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Little Paxton Primary School Governing Body

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting Monday 30th November 2015 at 6.30pm

Ellen Barrett	Co-opted Governor	Debbie Gray	Co-opted Governor /Staff
Penny Conway	Authority Governor / Chair	Diane Hawkes	Staff Governor / Head Teacher
Neil Donoghue	Co-opted Governor	Graham Hiom	Co-opted Governor
David Jones	Parent Governor	Barbara Hughes	Parent Governor
Mike Kendall	Co-opted Governor	Oliver Poulain	Parent Governor

In attendance as an observer Mark Wardell Earith Primary School Chair of Governors

Supporting papers: Minutes of last meetings, Head's Report, SEF/TOP, KiT report, Information about setting the ISR, letter to parents regarding school lunch questionnaire, training materials from "British Values" course,

Policies: Freedom of Information Policy

1. Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from

Sophie Carroll	Parent Governor	Gemma Manning	Parent Governor
Rebekah Jenkins	Associate Member / Staff		

2. Declaration of interests - no changes declared

3. Minutes of the last meetings and Matters Arising

- Full Governing Body meeting (5.10.15)
Update - Safeguarding concern has been investigated and case has been closed. Minutes approved.
- Site & Buildings Committee (19.10.15)
Update - All the old key fobs have been disabled and 15 new ones have been obtained. All fobs are now registered when issued. The register is held by Mary Parnham in the office and spare fobs are kept in the safe.
There is a meeting on Wednesday regarding the school extension project.
Minutes approved.
- Personnel Committee (19.10.15)
QU: Is there an update regarding the safer recruitment and the new DBS system.
ACTION: DH will follow up with EPM and will update governors.
Update - The panel is not required at this time but the members of the panel will be retained should they be required in the future.
Minutes approved.
- Curriculum & Standards Committee (16.11.15)
Presentation minutes approved.
Accessibility Plan - still needs to be completed in terms of accessibility to curriculum and access to information. This may be a reference to other policies.
ACTION: DH to update and share revised policy with governors.
To be on the agenda for the next C&S Committee.

There was a lot of discussion at the last meeting regarding the national figures for EYFS baseline assessments and governors were very keen to see the school benchmarked against the national picture. It was recommended that this be included as an action point in the minutes.

ACTION: AG to amend the minutes to reflect this as an action point to ensure that it is captured.

Minutes approved subject to amendment.

4. Head-teacher's Report

- No further update regarding the return to work of a member of staff since the head's report was written. Support meetings with Occupational Health organized through EPM are scheduled.
- **QU:** How are things progressing with regards to replacing the TA who works with the Year 3 class? DH is currently looking at existing TAs to see whether extra hours are available. So initially there will be an internal advert and then the plan is to advertise externally
- BRP Boosting reading at primary - The teachers have had their third training session this evening, all of the training has been high quality and stimulating. **QU:** What is different about it? The reading is based on quality texts and teaching actual reading skills. For example synthetic phonics don't work for some children but there are other things that can be used and these have been shared. We have come away with useful recommended resources and websites for the teachers to access. Training has looked at core skills and the different ways to present those to the children. The TAs will have two sessions of training in the new year and there will be a parents evening to share with them too. There is also available a spelling and grammar programme which we plan to review to see whether this would be beneficial also. In addition, training together with the other PPP schools was useful and many ideas were shared.
- The SEF and revised consolidated version of the TOP were shared at the Curriculum Meeting. Governors fed back that this was helpful and clear.

5. KiT visit

The report has been received from the County and the priorities are as per the TOP.

The KiT report includes details of skills which are available to share with other schools, but it is not clear how this is used by County as the sharing does not currently happen.

6. Meeting with Finance Adviser (25.11.15)

As per the report issued with the agenda. Funding is self-explanatory.

The main point for discussion and agreement is free school meals and whether we should actively incentivise people to apply for free school meals? **QU:** Do we know how many more children could be eligible? Staff can only have opinions but wouldn't know for definite. **QU:** What are the qualifications for free school meals? There is a list according to claimed benefits. All new parents are asked to fill in the form. However, as infants get their meals free anyway parents may not see the need to fill in the form. Other schools advertise that pupil premium children can have their school trips paid for and include details on the bottom of trip letters. Or schools offer a couple of sweatshirts each year for those who are in receipt of pupil premium (PP) funding. The school should be funding the pupil premium children in this way as part of the commitment to make sure they get the best education possible. The benefit of identifying more PP children is twofold; firstly they receive funding from County and also we want to support these children. **QU:** How many bounce from free school meals to well paid jobs, probably not many. How can we help people to access this money? **QU:** Is there a risk that we offer incentives but we don't get the funding money? The school often supports these children without the budget for which the school has funds. **QU:** Do people understand pupil premium? It needs to be introduced to people and explained to parents. **QU:** Is the key issue incentivising parent to apply PP status so that the funding is received? The message needs to be clear to parents what the benefits to their child are. The message would need to focus on the cost of residential trips, Hilltop etc. The pantomime trip is coming up and this affects every child. All our letters regarding trips include standard wording that

if finance is an issue please do come and speak to us and we may be able to assist but perhaps we need to make this a stronger message.

The recommendation is to use the examples from other schools and offer a free sweatshirt each term and full payment for all trips. **QU:** How do we make sure that people read the request and respond? We have always tried to support parents with form filling when required. We use both text and emails. There are 5 or 6 families who don't receive electronic communication but have paper copies. **QU:** The problem is how do you get to the people who need the help? There is less of an issue with this and being in receipt of free school meal has fewer stigmas these days but we do need to educate the parents about PP and the benefits. **QU:** How would the sweatshirts be distributed? In the normal way as if they had been ordered. MW shared they have offered sweatshirts in their school. **QU:** We need to help people assess whether they qualify to apply for PP? The form is not difficult and it would be sent out with the letter explaining PP and include details of what is available. **QU:** Do we tell the parents that the school also benefits? Yes we need to be transparent. **QU:** What are the issues with paying for trips for these children? If we have the PP funding there isn't an issue. We need to make sure that this is included in the budget. Schools are responsible for deciding how the PP money is spent. Other schools also include free or subsidised music tuition, this is a really good enrichment opportunity for the children and it is expensive so often it is not accessible to these pupils. Music lessons are held in school so people with transport restrictions can still have access. It would be good to be able to offer this to PP children when there are spaces available for lessons in school. **QU:** How much of the cost of trips will be paid for? Currently we look at the cost of the trip and try to make it affordable. The largest costs are for the residential trips. It is more straight forward to offer to pay for the whole amount of all trips rather than having to work out a percentage for each scenario. It would not take enough of their PP funds to affect their in school education support. There are a couple of trips a year with an expensive day trip costing £25 to £35. **QU:** Our responsibility is to provide an all-round education, trips are important? The Government is giving money to enable us to help these children. It is not just about results but it is about the development of the whole child. Propose 100% of trips to be covered for PP children. It can be revisited regularly if the situation changes. If PP is removed then the policy would be changed. **QU:** How much are music lessons? The cost is around £78 per half term for each instrument. What about instruments? DH is speaking to Ruth Duffet to see what can be purchased by the school and loan to that child. This needs to be investigated further and won't be offered initially. **QU:** Can this be done through county? No. Average prices would be £50 for a half size guitar, £50-60 keyboard.

Governors agreed that PP children will be eligible for full funding for all trips, 3 sweatshirts a year and music lessons in school if space is available. It was also proposed and agreed that the PP remain a focus throughout the year and that there is an ongoing campaign to raise awareness in particular relating to the request for payment for trips.

ACTION:

DH to work with office on a letter to parents.

GH & EB to review. Letter to be sent before Christmas.

EB to propose an ongoing campaign.

The Finance Adviser noted that there is a large projected carry forward for the next financial year; Governors were reminded that funds were being reserved for the extension to allow for recruitment ahead of having additional children and decorating the new classrooms etc.

OP gave an update on the plans for the extension via public information he has access to through his work. The build is due to start on site in January 2016, it is a 12 month contract expiring on 4th Jan 2017. Coulsons have been appointed the job, they are a local builder. The scheme is a traditional build to match existing and the contract includes everything in the specification. This is a guideline. The timings caused concern particularly in the light of planning permission not yet being sought. More information will be available after Wednesday's meeting about the development.

Post Meeting update Update following meeting with Project Manager: ground surveys etc will start in the spring term, a consultation meeting will be held in February/March with planning permission being sought soon after. The existing mobile classrooms will be re-sited during the summer and the extension will begin as soon as possible thereafter. It is hoped that refurbishment/remodelling works to the existing building can be carried out during holiday periods If all goes well the building will be finished for September 2017.

7. Individual School Range – to review our ISR (last reviewed in 2010/2011) given the recent and future growth of the school.

DH left the meeting during this discussion.

The ISR denotes the salary range of the Head Teacher (HT). It is set by the Governing Body (GB), within certain legal constraints. In setting the ISR the GB must first determine the HT Group that the school is in as well as having due regard for the particular responsibilities of the post.

Governors thanked PC for the written informative document which was easy to understand. It was highlighted that the current range was set when the school was smaller. There were then 8 classes, there are now 10 rising to 11 in September 2016 and eventually there will be 14 classes. Governors considered the information presented and discussed the timescale of the growth of the school, the increased responsibilities of the Head both during this period of growth and when the school reaches its new full capacity as well as any potential retention/recruitment issues.

There were 3 possible options:

Option 1: leave the ISR as it currently is (L14-L20). All governors present agreed that this was not an appropriate course of action as this range no longer reflects the current size of the school.

Option 2: increase the ISR but keep it in the range recommended for the existing size of the school (L15-L21). All governors present agreed that this was not an appropriate course of action, as the school will most likely move into the next size group within the next year.

Option 3: increase the ISR to reflect the final size of the school (either L16-L22 or L17-L23). All governors present agreed that this was the most appropriate course of action. There was discussion about which of these possible ranges would best suit the school's needs. Governors decided by majority (7 out of 9) that they would increase the ISR to L17-L23 as this was felt to reflect the increased responsibilities of the HT of a 2 form entry school.

ACTION: PC to liaise with County to confirm this is acceptable as we are currently a Group 2 school and this would move us to Group 3.

Post Meeting update - PC contacted Hazel Belchamber (LA Officer) who consulted with Keith Grimwade (Service Director: Learning). Their response was that there is no reason for the change agreed by the GB not to go ahead as it is in response to the growth of the school. EPM will be instructed to record the school's ISR as L17-L23.

It was pointed out that the range is not a fixed ceiling and governors may choose to vary the range again in the future. It was felt that this decision would send a clear message about the increased responsibilities and opportunities for the HT at Little Paxton and it would be key for both retention and recruitment.

DH returned to the meeting.

8. Performance Management

QU: Have the remaining performance management meetings been completed? With the exception of one member of staff currently on leave they all are complete. This will be completed on their return to work in January.

9. School website – update from OP who has undertaken an audit of the website

Jackie Turner, PC and OP have reviewed the website a couple of times. There are still some policies to be updated and some further detail is required on the curriculum pages. The curriculum information is currently work in progress; the information was pulled down from the website so that updated versions can be reloaded. English and maths are still to be completed but it needs to be determined the level of detail that should be on the website. It may be possible to add a hyper link to the national curriculum pages. This is still work in progress. There is some further SEN information to be added. Governor details have been updated but some profiles remain to be done. A few tweaks to mapping may be required but on the whole it is coming together. Wherever necessary, contact information has been added so that anyone wanting more details of who and how to contact the school can find them easily. **QU:** What % of office staff time is being spent on the website? Do we need to give this a focus? Jackie is the leader but Faye can also load information. The work is done as and when it is required and the time is slotted in to her other responsibilities **QU:** Is there a need to devote more time to this and to be more proactive in the way we use the website and social media? This could not be undertaken by an office member of staff. **QU:** Is this an additional requirement? There is a lot of work generated by the website, emails from the website, updating it etc. It could be taken to the next level but would require another person or outsourcing. **QU:** Is this enough in terms of admin? As the school grows how will this be impacted? What is your thought as an OFSTED inspector? Ofsted look to make sure the website ticks all the boxes and RAG rate it. Minor things are highlighted but if there are glaring omissions this will be looked at more deeply. It depends what we want, do we want it to be daily updated and fully interactive? This would need more time. It may be that this is not the right medium and other social media options should be explored. **QU:** Would parents proactively look at the website rather than a Facebook feed? This would need to be explored further. There are other things that would be nice to have such as more of the children work. **QU:** Is it possible to involve the children? Not in the loading up to the website but with regards to the content they can be involved.

ACTION: OP to address the gaps and progress further.
All governors are to send in their profiles for the website.

10. Policy Review

- Monitoring and Evaluation Policy – this is deferred to next term to allow time for staff consultation.
- Freedom of Information Policy - SC has been reviewing this and has highlighted documents which we don't currently have on the website and given suggestions of other things we may consider to put on the website. It was agreed that the whistle blowing should also be added. Changes to the policy were approved and the policy agreed.

ACTION: AG to issue final version of the policy and have it included on the website.

11. Prevent Strategy

As a result of this government initiative schools have new duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn in terrorism”. Each school must have a nominated Prevent Lead who will train staff to recognise possible extremism or radicalisation and draw up an action plan to address this risk. DH and Sue Else trained. This may be a useful subject for governor training.

12. Parents Evenings

Autumn Term 2015 – thank you to EB, ND, BH, MK and OP, N Donoghue, who joined the Chair, PC, at Parents' Evenings to meet with parents. 75% of parents completed our questionnaire about school lunches. A letter was sent to parents detailing the results and concerns were passed to the caterers or relevant members of staff. Also sent communication to CCS and have not yet had a response. For future, it was suggested to include in the letter that concerns are being reviewed and have taken appropriate action, contacting other providers if necessary - CCS in this instance.

ACTION: PC to chase for a response from CCS.

Spring Term 2016 – Tuesday 9th February and Thursday 11th February

Will agree governors' attendance nearer the time.

Proposal to discuss how funding works, including Pupil Premium.

13. Governor Training

- Exploring British Values – training course attended by PC on 14/10/15. This will be considered in more detail at the C&S Committee meeting next term which will begin with a presentation British Values and SMSC. DH plans to do an audit to identify the values and where they are covered in the school. This will then be included on the website along with a British Values statement. **QU:** The media highlights inner city schools needing to focus on this but do you consider it is more schools like ours which are not multi-cultural that the focus is required? Questions will be included in curriculum meeting next term.
- In-house training needs to be completed before Easter as this is the last free training session offered by CGS. The price for the CGS is not likely to be decreased. Not sure if there is anything on the Prevent Strategy or British values. Ask for a bespoke in-house training on these subjects.

ACTION: AG to liaise with CGS to request training on Prevent and British Values

Governors were reminded of the following meetings and encouraged to attend if they are able:

- CGS Governor Briefing 27th January 2016, 7.00 – 9.00pm at Wood Green Animal Shelter, Godmanchester
- Annual Cambs Governor Conference "Open your Mind: New or Different Approaches in Education" on Saturday 6th March 2016, 9.15am – 1.00pm at Swavesey Village College. Places can be booked by emailing Cambs Governor Services (ask the Clerk if you need assistance with this)

14. Governor Visits to School

The following visits are scheduled:

Reason for Visit	When	Who
Teachers new to year groups and new to school	Complete – report presented at next Personnel meeting.	GM EB
Hand writing focus in school - based on new focus in new curriculum	October & September Oct visit complete – report due Present at C&S in summer	BH SC
Assessment Grids	Complete – report presented at next C&S meeting.	GH OP
*Changes to curriculum in year 2 and year 6	Spring Term	BH tba
Progress in reading Speak to those who have done the BRP training and review the impact of the associated interventions. DH to advise who to speak to. RJ would be key. Also speak to the children regarding their perception and about Fiction express. Look at teachers' reports on progress. Understanding what constitutes reading in different year groups and the progression of reading skills.	Spring Term	MK EB
Outdoor Learning Questions to be agreed at the next C&S meeting	Summer Term	MK tba
Re-visit marking Questions to be agreed at the next C&S meeting	Summer Term	tba

15. Governor vacancies

We have two vacancies, both for co-opted governors. Governors had previously agreed that it can be useful to have one vacancy in order to allow for rapid recruitment of a governor with a particular skill that the GB might need. Specific skill requirements may arise during the extension work and the subsequent growth of the school.

16. Governor communications

Some governors have highlighted that the school email system is sometimes difficult to access. It was agreed that the Clerk should hold personal email details so she can easily contact governors if their school email is out of action. It was stressed that this would be personal email addresses only and no confidential information would be distributed to these addresses.

ACTION: AG to collect email addresses from Governors

17. Correspondence received – letter raising concerns about head lice and CoG's reply attached for information. No response received from the grandparent following the letter.

18. Any other urgent business - no further business

19. Dates of next meetings

Meeting	Time	When
Committees Evening	6.30pm	Monday 25 th January 2016
British Values Presentation	6.30pm	Monday 1 st February 2016
Curriculum Evening	Follows above	Monday 1 st February 2016
Full Governors' Meeting	6.30pm	Monday 29 th February 2016

Meeting closed 8.25pm