



Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body on 10 th December 2019 at 5.30pm in the School Hall	Action by /or decision
1. Present: Chris Pleeth (Chair of meeting), Ali Bachelor, Kim Greenslade, Sarah Hancock, Stephen Meredith, Daniel Moncrieff and Barbara Stokes Apologies for absence: Jo Griffiths (family commitment) agreed absence In attendance: Ruth Cook (Clerk) Conflict of business interests: SH Item 11. The meeting was quorate. CP welcomed the governors to the meeting.	
2. BUSINESS	
There was one amendment to the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2019 and they were approved by the Governors and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: Actions taken KG has almost finished updating the school website. The SEN and Complaints policies are already on the website. The information requested in the Head Teacher's report will be included in the Autumn term's report to be presented to the next governors meeting. AB and KG have met to discuss where funding is needed and possible funding sources. KG has set some priorities for the school and AB will be seeking external funding during the Spring and Summer terms. She will report back to the governors meeting as required. RC had checked that governors' details are correct on the school website. She has also updated the Governance page on the GIAS website. KG has been advised by the School Finance Officer(SJH) that it is not possible to have a secure area on the school website for governor papers. Governors should use OneDrive but this has not proved very easy to use. It may be possible for some training to be provided. RC had resent details of the OFSTED training for governors after the last meeting. SM had prepared his part of the article for LINK magazine but it had not been finalised. KG And BS to do this for the next available issue. RC to resend email with the report so far. All other Matters Arising are on the agenda.	KG/BS RC
3. KEY ITEM – BOOK SCRUTINY	
KG had brought in 3 writing books from each year group for the governors to look at. She asked the governors to look at the progress made from the beginning of term to the latest piece of work for each year and also to look at the progress from Year 1 to Year 6. As an example, Year 1 progress could be seen in the standard of writing and spelling and Year 6 could be seen through the vocabulary used. The governors then tried to rank the work in order.	

KG explained to the governors that the older children self-mark their work and then the teacher also marks it. Feedback is therefore provided promptly. She said that it is harder to measure progress with the new curriculum as the school are now measuring progress from the start of school life until a child leaves rather than with set levels as before. The governors and KG discussed the progress of pupils and standards attained. She suggested that the governors do this again with the science work at the end of the Spring Term. CP asked that KG pass on to the teachers the governors thanks for providing this information and for all their hard work. He asked the governors what would make that exercise more meaningful for governors and any suggestions should be made directly to KG.	All
4. MONITORING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT /SE & Strategic Planning	
KG provided a Priority sheet for governors which links into the full plan issued last time. These priorities will be included in the Head Teacher's report for the autumn term. She reported that the INSET days so far this year have focussed on the curriculum. For Science the school are using knowledge organisers which have been adapted for their own use. She has met the HLTAs to discuss RE, Computing and PHSE. History is the next subject for which knowledge organisers are being introduced which will allow for more thorough assessment. The governors felt that this sheet was very helpful and the "missing piece" from the information provided before. KG emphasised that the priority sheet has to be looked at with the full plan and details there. CP asked if the staff are aware of these priorities. KG replied that the staff are in agreement about this. She has been having fortnightly meetings with the staff but this has not proved practical so she will be returning to weekly meetings from January. CP asked if KG was satisfied with the progress to date and KG replied yes that the processes in place are working well. CP asked when it could be looked at in more detail and KG replied that there will be a lot more detail in her Head Teacher's Autumn term report. The next governors meeting will be focussed on this report and she will be having meetings with all staff before the end of term. CP asked if governors could send questions about the report in advance of the meeting and KG replied that it is always helpful to have notice of any questions. AB commented that we need to work out the governors monitoring role and suggested that after the February half term might be a suitable time. KG agreed that meetings could be held during the 2nd half of the spring term so that governors can report back to the meeting on 31st March 2020. DM asked if it would be helpful for governors to attend meetings or other events in school relating to their area of the plan before 31st March. KG replied that she will let each governor know who they should be contacting for their area of the plan. RC to reissue details of this.	All to note All to note RC
5. STATUTORY DUTIES	

<u>Recruiting governors</u> - RC had arranged for the Parent Governor election to take place with the deadline of 6th December 2019. Sadly no nomination papers had been received and neither she nor any other governor had received any enquiries about the role. RC had followed up the enquiry from the June election but that person is currently unavailable. The governors were disappointed with this outcome and CP reminded them that governors had attended parents' evenings to try to encourage some interest and we have held two elections during the year with no nominations each time. RC will report this outcome on the school newsletter in January and emphasise that parents currently have no voice on the governing body. She will also ask for comments and advice at the next Clerks Briefing. RC had contacted the Diocese for advice about recruiting a Foundation and Ex-Officio governor but had received no reply. She will follow this up. SH left the meeting at 6.30pm <u>The Register of Business Interests</u> had been prepared. This was signed by the Chair. <u>Skills Audit</u> – This has been completed. CP will identify our specific skills needs and send this to governor services for their advice and action. (We have one co-opted vacancy) <u>Impact Statement</u> – CP had completed the Impact Statement and this had been issued. There were some minor changes to be made and he will then re-issue it to all governors. The governors felt that this was a worthwhile exercise and a good summary of all that is done.	RC RC CP CP
6. FINANCE	
CP reported that there was not much to report and that the month 6 finance report has been issued to all governors. The predicted overspend at this point of the year is £13K but it is not possible until month 9 when more information is available, to make a more accurate assessment. He reported that the detailed month 9 report will be going to the Finance committee along with plans to ensure that there is a balanced budget for the year end. DM asked if the month 9 report will be available in January and CP replied yes and that the committee will be having an additional meeting to consider this as soon as the figures are available. KG reported that the planned meeting with the Council's Finance Officer has been cancelled as they would charge £500 for a ½ day visit. She and SJH will look at the information themselves in detail. KG reminded governors of figures for 2018/19 and how these had changed at year end. She also reported that staffing costs for 2019/20 will be higher than expected due to an unexpected increase in pension contributions not budgeted. CP explained that there are no guarantees about specific situations but we should	

have a plan in place in case of a difficult financial circumstance arising. KG confirmed that any overspend would need to be repaid in the next financial year which creates difficulties then. SM also added that overall costs were linked with the impact of the Pre-School situation. KG felt that the Council's Finance staff tend to look at "worst case" scenarios for budgeting which can then be adjusted. AB asked why last year's actual figures had been so different from the predicted totals. CP and KG gave reasons for this and AB commented that she felt sympathy for the staff working with inconsistent budgets. KG replied that she and SJH do go through all the figures monthly but information provided is not always constant. CP added that it is very frustrating for school staff and governors as detailed information is held by SCC but the details are not always passed on as needed. He recapped last year's situations and the actions taken. AB asked about the standard of SCC Finance staff and KG considered that our current Financial Advisor was helpful. DM asked what is the current balance and KG replied that it is £3K. She had not reduced class budgets and income from the PTFA is still due to be received. The month 6 contingency figure stood at £2K so there is a small balance there. CP added that it is very difficult to manage or influence the budget as 80% of costs are staffing and there is very little flexibility in the school structure to change this. AB asked if the school could follow up about Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) income not being allocated to individual schools even though they bear the costs of staff being sick. Could this be challenged? DM considered SSP to be a very small percentage of the overall budget but AB felt all income was vital. CP agreed that as a percentage it is not a huge amount when running a business but for a school to repay £10K there is an impact. DM felt that predicting a budget to within 2% of accuracy is very difficult. KG gave details of possible savings in 2020/21 and she is meeting SJH on 11th December to look at all the details again. CP felt it was unsatisfactory to make plans to deal with a predicted loss which then did not happen and changes made which subsequently had to be reversed. Governor Allowances and Expenses Policy – this had not been issued and will be carried over to the January meeting. Premises Plan – KG said that she had no formal report but the school has received a grant for decorating the outside of the building. She had hoped this could have been done in the summer but it is still to be done. CP asked if a list of building priorities could be prepared and issued to all governors. KG will update her current list and issue this to all governors.	KG
7. SAFEGUARDING	
There were no Safeguarding incidents to report. KG reported that there is a new Safeguarding Audit to complete. She will do this and meet with BS and BS will then report to the meeting on 31/03/20. BS confirmed that the audit has to be completed by 3rd March 2020.	
8. HEALTH AND SAFETY	

SM had no update for this meeting. KG reported that a grant had been received to put up a fence around the pond. When this is done, the pond can then be used safely. CP asked about planting a hedge around the pond but KG replied that this was considered too much work to keep the hedge trimmed.	
9. POLICIES	
<u>Admission Arrangements</u> - The School follows SCC's Admission Policy so there is no policy as such to approve. The link to this was issued prior to the meeting and the governors agreed to continue to use this policy. SCC administers this policy. <u>Safeguarding Children</u> – issued prior to the meeting. This again is SCC's policy which has been personalised for the school. The governors agreed to adopt this policy. The Safeguarding Governor (BS) monitors compliance with this policy. <u>Home/School agreement</u> – this had not changed and so was not reissued to governors. <u>Equality Policy and Statement</u> – issued prior to the meeting. The objectives had been updated using policies used across Taunton and an example provided by Mark Bradford as employee of a Trust. The governors accepted the objectives. The SEN governors (AB & BS) will monitor this in future. CP asked about the governors' role with policies and if we are monitoring them. KG replied that the governors are doing so through individual governors or committees as appropriate. DM asked if KG had procedures for including other faiths and cultures and KG replied that Katherine Taylor includes this in RE e.g. the children have had visits to a mosque and other faith venues. BS reported that this topic had come up at her recent training with the Diocese and the school is doing well in this area. DM asked if there had been any racist language in the playground and KG replied that there had been no such issues. The school has no different ethnic groups at this time. SM asked if equality matters could influence admissions to the school and KG replied that this is dealt with by SCC and she has no influence in this. She reported that the school had held a Windrush workshop last school year with the older children which they had enjoyed. She said that if any such issues did occur then they would be dealt with immediately.	
10. TRAINING	
BS reported on the Chairs Briefing she and CP had attended on 19th November 2019. There were four main areas included: OFSTED new framework, GIAS (Get Information about Schools), Confidential Minutes and Associate Members. She gave full details of the information provided. Under OFSTED, the governors' role will be assessed as monitors in the Leadership/Management section.	
11. AOB	

Confidential minute from meeting 12th November and 20th November 2019 taken at this point. The outcome of the Parent Governor election will be reported in the school newsletter. KG will be conducting a staff interview in January and will need a governor present. BS and SM were able to do this. BS asked if a governor could read the lesson at the Church Carol Service on 22nd December. AB was able to do this. AB reminded the governors that SSE Governor Services had recently won an award for their team. All the governors agreed this was well deserved. The Chairs will write to Ann Adams and send our congratulations. The meeting ended at 7.35pm	RC CP/BS
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10: Date of next meeting: Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 5.30pm

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY

Actions from Previous Meetings

09/07/19	KG to amalgamate the queries from the website questionnaire and update the website as required. Also, the SEN and Complaints policies to be shown on the school website.	KG	In autumn term
09/07/19	KG to include staff changes only in the HT report in future. The list of all staff will be an Appendix Also KG will provide details about the Bradford Scale table shown	KG	At December meeting
24/09/19	AB to look for External Funding for books, tables & chairs and improving the garden area	AB	During the autumn term
24/09/19	All governors to return their completed Business Interest forms to the Clerk - Done The Clerk to prepare the Business Interest Register	RC	For December meeting
24/09/19	RC to make sure that the school website and GIAS have the correct Governance information	RC	For December meeting
12/11/19	KG to check if a secure Governors Page can be set up on the school website so that shared documents can be accessed there	KG	By next meeting
12/11/19	RC resend details of training for OFSTED visits	RC	As soon as possible
12/11/19	RC to contact the Diocese for help in recruiting a Foundation governor and ex-officio governor	RC	By the next meeting
12/11/19	RC to update the letter issued to Parents about	RC	As soon as possible

	the election and also follow up previous enquiries		
12/11/19	SM has prepared his section of the article. RC to resend this to KG & BS KG and BS to prepare an article for the next edition of Link magazine to help recruit a new governor	RC KG & BS	As soon as possible For next Link magazine
12/11/19	The Impact Statement to be finalised and brought to the next meeting	KG/BS/RC	For December meeting
NEW ACTIONS			
10/12/19	Any suggestions about the Book Scrutiny exercise to be made directly to KG for next time	All	For March meeting
10/12/19	RC to reissue details of monitoring the SE plan	RC	As soon as possible
10/12/19	RC to report outcome of Parent Governor election in next school newsletter	RC	1 st newsletter of the Spring term
10/12/19	RC to contact the Diocese again about recruiting a Foundation and Ex-Officio governor	RC	For January meeting
10/12/19	CP to follow up the Skills Audit and contact Governor Services about recruiting a co-opted governor	CP	For January meeting
10/12/19	CP to make minor changes to the Impact Statement and reissue it to all governors	CP	Before next meeting
10/12/19	KG to update Premises Plan and issue it to all governors	KG	For January meeting
10/12/19	The Chairs to write/email Governor Services to congratulate them on their recent award	CP/BS	Before next meeting