



**Minutes of the meeting of Pulford V.A. Lower School Governors held
On Thursday 8th February 2018 at Pulford V A Lower School, Leighton Buzzard**

1.	Registration and Prayer	ACTION.
	<p>Present: Mr D Heather (DH) (HT), Mrs S Marchant (SM), Mrs T Rees (TR), Mr Gary Hargreaves (GH), Mrs Emma Birtles (EB), Ms Beci Morley (RM), Dr Stephen Burge (SB), Mr Jon Chadwick (JC), Mr Bill Webb (BW), Mrs Bex Howe (BH), Mr Dave Farlam (DF) and Mr Paul Whittington (PW).</p> <p>Ms Vicky Lerego (Clerk).</p> <p>Apologies were accepted from Canon Grant Fellows (GF) and Mr Andrew Wood (AW). Mr Alan Brandham (AB) was absent.</p> <p>The meeting opened at 19:34 with prayers led by SB.</p> <p>The Chair introduced the 2 new Governors, who are both foundation Governors elected by the PCC.</p>	
2.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests	
	<p>No interests were declared.</p> <p>DH passed around Declaration of Pecuniary Interest forms for all Governor's to complete and return by the end of today's FGB Meeting.</p>	
3.	Agree and sign the Previous Meetings Minutes	
	<p>The Chair advised that the minutes of last meeting were circulated prior to tonight's meeting for review. The minutes were unanimously agreed and signed by the chair.</p>	
4.	Matters Arising from Previous Meeting	
	<p>None were raised by the committee.</p>	
5.	Actions Required from the Previous Meeting	
	<p>There were no outstanding actions.</p>	
6.	Chairs Report: GH	
	<p>The report was distributed prior to tonight's meeting and the chair asked for any comments from any of the FGB members.</p> <p>It was asked about the tracking of individual child's progress. SB advised that this had previously been raised at the Governance review as the FGB should not be aware of any of the children's identity when reviewing their work. GH advised that he was looking at data with BW, to see how each cohort we look at is made up. No names were discussed or seen by GH. The school keeps records for parents and the teaching staff, but GH wanted to see how data is made up and how the system</p>	

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works.
GH recommended that governors who have not seen this should come into school to see how this data is built. BH was asked for her comments on this matter and advised that one of her schools have had their Ofsted inspection this week and recommended progress by cohorts and by groups of learners. This information would be useful moving forward, to see their progress and not just the end results. It was further asked of BH, in terms of what Ofsted are expecting to see, is there a way they would like for this is to be presented? BH advised that there is no set presentation, but that Governors do need to be aware of the progress and be seen to be looking into this. GH advised that this is a point for all members of the FGB - Governors do need to be aware of how figures are calculated. EB advised that Ofsted are looking for Governors to understand what evidence has been presented and how this is demonstrated – Can the FGB be confident that progress is being made with different groups of children? SB confirmed that cohorts have been compared and tracked, and that the data has been provided by DH in the past and reviewed in the C&S Committee.

To take forward, DH has arranged a meeting on 1st March, where the Governors attending will look at this in more detail and will provide a good workshop environment to discuss what the FGB would like to see.

PW asked the chair to clarify point 3, Finance – On the report it refers to a statement of accounts and PW would like to run through this with finance, to avoid any extra burden. He also requested more detail on what GH would like to achieve from the risk analysis. GH advised that in order to feel more comfortable, the FGB should have confidence in information that is given. He is trying to work on the sections that could still be improved a little more each year. GH advised that he is more confident now than he has been for a long time with the financial information and that he will come back to PW with more information on the risk analysis.

GH

A question was raised of the Local Authority's recent review into school structures. DH advised that Leo Jones is leading this project for the LA and meeting with HT's in late February when the school should know more and that until we have more information, it would be difficult to discuss. It was asked to the FGB, if it is an active decision that we are waiting to see what the LA stand is, are FGB comfortable with this decision?

DH advised that the school has been pro-active, over the last 5 years Pulford have future-proofed the school to a model that can adapt to change. In terms for moving forward, several meetings have taken place with other local Head teachers No one knows what the recommendation or change may be and DH feels that there are too many maybes to build on that anymore.

EB advised that if the recommendation is to re structure, the process is very expensive and so unless CBC can support financially, a lot of schools would not be able to cope, especially to manage the 'bulge'. Some schools have had a drop-in performance during this transition. SB advised that should this happen, he feels that Pulford are in a good position.

Chair closed this discussed, summarising that DH will wait to see the outcome of the meeting at the end of the month, however, JC did advise that he feels there is more than we could do.

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		DH
7.	Remuneration Matters: GH	
	<p>The chair asked the teaching staff present (DH, TR, BW and SM) to leave the meeting and a conversation took place to discuss remuneration, which was agreed by the FGB.</p> <p>Following this conversation, DH, TR, BW and SM re-joined the meeting.</p>	
8.	Head Teachers Report: DH	
	<p>DH circulated 2 documents prior to tonight's meeting – The HT report and the School self-evaluation report.</p> <p>It was asked about the pupil attendance figures as one of the FGB members raised a point that there is a lot of discussion about taking children out of school on holiday. Pulford have 97.4% attendance on report which in Ofsted's view, is outstanding attendance. DH advised that the subject to term-time holidays are a minefield and that parents do take their children out of school but this is not authorised unless it is due to exceptional circumstances. If the school did decide to issue fines, the money would not go back to the school. DH can provide figure of un-authorised holidays and that the figure stated in the report does include sickness.</p> <p>A question was raised on how the self-evaluation form links to Ofsted. DH advised that this was actually discussed with an external advisor earlier on this week. DH advised that he feels that Pulford is of a good standard, with some outstanding features. However, there is more to be done on the data, in particular on the group of children that sit under the most able band and the pupils in preschool, preparing the children to be school ready. The data is much improved year-over-year and DH expects the data to improve this year as a much stronger middle leadership team is now in place.</p> <p>SB advised, following his visit to the school last week, that some improvements to writing in KS2 were identified. To which BW advised that more writing has been happening across the curriculum and a plan is in place across the whole key stage to see if more work needs to be done, for example on grammar, where do the teaching staff need to focus and how can Pulford moderate this with other schools.</p> <p>BW visited 3 other lower schools in Leighton Buzzard to moderate and one of the questions discussed related to homework. There is not a huge amount of academic literature about homework and from the schools BW visited, some have lower attainment, some have higher. However, BW advised that no theme had come as a result of these visits.</p>	DH

	<p>GH advised that roughly 20% of schools are rated as outstanding. DH advised, to be outstanding doesn't mean you are the highest performing school. It is about progress of the pupils from entrance to exit. In general, Pulford pupils come in on the National Average and leave above average. BM advised that we do receive this data in the C&S Meetings.</p> <p>It was asked how the FGB can know what is outstanding and what is classed as good, to which DH advised that he is not sure it would be possible to correlate the schools data to Ofsted's judgment, which SB confirmed is the case. However, DH advised that this could be looked at in the meeting on 1st March.</p> <p><i>SB left the meeting.</i></p> <p>EB advised the FGB that the key point is to identify the strengths and weaknesses and that plans are in place to fix the weaknesses. GH advised that FGB need to be more comfortable in the data to which BH advised that as long as school can show starting point to end point, you can compare against LA but also compared like-for-like with a similar school.</p> <p><i>SB re-joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>DH advised in his report that the school is trying to raise funds for the all-weather surface. The school have already started to raise money for this with £10,000 raised so far or promised to us. DH believes the school can raise £25,000 but the quote is £75,000. DH asked if the FGB agree to put it to the trust that Pulford pay 1/3, asking trust to pay the rest which was agreed. DH to follow-up with the trust.</p>	DH
9.	Safeguarding Report: EB	
	<p>EB met with DH in early January and completed the Health and Safety and Safeguarding reviews together as there are overlaps. The results of both were very satisfactory.</p> <p>EB provided a summary for the FGB and advised that the Safeguarding Policy was reviewed.</p> <p>BH is qualified as a safe recruiter and so is another governor who can do this. The Code of conduct was completed at this term's Finance & Resources Meeting and that all risk assessments are completed.</p> <p>BH advised if anyone wants to be level 1 or 2 safeguarding trained, BH can arrange this for free for Pulford staff.</p>	
10.	SEND Report: BM	
	<p>The report was distributed to the FGB by BM prior to tonight's meeting and she provided an overview and summary of the data to the FGB.</p> <p>There are 2 pupils who are going through the statementing process. 1 pupil who had previously completed the process has now left the school but the school received feedback thanking them for their help. GH advised that there was a recent article in the telegraph about autism and recommended FGB read this. GH to send the link to the FGB members.</p>	GH

11.	Committee Reports	
	<p><u>Finance & Resources Committee</u> – PW provided an update of the recent committee meeting which encompasses Finance, sites and building, pay and personnel. He provided an overview of the highlights which included the work on reducing the amount of cash transactions, which is down 67% YOY.</p> <p>The schools Financial position – Costs are tracking well to budget. The licence deficit will leave only £2,000 to pay off next year and the school will end the year within 1% of budget which is within the margin allowed by the LA.</p> <p>Pulford’s are in the last year of expansion due to the delayed payment of government funding, which comes to an end this Financial Year. The key point moving forward is that this will make the financial situation much more manageable and cash flow easier.</p> <p>PW is continuing to work towards improvement on the financial matters, to keep matters focused through 1 monthly meeting and reduce the burden on HT.</p> <p>The new FY budget will be put together 17-19th April, including a contingency of 1% of income. This will then be reviewed by F&R Committee. Andrew Wood (AW) has taken on the RO role and DH confirmed that he and AW have met.</p> <p>DH advised that there is no update as yet on a response from the Diocese regarding the funding request. Further updates were that the site agent advert closed last week and 2 applicants received.</p> <p>PW advised which policies approved and agreed last meeting.</p> <p>The Finance & Resources Manual was reviewed by the F&R committee and they recommend this be signed off by the FGB. DH advised that no changes have been made apart from TB to TT name change.</p> <p>GH questioned, that when the budget was formulated, there was the intention to take £40,000 from the deficit. From his data, at the end of December 2017, the surplus Income over expenditure was £7k and that GH’s feeling is that deficit will be reduced by £24,000.</p> <p>This is in data that GH has forecast and PW requested that he goes through the data with GH to understand his projections and data. DH advised that he expects that the year will end closer to PW figure but that this would depend on income and amount of accruals which go through to next year.</p> <p>PW and GH have agreed to meet, to understand data before he next meets with HT.</p> <p>The Clerk asked if the Finance Manual can be agreed in the FGB, to which all agreed. PW has signed in F&R Meeting.</p> <p>Buildings Update – Already discussed earlier on in the meeting.</p> <p><u>C&S Committee Update</u> – BM provided an update, but a lot has been covered already earlier in the meeting. In this term’s committee meeting, a lot of the policies were reviewed and signed off.</p> <p>The biggest point that came out of the last meeting, is to encourage governors to</p>	<p>PW/GH</p>

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	be more proactive in terms of understanding and supporting the school in this regard. A sub-group has been created for governors to be more involved and there is an open-invitation for governors to attend the meeting taking place at the school on 1 st March @ 6pm. A general welcome has also been extended for any FGB members to come in and see the school. BM advised that she feels this is a proactive and a positive move.	ALL GOVERNORS
12.	Report from the school's PTA – AE	
	A report was provided by the PTA Chair Ann Emery and circulated to the FGB members in advance of the meeting. DF summarised the report which covers the main fundraising in 2016-17. The figures show that £7,000 was donated to the school of which £3,000 was spent on the new monkey bars and £2,000 on play equipment. The money raised by the PTA was mainly from the football festival, where just over £3,000 profit was made. The Christmas fayre made a profit of £1986.98. It was asked to be noted that the vast majority of work is done by a small number of parents and it is only through their sheer hard work that these events take place through continued time and efforts. It was questioned what results a larger group of parents could produce. The Chair asked DF to convey back to the PTA our thanks.	DF
13.	Governor Training and Development Report: SB	
	SB advised that this will be provided at next FGB meeting. He also requested that if any member of the FGB goes on training, to let him know. SB advised that this can be booked directly and the school would reimburse the costs, SB to circulate information on how these courses can be booked.	SB
14.	Governor Visit Reports	
	SB advised that he visited the school last week, where he looked at maths, literacy, book trawl and early years between 9am-2pm. He sat through various classes, did a long book trawl with Rosie and feedback had since been received. GH to visit to see how school operates in the classrooms, collection of data, listening to lessons.	GH
15.	Correspondence	
	No new correspondence to be discussed from either the Clerk or the HT.	
16.	Review New and Existing Policies	
	The Admissions Policy 2019 was approved but the Chair's signature is required. Learning Support, Whistle blowing and Child Protection Policies were all signed by the FGB Chair.	
17.	AOB	
	SM advised the FGB that she will be stepping down from being a Governor in July after 18 years. The Chair thanked SM for her service to the FGB. Saints Alive – DH advised that Governors need to do 4 articles for the church magazine. It was agreed that the following FGB Governors will complete the articles: March – DF, April – SB, October – GH, November – EB	DF, SB, GH, EB

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	<p>Chair confirmed date for the next meeting – 17th May at 7:30pm.</p> <p>The meeting finished at 21:13 and chair closed the meeting advising that he has visited all of the committee meetings this term and appreciates the efforts put in by the FGB members. He also thanked DH for his performance over the past few years for the school.</p> <p>SB closed the meeting with grace.</p>	
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