



Newnham Croft Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Wednesday 4 October 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); Eleanor Toye Scott (ETS); Yudan Ren (YR); Annie Hanekom (AH); Ave Wrigley (AW); Katy Holliday (KH), Lucy Nethsingha (LN); Emma Smith (ES)

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

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members and introduced new governor ES to the committee.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- KSU proposed, MD seconded to elect DR as Chair of the Governing Body. The proposal was supported unanimously.
- AW proposed, DR seconded to elect MD as Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. The proposal was supported unanimously.

3. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

4. Review and acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023

With the removal of a paragraph from item 15, the minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters arising and review of actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023

- F2604:03 – Ongoing
- F0507:01 – Open
- F0507:02 – Closed
- F0507:03 – Closed
- F0507:04 – Closed
- F0507:05 – Closed

6. Governance documents 2023/24

- **Standing Orders** – adopted unanimously. It was agreed to add in a clause about governors needing to keep cameras on when attending a meeting virtually.

- **Terms of Reference** – the TLC and EPC ToR were approved, and the draft PFC ToR, which is yet to be approved by the PFC Committee, will be brought back to FGB if there any amendments.
- **Governor Code of Practice, KCSIE and Safeguarding and CP Policy** had been previously circulated. Governors to sign to declare they have read and understood them. EF will lead a safeguarding session at 5.30pm before the next FGB for those governors not present on 1 September 2023.
- **Individual pecuniary interests forms** were circulated during the meeting and returned to the Clerk.
- **Structure of the Governing Body** – previously circulated for information. The deputy chair will continue to oversee training, which he will review at half term. The two most recent governors will have an induction training session with the Chair. The Chair and Clerk had not had a reply from Niamh Sweeney regarding her being an Associate Governor. It is assumed that she does not wish to be an associate governor at this time.

7. Reports from Committees

- **Teaching and Learning** (minutes previously circulated) – No comments were raised.
- **Personnel and Finance** – No minutes for this meeting.
- **Eco and Premises** (minutes previously circulated) – The site manager has completed the walkway and updates to the Reception area. A rolling plan of replacing the outside storage sheds with shipping containers is underway. The long-awaited asbestos survey is booked in. The school Eco Committee is up and running again and reports will be made to this Committee. Quotes for short term repairs to the roof have been received (£10000 material costs for 200m²); the roof will be monitored over winter and the LA asked for a contribution towards the cost of roof repairs.

A discussion followed about the state of the roof, with a governor noting that the LA is likely to classify roof repairs as ongoing maintenance and therefore the school's responsibility, however she suggested investigating other areas of funding from the LA to improve insulation to save heating costs, as this approach would incorporate both repairs and energy efficiency. A number of questions were also raised about the containers, including what will be stored inside them as the temperature inside and the outside surfaces can be very hot in summer; the footprint and colour and foundations (could an alternative to concrete be used?). The cost of the containers was confirmed as coming from Sports Premium.

7. Headteacher's Written Report (previously circulated)

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

Why has the total possible days for reporting absences gone up so much (more than double from 190 to 386)? And how does 10.3 FTE work out at 1.2% and 21 FTE at 9.3%? It's because the 190 refers to possible days, but the 386 is sessions (there are 2 sessions per day - morning and afternoon). 10.3 Full Time Equivalent - i.e. all teaching days combined give the value of 10.3 full time teachers. The percentage relates to the percentage absence for teachers over that period. The same for support staff.

In the school vision, Swift represents 1 point as [Risk], I wonder whether [Risk-taking], [Adventure] or [Endeavour] would be better? Adventure is quite similar as [Explorer] among the list. In the school vision, the Tree: the last point [Nurtured by the world], I wonder whether could add another layer of meaning such as [Nurtured by the world and to benefit the world]? Regarding the school vision, the first page is the actual vision that would be published; the following pages are my

thoughts that led me to that. I did think that, if it was agreed by stakeholders, I would use the thinking behind it to present it to the children, so will bear your adjustments in mind. In terms of the roots, I tried to incorporate your point by writing "Nurtured by and nurturer of" in the roots attributes, hoping to imply that the relationship is symbiotic and mutually beneficial.

Are there plans from the Maths Subject Lead for KS2? For Maths KS2, there will be the ongoing and usual focus of improvement, observations and monitoring (which don't need to be on the SDP as they are ongoing). We completed quite an extensive list of actions for maths (with a focus on reasoning and problem solving) alongside the LA in '21-'22.

Would it be possible to observe the Maths lesson by EF on 5th Oct.? The Maths lesson will be for teachers only.

For the Safeguarding and GDPR audit, what are the "a few areas that need developing"? The GDPR audit is complete. The actions that are not complete on the safeguarding audit are ongoing targets (use of MyConcern, reporting safeguarding to governors) or have dates for completion. I have included a log of actions for you. The green are complete. Amber and yellow ongoing or as yet unfinished.

It is really encouraging to see the CPD opportunities for staff available this term. Do you have a sense of how staff are responding to the increase in opportunities for continued development? We are trying really hard to ensure that training and development opportunities are useful and targeted. As a result, I feel the staff are positive and see the benefit in a lot of the training. Things like the Little Wandle Rapid Catch up training is rather dull, but staff understand the need for consistency in the delivery of these lessons. The diabetes training has been invaluable and very reassuring, as, with this age group, no-one is familiar with treating this condition.

What areas of the safeguarding and GDPR audit still need actioning? The GDPR audit is complete. The actions that are not complete on the safeguarding audit are ongoing targets (use of MyConcern, reporting safeguarding to governors) or have dates for completion. I have attached a pdf of current status - green is complete - yellow and amber are ongoing or yet to be addressed.

Why is the School Budgeting System challenging? Is this something that the new Finance Manager (FM) will be able to take over confidently when she starts her new role? The software was not properly developed. The issues we are facing are the same for all schools. This is an improving situation as the LA are very aware of the problems. The FM has been brilliant at mitigating the impact and finding fixes. I have no doubt that the new FM, benefiting from the FM's expertise and the ironing out of snags by the company responsible, will be able to take over competently.

Could we have an update at FGB on census numbers, please. What impact will the potential loss of £35,000 to £40,000 have? We will have 226 for the census on Thursday. That is 9 less than last year (though four of those are due to Reception PAN reduction). There will, obviously, be an impact on the budget. However, it is worth noting that the numbers do go up and down and there is always a way of creating an acceptable budget.

How many shipping containers is the school looking at to replace the sheds and what do you propose to do to ensure they blend in with the natural look of the island and stage areas? Is planning permission needed? Planning permission not needed. Two 15' containers are planned at moment to replace the PE sheds and after school club shed. They are going to be painted dark green and are not quite as industrial looking as they sound. They can be clad in wood as well.

How many children are attending the GetSet club? How often does it run? 14-15 children. It runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Questions raised at the meeting included:

A concern of Governors in the past has been teacher wellbeing. Is this a concern? It is always a concern! Nothing is ever taken away from teachers, but more tasks are demanded, such as teacher subject teacher roles which are a big pressure due to Ofsted carrying out deep dives in this area. Most teachers manage it well, but if there are any additional external pressures, then it can be difficult to deal with. In this case we have tried to mitigate the stress.

It is a testament of dedication of staff to put in extra hours, but as a governing body it would be good to have a measure of this, and whether it is changing over time. Have you any thoughts on how to measure this? It is impossible to track as there is always something else to do. Some teachers are happy to use schemes of work, whilst others prefer to tweak lesson plans. Some staff are less efficient than others and some are able to just stop! This is a difficult thing to train people to do as is the pressure that some people put on themselves. The average day is 7.30am to 5.30pm.

Have you ever asked the PTA to help with funding with half day drama classes, for example, to give teachers the chance to talk to other teachers or other task they need to carry out. We have in the past had anti-bullying plays which the teachers usually supervise, but this is a good idea. The subject leader role has increased in every school, not just ours; we have given teachers subject leader release time this year.

The following was also reported:

Safeguarding

- There have been 33 incidents recorded on MyConcern in the past two months indicating that staff are much more proactive in recording incidents now.
- No incidents of Child Protection
- No Looked After Children.
- No prejudice related incidents.

Attendance

- 96.1% for the term to date.

Finance

- The new budgeting system has been proving challenging for all schools, but the Finance Manager has been working hard to keep tabs on spending.
- The teachers' pay award of 6.5% has been confirmed and will be fully funded.

SEND

- The SEND register has been updated.

Pupil Premium

- 20 pupil premium children on roll. Those who undertook assessments had performed well and most have made good progress, although 20% continue to be a concern. Intervention and support plans have been drawn up for the term. A GetSet club has been established for those children who would benefit from a more active start to the day and targeting those children whose attendance is poor. So far it has been well received. The SENCo works with PP children each Tuesday.

Sports Premium

SP is to be used to upgrade PE storage. We have also booked in an in-line skater to do a workshop and whole school demonstration, highlighting the perseverance required to become a champion and the courage needed to try new things.

School Vision

The HT presented a draft version of the new Vision, which will be shared with all stakeholders, including parents and pupils. This version is more concise and snappy compared to previous years and the words used intended for children to understand. A draft new logo design was also presented. Governors unanimously approved the new Vision and the third of the sample logos.

Teacher Assessment Data

The Assistant Headteacher shared data showing the levels of children at the end of the summer term.

Reading – All KS2 year groups are on track for reading. Y3 has considerable need and the reading element is being addressed with LW Rapid Catch-Up, which is a new intervention for KS2 this year. An experienced TA has been placed in that class. There are some gender differences in pockets of the school, however in general 84.6% of boys and 83% of girls are at ARE or above in reading. EAL are working above their peers in all cohorts apart from Reception. Pupil Premium (PP) children have made progress over the term. Just over half (55.8%) PP children are OT. There continues to be extensive support and constant evaluation to ensure we are providing appropriate and as effective as possible interventions where needed, both through usual class interventions and the use of the Pupil Premium fund to pay for 1:1 tuition, which is reviewed with the teacher on a half-termly basis. **SEND** – 4 of 10 (40%) children are OT for reading. Extra interventions support this group in the mornings as well as in class during normal lessons.

Writing – For the whole school excluding EYFS, 66.8% of boys are OT and 69.7% of girls are OT, so not significant. 67.6% of EAL are OT 67.3% of non-EAL are OT, so not significant.

Pupil Premium – 7 out of 19 (38.9%) are on track to achieve ARE. There is extensive support in place and where writing is considered the priority, the children are receiving 1:1 support, particularly with editing and correcting their own work – a key skill in improving the quality of output. The input received from LW Rapid Catch up for phonics should also have an impact on writing.

SEND – (1 out of 10) 10% of pupils are OT for writing. Continues to be the most significant area of need. 90% of SEND pupils are currently working below age related expectations. The main barrier to this is spelling and phonological awareness, though editing work to ensure that it is coherent is also a problem for many in this group. Writing continues to be the curriculum area where high-incidence SEND is most often identified. A number of these pupils have dyslexia as a diagnosis.

Maths – 78% of girls and 86% of boys are OT across the school. Staff are continuing to have discussions about this aspect of the data and are looking into why this is and what support can be put in place to ensure that girls feel as incentivised to stretch themselves (and, possibly, encouraged to take risks). However, in last year's SATs a greater percentage of girls had GD in maths compared to boys. 84.7% of EAL children are OT, compared with 80.6% of non-EAL. 66.7% Pupil Premium children are OT and are supported, where appropriate, through 1:1 sessions and in-class support using pupil premium pre-school time sessions.

SEND – 40% of children with SEND are OT for achieving ARE across the school. Support is place and interventions reviewed regularly to ensure that they have as much impact as possible.

Science – There is a slight difference between genders for children being OT or above for achieving ARE. There is a discrepancy when looking at children achieving greater depth, with 30.4% boys achieving GD and 19.8% girls. There is no significant difference between EAL and non- EAL children.

Are the assessments accurate? New science assessment tools are being trialled. 7.7% of Pupil Premium children are OT.
SEND – 50% of children OT.

EYFS

80% of pupils attained a GLD. Writing and number are lower (85.73% and 82.9% respectively). This is true of the local authority trend however school data is significantly stronger than this. There are no significant differences based on gender in terms of those who achieved a GLD. No other groups stand out as being different from the cohort in general. In 2022, 69.7% of children left the foundation stage having achieved their GLD.

The following questions/comments were raised:

Do you know what the underlying factors of low performance are in Year 3? There is a higher percentage of children who need extra support than in other classes, and other children not on the SEND register but requiring targeted SEND support (beyond normal classroom provision but not yet fall into SEN). Reading and phonics interventions in Year 3 are going well.

In a sense one would expect Year 6 to have more children on the SEN register. The Assistant HT agreed, noting that it can take a long time for children to make it onto the register as it is often hard to prove how far behind they are. A governor said it would be good to communicate this to parents, as families can find it hard to navigate and might see barriers in the school. The Assistant HT said the school is trying to improve communication in this area.

Writing appears to be systematically lower? The Assistant HT responded that it always is, and is an area being worked on this year. The school is focusing particularly on spelling and presentation, and concentrating on spelling schemes this year.

What is being done to address the next steps from the previous OFSTED report?

- *the proportion of middle-attaining pupils who achieve the higher standards increases to be in line with the national average*
- *teachers have higher expectations of pupils' handwriting and spelling*

The spelling and presentation target is a focus on this year's SDP (having been addressed immediately after the inspection in 2018-19). The middle-attainers target has been much more difficult to measure with the lack of data during the pandemic. However, the school has now built up more data for each cohort, so will be more able to track progress through the year groups.

SDP 2022-23

The document had been previously circulated.

A governor asked if there was anything not achieved on last year's SDP? The HT responded that he was happy with the achievements, especially the improvement to leadership. HT referred to the difficulty that defining cultural capital initially presented, but felt that, when using the government definition ('the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success') the school curriculum does provide this for the children.

SDP 2023-24

The Chair highlighted that the SDP is what the governors use to hold the school to account. She encouraged the Chairs of Committees to allow sufficient committee time to look at their relevant sections. She read out the objectives at the top of the SDP - the objective of governors is to monitor the school's impact in these areas.

A governor noted that none of the fabric of the school (roof/sheds etc) is reflected in the SDP. The HT responded that he has tried not to incorporate ongoing issues, such as children achieving well, but to include targets specific to the upcoming year. HT agreed to include the ambitious project for developing the front area of the school, as discussed at EPC, in the SDP.

A governor asked whether the gender gap issues are similar to last year? It is unlikely to change in a year, but last year's Year 6 girls did brilliantly, outperforming boys at GD in Maths and Science, so it can be cohort dependent, and affected by home life aspirations/influences too.

As an action point, governors asked if the number of objectives could be put into a column.

ACTION F0410-01: HT to add the development of the front of the school to the SDP.

ACTION F0410-02: HT to put the number of objectives into a column in the SDP.

9. Governor Visits and Monitoring

- The previously circulated plan should link to the SDP.
- When planning visits, members should look at timing so they are spread throughout the year.
- A reminder to review any outstanding monitoring visits at committee meetings.
- To anonymise staff in monitoring visits.

10. Chair 360 Review

The Chair noted that she had found the review helpful to reflect on her chairing, and to consider criticisms. She encouraged governors to talk to herself and the Vice-Chair for support.

11. Governor Training

The Chair stressed the importance of training for effective governance. The two newest Governor are to receive induction training.

ACTION F0410-03: The Chair to carry out induction training for two newest governors.

ACTION F0410-04: HT to conduct safeguarding training for those that missed it in September.

12. Policies for Review:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection - approved
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Statement - approved
- Critical and major Incidents Guidance - approved
- Complaints - approved
- Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints - approved

The following had been previously circulated for information only:

- First Aid

13. Any other business

Traffic Survey – emailed to governors, and to Councillors, who have not responded.

Owstone Croft appeal – Thanks was given to the three members who have spent a considerable amount of time preparing papers for and subsequently attending the lengthy planning appeal meetings. A discussion followed about the difficulties encountered during the meetings. Some agreements have been reached, such as some of the demolition would be carried out during school holidays. The issue of a 'gathering lawn' near the boundary by the school gate was highlighted. Queens' have offered to replace the fencing in this area with a solid fence and new gate. Concerns were raised that with the amount of building work on the development, this will be the only green

space and therefore potentially heavily used, raising concerns about safeguarding. It was agreed that further discussions about this area should be conducted between Queens' and the HT.

With there being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.16pm.

ACTION LOG:

Minute Item no.	Action ref	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
6. Reports from Committees	F0507:01	The monthly finance papers will be circulated to all governors and also loaded on to the Drive.	LS	Dec 2023	Ongoing
8. HT Report	0410:01	HT to add the development of the front of the school to the SDP.	EF	Oct 2023	Open
8. HT Report	0410:02	HT to put the number of objectives into a column in the SDP	EF	Oct 2023	Open
11. Governor training	0410:03	The Chair to carry out induction training for 2 newest governors	DR	Oct 2023	Open
11. Governor training	0410:04	HT to conduct safeguarding training for those that missed it in September	EF	Oct 2023	Open

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____