

# Weaverthorpe CE Primary School

## Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 17 March 2020, 4pm at school

<b>Present:</b>	Femi Shellard (FS) Janette Wilkinson (JW) Andy Bowden (AB) Trish Lake (TL) Tracy Wallace (TW) Nick Carnes (NC) Fiona Robinson (FR) Jo Bowden (JB)	(Chair) Co-opted Governor Headteacher Foundation Governor Foundation Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Bursar Development session lead
<b>Not in attendance: Therefore minutes taken by</b>	Laura Waites Andy Bowden (AB)	NYCC Clerk Foundation Governor
<b>Apologies</b>	Katie Church Jenny Driver (JD)	Staff Governor Parent Governor

Minute	Item	Action
1.0320	<p><b>Governor Development Session 4-5pm Led by Jo Bowden (JB)</b></p> <p>The CPD session began with JB telling her story as a chair of governors in a similar situation to our governors and how their governing body rapidly improved over a short period of time.</p> <p>We then looked at eight elements of Effective governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right people around the table</li> <li>• Understanding roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Good chairing</li> <li>• Professional clerking</li> <li>• Good relationships based on trust</li> <li>• Knowing the school-the data, the staff, the parents, the children, the community</li> <li>• Committed to asking challenging questions</li> <li>• Confident to have courageous conversations in the interest of the children and young people</li> </ul> <p>We took time as individuals to look at each of these statements and to assess how we are as a FGB in each of these areas. We then talked in pairs and fed back as a whole group. It was very helpful to see where our strengths were but especially where we needed to do a lot of work, specifically understanding our roles and responsibilities</p> <p>JB then led us into a discussion about the core functions of a school governing body, reading the National Governors Association NGA guidance “ The ‘board of governors’ should operate at a strategic level, leaving the head teacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to it for the operational day to day running of the school.”</p>	

We then had a discussion about what we should strongly focus upon:

- Setting the vision and strategic direction of the school
- Holding the head teacher to account for its educational performance
- Ensuring financial resources are well spent

NC asked how we can operate strategically if we do not have an understanding of the operational day to day running?

JB - This is a good question. Shows the importance of the governors working together as a team so that one person does not need to know everything. The governors need to focus on their core strategic responsibility when looking at the operation of the school. Having Link Governors enables individual governors to look into a particular aspect of the school e.g. literacy, in more detail: going on specific training/one to one with the head teacher/learning walk around the school/visit to a class room and seeing lesson taught and then talking to the teacher and the pupils afterwards etc. This is a good place in the CPD as the next governor CPD training in April will be all about Link Governors.

JB concluded the CPD training with some other NGA resources including 'questions for governing bodies to ask'; 'staying strategic'; '20 key questions for governing bodies'; 'what boards should expect from schools and what schools should expect from boards'; a model information pack for governors that JB used with her Governing Body.

JB offered to more help if the FBG felt this would be useful and was thanked by everyone for an excellent training session.

#### IMPACT OF CPD TRAINING:

Examples of impact during this session:

- FS this has been a very insightful, we have been able to see for ourselves what some of the key issues are and start to understand what the aspects of effective governance are.
- Newer governors had a clearer idea of what the role of a governor was and the need for induction and training.
- All agreed on the fact that we need to work together much more as a team and not rely on one or two individuals to do everything.
- All realised how important it is to have a good professional Clerk who is confident in their own role
- All realised we do not have much confidence or courage in ourselves and this training and therefore our need for more work like this!

## Core Functions of Governance

1. *Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.*
  2. *Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.*
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.*

Minute	Item	Action
2.0320	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The clerk had not arrived by the start of the meeting so it was agreed by all that AB should take minutes for the meeting and send them to FS and JW for errors and omissions.</p> <p>AB opened the meeting with a prayer. FS welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a reminder of the above core functions.</p> <p>FS reminded the governors that the main focus of today's meeting is Resources. Next FGB in April will focus on School Improvement.</p>	AB
3.0320	<p><b>Apologies for absence and to determine whether any absences should be consented to.</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from KS and JD and consented to.</p>	
4.0320	<p><b>Declaration of Governors' interests.</b></p> <p>No interests in the meeting agenda items were declared.</p>	
5.0320	<p><b>To determine whether any part of the proceedings should be treated as confidential and excluded from the minutes to be made available for public inspection.</b></p> <p>FS reminded governors of the need for confidentiality. Some aspects of the finance discussions might need to be kept confidential.</p>	
6.0320	<p><b>Notification of urgent other business.</b></p> <p>None raised. Governors were reminded of the need to complete circulated declaration of interest forms. Completed forms to be filed in the governor's file.</p>	
7.0320	<p><b>To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the previous FGB meeting held January 2020</b></p> <p>These were approved by governors and are to be signed by FS for filing in the governor's file.</p>	FS
8.0320	<p><b>To consider matters arising from the minutes and for which there is no separate agenda item.</b></p> <p>None raised.</p>	
9.0320	<p><b>Governor Vacancies</b></p> <p>Vacancies - There is a vacancy for an LA governor. FS gave a reminder to all governors to look out for suitable candidates.</p>	ALL
10.0320	<p><b>Benchmarking</b></p> <p>Benchmarking of the school is with schools of same size (most of these schools are federated and do not have a full time head).</p> <p>We have below average income. We have a higher than average number of teachers because of having a teaching head</p> <p><b>Q Why spending on ICT so low?</b></p>	

	<p>A Because it comes from the Capital Fund and not from the Revenue Fund</p> <p>Q Why is there so much sickness among the teachers at this school compared with the other schools?</p> <p>A This particular graph looks at the complete financial year and we had a lot of sickness in this school. JW was off for 11 weeks and another teacher was off for almost a term which pushed up this annual average</p> <p>FS - we are median in a lot of graphs this time rather than on the extremes which is where we were last year</p>	
11.0320	<p><b>Approve the 20/21 Start Budget</b></p> <p>The budget for 2020-21 show a healthy in year surplus and the two forecast years have also improved.</p> <p>Q Why is there an improvement?</p> <p>A Two reasons: LA had surplus funding that they shared with all schools. Teachers pay and pension grant is higher than expected.</p> <p>FR advised that it is good to keep a healthy balance at this time</p> <p>Q In the light of the healthy budget, can we refund the donation from a parent governor?</p> <p>A As long as this is minuted</p> <p>The refund was proposed by FS, seconded by TL.</p> <p>FS, on behalf the of the whole school, offered our huge thanks and appreciation for the generosity for the gift.</p> <p>Q Does this include previously discussed staffing levels for the summer term 2020?</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>During the Summer Term, the Head Teacher has a lot of extra leadership responsibilities.</p> <p>Q Why is that the right thing to do?</p> <p>A Post Ofsted, there are a lot of actions that the Head Teacher needs to do and therefore cannot also do teaching as well. Therefore the following plan is implemented for the summer term: full time class teacher in Willow Unit, full time teacher in Silver Birch, 0.2 PPA cover music French and DT.</p> <p>Q Will we have evidence that these plans have been implemented?</p> <p>A Yes there will be evidence of these plans by the beginning of September</p> <p>Q Is the money ring-fenced?</p> <p>A No</p> <p>Q where does the surplus go?</p> <p>A The surplus goes to the LA</p>	

	<p><b>Q Should we be spending this pot?</b></p> <p><b>A Some of that is being spent on the teaching staff. If we put a clear business plan in place the LA should approve it</b></p> <p>The school has budgeted at least £5,000 for extra resources and has also budgeted for extra admin. Extra has been put in for CPD for staff and governors. All this extra spending is what will be needed as a result of the Ofsted report (when the report comes out).</p> <p>In September 2020 the forecasts assume a shared-head teacher for 2 days a week but this process could take 3-4 months so, if it takes longer, there is money in the budget. 2021 shows that we are financially viable.</p> <p>The Start budget was approved.</p>	
12.0320	<p><b>To Review Contracts</b></p> <p>All contracts were reviewed and were discussed in detail.</p> <p><b>Q Is there any value in paying so much money back to the LA, do they represent good value for money or could we do better?</b></p> <p><b>A At this stage, the school is not going to commit to anything new, we are in the best contracts for the moment. We do now have a better broadband contract. The rest of the contracts are best value for money.</b></p>	
13.0320	<p><b>School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)</b></p> <p>There was a discussion about the SFVS and it was noted that we are spending a lot of money on energy bills. This is because we have an old building with poor insulation and electric heating is an expensive fuel.</p> <p>The school has been benchmarked against national figures and this is showing many schools the size of this school have a shared leader.</p> <p>All looked through the comments on the side of the report and all were happy with those comments.</p> <p>FGB approved the SFVS</p>	
14.0320	<p><b>To consider and agree the maintenance programme and proposals for the use of devolved capital</b></p> <p>We have considered this and no actions are required at this time and approved this programme and proposals.</p>	
15.0320	<p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <p>FS and TW walked around with health and safety advisor. He conducted a visual inspection and noted 11 things though none of them were major. Cracked tiles need painting unless the tiles used as planters. Gates to fix with hooks &amp; eyes for when they are open, access to outside EYFS storage the floor should not be cluttered etc. We have an action plan to action all 11 points.</p> <p><b>Q When will it be done?</b></p> <p><b>A Couple actions already completed. Now waiting to the contractor and all 11 points will be completed within 3 months</b></p>	

16.0320	<p><b>To review staffing</b></p> <p>Covered as part of finances. One teacher is back from a period of long term absence.</p> <p>Q How is the phased return?</p> <p>A It is going well, and she is very keen. There is a lot of catching up to do after five months absence but she is adapting very well and integrating into the school.</p>	
17.0320	<p><b>SEN Update</b></p> <p>An EHC plan has been approved for a Y6 pupil for special equipment and 28 hours of 1to1 teacher time until the end of the term, so we should see the pupil's level of improvement return to the level it was when they had similar support. This will really help the pupil when they move up to the secondary school in September. Good news!</p>	
18.0320	<p><b>School Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Still awaiting the Ofsted report</p>	
19.0320	<p><b>Pupil Premium/ Sports Premium</b></p> <p>Same actions as agreed at the November meeting,</p> <p>Continue to employ a PE teacher and the children have had a series of lessons in gymnastics and dance by a Norton College specialist.</p>	
20.0320	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Whole staff training on de-escalation training, which was excellent.</p> <p>J &amp; F had their half termly safeguarding meeting.</p>	
21.0320	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMSC Policy</li> <li>• Sun Safety Policy</li> <li>• Collecting Children From School Policy</li> </ul> <p>All three policies have been read and were adopted by the FGB.</p> <p>There was a discussion about safeguarding children and parents walking across the carpark to school.</p>	
22.0320	<p><b>School Advisor visit reports</b></p> <p>Reports noted from a York Diocese Advisor visit and a LA advisor visit.</p>	
23.0320	<p><b>Rapid Improvement Group (RIG) Update</b></p> <p>There are 4 governors on the RIG with Alison Smith from the diocese and Janette as the head teacher. This is helping governance rapidly improve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dates are booked for governor training (however due to the virus these training events are cancelled)</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dates are set for governors to attend staff meetings.</li> <li>• We have a terms of reference document that the FBG approved of.</li> <li>• The next FGB CPD planned is on Link Governor training.</li> <li>• The Governors have also joined the NGA and all governors will be issued with a password on FS' account?</li> <li>• At the RIG tomorrow we will also look at an induction pack</li> </ul>	
24.0320	<p><b>Governor Training / Skills audit</b></p> <p>FS has collated all the skills of the FGB and colour coordinated the audit:</p> <p>Over 21+ green</p> <p>Over 11-20 amber</p> <p>1-10 red.</p> <p>We are just waiting for one more governor skills audit – which was handed in tonight. This skills audit will be ready for the next RIG tomorrow.</p> <p>TL attended Safeguarding in School governor training. TL learned a lot, especially the importance of not rushing in too quickly when there is a crisis. (All staff members were present too).</p>	
25.0320	<p><b>Governor monitoring / link governors / reports of governor visits</b></p> <p>TL made a governor visit on World Book Day: see notes from TL</p>	
26.0320	<p><b>Communication with Stakeholders</b></p> <p>None at the moment but when the Ofsted report is published we have some important communication to organise.</p>	
27.0320	<p><b>To deal with any matters agreed for consideration under item 5 above.</b></p> <p>None</p>	
28.0320	<p><b>Impact of Meeting</b></p> <p>Impact of CPD at the start of the meeting already recorded above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• resources released for the pupils,</li> <li>• staff with extra training,</li> <li>• governors doing more training will impact the pupils,</li> <li>• approved policies to keep the children safe,</li> <li>• approval of SMSC policy make it better for personal development</li> </ul>	
29.0320	<p><b>Date of next meetings</b></p> <p>Next Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> April 4pm Governor CPD 5pm FGB meeting on School Improvement</p> <p>Governors meetings will continue, despite the virus, until the schools are closed by the government. If the school closes, every child will get a learning pack and contact details for the head teacher who will contact parents when the school is re-opening.</p>	

Signed:

Dated: