



PULFORD
 Church of England VA Lower School
A church school for the whole community

**Minutes of the meeting of Pulford V.A. Lower School Governors held
 On Thursday 12th October 2017 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 R Pickering(RP), Mrs T Rees (TR), Canon Grant Fellows (GF), Mr Gary Hargreaves (GH), Mrs Emma Birtles (EB), Ms Beci Morley (RM), Dr Stephen Burge (SB), Jon Chadwick (JC), Mr Alan Brandham (AB)</p> <p>Mr Bill Webb (BW) observing as part of training.</p> <p>Ms Vicky Lerego (Clerk).</p> <p>The meeting opened with prayers led by GF.</p>	
2.	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies were accepted from Mr Paul Whittington (PW), Mr Ed Senior (ES) was absent	
3.	Declaration of pecuniary interests	
	<p>No interests were declared.</p> <p>GH advised that BW has joined the meeting as part of his higher management training. He cannot comment or vote, but the Governing board are able to ask him questions.</p>	
4.	Elect Chair for the ensuing year	
	<p>GF asked if GH would like to continue in the role of Chair, to which he responded that he would but would like to find someone who could take on the role in the future.</p> <p><i>EB joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>This was put to a vote and unanimously agreed by the committee. GH thanked the governors for their work, a lot of which is unseen but very much appreciated by the staff and the governors.</p>	
5.	Elect Vice-Chair for the ensuing year	
	SB put himself forward to stand again, which the committee agreed unanimously.	
6.	Amend Terms of Reference to reflect agreed committee members	
	DH advised that the Governing board need to review if there any changes to the members of the relevant committees. It was confirmed that the committee members are as follows:	

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	Finance & Resources: DH, GH, PW, JC, AB, ES, EB, SM Curriculum & Standards: RP advised that as she is now a member of staff, in the terms of reference she may no longer chair this committee. BM was agreed as the new chair in the September 2017 meeting. Additionally, RP advised that her term of 4 years on the Governing board is due to finish in December 2017 and she will then be leaving, which means that a new parent governor will need to be found. DH advised that the paperwork to start this process will begin after the October half term with the goal that a replacement has joined prior to the next FGB Meeting.	DH
7.	Matters arising from previous meeting.	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 18 th May 2017 were circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. There being no questions or outstanding comments from the FGB.	
8.	Actions required from the previous meeting.	
	As above, duplicate agenda point.	
9.	Agree and sign minutes of the previous meeting	
	The minutes were unanimously approved as a true record and signed by the Chair. These have been passed to DH for filing.	DH
10.	Chair's Report: GH	
	<p>GH hasn't circulated the report before the meeting, but advised he will provide a copy to the FGB once the meeting has finished. There were 2 points that GH wanted to raise, the first of which the FGB may be aware of. CBC are looking at the organisation of the schools in Central Bedfordshire as they are the last unitary authority with a 3-tier system.</p> <p>GH asked AB for any updates in the area, to which AB advised that a paper will be issued shortly from CBC. DH followed this by informing the FGB that a document issued from CBC on 21st July 2017 advised that an assessment is taking place, to look into possible changes from a 3-tier to a 2-tier system.</p> <p>DH advised that Leo Jones sent out a letter last week toning down this language, advising that the decision was made before his appointment into the role and that he would like communication & consultation with the schools. Consultants have been appointed and they are half way through the process. Scenarios for each area of recommendation will be available in January and then the LA will consult with Head Teachers. DH advised that there is not much information coming through, but locally he is communicating with other schools to see what models would be appropriate.</p> <p>The impact to Pulford School, if this change saw them taking Y5 and Y6 pupils, is that there would be a "bulge" as the current intake is 45 pupils and this would need to decrease back to 30 pupils per year to accommodate the change. For example, new classrooms would be required, where would they be located? There would need to be a piece of work completed based on the outcome from CBC and DH</p>	

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	<p>advised that while we really need to wait-and-see, there is a growing realisation that it is going to happen but still a question mark as to where the funds would come from.</p> <p>GH advised if we changed to become a primary school, pupil intake level would go back down to 30 pupils. Money has previously been spent to increase class sizes to 45 to accommodate the number of children wanting to attend, so this would be changing direction. There will be an increase in the number of school age children over the next few years in the area, outline planning permission in the local area runs into several thousands of houses which will impact on the number of children requiring school places. There then followed a discussion among the Board as to the possibilities around future collaboration and potential partnerships.</p> <p>A small team of governors would need to be selected to oversee work in this area and EB, JC, AB, BM, GF, SB all advised that they would make themselves available for this group. DH/GH will take this forward.</p> <p>GH also provided an update on the extension to forest school facilities and the additional pre-school places. The project has gone well, the facilities were viewed by the board today and received good feedback. The number of children requiring 30 hours has not increased as quickly as the school thought. GH advised that from discussions with Stacey Major, the testing period will be in January when the surge tends to happen and there still may be some parents who are unaware that 30 hour facilities are available.</p> <p>GH addressed the FGB regarding the Curriculum Committee and advised that having spent considerable time and effort looking at building works and the finance function in great detail, he would like to suggest that all Governors attend Curriculum Committee meetings to see how it operates and gain further understanding on what is required. He also recommended that they visit school, by agreement, to observe first-hand the teaching plan in action. (BW advised that the Governors visit today was very good).</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>ALL GOVERNORS</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Head Teachers Report: DH to include proposed objectives for this academic year</p>	
	<p>DH advised that there are 3 objectives for year, as agreed with external advisors, SB and EB.</p> <p>The first is to continue to improve the outcomes in writing, with more focus at KS1 but also across the school.</p> <p>The 2nd objective is to embed the 30 hour offer for nursery children and the 3rd, to extend the school leadership model. There is now a team of leaders across the school who meet with TR, BW, DH and AQ frequently.</p>	

	<p>A highlight has been the Harvest trail which ran in conjunction with All Saints church. It was very successful and noted by external sources on how good it was, enabling Pulford to work more closely with partner local schools. Y4 pupils are going to sing carols this Christmas at the Church and all schools in town are participating.</p> <p>DH raised a request to the FGB regarding the well-being of staff. As the school has grown, on a personal basis DH is working 70 hours a week and this needs to be reduced. As such, apart from the 9 FGB and Committee meetings a year, DH requested that if any of the FGB do need to see him, that this is arranged by appointment and with a finish time of 7pm at the latest. This was unanimously agreed by the FGB and will be put in place with immediate effect.</p>	ALL GOVERNORS
12.	Safeguarding Update for the Governors DH/EB	
	<p>DH advised that as the Safeguarding officer for the school, he wants to ensure that the FGB are fully up to date on the procedures. 2 key documents (which have not been circulated in advance of this meeting) were discussed - Working together to safeguard children Feb 2017 & Keeping children safe in education Sep 2016.</p> <p>All staff have an update annually on safeguarding with DH and TR attending a 'train the trainer' course so they can cascade training internally. EB is the schools safeguarding governor and completes a termly audit in addition to checks that the single central record to ensure that only approved people are allowed on school's premises. These documents are then kept in a locked fireproof cabinet and Alison Quick (AQ) is officer in-charge of keeping these records, which are filed in chronological order with a front sheet.</p> <p>The school also work with Relay, an agency which works alongside the school and police, as well as social care.</p> <p>DH also advised that the FGB may need to be involved if allegation is made against member of staff, as it would be up to the board to decide what action would be taken in the first instance. This would need to be investigated and the school would receive advise from Rosemary Webster, the LA's dedicated officer & DOSA colleagues in St Albans. If this was against DH, EB and the FGB the Chair of Governors would lead on this with advice as detailed above.</p>	
13.	SEND Report RP	
	<p>The report was not circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting, a copy will be distributed with the meeting minutes.</p> <p>TR thanked RP for all of her work as the SEND Governor. RP then ran through the report, advising that the number of pupils has remained the same, apart from 2 children with education and healthcare plans (formally known as statements) who are no longer at the school. The number of more able children is currently 12 however</p>	VL

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	the register is reviewed in January so this number may change.	
14.	Committee Reports	
	<p><u>Curriculum and Standards Committee</u></p> <p>BM provided an overview of the last committee meeting that took place in September 201. Reading is strong in the school and more emphasis needs to be put on maths and writing. This could involve more help from the parents as this seems to have a positive effect in reading.</p> <p>In KS1 next term, the focus is on repeating key skills, such as number bonds and letter formation. In KS2, a focus is on writing homework.</p> <p>DH advised that Pulfords were ranked top in Leighton Buzzard in reading, 4th in writing and 5th in maths. The question was raised that how, as a school, can be close the gap.</p> <p>RP noted that SEND children had made good progress from their starting points. Numerous training events have taken place, including from CHUMS, a charity supporting child mental health.</p> <p>The school nurse has also provided training on many medical problems, and this has raised that there is an impact of medical conditions on a child's education and their academic needs.</p> <p>TR provided staff training on SEND Support reports and education plans, which involves thinking about child's strengths and how to support them. They are phasing out MEP's and completing the new standard forms.</p> <p>The children have learnt signing and a Speech & Language therapist continues to come into the school which has been successful. There is also a speech and language nurture group which runs at lunchtimes and fine and gross motor skills group for children who may need extra support.</p> <p>All Gifted and Talented children on the register are working at exceeding at their area of strength. The staff are looking at opportunities for this, including a KS1 accelerated reading group and book buddies across the stages.</p> <p>There is also an upcoming webinar that TR has signed up to on challenging children.</p> <p>The SEND Governors role was also discussed as RP will need to be replaced. This would involve meeting with TR termly, looking at the profile of SEND across school, to future proof this for children's needs, monitoring that interventions are in place and that children on SEND register are making progress to their targets, as well as checking that policies are up to date. Lots of training would be provided to the Governor who would like to take on this role. BM confirmed that she will take over SEND responsibility from RP.</p>	

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	<p><u>Finance and Resources Committee.</u></p> <p>EB advised that the main points of discussion were around the budget & whether forecast is accurate. There is no major cause for concern, DH and the leadership team need to look at resourcing in school for the business running of school and the relevant processes for financial reporting, to provide the FGB with confidence in the accuracy of the reporting.</p> <p>The governors have been involved in the operational processes but separation needs to be put back in place, but this does require a level of confidence in the accuracy of the data provided. Overall, the controls are within the correct limits and most of the problems have been resolved.</p> <p>GF advised that DH should be an educationist and not an administrator.</p> <p><i>SB left the meeting</i></p> <p>The committee meeting also Highlighted major capital works, including the roofs and guttering. One of the recommendations EB made, as she is not at school to physically check every day, is that the school look into the possibility of an ad-hoc maintenance role who can be called on to do regular H&S compliance checks and general maintenance. DH advised that this is on the SLT agenda and DH has an action to look at what this job description may look like.</p> <p>DH advised that the conditions survey has been sent out since the F&R meeting, to obtain quotes to put a bid in to funding in November.</p> <p><i>SB back in the meeting</i></p> <p>ES gave the responsible officers report in last Finance & Resources Meeting. An update on the new building was provided, 1 is still incomplete and DH advised that there is still work to be done. On the bigger project, the conclusion, which has been reached because take up of places hasn't been as expected and complications in planning permission, has been to withdraw the application for the time being.</p> <p><u>PR Committee</u></p> <p>RP provided an update to the FGB following the meeting in September 2017 where the decision had been made to absorb the PR Committee into the Curriculum and Standards committee. Any key points would be added into the C&S agenda.</p>	<p>DH</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>Determine School Development Improvement Plan</p>	
	<p>This was discussed as part of the HT report.</p>	

16.	Policies	
	<p>Pay Policy – BW provided an update on this policy, advising the FGB that there were minor updates which reflect the recent teachers’ pay and conditions document. This mostly involves changes to their titles. The new policy was signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Child Protection Policy – BW advised that again there were few changes.</p>	
17.	AOB	
	<p>SB advised he that a Governors visit has been completed and a report will be made available for the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>SB also put himself forward to take over the responsibility of training, as this was previously RP. RP agreed to stay as part of the committee until a replacement is found.</p>	<p>SB</p> <p>SB</p>
18.	Dates and Times of meetings for the ensuing year	
	<p><u>FGB:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 8th February 2018 at 7.30pm. • Thursday 17th May 2018 at 7.30pm. <p><u>Finance & Resources Committee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, 18th January 2018 at 7.30pm • Thursday, 26th April 2018 at 7.30pm <p><u>Curriculum & Standards Committee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday, 23rd January 2018 at 7pm • Tuesday 1st May 2018 at 7pm 	
19.	There being no further business, the meeting ended at 21:06 with The Grace	

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Date:.....