so some significant work is required. It is an absolute priority for the Governing body to ensure that it is comfortable and confident that the school is good. The Chair noted that non-staff governors had met earlier in the week and unanimously supported the actions recommended in the Leadership & Monitoring review from the LA dated 8th October 2021 (minutes of meeting attached).

AM said that a school who had recently been visited by Ofsted had shared questions that governors were asked. He will forward this document to the FGB.

The Maths link governor reported that she had accompanied the Maths Advisor on a recent monitoring visit. She recommended it as a very useful experience which had given her an understanding of the Advisor's thought processes and expectations. The Advisor is to share the timetable of visits and this will be circulated to the FGB.

Action F0112:01 – AM to forward Ofsted governor questions to the FGB

Action F0112:02 – DR/AM to circulate the timetable of Advisor monitoring visits to the FGB

In relation to the Health & Safety report, a governor asked for more specific information. AM responded that a child had tripped in the Reception play area resulting in an injury that required stitches.

A governor enquired when the SEF would be available. AM said it would be circulated to the next FGB meeting.

Health and Safety

- 1 accident in school since September requiring hospital treatment, this was reported to the Local Authority.
- Work has started against the actions arising from the Health and Safety Audit and these have been reported to the EPC.
- First Aid and pupil health information have been updated.

Pupil Premium

- Currently no Looked After Children (LAC).
- 13 pupils eligible for Pupil Premium.
- 13 children currently eligible for Free School Meals.

Safeguarding

- 2 incidents of Child Protection concerns since September.
- No LAC.
- No exclusions.

8. School Development Plan 2021/22

- Curriculum section – relatively long and discussed by TLC.

- Leadership, safeguarding and governance sections were not discussed at TLC. AM suggested that FGB would be a good forum for asking questions about the targets in these sections not covered by Committees.
- It was noted that the Governance section was discussed in detail at the recent non-staff Governor meeting. DR will feed back to AM.

A governor enquired whether the Governance section has been rewritten in context with the plan from the Advisor. AM said it has been written in isolation, but leadership and management has a lot of actions. DR reported that this had also been discussed at the non-staff governor meeting and that governors all broadly agreed the actions and are working towards them. Asked whether it is on the SDP directly, AM responded that he didn't think there is anything from the LA plan that isn't in the SDP. DR suggested that she and AM meet to look at both documents to tighten up the SDP in line with the Governance report.

Action F0112:03 – DR & AM to meet to look at both the LA plan and SDP to tighten up the SDP in line with the Governance report.

Monitoring visits: Governors are advised to look through the curriculum section of the SDP then during a monitoring visit should target questions to subject leaders about these objectives, ie where they are with the curriculum, skills progression and sequencing of topics.

Governor Monitoring Policy - The Chair screen shared the draft Policy, which had been previously discussed by Governors. The policy was approved unanimously (minus the appendices) on the understanding that it will continue to be edited and will be reviewed annually.

A Governor commented that he struggles with the format of the SDP and finds it hard to use as a strategic document. Another Governor agreed that it is cumbersome. Members agreed that it would be useful to see other examples of SDPs.

Action F0112:04 – AM to forward other examples of SDPs to Governors.

10. Proposed reduction of school PAN

A decision on this needs to be made in early Spring; the LA will want to publish their Admissions documents for 2022/23 next summer. The consultation is between Governors, staff and the LA.

A Governor asked how the consultation with teachers and staff took place. AM responded that it was discussed in a staff meeting and was met with universal approval.

A Governor enquired about the discrepancy of learning/inequalities of provision, saying it hadn't been brought to the attention of Governors before now. AM said it had been raised at TLC where the importance of having consistency between classes is critical with the new Ofsted framework.

A Governor suggested that Parent Governors could have an informal talk with parents/new parents considering Newnham Croft, to ask what is important for them – a large class size, or a smaller mixed year group. In the past, the school considered smaller class sizes in KS1 to be more desirable.

EF spoke of the pressures on staff following the recommendation from the Advisor that all Year 1 children across the three classes must have exactly the same experience and opportunity. The unrealistic nature of this recommendation is being felt by Year 1 staff.

Another Governor said he would like to see the numbers from the school financial advisor for the new model. This being the case, it was agreed that a detailed analysis go to the next PFC meeting before voting formally on the proposal at the next FGB.

Action F0112:05 – Detailed analysis of new model to go the PFC for discussion before voting formally on the proposal at the next FGB.

11. Proposed development at Queen's College Owlstone Road site

The link and feedback from local resident groups had been previously circulated. AM reported that he had met with the Bursar to raise his concerns about the impact of the development in the school, during and after construction. The following was discussed with the Bursar:

- The final detailed plans will be available end of February.
- If the College can't develop the site, they may consider selling it.
- Suggested that the Bursar be invited to a FGB or EPC meeting.
- Concerns raised included: noise, safeguarding, access of vehicles, the effect on the already waterlogged school field, asbestos removal.

A governor raised his concerns about the development, saying there could be serious issues for the school and he urged governors to think about the possible consequences. He warned the school to be wary of inducements the developer might offer. AM noted that he had felt the Bursar had taken some of his concerns seriously. Another governor said that the school stance is independent of whatever the proposals are, suggesting the school make representation by letter, stating its concerns, which would be fed into the planning process. Governors agreed that a Governor meeting with the College should be arranged.

Action F0112:06 – AM to arrange a meeting with the Bursar of Queen's College to discuss the proposed Owlstone Croft development.

13. Proposed field perimeter track

AM reported that only 1 contractor has so far provided a quote. Going forward, if other contractors can be found, they will be asked to respond to the toxicity concern of materials used, and to quote for an alternative method. He was reminded that the proposal cannot be considered without 3 like for like quotes. Another suggestion for the SP spend could be on a climbing wall. It was agreed that this matter return to EPC who need to be provided with a detailed outline of different options for the SP spend of money, including drainage of the field. Another governor suggested that the detailed outline be forwarded to all Governors and all Governors be invited to attend the EPC meeting.

Action F0112:07 – AM to send a detailed outline of the different options for the SP spend of money, to be put on to the next EPC agenda. The outline to be forwarded to the FGB and an invitation to the EPC be sent to all members.

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

- Governor Induction: approved unanimously.
- Governor Monitoring: as minuted above; approved unanimously.

14. Any other business

The Chair recommended putting in place mentoring for new Governors.

SB to mentor MD; HC to mentor MD on financial issues; ETS to talk with KF re TLC Committee; JP to talk to DC in relation to EPC.

Regarding rainwater harvesting, JP reported that the quote received from Stormwater was very expensive (£23 000-26 000). Governors agreed not to pursue the proposal.

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

The meeting closed at 8.03pm.

ACTION LOG:

Action ref	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
F0610:02	Sue Bowman to arrange subject link monitoring training for Governors.	SB/AM	Dec 2021	Ongoing
F0610:03	Historical data illustrating the migration of children from Reception to Year 6 to be circulated to governors.	AM	Dec 2021	Ongoing
F0610:04	The member of staff responsible for SP to present a thorough report about the project to Governors. To be discussed at TLC first, then to FGB.	AM/KW	Dec 2021	Ongoing
F0112:01	AM to forward Ofsted governor questions to the FGB	AM	Dec 2021	Open
F0112:02	DR/AM to circulate the timetable of Advisor monitoring visits to the FGB	DR/AM	Dec 2021	Open
F0112:03	DR & AM to meet to look at both the LA plan and SDP to tighten up the SDP in line with the Governance report.	DR & AM	Dec 2021	Open
F0112:04	AM to forward other examples of SDPs to Governors.	AM	Dec 2021	Open
F0112:05	Detailed analysis of new model PAN to go the PFC for discussion before voting formally on the proposal at the next FGB.	AM/HC	Jan 2022	Open
F0112:06	AM to arrange a meeting with the Bursar of Queen's College to discuss the proposed Owlstone Croft development.	AM/DR/JP	Dec/Jan 2021/22	Open
F0112:07	AM to send a detailed outline of the different options for the SP spend of money, to be put on to the next EPC agenda. The outline to be forwarded to the FGB and an invitation to the EPC be sent to all members.	AM	Jan 2022	Open

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____