



Full Governing Body

19th November 2020, 4.30 - 6pm, by Zoom

Minutes

1. Apologies

None; all present.

2. Conflicts of interest

None declared.

3. Minutes of meeting of 2 July 2020

Unanimously approved.

4. Matters arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda

5. Headteacher's report

Governors noted their appreciation of the huge amount of extra work done by staff (including part-time staff) during this further period of online learning, and the flexibility which everyone has shown to ensure that any gaps are covered. Camilla will write to teaching staff and TAs in the week of 23 November to thank them on behalf of the governing body.

Feedback on online learning has been overwhelmingly positive. Parents have commented that the lessons feel like normal lessons, and there has been 100% attendance. There has been some negative feedback and there are certainly further improvements that can be made, e.g. by standardizing the timetable and online lesson links, and by combining online learning with offline tasks. Lucy is leading the final curriculum shaping and developing individual subject leads.

6. Update on current arrangements in school – Covid-19 cases

The risk assessment is working well, and under current arrangements the virus has not spread.

7. Assessment systems

Initial training in SIMS has been mixed, although the system is working well enough and the IT support is good. Governors agreed that assessments should not be done until the end of term, once there has been further opportunity for catch-up and levelling out between those who have fared well and much less well during lock-down. The staff team expects a really robust system in place by the end of this year.

8. Buildings update

Governors noted that Local Authority officers including the local councillor have been very helpful in supporting efforts to replace temporary classrooms with more permanent structures, despite some initial attempts to install new modular buildings. In the meantime a survey is required to determine whether the current structures remain safe, as although some water ingress damage is visible the extent of this is unclear given the cladding and rendering. Efforts by the school and the LA to raise additional funding continue.

9. Instrument of Government and parent governor nominations

The current Instrument of Government, rules and vacancies were clarified and discussed in detail (including the inconsistency between articles 4 and 7). Governors agreed unanimously a revision to the Instrument to show 3 each of parent, foundation (including the incumbent / team vicar ex officio) and co-opted governors, 2 staff governors (including the headteacher) and 1 Local Authority governor.

Following an unsuccessful parent governor election process, Lyn was unanimously appointed as parent governor. As Orleton PCC's elected nominee, Liz Mackay was nominated as foundation governor, alongside Sallie Peacock (Brimfield PCC) and Matthew Burns (team vicar). Emma Morgan was unanimously co-opted as a governor. Two remaining co-opted governor places remain vacant. These could go for example to an interested parent or community member and to a member of the non-teaching staff (noting that up to 4 governors of the total 12 places can be staff members).

10. Governor areas of focus from Committee meetings

Sallie and Camilla will meet before the end of term to look at music in the school and how that's changing with Nicola and Beth. Lyn's link governor visit to Class 3 has been delayed by their isolation. Matthew is link governor for SEND and will arrange a visit when he is in school on Wednesday 25th November.

11. Safeguarding update

Adam and Camilla met on 18 November 2020 for a safeguarding update. Conversations continue with families where there are lower-level concerns, to ensure that these can be de-escalated before any further referrals are required. Zoom lessons with classes 3, 5 and 6 are mostly successful, but some recordings could not be published on the school's private YouTube website because of some behavioural concerns; Adam wrote to all parents to remind them of expectations, and behaviour has now improved.

Governors all confirmed that they had read the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education update, and have seen the safeguarding video which was sent as a private YouTube link.

The safeguarding audit was noted, with no significant concerns arising. Governors queried whether all staff are aware of child-on-child abuse (which has been added to peer-on-peer abuse given the potential power dynamics between pupils of different year groups), including upskirting, and insisted that training be provided in child exploitation, not only in regard to sexual exploitation but also exploitation e.g. through county lines. Governors requested that Adam write to all staff to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are being recorded, so that it is clear that lower numbers are evidence of good safeguarding practice and promotion and not of reduced reporting.

12. Update from Herefordshire Governors briefing

Governors noted key points from the briefing, including concerns about attendance (which is high at Orleton compared with the county average), Covid-19 case numbers (which are lower than in other areas, and of which at the time of the briefing there had only been one case in primary school), and health & safety. A significant report analysing health & safety in schools has been released, and governors noted the recommendation to have a link governor for health & safety and risk management.

13. Governor training opportunities

Governors noted both HGA and diocesan training opportunities, which will continue to be circulated as new opportunities emerge. For now these courses have moved online, which may facilitate attendance.

14. Pre-school link update including nomination of governor for Pre-school Committee

Governors noted that the pre-school constitution requires two school governors (not including the headteacher) to serve on the pre-school committee, and there is currently one vacancy.

The pre-school seems to be coping really well with the current situation, and is a happy and thriving community. Sallie and Tara will discuss in more detail the concerns about developmental aspects, e.g. improving differentiation in teaching and learning so that the more able children are challenged and stretched, which was noted in OfStEd's last visit.

Governors noted that work continues to get an EHCP in place for a child with significant SEN who will be joining school in January 2021.

Numbers are expected to increase in Spring and Summer terms as usual, so are not currently a cause for concern. However, Covid-19 closures have affected Fun Club, so after-school care income has been reduced.

15. School Food Company update

Governors expressed their appreciation for all that the school food company has been able to provide both during lockdowns and school opening, including to the wider community, and noted that reduced numbers in school, and changes to the VAT rules and furlough arrangements are having a negative impact on income, which may require changes to the staffing structure.

16. Any other business

Governors noted the discussions with the worship committee about the Biblical basis of the school's ethos, and agreed unanimously with the choice of rooting this in 1 Corinthians 16.13-14: Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. This is likely to be framed as "Stand true to what you believe", and governors welcomed the further elements of these verses around courage, strength, and love.

17. Dates of next meetings

Committee meetings : Thursday 11 February 2021 from 4pm

Full governing body : Thursday 25 March 2021 from 4:30pm