



Little Paxton School Governing Body

Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Monday 10th July 2017 at 6.30pm

Present:

Ellen Barrett	Co-opted Governor	Tracey Locke	Co-opted Governor
Penny Conway	Authority Governor	Oliver Poulain	Parent Governor
Neil Donoghue	Co-opted Governor	James Purser	Co-opted Governor
Richard Fairbairn	Parent Governor	Natasha Stott	Staff Governor
Diane Hawkes	Staff Governor/HT	Paul Warmington	Parent Governor
Graham Hiom	Co-opted Governor		
Rebekah Jenkins	Associate Governor	In attendance:	
David Jones	Parent Governor	Julie Zausmer (Clerk)	
Mike Kendall	Co-opted Governor		

1. Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from: Maria Button.
Gemma Manning was absent.

2. Declaration of Interests – none and no changes declared.

3. Minutes of the last FGB meeting 24/4/17 & matters arising

The Annual Parents Report – P Conway to action and send.
There no other matters arising from this: all other actions on this or other committee agendas.
Minutes approved.

4. Minutes of the Committees Evening 22/5/17 & matters arising

Site & Buildings – The ventilation for the kitchen has been sorted out. Fire drills are to be organized early next term once the new building is in use.

Finance – questions about carry-forward to be clarified with Rob Cottle (School Finance Adviser) – predicted 12000 more but dropped?

There are budget concerns if the numbers do not increase. The funding received is for children on roll – just over 300 at present which is only sufficient for 10 classes, not the 11 currently running. Next term we will have more children on roll (about 320) but will open another 2 classes to allow for growth as families move into the village.

Questions were raised regarding recognition of performance through pay allowances. Better communication to staff is needed regarding this. Personnel and Finance committees to decide how this will work in the future.

ACTION: Pay allowances linked to performance management to be on the Personnel and Finance agendas in the autumn term.

Personnel – P Conway left the room so her re-appointment could be discussed. M Kendall chaired this. It was asked if anyone had any reason why she should not continue. All the governors present agreed that she should continue. P Conway then returned to the room and was informed that everyone was in agreement of her continuing in post.

The Google poll that had been done regarding the Governor meetings with staff will need to be re-visited as there had been very few replies.

ACTIONS: Clerk to inform Cambs SGT of P Conway's reappointment. Meetings with staff to be added to next FGB agenda.

Curriculum & Standards – Several reports for Y1 and Y2 had been prepared regarding their progress. There had been much discussion about the content of these reports and what they did and did not show. One area which governors would like more information about is the progress of pupils in vulnerable groups. Not all KS2 data was shared. Yr 6 had been shown but in a different format. Yr 5 was available but had not been shared. Much time was spent explaining and discussing the concerns about this method of sharing data and reporting pupils' attainment against ARE (age related expectations). It is a Government requirement to the measures of below, at and above ARE and to use show it this way.

QU: was data for other year groups available even though it had not been shared at the meeting? There had been some confusion about what data was required from lower KS2 but that for upper KS2 was known. The leadership team has now got data for all year groups.

QU: Governors who had not been present at this meeting asked if the data showed that pupils are making expected progress. The answer was that the majority of pupils are on track to make expected progress.

QU: is there data for vulnerable groups? Why is it not shown? The data is always a struggle to produce in a way that is helpful to governors which was agreed by the members of the meeting. It was suggested that some assistance should perhaps be given regarding the data methods. E Barrett and D Jones agreed to work on producing a format for data sharing that would be useful to and understandable by governors but that did not create a lot of additional work for staff.

Concerns were expressed regarding the maths mastery that is being introduced. Some staff have said they lack confidence to do this. The HT said that the leadership team were aware of this and appropriate support would be given.

ACTIONS: E Barrett and D Jones to work on producing a format for data sharing.

All committee minutes approved.

Following the review of minutes of previous meetings the Chair noted that there are some strategic issues which governors need to be aware of going forward which she summarized as follows:

- Stabilising finances – we are currently running more classes than we are funded for – this is to allow for growth. If numbers do not increase significantly over 2017/2018 we might need to delay the opening of the 14th class (currently planned for September 2018).
- Pupil progress data – this needs to be reported to the C&S Committee in a timely way and in a format that includes all the relevant information so that it is accessible to governors. It may be necessary to review the dates of the meetings so they align better with the school calendar for collecting data.
- Performance management and pay incentives – the policy of paying allowances linked to PM was introduced some time ago and needs to be revisited in light of recent changes.
- Communication issues – as the school grows new methods will have to be found to ensure everyone (staff and governors) gets all the information they need in an effective and efficient way to avoid misunderstandings.
- Introduction of Middle Leaders – staff have been appointed and begun to take up these roles but this needs to be embedded so everyone, including parents, understand the new structure.
- Maintenance of the buildings – some areas now look a little “tired” compared to the new and will need upgrading (on a limited budget). A rolling programme for maintenance needs to be devised to avoid the future possibility of large amounts needing to be at the same time.

5. Head’s Report including:

School Development Plan (includes SEF and TOP)

Staff Update, including training

Pupil numbers update

Premises Update

Finance update

PPP Partnership

Copies of the HT's Report, the annotated TOP and the KS1 and KS2 SATs results were distributed to all governors prior to the meeting. The following points were discussed:

Currently, there are 306 children over 11 classes. This is an average of 27.8 children per class. Next year there will be 13 classes, 2 classes in each year group excluding Yr 6, and the average will be 24.3 children per class. This could lead to financial pressures (the "break-even" point is 26 or 27 pupils in a class). 97% of the funds for 2017/2018 have been spent on staff. This is not sustainable unless pupils numbers increase and has only been possible by using much of our carry-forward.

It was noted that the Finance committee need to ask some challenging questions and ask for options – something the Finance Chair is well aware of. It needs to be clearer what challenges there are and whether any additional funding may be available to support the growth in pupil numbers. A meeting with the Finance Adviser early next term was requested.

QU: When will it be possible to raise the PAN (pupil admission number per year) to 60? – September 2018 is the earliest date due to the need to consult.

QU: What are the legal constraints of class size? 30 for KS1 classes and no legal maximum for KS2, although 34 (or sometimes 35) is seldom exceeded. The catchment has not been as fast growing as anticipated which could affect the budget. There are some appeals for admission in September 2017 in progress. Of the applications for EYFS places this September all catchment children, whose parents wanted a place, were allocated but there were no allocations to out of catchment children. This is in order to ensure there are places for any families moving into the area later in the year. We expect to be allocated some more catchment children in the second round of allocations.

It was suggested that Rob Cottle should be contacted as soon as possible regarding modeling various possible scenarios into the future. It is now thought it may take another 4 years for places to fill up.

QU: a Planned Growth Fund has been mentioned in the past – could we receive funds from this? We could be eligible for this if growth in year has exceeded 26 pupils – it would be approximately £30K – which would help but not resolve the problem.

It was recognised that in order to grow there will inevitably be an element of risk. It is not intended to take children from other schools, governors agreed to increasing the size of the school in order to provide for catchment need. This year will be the worst year financially and the question is have we been premature in splitting classes? We need to stay close to the numbers and introduce more control.

The Maths Mastery programme will send 2 teachers to Shanghai next term to visit and observe in schools there. We are very fortunate that J Watts, our Maths Subject Lead and Maths Mastery Specialist, has been selected to go. This is a 2 week visit which is fully funded by the Maths Mastery programme and so does not impact on our budget. School also applied to host the corresponding event in the UK but another school was

selected for this. Some of our staff will however be able to visit and see demonstration lessons during that event.

PPP Partnership has run children's projects in music, art and PE. This was an opportunity for pupils to meet and work with those from other schools.

QU: Why was the PE aspect cancelled - the weather was far too hot. The Art aspect was amazing and very enjoyable – this included glass design. There was a STOMP workshop and presentation as well as claywork available. Staff felt it was a very worthwhile project: children and staff found the activities hugely enjoyable and the children were all fully engaged in their learning.

QU: Was removal of the mobile safely accomplished? There were some delays but the mobile classroom has now been removed. This was done without disruption to school.

QU: Is there any more information following the meeting with SWIFTS (out of school club) owner to ask if they would like to put a mobile on the premises? The proprietor of SWIFTS is looking at whether it would be viable to place a mobile in the grounds. County have asked to see any proposal that is forthcoming.

QU: If the school provided the mobile could we generate some income from it by renting it to her? We have got some quotes for doing this. Indications are that a mobile of the required specification would be too expensive to make this a workable option for us. SWIFTS have said that they would need to be assured of a long-term lease (at least 7 years) to make it a viable option for them.

Once we have details of what SWIFTS might propose this needs to be factored in to our plans going forward.

TOP

A review of the summer termly operational plan (TOP) was circulated prior to the meeting.

Most of the proposed actions for the term have been completed.

As already mentioned Maths Mastery has been introduced. It will be rolled out to the whole school next year. It is recognised that there is a lot more work to do on this but early indications are promising. The new build was an excellent opportunity to sort through all the resources in school and evaluate what is needed in the future.

All the Phase Leaders are now in place. They are enrolled on the NPQML course (National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders). Each has a project to be finished end of the autumn term – the final assessment is in February. The projects chosen are those that will be of direct benefit to the school. We believe these new roles will have a big impact on the school as leadership will be more widely distributed. The roles will evolve as the school continues to grow.

Wider leadership day with many styles – this was an amazing day as everything picked up was on the ‘wanted’ wish list. The time spent as a team was very beneficial and inspiring. All learnt how you can do the best job with the current staff and their skills. The whole SLT and all middle leaders were included. Unfortunately D Moffat and S England could not attend but it is hoped they can join a similar day being held in the autumn for Priory School.

QU: Was there an action plan? Yes and everyone learnt something very positive. Parts are already in place, for example Middle Leaders are looking at data, leading meetings and groups. Towards the end of their courses the Phase Leaders will evaluate their projects and the impact on the school’s priorities.

Another identified priority is to improve the teaching and learning of spelling and grammar in the lower school – this cannot be left until later on in the school.

KS1 and KS2 SATs results

These had been supplied to governors before the meeting.

Governors congratulated the school on the good set of results which, early indications show, are well above the national figures.

KS1 – Broadly similar to last year but a slighter lower percentage attaining at or above ARE (age related expectations) with slight increase in numbers attaining above ARE in reading and writing. Y2 SATs were moderated for Reading, Writing and Maths this year. This was done to a greater depth than previously. **QU:** Did we have targets or expectations? Yes, these were they based on these previous years data. Children performed well against these.

KS2 – we are delighted at results. **QU:** How does this compare to last year? An increase in the numbers attaining above ARE in reading, maths and SPAG. **QU:** Why the decrease in writing? This cohort have struggled more with the writing element of the curriculum but have all made progress from their starting points. **QU:** It is interesting that in many schools the scores for writing (which is teacher assessed rather than an external test) are higher than those for reading and maths – are we too harsh in marking here? The Y6 teacher is herself a moderator and applies the criteria very robustly. These figures are an accurate assessment of the children’s attainment. **QU:** How far below ARE are those children who didn’t attain ARE in reading? Two or three marks - one paper has been submitted to be re-marked. Progress measurement will be available in September. It has been a difficult year but we are very pleased with results - they are all above national figures and are excellent results.

QU: Given these results – why is all the effort on maths? What benefit does this give the school in terms of Reading and Writing? What is it going to do for the children and school? Maths Mastery is a government initiative and priority. There is good evidence that using this strengthens and deepens children’s learning and understanding in maths.

It was also reported that figures for EYFS are good and children have good levels of development. Results for phonics are also good.

QU: What would you put the school's successes down to? The teacher assessments and teaching methods that are used. Moderating is done more regularly and those identified as falling behind are given well targeted supported.

Further analysis will be possible in the autumn when more detailed data is available. This will be looked at by the C&S Committee.

6. Annual reviews:

- a. Monitoring of Provision of Information under the Freedom of Information Act – there was one request received this year. It was regarding the total amount of funding the school received last year and was answered with advice from the School Financial Adviser.
- b. Annual review of pupil attendance – the attendance of pupils up to end of May was 96.5% which is very good. The very few children whose attendance is low are followed up and supported.
- c. Exclusions – 1 child was excluded for a fixed term but has been successfully reintegrated into school. The child is receiving ongoing support.
- d. Child Protection Monitoring Report – the annual child protection and safeguarding report had been completed and was shared with governors. It did not raise any concerns.
- e. Review racist or homophobic incidents – none

7. Pupil Premium Expenditure

The school received £53,954 of Pupil Premium Grant in 2016/2017. The report of expenditure and impact had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The largest single item of expenditure was £18,000 on reading recovery. This is a programme, with a proven track record of success, to support children who have fallen behind in reading. The HT outlined the impact this has: all children on the Reading Recovery programme except one had made significant progress. One child has gone up by 3 band levels which is amazing progress. Children who have been on the programme made accelerated progress such that when they catch up with their peers they are no longer part of the reading recovery group.

QU: What happened to the child who did not make progress? Other interventions were put in place and there has now been progress.

A significant amount had also been spent on running the "Social Capital" group – this has been monitored throughout the year by 2 governors (E Barrett and M Button) – a full report will be available in the autumn. E Barrett reported that they could see over the course of the year that the children's levels of confidence had risen, their social interactions with others had improved and their resilience was greater.

Overall she felt the group had been very successful in what it set out to do although

it was recognized that it is a very expensive resource that benefits relatively few children.

QU: Should all amounts add up to the amount at the bottom? Yes, this will be checked.

8. School Meals Provider

There were 5 bids of which 3 were shortlisted. For the final selection the 3 shortlisted companies were invited to present their plans and to provide samples of meals on 6th July 2017. The HT, 2 lunchtime staff, the finance secretary and a governor looked at these plans. The day before one company pulled out completely. However, the other presentations went ahead as planned.

11 children and staff tasted all the food that was set up. Presentations were given showing guaranteed processes and standards. The companies explained what sort of food would be available on a daily basis. They would both save money. Edwards and Blake were the company selected. The “food tasters” said the quality was excellent and felt both children and staff would enjoy the food. There was a good variety of recipe choices and the food met the government nutrition guidelines. They would offer pick and mix option.

QU: Would the kitchen equipment need to be upgraded or maintained? Edwards and Blake have said they would make an investment of £8000 initially. There would also be a higher paid person in charge to manage trained staff and cook all meals from scratch.

The changeover would be after October half term. The administration system used by this company will relieve our office staff of some of their current workload in accounting for school meals.

9. HTPM panel

As previously agreed, E Barrett and P Conway will continue. D Jones is standing down from this but will stay to complete a handover. R Fairbairn will take his place as agreed. E Barrett will continue to chair the panel. A meeting with Nigel Battey (the external adviser) to review the past year and agree objectives for this year has been scheduled for 11/10/2017. D Jones was thanked for his work with HTPM.

10. Scheduled Review of Policies:

- a. Child Protection and Safe-guarding Policy – awaiting an update from the LA.

QU: Is there a policy covering mobile phone use at school? No, not specifically. We need to look at this in the autumn. It forms part of the policy for Acceptable use of Technology (which includes phones and apps, laptops, tablets etc and social media). The policy will need to refer to everyone’s use of ICT (that is staff, governors, visitors and pupils) both in and out of school.

- b. Equality Policy and Information – G Manning is looking at this on behalf of the Governing Body

ACTION: Add these policies to the next FGB agenda

11. Governor Attendance at Parents Evenings

Thank you to N Donoghue who has volunteered to attend the Open Evening on 11th July on behalf of governors and talk to parents about the new build.

12. Governor visits to school

School Council - T Locke and M Button met with the School Council. Report was circulated to governors. They said how welcoming the Council had been and how articulate the children were in explaining what they were doing and what they wanted to happen.

QU: Was this working and were they taken seriously? The children were able to explain what they felt the council had achieved that they were proud of.

QU: Why was there a governor visit? We wanted some way to engage with pupils. It would be good to invite a couple of the older pupils to a governors' meeting to hear them talk about the School Council as well as the key issues from the pupils' perspective.

QU: Do we need to increase governor engagement with pupils – should this purpose be agreed? We need to find effective ways to hear from not only pupils, but staff and parents too. We should be able to show we are here and serving the needs of staff and pupils.

Maths Mastery – several visits looking at the introduction and impact of this have been done by E Barrett and T Locke. A full report will be presented to the C&S Committee next term.

PE – a visit by O Poulain and P Warmington – a report was presented at the previous C&S Committee meeting – there may be an opportunity for follow visits next year.

Social Capital group – several visits have been made by M Button and E Barrett to monitor the impact of this group. A full report will be presented to the C&S Committee next term.

Impact of building work – N Donoghue has made many visits throughout the year including attending meetings with the builders and talking to staff. He reported that, during the whole project, the builders had been very courteous in informing staff well in advance of any work that was likely to cause any disruption. Such work had, in any case, been carried out outside school hours whenever possible. The staff and children are delighted with the new building.

Governor visits for 2017/2018 –

The following visits are to be held over until next year:

- Marking (follow-up visit) – D Jones and O Poulain
- Middle Leadership – Volunteers required

The following visits have been agreed for this year – volunteers are required:

- Communication – effectiveness of communication within school and between school and parents/carers and the wider community as the school grows. The precise remit for this visit will be decided at the next Personnel Committee meeting.
- Implementation of Maths Mastery across the school – a follow-up to the visit carried out in the summer term 2017

Further governor visits will be linked to the priorities in the TOP and other visits will be arranged as the need arises.

13. Curriculum Presentations for next year 2017/18

The following were agreed:

- Autumn term 2016 - Whole school data on pupil progress and achievement (using the replacement for RAISEonline which should be available in the autumn)
- Spring term 2017 – Maths Mastery
- Summer term 2017 - a curricular area taken from the SDP

14. Governor Training

Governors were reminded that the school subscribes to Cambs School Governance Team's training programme and that individual governors should book courses relevant to them. The programme for next term will be distributed when available (probably early in the autumn term).

15. Governing Body vacancies:

There will be a vacancy following the resignation of M Kendall. Consideration of any skills gap will be made at the next personnel Committee meeting.

16. Audit of Governing Body effectiveness

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Initials: Date:

The audit received this year from the Cambs School Governance Team is in a different format from previous years. It is intended solely for self evaluation and is not submitted to the Cambs SGT. The Chair had shared it with the Chairs of the Committees and some discussion has taken place. A completed audit was shown to all other governors and the following areas had been identified by chairs as requiring some work:

- Roles and responsibilities – all governors need to be aware of what these are and be prepared to fully engage with the work of the Governing Body: attend meetings, volunteer to carry out task and complete them on time.
- New 3-5 year strategy – existing plan to grow to a 2FE school is almost complete – we need to identify the medium to long term goals for the next few years.
- Curriculum & Standards Committee to review dates of their meetings to enable a proper review of data. Work needed on what data should be supplied and in what format (work has begun on this already this term).
- Find ways to be more visible and accessible to all staff.
- Governor visits to school and subsequent reports need to be done in a timely fashion, ensuring that any agreed action is taken promptly.

The same items are continually being picked up on.

The big question is: Where are we going now? This is not to say there is a major issue – there isn't - but we want to make improvements and make a difference.

QU: How does each committee see things? There was general consensus that it is time to set a new strategic direction. This is not something we can discuss in full and decide at this meeting. Next term each committee can look at the school from their perspective and report back to the FGB what they see as the key factors going forward. From this we can, together with staff, produce a new strategic plan.

QU: (To the Head) with your Ofsted Inspector hat on – could the Governing Body function better? On the whole the Governing Body works well. Getting governors into the school more regularly would be good so that you can look at everything with an outside view. This would be useful for the SLT.

We need to articulate where we are going in a better way. It would give more motivation if there were some specific aims identified and people felt they were adding more value to what is done.

QU: Does a separate strategy meeting need to be organised? Initially this should be looked at in committees and then brought to the FGB so it needs to be mapped into future meetings. It is important that we work with and consult the staff – but it would be useful to go to them with some proposals to start the discussion. We want this to be a collaborative effort.

17. Review Governing Body's performance, structures and procedures

QU: Do the present structures work for the school and for us as a Governing Body? There are many crossovers between committees - could they be put together? It sometimes seems that some committee meetings can take as long as a FGB. Some Governing Bodies operate with just 2 committees: Standards and Resources – the later covers everything except the curriculum and achievement. In effect we do that here by running Site & Buildings, Finance and Personnel Committees concurrently on the same evening. This allows for a focus from a small group on particular issues and it also provides for more distributed leadership across the Governing Body. There is a need for each committee to be very clear on objectives and more precise about its remit. We can, as we have sometimes done in the past, run two meetings or parts of meetings simultaneously to avoid duplication if discussions. For the C&S Committee dates are set, but not dates for data requests. Maybe a timetable for data dates required. Sometimes the data provided is just for governors – this is odd and we need to look at setting meetings and requesting data so that it meshes more easily with the school.

QU: What governors really want to understand and monitor is progress for all pupils – we know that achievement per se is good from the statutory end of year results. How can we do this so it's not a burden to the school? The data supplied needs to be user friendly, not confusing and easier to use and understand. (E Barrett and D Jones have agreed to work on this – see item 4.)

QU: Should the C & S meeting remain separate? There is usually a presentation and there is much to discuss at this meeting. It needs to be kept separate to allow sufficient time for a proper scrutiny of the data. We will look to involve middle leaders and change items around.

QU: Finance – does this meeting need to be longer given the current pressures on the budget? It would be useful to have more time but it is not fair on staff for meetings to go on late into the evening.

QU: Would it help if we started earlier? S&B could begin at 6pm which would then allow for Finance to be longer.

It was agreed to keep the current committee structure as, on the whole, it works well. Finance first? Site and Buildings, Finance and Personnel will continue to meet on the same evening: Site and Buildings 6.00 – 6.30pm, Finance 6.30 – 7.15pm and Personnel 7.15 – 7.45pm. As noted above meetings or parts of meetings can be amalgamated if expedient to do so. C&S will continue to meet on a separate evening and include a presentation from staff. This committee will review its dates so as to fit better with the school data cycle.

18. Arrange dates for next year's meetings

The following were dates agreed for next year's meetings:

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Initials: Date:

Autumn Term	
Full Governing Body	2 nd October 2017
Committees Evening	16 th October 2017
Curriculum & Standards	20 th November 2017
Full Governing Body	4 th December 2017

Spring Term	
Curriculum & Standards	15 th January 2018
Committees Evening	29 th January 2018
Full Governing Body	12 th March 2018
Committees Evening	26 th March 2018

Summer Term	
Full Governing Body	30 th April 2018
Curriculum & Standards	14 th May 2018
Committees Evening	11 th June 2018
Full Governing Body	9 th July 2018

Post meeting update: The December FGB meeting has been re-arranged to 11th December 2017 due to a clash with another school event.

19. Correspondence received – An anonymous letter of complaint had been received by the Chair and some other governors. This had been shared with the Senior Leadership Team and, together, a plan to address the issues raised was agreed. The letter has deliberately not been shared with all governors lest the letter-writer chooses to take the matter further which might result in an Appeals Panel being necessary.

20. Any Other Business –

This was M Kendall's last meeting. The Chair thanked on behalf of the FGB for the 13 years of service he has given including many as Chair of the Personnel Committee.

21. Dates of next meetings

Committees Evening has been arranged for 6.00pm on 16th October 2017
Curriculum Evening has been arranged for 6.30pm on 20th November 2017
Full Governing Body has been arranged for 6.30pm on 11th December 2017

Meeting closed at 8.45pm