

MINUTES OF MEETING

School:	Porchester Junior
Meeting title:	Spring term meeting of the governing body
Date and time:	Thursday, 23rd March 2023 at 5.30 pm (previously 2.3.2023)
Location:	Held virtually

Membership		Ms J Barnard (Chair)
'A' denotes absence	P	Miss J Fidler (Headteacher)
'P' attended part		Miss V Moore
		Ms L Mintey
	A	Mrs E Spick Fletcher
		Mr G Tucker

In attendance		Mrs J Garbett (Clerk to the governors)
	P	Mrs D Beesley

01 Preliminaries

1.1 Apologies for absence

The meeting took place virtually through Microsoft Teams.

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Spick Fletcher, who was on a train and unable to join discreetly.

It was

resolved

that the governing body consents to this absence.

1.2 Declarations of interest

Register of pecuniary/business interest/Declaration of Eligibility

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

1.3 Membership

Vacancy update

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

- 1 x parent governor
- 2 x co-opted governor

End of terms of office

The clerk advised that Lauren Mintey (Staff Governor) term in office ends on 31.10.2023.

The governing body **noted** that ESF may resign at the end of the summer term and the chair said enquiries to recruit governors are being made through the Inspiring Governance website.

The chair explained that a new governance model will be implemented by the Trust. This had been discussed with them and the model seems in line with the structure of the governing body at Porchester school anyway.

A discussion entailed and governors wanted to start the election process to fill the parent governor vacancy. The headteacher asked to defer this until the Office Manager returns to work as there is not the staffing capacity to do this, and it was not a necessary action. **Action:** Nominations for the parent governor vacancy would be deferred until the summer term.

Head teacher

1.4 **Minutes of last local governing body meeting, review of actions and other matters arising**

The minutes of the summer term meeting held on 3rd November 2023 having been previously circulated *and subject to the following corrections being made* were confirmed and signed by the chair.

3.1 The chair has asked the **Business Finance Partner** (*not the office manager*) to provide the list of the dates she works to that will enable governors to liaise with her over any financial matters.

Review of actions

It was confirmed that all actions had been completed or are an item for discussion in this meeting.

1.5 **Minutes of relevant committee meetings**

The chair reported that the governing body called a finance meeting, which was held on 14th March 2023. There are no minutes from this meeting.

It was reported that governors, headteacher and deputy headteacher met with Zoe Maxey and Chris Stevens from Flying High Trust to escalate concerns regarding the current situation and financial position. The chair reported that the outcome from this meeting was that the Trust has assured governors that they will receive the right financial information at the right time from the Trust.

The clerk advised governors that minutes or formal notes should be taken at any meetings of the governing body. **Action:** JB/GT will liaise and produce a minutes for this meeting.

JB/GT

03 Finance report

3.1 **Budget monitoring report and commentary on variances from School Business Manager/Finance Manager**

The governing body agreed that this item could be brought forward on the agenda.

The governing body **received** the budget monitoring report for period 5, which had been shared with governors prior to the meeting. The chair asked DB to provide

governors with the latest information, relating to period 6, which had not been circulated. DB shared her screen with governors virtually.

It was reported that there is a c/f balance from 2022-23 of £52,654, with a projected forecast of £83,240 – a variance this month of £10,075.

The key updates were: -

- VM confirmed that the pupil receiving HLN funding will have left for the summer term.
- Budgets were set which included an amount of staff absence but as the year progressed, the staffing requirement were understood more.

DB outlined the variances within the report for expenditure on staff and advised that she will be discussing with NCC finance the bank changeovers.

Governor question: regarding the trips – are we are owed money? DB replied that money was owed. However, very little is owed through parent pay. There are some debts that need writing off, which are reported outside this report.

The governing body **challenged** the MDSA vacancy, which TA's are currently covering and asked whether staffing was sustainable? VM replied that from September budgets should be more sustainable. It was reported that the MDSA position has been excluded from the projections. DB stated that she was confident with the figure of £124,260 for agency staff given the work done with VM around this recently. The governing body were told that challenges were being encountered with children with complex needs. An alternative provision has been put in place within school, which is at a significant cost to the school.

DB drew governors' attention to the incorrect coding of an invoice from Atom and said this will be corrected in period 7.

A governor **asked** what is included in the 'other supplies' at £122,000? DB replied that this includes catering costs, pupil FSM, catering equipment, pupil paid meals, adult meals, telephone cost, IT support services, HR and OH costs, clerking provision and other central services.

It was reported that the predicted in year reserves for 2022-23 is a deficit -£77,000, which will provide a cumulative deficit of -£130,000. DB advised that the 3 year projections are not complete on this report yet. A governor **sought clarification** whether this information would be there to sign off at the meeting with the Trust on 24th March 2023 and was assured that it would be.

DB drew governors attention to the KPI's and said cumulative reserves and staffing are both RAG rated red, therefore above the Trust targets for these areas.

DB left the meeting at 6.15 pm.

The governing body summarised that they were disappointed with the current financial situation and said that in future they need assurance that budget projections are being monitored fully.

Governors **noted** that the headteacher is attending a meeting at the Trust tomorrow (24th March 2023).

The Headteacher advised governors that the staffing structure for summer term is not known yet known, however it is unlikely that her secondment will finish yet. Governors will be advised of any developments after the meeting with Paul Goodwin tomorrow.

The headteacher praised VM and LM and said they have managed the school well in the headteachers absence. The governing body echoed this praise and thanked them sincerely.

JF left the meeting

02 Headteacher report and matters arising

2.1 Headteacher report to Trust format including:-

The headteachers report was circulated prior to the meeting and governors were invited to ask questions, which VM will answer in the headteachers absence:

Governor Challenge: The attendance rate is low again. Does this attendance figure include the children who are persistently absent? VM replied that attendance is low, and the school are reviewing how children who are persistently absent are reported. Senior Leaders have met with the Trust to discuss attendance plans. The attendance policy is followed by contacting families and making referrals for enforcement through fixed penalty notices. Attendance continues to be a key focus on newsletters and all staff work towards improving attendance. VM is looking towards separate reporting of attendance data. Governors were advised that when it snowed the school remained open but less than 50% of pupils were in school.

A confidential discussion was held here and is minuted separately.

Governor Question: are all the exclusions in Year 6? No two were and the other one is in Year 5 and has now left the school. Governors discussed the circumstances and was advised that the Trust have supported the school with the process. Governors were pleased to hear that two of these children have since returned and their behaviour has improved.

Governor Question: The School Improvement Plan - is this on track in the headteachers absence. VM said the SIP objectives remain the same. Some actions are slightly behind but there are many areas that are moving forwards. The curriculum in particular is developing well and staff understanding and pupil voice is a strength at the school. **Action:** VM will circulate the latest document, which although not RAG rated will enable governors to see the progress being made.

Governor Challenge: attainment figures – The report indicated that we are not attaining in maths. VM confirmed that KS2 figures are provided and said the Y6 cohort have been particularly low throughout the school. Maths was identified as a focus area and interventions/support mechanisms were put in place – and the improvements can be seen. Maths is now considered to be a strength for the school and the strategies used will be implemented across all year groups.

It was **noted** that there may be 21 children in the Y6 cohort that require additional time to complete their SATs, which are being taken week commencing 8/5/2023.

VM drew governors' attention to the number of accidents that have occurred over the past 3 weeks. 2 children fractured bones and an ambulance was called for a child who fell and hurt their back. The trust has been asked to investigate the playground as there are parts that are sinking. Although the accidents were not linked to this, the Trust have taken photos and will advise the school if there any action is required.

The chair said she would complete a Health & Safety walk in the forthcoming weeks.

03 Finance report

3.1 **Budget monitoring report and commentary on variances from School Business Manager/Finance Manager**

This item was discussed at the beginning of the meeting and is minuted above.

3.2 ***Internal audit: update on progress from last internal audit report***

The governing body was advised that the school finances are being monitored by the Trust.

The clerk **sought further clarification** as to whether the Trust had either completed an internal audit or whether a date had been arranged to do one in the near future? VM confirmed that the school had not received any information regarding the Trusts Internal Audit.

Report on Spring Term visit (if applicable).

Nothing was reported under this item.

3.3 **Review and discuss annual service contracts**

VM advised the governing body that she is meeting with the Trust tomorrow (24th March 2023) to discuss the annual service contracts and governors will be advised of the service contracts being purchased following this meeting.

The clerk **asked** whether these needed approving by the governing body and it was decided that a special finance meeting will be called if necessary.

The chair remarked that governors would like to continue with the Governor Services clerking package (and also the advice and guidance package).

3.4 **Review three-year staffing plan**

VM advised the governing body that the staffing plans would be discussed at the meeting on 24th March 2023 and governors would be advised accordingly.

A confidential discussion was held here and is minuted separately.

04 Report from Chair

4.1 **Issues and key points from FHT Local Hub Boards (including sharing of latest dashboards)**

The chair said she was not able to attend the last FHT hub meeting because the date was revised and confirmed that the dashboard had been shared with all governors.

JB stated that data dashboards indicate that other schools are in a similar situation to our school.

4.2 **Communications from parents and members of the local community (including complaints where appropriate)**

It was confirmed that no communications had been received that needed reporting to this meeting.

4.3 **Emergency action taken since the last meeting (where applicable)**

It was confirmed that no emergency action had been taken since the last meeting.

4.4 **Strategic Vision for the next five years**

The chair said that the strategic vision is under review due to Headteachers absence.

05 Reports to Governors

5.1 **DfE reports and key updates from NGA and other national bodies**

The clerk drew governors attention to the following updates in the Governor Newsletter:

- DfE guidance Feb 2023 – responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
- New DfE research on staffing and links to exploring the costs and benefits of flexible working in schools and exploring collaboration and workload reduction.
- The National Audit Office – Education recovery in schools Report – value for money. The DfE requires schools to publish a statement each year explaining how they plan to spend the recovery premium and demonstrating that their approach is informed by evidence on what will help pupils catch up on lost learning.
- Ofsted annual report: pandemic recovery slowed by workforce crisis in children's education and care.

5.2 **Local Authority correspondence where applicable to academies**

The Clerk drew governor's attention to the following reports, which had been uploaded onto GovernorHub and explained that video recordings are available for governors to watch through the following youtube link: <https://youtu.be/mrL0-TxZ2s0>

The Schools Bill and School Attendance

The Department for Education are introducing several important changes to the non-statutory guidance, policy framework and statutory regulations related to school attendance and the use of legal interventions.

The policy and legislative changes will set an expectation for local authorities to take on a more strategic role in relation to school attendance

Schools will be expected to develop and publish a school attendance policy covering attendance expectations, named attendance staff contacts, day-to-day attendance management processes, their strategy for using attendance data, their strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, and the point at which sanctions will be used.

The Secretary of State for Education will introduce a statutory requirement for schools to sign up to data returns to be collected by a company called Wonde from September 2023. Schools are encouraged to commence data sharing this academic year

Action for governors

Questions governors will want to ask:

1. How familiar is your school with the new non-statutory guidance for 2022-23?
2. Does the school have an attendance policy in place that will meet the requirements set out above?
3. How effective are school leaders in tracking pupil attendance?
4. What are the school's current arrangements for the use of Education Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences in term time?
5. Has the school begun to share attendance data with the Department for Education using Wonde? Not doing, but looking at this.

Harm outside the home toolkit

The Harm Outside the Home Toolkit was created with the aim of supporting schools in developing their capacity as a protective factor for children at risk of harm. Creation of the toolkit was one strand of Nottinghamshire's involvement in the DfE's regional Practice Solution Project which involved working in partnership with Lincolnshire and Leicestershire.

A co-production approach was adopted drawing together teams from across Children's and Families Services: Tackling Emerging Threats to Children Team, Social Emotional and Mental Health Team, Partnership Team and the Educational Psychology Service. The aim of the toolkit was to create something meaningful and useful; grounded in evidence-based practice, mindful of what our children and young people have said, and what our schools and settings have reflected whilst at the same time ensuring it is purposeful across different contexts, different settings, and across counties

The toolkit is published on the Em-ed website and will also feature in the regional website once completed Links to each are below:

- <http://www.em-edsupport.org.uk/harm-outside-the-home>
- <https://www.childexploitationeastmidlands.org.uk/>

Action for governors: To support the longevity of this project, Governing Bodies and Trust Boards are requested to monitor use of the toolkit in their schools and across their organisations.

The governing body **noted** the contents of the reports from the Corporate Director and the actions required from governors.

5.3 **Any other relevant correspondence from the clerk**

The clerk advised that there will be two newsletters circulated to governors during the Spring term and drew governor's attention to the following articles in the first newsletter, which is available on GovernorHub: Details are also available on Utube through the link circulated on GovernorHub.

Summary of articles:

- Introduction from the new Governor Services Team Manager – Sinead Allan Update from Peter McConnochie, NCC Service Director, Education, Learning and Inclusion including information on the SEND review and new framework that comes into operation for local area reviews for children and young peoples with SEND plus an update on the School's Bill.
- HR updates includes advice regarding staffing reductions, industrial action, additional bank holidays and HR training opportunities.

- Safeguarding updates include a reminder that governors should receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction, information regarding managing allegations training and the spring term audit for CP and confidential file records. Plus information about the safeguarding governor focus group.
- An article about apprenticeship gives information about opportunities and funding arrangements for schools to access.
- An environmental Pathway for Schools was shared by the Church of England diocese with governors on Governorhub and is a very interesting tool. Schools are invited to join the journey.
- There are National updates article with news from the DfE, Ofsted and the NGA Message from the chair of NAGS Jane Mansell – regarding the pupil competition, governor of the year and governing body of the year. A School Governors' Awareness Day is being celebrated on 28th February 2023 if governors wish to take part.
- Governor Recruitment – support for boards from the NGA, Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools and a template advert to use
- Governor Learning and Development is now managed by the East Midlands Education Support Service. New programme is being launched on 1st April 2023 but in the interim all existing subscriptions to Governor Training will be valid and usable for training until 31st March 2023, including 2 places for the Nottinghamshire Governor Conference on 4th March 2023.
- Enhanced support for kinship families in Nottinghamshire
- Governing body is responsible for the provision of school food and they need to ensure school food standards are being met.
- Governor Conference will take place at Eastwood Hall on Saturday, 4th March 2023. Two places are available as part of the annual subscription (£135 if not).

06 School Performance Management Arrangements of all Staff Members

6.1 **Feedback on headteacher performance management by the allocated appraisal governor.**

The Chair explained that she was unable to attend on any of the dates provided by the Trust to complete the headteachers appraisal meeting.

Therefore, Chris Wheatly, CEO for FHT conducted the performance management meeting with the headteacher in December 2022.

6.2 **Confirmation of completion of performance management target setting for 2022-23.**

VM confirmed that all staff had received their performance management targets for 2022-23.

6.3 **Staff well-being and attendance**

It was **acknowledged** that staff wellbeing and attendance was reported upon in the headteachers report.

07 Safeguarding

7.1 **Update on the school's Safeguarding audit, action plan and progress**

JB confirmed that the audit of child protection and confidential files had been arranged for 24th March 2023.

**Action
Chair**

It was **acknowledged** that GT is taking on the role of safeguarding link governor moving forwards and will be meeting with VM on 28th March 2023 to discuss.

GT

7.2 **Equality, racial and other Safeguarding incidents reported since the last meeting**

This information is reported in the *Headteachers report*

08 Policy Management

8.1 **Policies requiring local governing body ratification**

The governing body

Ratified

The Admission Arrangements for 2024-25 and the Health & Safety Policy 2023, which had been circulated prior to the meeting on GovernorHub.

8.2 **Approval of policies from local governing body committees and working parties as appropriate**

Nothing was discussed under this item.

09 Governor Monitoring

9.1 **Visits and monitoring reports from previous term**

It was confirmed that the following monitoring visits had been completed:

- Finance (GT)
- Meeting with FHT re concerns over finance reporting (JB/GT/JF/VM).

9.2 **Reminder of governors' link responsibilities in 2022/23**

It was reported that governors link roles are being reviewed as part of the FHT's new governance model.

9.5 **Report from training governor, feedback on training and development undertaken, identification of future governor training requirements and opportunities for online training from the Trust and other bodies**

LM reported that the following training had been completed:

- safeguarding training (GT) 3.11.2023
- managing allegations training (GT) 22.11.2023

It was **acknowledged** that governors had been notified of the finance training but were unable to attend. VM said this finance training may have been recorded and if so, would be shared with governors. LM asked governors to advise her when they have completed training so the spreadsheet can be updated.

**All
governors
to note**

10 Communications from the local governing body

10.1 **Engagement with parents and local community**

There was nothing reported under this item.

10.2 Website updates

The chair enquired who updates the website as John Hatton needs to be removed from list of governors. Action: VM will update the website.

VM

10.3 Other relevant communications

There was nothing reported under this item.

11 Confirm dates and times of future meetings

It was noted that the date set for the summer term meeting of 22nd June 2023 is when VM/LM are on the PGL residential and asked if it could be re-arranged.

Governor Question: when should the finance report be shared with governors – we need to arrange meetings in line with this? The Trust Finance Officer had been asked for this information previously, but these dates have not been confirmed. VM found the information and emailed it directly to the chair.

The date of the summer term meeting was confirmed as follows:

11.1 Summer term 2022 – Thursday, 29th June 2023 at 1.30 pm (virtual)

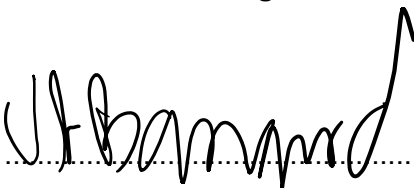
13 Determination of confidentiality and communication

It was

resolved

that all papers and reports be made available as necessary, apart from 2.1, 3.4

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Signed  (chair) Date 29.6.23



MINUTES OF MEETING

School: Porchester Junior
Meeting title: Spring term meeting of the local governing body
Date and time: Thursday, 23rd March 2023 at 5.30 pm
Location: Held virtually

Confidential item(s)

Action

2.1 Headteacher report to Trust format including:-

Governor Question: the long term staff absence – when will they return? VM replied that the Office Manager is wanting a phased return. VM has liaised with the Trust around finding additional support for the office and the Office Manager from Rivendale is currently supporting the school and it is hoped this will continue when the office manager returns.

3.4 Review three-year staffing plan

LM left the meeting

A flexible working request had been received from NG, to be effective from 5th June 2023 when her maternity leave ends. NG has requested to return 3 days per week for 4 weeks, increasing gradually with a view to being full time from September 2023.

Governors **noted** that KIT days are being completed by NG.


The chair **sought clarification** on the class responsibilities and whether this request meets with the SLT responsibilities. VM confirmed this was a sensible arrangement that works well for the school.

The governing body

Approved

The flexible working arrangement as requested

LM returned to the meeting.

Signed  (chair)

Date 29.6.23