



Dr South's CE Primary School

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Nurture, Educate, Inspire

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Minutes of the Local Governing Body (LGB) meeting held on Thursday 18th March 2021 at 7pm using Zoom

<u>Present:</u>	Calum Miller (CM) [Foundation], Chair Kathryn Campbell (KC) [Foundation] Jon Conibear (JC) [Foundation] Rob Dallison (RD) [Foundation] Liz Halsey (LH) [Staff] Steve Hayes (SH) [Foundation], until 8pm Huw Morgan (HM) [Headteacher] Jonathan Nicholl (JN) [Foundation] Matthew Nicholson (MN) [Foundation], from 7.30pm Ruth Sibly (RS) [Foundation] Helen Watson (HW) [Co-opted]
<u>In attendance:</u>	Bryony Thomas (BT), Clerk
<u>Apologies:</u>	Mandy O'Sullivan (MOS) [Parent], Hannah Penwarden (HP) [Parent]
Confirmation of Quorum - Quorum was met	

No.	ITEM	ACTION
1	Welcome and opening prayer CM welcomed everyone and SH opened the meeting with a prayer.	
2	Receipt of apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Mandy O'Sullivan and Hannah Penwarden.	
3	Declaration of any new interests including related party transactions (RPTs) There were no new declarations of interest. No RPTs were declared.	
4	Review of the RPT register There were no RPTs to review.	
5	Notification of any urgent business HM to correct an error of fact from the recent FPP meeting in item 11.	
6	Approval of the minutes from the previous LGB meeting held on 4th February 2021* These were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. CM to leave a signed copy at school.	CM
7	Discussion of matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:	

Certified true copy of minutes.....

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7.1	Strategic planning and curriculum review HM is to work on curriculum development over the Easter holidays. CM will liaise with HM for a suitable date early in the summer term to discuss strategic planning within the context of the new curriculum , and the date will be advertised for any governors interested.	CM/HM
8	Update on school's current position including discussion of ways to support pupils on their return and the use of Covid catch-up funds The school reopened on 8th March, and almost all pupils are regularly attending. A strict four-bubble system is in operation, with minimal crossover at lunchtime (there are not enough staff to avoid this altogether). The lockdown has led to high levels of anxiety in a sizeable minority of pupils, and even normally resilient children are currently very easily upset. Some pupils appear to have lost their ability to make decisions. Staff and parents too seem more fragile than after last year's closure. Playtimes were initially challenging as pupils had 'forgotten' how to play with one another. However, the situation has improved, and the new play equipment has helped with this. The money received to date for Covid catch-up is being focused on helping Years 5 and 6, though it is also used elsewhere in the school. The funding has been allocated to the staff carrying out the additional support, and new funds have not been received or announced. LH is repeating the Stirling assessment that was completed in October to assess emotional wellbeing and how pupils compare with the results at the start of the academic year. Appropriate support for individuals or groups of pupils can then be put in place. The results of the assessment will be analysed next Tuesday. <i>Q: By May, you will have identified children needing support and put it in place. Do you expect children to be back to where they were emotionally 15 months ago by the end of the summer term?</i> <i>A: We don't know.</i> <i>Q: You compare the scores from the assessment against the previous results and also the norm. What is the norm? Do we know how other schools are doing?</i> <i>A: The norm is the standardised expectation for age, but it would be useful to know whether other schools have used this assessment tool in a similar way and to compare results. LH will look into this.</i> Governors discussed what they could do to support the school community, and it was agreed that parents should be encouraged to contact the school with any concerns about their children, either now or arising from their time spent home schooling. The use of a parent questionnaire was also discussed. The customary annual parent survey, carried out in this term, has been side-lined this year, but it was agreed that it could be carried out in the summer term. The T&L meeting on 5th May will finalise the questions. Staff were thanked for their enormous efforts over the last term.	LH T&L
9	Receive and discuss report from T&L* The minutes had been circulated, and SH was asked to pick out anything of	

	particular note. Governors had been staggered at the efforts put into the online learning, and impressed at its effectiveness. Assessment data is not readily available, but it is thought that pupils are generally behind in maths, with some topics not covered. SH and HW will audit maths work along with handwriting. There were no safeguarding issues, and staff health and safety and wellbeing were discussed as well as those of pupils. Pupils were in good spirits following the return to school, so it is interesting to note the concerns now. <i>Q: When can governors return to visiting the school? Non-parent governors in particular, can feel very disconnected from the school.</i> <i>A: At present, though legally permissible, it is right governors should not come into school. After Easter, it should be acceptable for governors to come in after school to look at books and to complete the governor health and safety walkabout. Where contact is easy using Zoom or Teams, for discussions on finance for example, the contact should remain remote.</i> It was agreed that if there is another term where governor visits are not recommended, some form of light touch connection needs to be considered	
10	Review SIAMS No recent developments in SIAMS have been made. MN joined the meeting at this point.	
10.1	Report on upskilling required in religious education (RE) teaching LH has met with staff to plan the teaching of RE, and resources have been purchased. The school now has videos giving an overview and walkthrough of significant stories from the Old Testament, to increase staff knowledge. Review of the RE curriculum will make clear what teachers are required to know. <i>Q: Do pupils know all the key stories from the Bible by the time they leave?</i> <i>A: They should do. The stories are all covered. In addition to their central role in the Christian faith, they also underpin Western culture.</i>	
11	Receive and discuss report from FPP* Five highlights were cited from the recent meeting: • Budget monitoring – period 5 monitoring showed an improvement in the financial position of the school compared with the worst-case scenario following the finishing of the Bletchington joint working. • The benchmarking document from ODST showed three areas where the school deviates from the norm, but these are not unexpected due to our unusual staffing structure funded by additional money. Overall the school's spending is on a par with other schools. • The draft budget was reviewed – this will be discussed further in item 13. • Results from the staff welfare survey had been reviewed, and there had been a full range of responses. The overall judgement is that teachers enjoy their job, and the principal problem is a lack of face to face contact. • The health and safety audit had scored the school at 100% in all areas. The correction needed (raised in item 5) was that at the meeting it was reported that one-third of staff were taking the lateral flow tests. However, this should be corrected to about one-third of staff were at the time reporting results from lateral flow tests, but almost all staff are now taking the tests and reporting them.	

11.1	Update on replacement for school business manager The position of school business manager was discussed in detail at the FPP meeting. It was agreed that the school did not need an experienced school business manager as well as an experienced non-teaching head. HM will take on some aspects of the role, while other aspects will be given to a less experienced member of staff at a more junior level than Katie Rayner had been. The appointment is likely to be internal, as the school is reducing staff numbers, as seconded staff return from Bletchington. Governors expressed the concern that HM may become tied up by time-consuming tasks, as previously when he was responsible for the school business manager role. However, governors were assured that staff are being trained to take on such tasks.	
12	Staff wellbeing The last year has been very hard on staff. Working all day with children, and with adult contact reduced to a minimum, can have a large impact on wellbeing. Staff working within bubbles work closely together, but this will bring additional problems when the bubbles are finally integrated. The T&L meeting had discussed the isolation, in particular, of teaching assistants (TAs) and the lack of any meeting for them. Governors discussed the problem, and raised various suggestions – use of the sensory garden, the church or Lin Cooper Practical Skills Building for meetings, use of technology and evening meetings with overtime. HM will continue to work on solutions to the issues of meetings for TAs and the isolation of all staff.	
12.1	Discuss means to ensure staff have break over Easter and the summer Governors would like staff to take a break, but are aware this is an operational matter, and there is little they can do. It is hoped a break will come naturally. Governors questioned when HM would be able to mix with pupils – at the moment he forms a bubble with LH and office staff – and this led to discussion of when bubbles would cease. At the moment, they are recommended to ensure any positive case of Covid within the school means isolation of just a section of the school with their teacher, and provision will be online. The guidance is due for review in 10 days, which may mean a change to guidelines after Easter. It was agreed that the bubble system, though logical, comes at a cost and it may be that the balance in risk will shift to allow an easing of the restrictions. Any change will need to be carefully communicated to staff. SH left the meeting at this point.	
13	Review of first draft of budget* The budget is still in early form, as there are key variables yet to be finalised, such as the cost of maternity cover. However, the draft has been looked at by ODST's bursar service, and is as up to date as possible. IO1 shows the funds delegated by the local authority from September 2021-August 2022. In the 3-year plan, it can be seen that funding decreases in the year 2023-2024, when the compensation	

	for increased teacher pension fund contributions ceases. High needs top up funding (I03) also ceases in that year when the supported pupil leaves the school. I13 shows funding from the Trust fund. Expenditure on teaching staff increases year on year, but spending on support staff decreases in Year 2 of the plan. Other expenditure numbers are taken from this year, with inflation added. Over the 3 years, the very small positive balance in the first year becomes a £12,000 deficit in the third year. However, with the uncertainties in funding, ODST require a balanced budget in the first year only. Funding for Forest School is included, with adequate but not generous levels of support staff. All classes have a TA and the school also employs higher level TAs which keeps supply teacher costs down. The budget will require further refinement. Normal numbers for Reception have been assumed, with more cautious numbers for Nursery pupils. The funding per pupil will be £3192, up from this year's £2920. <i>Q: What are the assumptions for the clubs, and do they bring in much money?</i> <i>A: Clubs bring in a large amount of money. This year the school has been hit three ways for income, with the Bletchington partnership ending early, the very low Nursery numbers and the reduced money from clubs. The budget assumes that revenue from clubs will go back to pre-pandemic levels.</i> <i>Q: When we are presented with the final budget, will we be able to have this year's budget as the first column to make comparisons easier?</i> <i>A: Yes. HM will add this as an additional column.</i> <i>Q: In E03, expenditure on support staff decreases in the second year and then increases in the third year. Why is that?</i> <i>A: It is not clear. HM to check these numbers, which may include an error.</i> Governors then discussed the changes made to the funding of schools. All the sweeteners for the changes are thought to be removed from next year, and it is not known when the reduction in the MFG (the Minimum Funding Guarantee) will take effect. It was agreed that it is important ODST is aware of all the changes being made. As a MAT, it is better able to campaign against the changes than single schools. However, the trust has no earlier notice of funding than schools. <i>Q: Who has responsibility for the budgets and ensuring they balance?</i> <i>A: The chief finance officer of ODST. ODST have no funding of their own. Anything that affects the schools, affects ODST. Pupil numbers determine approximately two-thirds of the school's funding.</i> It was agreed that FPP should track when the additional pension support and the minimum guarantee of pupil funding are to be removed. The budget will be further developed over the next few weeks, and HM will hold a surgery for any interested governors to look at it in much more detail. HM and the FPP committee were thanked for their care of the school's finances, particularly in view of the fact that many schools cannot make their first year balance.	HM HM FPP HM
14	Discussion of summary of governor views on ODST LGB effectiveness and skills	

	audit* Concrete actions had been added to the summary document at governors' request, and these are highlighted in yellow. • Governors can request time to think, if needed, before making a decision (where practical) • It is hoped to revive the staff/governor summer social event, and a volunteer to coordinate the event is required. • Governors felt the Target Tracker PowerPoint training presentation circulated by HW was very clear and easy to understand. Governors wanting further training should contact HW. Governors should note that Target Tracker cannot be accessed from Macs, but only from Windows systems. • A volunteer is sought to work with CM and BT on governor induction. • Any governors interested in being linked with a class should contact CM or BT. • A small working group is planned, to build up expertise in recruiting senior leaders, for preparation for the future.	All govs
15	Update on Governor training to be completed before May meeting No training has been undertaken recently. Provision of courses is sporadic. BT to upload training programmes on GovernorHub when available.	BT
16	Receive revised scheme of delegation, with statement of intent, and discuss implications* The scheme of delegation is a carefully drawn up quasi contractual document between ODST and Dr South's, which was carefully considered before the school agreed to academisation to ensure all authority was not swept away from the governing body. This document is updated occasionally, and a revised version has recently been circulated. The school currently has 8 foundation governors. The revised scheme changes this to 7 foundation governors and 1 community governor, which was the school's original arrangement before academisation. CM's term of office is due for renewal shortly, and it was proposed that he becomes the new community governor. The revised scheme also tightens up the language with regard to staff governors, and now allows only 1 member of staff to be on the governing board, along with the headteacher, who is a de facto member. This affects HW, whose term of office as a co-opted governor ends in September. However, as co-headteacher she will join HM as a de facto member from September. The additional clauses within Dr South's original scheme concerning the involvement of the PCC in 4 foundation governor positions have been reinserted, with the agreement of ODST. <i>Q: Can ODST provide a list of the changes made? It is a lengthy document to get to grips with.</i> <i>A: This can be asked for.</i> <i>Q: What would happen if we didn't want to agree to any of the changes?</i> <i>A: ODST are in charge and their directors have legal and financial responsibility for the school. They could suspend the scheme of delegation and take over the school. However, the LGB has always had good relations with ODST and it would</i>	BT

	<i>be hoped that we could enter into negotiation with them over any changes that we might want to make.</i> Governors agreed that the LGB should use a meeting to become more familiar with the scheme and it was agreed that the November LGB meeting would be a good point in the year to review the key elements of the scheme and ensure a common understanding of the school's formal relationship with ODST. <i>Q: What is the difference between a foundation and community governor?</i> <i>A: The addition of a community governor role allows diversification, as unlike the foundation governor, the community governor does not have to have a live connection with church and a Christian faith.</i> Governors were happy to accept the new scheme of delegation. <i>Q: Do we need to audit the scheme to ensure we carry out our obligations?</i> <i>A: Tim Fox, a previous chair, did a lot of work on the scheme and the committee terms of reference to ensure that our duties were carried out. Now would be a good time to review this work.</i> Concerns were expressed about a section on health and safety, and the concerns will be sent to CM. CM will find the work completed by Tim Fox, and compare it with the new scheme.	CM
17	Update on safeguarding and confirmation that all SmartLog safeguarding training completed by governors RS has not completed another check since the last LGB meeting as it has been agreed that she should complete one check per term. There are no safeguarding issues to note at this meeting. Two governors have yet to complete the SmartLog safeguarding training. HM to contact them.	HM
17.1	Confirmation of new deputy safeguarding lead (DSL) Katie Rayner is not being replaced and the school has enough DSLs.	
18	Update on health and safety MN has completed an audit of the school risk assessments. SmartLog has proved an excellent tool.	
19	Any other business None was raised.	
	Meeting closed at: 9pm.	
	Dates of next meetings: LGB – Thursday 20th May at 7pm (Tues 20th July) T&L – Wednesday 5th May at 5pm (12th July) FPP – Thursday 6th May at 7.30pm (Tues 6th July)	

*Indicates documents are associated with this item. *Italic text highlights governor questions, and the answers given.*
Bold text highlights action points arising from the meeting.

Quorum required: At least 5 governors, one of whom should be a Foundation LGB Member.

Action points arising from the meeting

CM to leave a signed copy of the minutes of the LGB meeting held on 4th February 2021 at school.

CM will liaise with **HM** for a suitable date to discuss strategic planning within the context of the new curriculum.

LH to investigate whether other schools have used the Stirling assessment tool in a similar way and compare results.

T&L, at their meeting on 5th May, will finalise the questions for the annual parent survey, to be carried out in the summer term.

HM will add this year's budget as the first column in the final budget presentation to make comparisons easier.

HM to check the numbers for E03.

FPP to track when the additional pension support and the minimum guarantee of pupil funding are to be removed.

HM to hold a surgery in a few weeks' time for any interested governors to look at the budget in much more detail.

All governors to look at possible volunteering opportunities in item 14.

BT to upload training programmes on GovernorHub when available.

BT to ask ODST for a list of the changes made to the Scheme of Delegation.

CM to find the work completed by Tim Fox, and compare with the new scheme to ensure all required duties are covered.

HM to contact the two governors who have not completed SmartLog safeguarding training.