

**Minutes of the meeting of Pulford V.A. Lower School Governors held
On Thursday 18th May 2017 at Pulford V A Lower School, Leighton Buzzard**

1.	Registration	ACTION.
	<p>Present:, Mr D Heather (DH) (HT), Mrs S Marchant (SM), Mrs R Pickering(RP), Mr Paul Whittington (PW), Mrs T Rees (TR), Canon Grant Fellows (GF), Mr Gary Hargreaves (GH), Mrs Emma Birtles (EB), Mr Ed Senior (ES), Ms Beci Morley (RM), Dr Stephen Burge (SB)</p> <p>Mrs Jane Smith (Clerk).</p> <p>The meeting opened with prayers led by GF.</p>	
2.	Authorised absence	
	Mr Sidd Arya, Mr Jon Chadwick, Mr Alan Brandham	
3.	Unauthorised Absence	
	None	
4.	Declaration of interests	
	<p>EB is a governor at Linslade Lower School.</p> <p>RP is a teacher at Harlington Lower School</p> <p>GF is Chair of the Pulford Trust</p> <p>No other interests were declared.</p>	
5.	Matters arising from the previous meeting	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 9 th February 2017 were circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. There being no matters arising the minutes were <u>unanimously approved</u> as a true record and signed by the Chair.	
6.	Chair's report	
	The Chair gave a brief verbal report pointing out that it is difficult to make any decisions currently due to the political uncertainty brought about by the upcoming election.	
7.	HT's report	
	<p>A copy of the report was circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The HT advised Governors that from September, as a result of staffing changes, data on progress as well as attainment will be key focus for the Board. Staff will also continue to focus on ensuring there is evidence of a rise in standards by all children. Governors queried whether the new staffing regime would affect the budget. The HT confirmed that these changes, and the extension of the nursery provision, mean that the budget will need to be re-written, but the financial situation is not likely to cause concern.</p> <p>Mrs Rebecca Pickering will join the staff in September. It was confirmed that this does not affect her role as a Parent Governor and her term of office is due to expire in December 2017.</p> <p>It was agreed to consider the implications of changing to an academy within the Diocese at the next meeting</p>	CLERK

8.	Safeguarding report	
	The Safeguarding Governor and the HT have met recently and EB confirmed that all outstanding actions have been completed. She will update the spreadsheet. Several governors agreed to undertake training in safer recruitment. This, together with the Safeguarding Policy, will be reviewed in October. The HT confirmed that the H & S Audit, the Safeguarding Audit and the Financial Audit are now all filed.	CLERK
9.	SEN and More Able report	
	<p>The report was circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Governors queried how the success of the Speech and Language Therapist's intervention is measured. The DHT advised that the child's progress is recorded and parents are also reporting signs of their child's improvement. Having the SLT at school means parents do not have to travel to Luton for appointments and the SLT is able to feed back to TAs, teachers and parents directly on progress and advise on how to assist the child.</p> <p>The Chair reported that he had witnessed that the school is doing as much as it can given the financial restraints, and is directing parents to good external agencies where their child's talents can be optimised. SB suggested that when carrying out a visit, Governors should find out about the differentiation in class for this group of children and make sure it is documented. It was agreed that it is important to ensure the school takes an holistic view of the child to make sure social skills and emotional intelligence are also addressed.</p>	ALL GOVERNORS
10.	Committee Reports	
	<p><u>Appeals and Admissions committee</u></p> <p>The HT advised that an Appeals hearing will be on 12th June 2017 at noon at Watling House. The school is heavily over-subscribed. It was confirmed that the admissions policy is made clear to parents when their child is admitted to Nursery.</p> <p><u>Curriculum and Standards Committee</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 2nd May 2017 were circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The HT confirmed that the Early Years data is now much healthier due partly to the interventions of staff and partly to a more accurate interpretation of the descriptors. By comparing their opinions with those of staff at other Leighton Buzzard and Local Authority schools, it was apparent that Pulford staff had been over-conservative with their assessments. Staff have also received training in assessment and monitoring and moderation. Another factor has been looking at ways the nursery staff can start to prepare children better for the Early Years curriculum and implement appropriate interventions early. Governors queried how staff check that intervention has been effective. The HT replied that progress is monitored and if a strategy is not benefiting the child an alternative is put in place. He pointed out that the system focusses on the individual child and is adaptable. It was pointed out, however, that academic data cannot identify progress being made in emotional and social development (apart from the EYFS) although this is recorded.</p> <p><u>Finance and Resources Committee.</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2017 were circulated to all</p>	

Signature of Chair of Governors:.....

Date:.....

	<p>Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The HT confirmed that he is still waiting for an update on the new funding formula. EB confirmed that she is still working on the repairs and maintenance schedule.</p> <p>Governors queried whether the new staffing arrangements would impact on the ability to pay back the deficit one year ahead of schedule. The HT said that, although the budget is £16K overspent at the moment, there will be £15K nursery funding to add in the autumn term and the planned repayment is still attainable.</p> <p>With regards to the bad debt write-off, it was confirmed that the Hardship Fund does not have any money currently.</p> <p>The RO reported that he met with the HT two weeks ago and they have co-ordinated a schedule of contracts to look at external procurement to bring costs down. He confirmed that the fireproof filing cabinets have been purchased and the amount of cash handled by the front office has reduced by half.</p> <p><u>PR Committee</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2017 were circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the GB is responsible for an article in the October edition of Saints Alive. The deadline is 21st October. It was agreed that the HT will prepare this.</p>	HT
11.	Governor visit report	
	It was agreed that ES will carry out a visit next term.	
12	Correspondence	
	<p>The Chair reported that he had been corresponding with the Department for Education in respect of the LA's custom of paying the pupil quota a term in arrears, and the adverse effect this has on the school's cash flow. He had been advised that it is up to the LA when they distribute their funds to schools. He therefore plans to approach Central Bedfordshire Council to ask them to justify why they pay when they do. The HT pointed out that as Pulford has expanded voluntarily, it does not qualify for prompt payment, which would have been the case had the LA demanded they do so. He thought that there are not many schools in a comparable situation. He said he is due to meet the Finance Officer next week and will make the point to him then.</p>	HT
13	Policies	
	None presented for ratification this time	
14	Update on the Building Project	
	<p>The HT reported that the planning application for the new building is now live on the CBC portal but it is unlikely that the project will be completed by 1st September. He had agreed with Stacey Major that, as there is a substantial waiting list for pre-school places, the improvement of the Forest School should be prioritised to allow children to be admitted in September. It is hoped that by January it will be possible to admit more children by using the proposed new building. The HT sought approval from the GB to work on a formal bid to present to the Pulford Trust for funding for the Forest School</p>	

	<p>and the additional costs of architect's fees, contingency and fitting-out the new classroom He said he would circulate this to governors. This was approved. GF, as Chair of the Pulford Trust, reported that when Trustees realised that the proposed expansion was a response to a statutory requirement they readily agreed to fund both projects, but wished to ensure that the school adhered to the tendering system. The GB expressed their gratitude to the Trust. It is understood that the LA will only contribute £75000 for the new build – they will not contribute to the development of the Forest School.</p> <p>The HT reported that as the school will be admitting rising 3s (to allow for a more natural progression into Early Years) a formal change of age range consultation has been commenced.</p> <p>PW queried how the Finance and Resources Committee could help. The HT said that at present moral support is all they can offer. They will meet in the first week of June to consider quotes received for the building works.</p>	
15	Dates and Times of meetings for the ensuing year	
	<p>Dates and times of meetings for 2017-18:</p> <p><u>FGB:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 12th October 2017 at 7.30pm. • 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, 21st September 2017 at 7.30pm • Thursday, 18th January 2018 at 7.30pm • Thursday, 26th April 2018 at 7.30 <p><u>Curriculum & Standards Committee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday, 26th September 2017 at 7pm • Tuesday, 23rd January 2018 at 7pm • Tuesday 1st May 2018 at 7pm 	
	There being no further business the meeting ended at 20.50 with The Grace	

Signature of Chair of Governors:.....

Date:.....