



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 Monday 15th May 2023 at 7pm at school

<u>Present:</u>	Kathryn Campbell (KC) [Foundation], Chair David de Mestre (DM) [Parent], from 7.15pm Eamonn Gearon (EG) [Foundation] Liz Halsey (LH) [Staff] Steve Hayes (SH) [Foundation] Lavinia Janke (LJ) [Co-Opted] Filiz McNamara (FM) [Parent] Calum Miller (CM) [Community], from 7.50pm Huw Morgan (HM) [Co-Headteacher] Hannah Penwarden (HP) [Foundation] Alastair Searle (AS) [Foundation] Helen Watson (HW) [Co-Headteacher]
<u>In attendance:</u>	Bryony Thomas (BT) [Clerk]
<u>Apologies:</u>	Jon Conibear (JC) [Foundation]
<u>Absent:</u>	Jonathan Nicholl (JN) [Foundation]
Confirmation of Quorum - Quorum was met	

No.	ITEM	ACTION
1	Welcome and opening prayer KC welcomed everyone and thanked governors for their participation in the focussed discussion groups of the previous LGB meeting. SH then opened the proceedings with a prayer.	
2	Receipt of apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Jon Conibear. DM and CM had notified the LGB that they would be late.	
3	Declaration of any new interests including related party transactions (RPTs) There were no new declarations of pecuniary interest.	
4	Review of the RPT register There were no new RPTs to review.	
5	Notification of any urgent business None was raised.	

6	Approval and signing of the minutes from the previous LGB meeting held on 27th March 2023* The minutes were approved, with no amendments, and signed as a true record of the meeting.	
7	Discussion of matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere	
7.1	Update on website revamp Governors have previously discussed the changes needed to the website, with testimonials from pupils and parents and updated photos to be added over the summer. A promotional leaflet will be produced ready for the autumn. HM to send KC the pupil questionnaire summary for potential further quotes.	HM/KC
7.2	Update on governor biographies and photos on website This is an ongoing process, with some governor details already updated on the website. Governors to send a brief biography and photograph to HM. The photographs will also be included in the rolling footage to be shown on a screen in the foyer.	Govs
7.3	Update on addition of artwork to foyer to emphasise Christian focus of school The plaque from ODST, given when Dr South's became an academy, will be put on display, and quotes are being sought for two versions of a feature wall for the foyer.	
7.4	Update on governor letter to local MP raising concerns about school funding Governors had written to the local MP John Howell about concerns over the budgetary crisis facing many schools, with rising costs not being met by a sufficient increase in funding. The letter was passed to the minister for education, Nick Gibbs, who responded pointing out the priority given to education by the current government in the autumn statement, with additional funding for schools in the form of the mainstream schools additional grant (MSAG). His letter will be circulated. The school's MSAG of approximately £15,000 is already included in the budget, which is only able to balance next year because of the additional funding from donors and trust funds. Governors will review the letter in more detail and consider whether to send a further letter. In response to the problem of recruiting support staff, particularly now that supermarkets are offering term-time only contracts, schools are now free to offer more than the government pay scales, though there is not the funding to enable this. There is ODST training on financial management for governors on 4th July and governors were encouraged to attend this course , which has previously been found to be very helpful.	FPP Govs
7.5	Recruit governors for small group to discuss evidence for Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) KC has already reviewed the SEF and suggested evidence for the leadership and management section. Once she has had feedback from HM and HW, she will circulate it more widely ready for July's LGB meeting.	KC

	DM joined the meeting at this point.	
7.6	Recruit governors to provide lunch for staff on Tuesday 5th September (INSET day) Governors are to take part in the morning session and then provide lunch for staff at the INSET day on 5th September in place of the summer social of previous years. HP and FM volunteered to organise the lunch, and further volunteers would be welcome.	HP/FM/govs
8	Discuss headteachers' written report* The report had been circulated and questions were sought. <i>Q: How did the SATS go?</i> <i>A: Really well, the Year 6 pupils did their best and were not fazed by the English paper discussed in the national media. The Year 2 SATS are taking place this week, but are kept very low key. The results will be available on 11th July and will be discussed at the Teaching & Learning (T&L) meeting on 13th July, before the LGB meeting on 17th July.</i> <i>Q: The predictions for age-related expectations in Year 6 are 80% for reading and 70% for writing and maths. Are you still happy with these?</i> <i>A: Reading may drop to 70% (each child is 10%).</i> <i>Q: One of Ofsted's points for further development from the previous inspection was to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, develop their subject-specific writing skills well across the curriculum. Is this happening?</i> <i>A: Not at the moment, and will be an issue for focus in the autumn, building in opportunities for pupils to show their writing skills across the curriculum whilst supporting those not able to do this.</i> <i>Q: The attendance figure for the term of 95.5% seems good compared with the national figure. Do you have any persistent absence or concerns with regard to attendance?</i> <i>A: An increasing number of holidays are being taken in term-time, and absence on Fridays is also becoming an issue.</i> Governors discussed the problem and agreed that it would be useful to look for guidance from ODST as to what their policy is. Most parents abide by the rules and the school would therefore prefer not to email too often about the issue. Parents are not currently fined for unauthorised absence. At present, the level of holidays in term-time is no worse than last year. Governors then discussed safeguarding and the number of cause for concern forms and team around the family (TAF) meetings. Staff are encouraged to complete forms, and a good number indicate that staff are alert and aware of their responsibilities. The escalation in number of TAF meetings indicates that more support is required, which is coordinated by LH. A referral to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) indicates an issue of concern. <i>Q: Under SIAMS, you refer to an online meeting with ODBE to evaluate current working practices. What was the purpose of this meeting?</i> <i>A: ODST commissioned ODBE to evaluate the partnership their schools have with the church. Rachel Woods from ODBE questioned both HM and the Revd Lucy about Dr South's relationship with the local church and a report has been</i>	

	<i>provided that will be reviewed at the T&L meeting next week. The relationship is a positive one, and the Revd Lucy led an assembly today at school to launch Christian Aid week.</i> <i>[SH, as Rector of the benefice, is very involved with the school, but was on sabbatical at the time of the report.]</i>	
9	Receive and discuss report from the Finance, Personnel and Premises (FPP) committee* The minutes of the April FPP meeting had been circulated. The main item discussed at the meeting was the significant potential budget deficit of around £60,000. There are two ways to address such a deficit – increase funding or reduce expenditure by cuts. The committee agreed that it would prefer to avoid cuts if at all possible. There has already been a cut in staff numbers by not replacing support staff who have left. The school is obligated to provide a balanced budget for the coming year, or ODST will impose the necessary cuts to ensure a balanced budget. The school's trust fund is a diminishing fund, and governors did not wish to draw down the whole of the budget deficit from the fund. HM and HW were therefore tasked with finding £30,000 from alternative sources, which they have now done. Money will be provided by the village trust fund, the Friends of Dr South's and private donors, and trustees of the Dr South's Trust Fund will be approached for the remaining money. It is hoped that further funding may be received from the government over the year and less money will be needed from the trust fund than expected. Governors expressed their very grateful thanks to all who had so generously donated the additional funds to achieve a balanced budget.	
10	Discuss and approve 3-year budget: 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26* The commentary provided by JC had proved very useful for governors reviewing the proposed budget. Staffing costs (teachers and support staff) have risen by around £45,000, though this has been reduced to £43,000 with minor changes to the staffing structure. The MSAG of approximately £15,000 covers only a third of the increase. In addition, year on year, income has reduced by approximately 3%, with costs rising by approximately 9%, which is why there is such a deficit without donations. The position over the next 2 years could worsen, and governors will review later this year what changes might need to be made from 2024 to reduce pressure on the budget, which will then be a focus topic for an autumn meeting. Governors discussed funding for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), shown in I03. The school has to pay the first £6000 of the cost of supporting a child 1:1 (previously, schools paid the first 15 hours/week). ODST has released additional funds to support schools, but this is likely to be distributed on an 'as needed' basis and it is unclear if Dr South's is likely to receive any of it.	

	The budget was unanimously approved and HM/HW were thanked for their work to prevent cuts to staffing levels.	
11	Review school action plan and governor monitoring* Several governors have now been into school to monitor progress on the school action plan and have completed yellow visit forms that have been uploaded onto GovernorHub. The meeting reviewed the three priorities with governors giving a brief summary of their findings from their monitoring visits. HM to update the action plan with their comments, for circulation with the minutes. All priorities are broadly on track and DM was thanked for his work in the school, together with a recommendation of an excellent handyman. CM joined the meeting at this point. Governors discussed the system of paper yellow forms for recording their monitoring visits, and suggested using Microsoft forms which can then be shared, and also added to GovernorHub. FM to trial the new electronic system. Governors were thanked for undertaking their monitoring visits. Their comments will be added to the action plan, which will then feed into the SEF. Governor monitoring is a powerful tool for informing governors, holding the school to account and providing a means of triangulation of results and actions.	HM FM
12	Discuss and propose admissions policy 2025/26* Although the policy was consulted on this year, ODST wish to synchronise the process for all of their schools, so Dr South's will need to hold another consultation in the autumn. The policy has to be submitted to ODST by September and governors were therefore asked to adopt the unchanged policy. Governors questioned the admission number of 15 and whether there is some flexibility in cohort numbers. Up to and including Year 2 have classes capped at 30, but Key Stage 2 classes have more flexibility, and if someone moves to the village the school tries to accommodate additional pupils where it can. The meeting reiterated the need to increase pupil numbers to ease the funding situation. The profile of the school needs to be raised, with details of its enrichment programme highlighted. FM to discuss the marketing of the school with HM/HW and further marketing expertise will be sought from the community. The policy was approved.	FM/HM /HW
13	Adopt revised ODST code of conduct for LGBs* The revised code of conduct was approved. All governors to confirm on GovernorHub that they will abide by the code.	All gobs
14	Receive update on safeguarding There is nothing significant to report since the March meeting. The school is	

	moving to CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System), but is currently running its paper-based system alongside the electronic version while it addresses teething issues. Once fully operational, it will be very useful, as information will easily transfer from other schools when pupils move.	
15	Receive update on health and safety There is nothing significant to report. DM was thanked again for his work within the school, and the governor monthly walkabouts continue.	
16	Update on governor visits and training undertaken Governor visits have already been discussed. SH has completed Prevent training. FM has completed induction training part A, with part B booked for Saturday 20 th May. ODST financial management training on 4 th July and SEN governor training on 8 th June were highlighted.	
17	Any other business All governors were invited to the May Day celebrations at school on Friday 19 th May from 9.45am. A 'think piece' from Ian Frost on how to support small schools in straitened times had been received. This will be circulated and reviewed at a future meeting. There will be governors leaving or coming to the end of their term of office at the end of the academic year. Anyone interested in the role should be encouraged to discuss this with the Chair, and a piece will be added to the Parish News to advertise the vacancies. It was suggested that colleges of education and the universities should be approached. The vacancies will be advertised on the school website and the link will be circulated within Oxford University.	FM
	Meeting closed at: 8.30pm.	
	Proposed dates of next meetings: LGB – Mon 17th July at 7pm T&L – Mon 22nd May at 5pm (13th July) FPP – Mon 3rd July at 7.30pm	

*Indicates documents are associated with this item. *Italic text highlights governor questions, and the answers given.*

Red 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

HM to send KC the pupil questionnaire summary for potential further quotes for the website revamp.

Governors to send a brief biography and photograph to HM.

FPP to review the letter from Nick Gibbs in more detail and consider whether to send a further letter.

Governors were encouraged to attend ODST training on financial management for governors on 4th July.

KC to circulate the updated leadership and management section of the SEF for comment.

HP/FM to organise the lunch for staff on Tuesday 5th September. Further volunteers needed.

HM to update the action plan with governor comments from their monitoring visits, for circulation with the minutes.

FM to trial a new electronic system for recording governor monitoring visits.

FM to discuss the marketing of the school with HM/HW and further marketing expertise to be sought from the community.

All governors to confirm on GovernorHub that they will abide by the revised code of conduct for governors.

FM to circulate link to governor vacancies within Oxford University.