



Gusford Primary School

The *Active Learning* Trust

"Together we believe, learn and achieve"

Minutes of Meeting of Full Governing Body held on 4th October 2021 @ 5.00pm

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| Members: | Mrs Claire Claydon | Headteacher | CC |
| | Mrs Emma Clifton | Trust | EC |
| | Mrs Samantha Collins | Parent | SC |
| | Mr Jonathan Eddy | Trust | JE |
| | Mrs Jenny Milsom | Chair | JM |
| | Ms Lisa Wood | Parent | LW |
| Apologies: | Mrs Nicola Griffiths | Trust | NG |
| | Mr Jon Wynne | Trust | JW |
| In Attendance: | Mrs Liz Talbot | Clerk | LT |
| | Mrs Kerry Hawes | Business Manager | KH |

| No. | Item | Explanation | Who | When |
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| 1. | Apologies/Welcomes/Resignations | | | |
| | | <p>JM welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance today.</p> <p>Apologies were received from NG and JW owing to work commitments. Consent to their absence was given.</p> <p>Annual Appointment of Vice Chair</p> <p>JE was nominated again to continue in the position of Vice Chair with no other candidates being nominated. He was elected by all attending governors and accepted this position for another year.</p> | | |
| | | <p>Membership: The following changes were reported:</p> | | |
| | | <p>There were no changes to report at this meeting. However, JM shared her concern about whether or not NG is able to commit to her Governor role with the additional responsibilities of her new job and they will be discussing this further soon.</p> | | |
| 2. | Pecuniary and other interests | | | |
| | | <p>There were no declared interests relevant to this meeting.</p> <p>New declaration forms have been received by LT from LW, SC & EC.</p> <p>JM & CC have also completed and stored hard copies at the school. KH will scan and send copies of these to LT for collation in a folder on Governor Hub.</p> <p>JE, JW and NG will complete and return declarations to LT as soon as possible, so she can complete the register and send to CC for updating the school website.</p> | | |

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| | <p><u>Actions Agreed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding Declarations of Interests to be completed and sent to LT for compilation of the updated Register of Interests and publication on school website. | JE/JW/ NG & LT | ASAP |
| 3. | AOB for end of Meeting | | |
| | <p>There was one additional AOB item to add under Item 11 of this agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions raised by JW. | | |
| 4. | Confirmation of previous minutes | | |
| | <p>The minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 12th July 2021 were reviewed and it was noted that the following amendments were required:</p> <p>Item 4 – JM noted that the reference to the anti-bullying policy was incorrect and should have stated that Governor support for staff implementing this policy should be made clear in a future parental communication, in particular in relation to Parental behaviour.</p> <p>Item 4 – SC noted in relation to the Quality of Education visit that scheduling future dates was discussed but these were not actually scheduled yet.</p> <p>Governors noted these changes and agreed that further to these amendments being made, they were happy that the minutes would be a true and accurate record of the meeting with no additional updates required and could be signed off by the Chair.</p> <p>CC noted that the last meeting was a very difficult one but she is pleased to advise that the school year has started very positively with progress on the School Development Plan (SDP) and a feeling that staff are very much on board with her plans for improvement.</p> | | |
| | Matters Arising from 12th July 2021 | | |
| | <p>The following matters arising updates were noted:</p> <p>Online Safeguarding Training – It was agreed that Governors need to either attend the ALT online training offer recently circulated for either 28th September or 5th October or complete the HandSam Safeguarding online module which CC will provide as required. All Governors also need to complete the KCSIE Part 1 & Part 2 reading module which CC recently circulated. LT will email all Governors after 5th October to see who needs the HandSam version and requested that all certificates need to be sent to her once completed.</p> <p>SEND online Training – There has been a problem accessing the training on The Key and it has come to light that the Trust has not signed up for the Governors package. LT will now investigate the Schools Choice version and advise KH of cost before booking this for JE and JW if appropriate.</p> <p>Governing Body meetings Work plan for the year – LT confirmed that this is completed and she will send to JM and CC for approval/amendments when she sends the draft minutes from this meeting.</p> <p>Behaviour and Transition Link visit and Annual Link Visit Schedule – Dates to be arranged by CaH and PC. CaH is behind schedule owing to recent absence but will contact the Governors when she returns.</p> | | |

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| | <p>CC asked JE if it would be helpful to meet the SENDCo at the same time as the Behaviour and Transition Link visit and JE agreed.</p> <p>Destination Data – Covered under Item 6 on this agenda</p> <p>Whole Budget Report as separate Report – to be initiated at next FGB Meeting.</p> <p>Health & Safety Link Visit – EC confirmed that this is still to be arranged.</p> <p>Strapline/Vision Statement – JM asked all governors to think what the school vision already is and consider what might work and then email ideas to her for approval by all at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>All other Matters Arising were completed prior to this meeting or carried forward to future meetings as planned.</p> | | |
| | <p><u>Actions Agreed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One of the online Safeguarding Training packages to be completed by all Governors. ● Details of SEND training to be investigated and provided to JE & JW for them to complete. ● Governing Body Work Plan to be sent to JM & CC for approval and use going forwards. ● Behaviour & Transition Link visit and Annual Link Visit Schedule to be planned and produced. ● H & S Link visit to be arranged. ● Email strapline/Vision statement suggestions to JM for approval at next FGB meeting. | <p>All</p> <p>LT/JE/JW</p> <p>LT</p> <p>CaH/PC/All</p> <p>EC</p> <p>All</p> | <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>22/11/21</p> |
| 5. | Trust Business & Chair's Actions | | |
| | JM advised that there was no new business or actions to share at this meeting. | | |
| 6. | Headteacher's Verbal Report [Standing Item] | | |
| | <p>Although this was a verbal report, CC shared slides and summarised as follows:</p> <p><u>Successes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PD days at end of term in July and in September used for sharing clear expectations and discussing issues raised by staff were received positively and followed up with another staff survey. ● Positive visits from Trust CEO and Director of Education. ● Positive day hosting ALT ECT1 cohort and were observed by the Trust's School Improvement Adviser. Received great verbal feedback and have asked for this in writing to put in the School Evaluation Form (SEF). ● Positive staff flexibility with a lot of absence to cover this term, in particular with the EYFS who were hard hit by the COVID, cold virus and other sickness absence. ● Pupil behaviour has been very positive with good engagement. ● Work completed on EYFS outdoor area and now used daily. Phonics scheme resourced in time for start of term. A lot of work done over the summer clearing trees and shrubs and team members painted and provided the mud kitchen. | | |

- New DfE Baseline for reception almost complete with just 8 absentee pupils remaining to be assessed but on track to complete before deadline. This data will be used in Year 6 to assess progress.
- New staff have settled well and had a positive start.
- The SDP is on track with more actions turning to amber and green (Plan to be shared later in the agenda).

JM asked how this cohort compare to the previous year and **CC** advised it is very difficult to compare to last year's cohort although they appear very confident in comparison and are settling easily.

LW asked if all the work on the outdoor area is complete and **CC** explained that this objective remains at amber as not all of the ordered equipment has arrived yet. Sand pit and water used regularly too.

Photographs of Commando Joes Team Building exercises and the improvements to the EYFS outdoor area were shared in these slides.

Validated Phonics Scheme

- Will be ensuring that staff are following this scheme and school have spent money to buy reading books etc.
- All teaching staff, HLTA's and TA's will receive 6 hours training on this scheme and expect all staff to complete before the next PD day. All Year 1 and Reception staff have already completed this.

JM asked if this is online training or Face 2 Face and **CC** confirmed that this is online but has the advantage of breaking it up as well as being able to refer back to it.

- Middle Leaders asked to send something for Twitter, Facebook page and Instagram page on a regular basis. Photos are usually very popular.
- Working with children to get them used to talking to visitors. 'Meeters and Greeters' in some classes. This should help them make eye contact with strangers e.g. Ofsted.

JM noted that hopefully the other children are watching and learning from this too.

JM asked if the children rotated in this position and **CC** confirmed that they will do after half a term.

SC noted that when she was visiting the school, she saw this being trialled and observed how good they were. **JM** also noted that it was good to see them being asked to take hands out of pockets etc., looking at whole demeanour and she observed how keen the children were.

Challenges

- Biggest challenge is COVID absences - highest so far is seventeen in a day, where only three in previous period. Additionally, three staff affected where previously this was one.
- A lot of children are not having symptoms but a household member initially has tested positive and then when they are tested, they are positive also.

SC asked if this is all over the school and **CC** confirmed that on the first Monday after the Summer break there were two cases without connection. It then spread randomly throughout the school. **CC** added that the contingency plan comes into force when there are either five cases in a Class or 10% of the school and this has not been reached yet.

- Staff shortages are now down to one TA in EYFS and absence overall is mainly owing to the severe cold virus.
- Behaviour challenges – 4 fixed term exclusions, 3 of which are for the same child but they are working closely with these children and they are not children who have had issues before. Advice has also been received from First Base PRU.

SC recalled that CC had spoken previously about a child that she thought needed specialist provision and asked if that was still the case. CC confirmed that the child was still at the school but they have changed the adult working with the child this year and this has been positive so far. CC noted that the change to being a large mixed school again is causing problems for some.

SLT

- Dropping into lessons regularly and checking consistency.
- Some classroom management issues addressed quickly and seen improvement.
- Books are looking good too and able to see improvement and consistency.
- Clarified with staff how we need great consistent teaching in every class.
- Strong new Deputy Head and SENDCo who need inducting and are from very different settings.

LW asked if all drop in visits are evidenced. CC advised that these are not but the Year Leaders and Subject Leaders do record theirs, including follow up visits resulting from CC/SLT observations. CC added that she is now confident about taking visitors around at any time of day.

JM asked if you see something amazing in a class how do you share this across the school and CC confirmed that these things are shared in briefings and through talking to the SLT members.

JM suggested capturing these things in a document to help when pairing staff up and for solid evidence that can also be shared. CC noted that with ECT's this comes out in their mentoring.

JM asked how the setting is very different and CC explained that the size of school is different so scaling up is the main issue and some of the safeguarding issues are different too.

Numbers on roll

- Was 568 and now 576 not including the Nursery which currently has 9 children.
- Work has started on a Nursery prospectus which will really show how the Nursery has access to all the school facilities and can work collaboratively with Reception.

EC asked if this year's Reception cohort is so much better because they came through the Nursery but CC believes they can't claim that yet as last year's did too.

Attendance

- 90.4% compared to 95.6% last year.
- X code was used in register for all COVID related absence in 2020/21 and didn't count in attendance data. However, now changed so a child isolating is an X but if positive now shows as ill, so affects attendance data for school and individual. CC will have National figures for written report at next meeting.

LW noted that communication regarding COVID absences is talked about a lot in the parent environment and parents are suggesting that they are not getting much information from the school about the number of COVID cases etc. CC explained that the DfE guidance has changed for this year and although she is not happy with

this change, she is adhering to it. She also highlighted the fact that Track and Trace are not contacting schools now for contact numbers either.

JM suggested CC should send a copy of the guidance to parents to show they are strictly following this and will not be contacting parents about every new case and KH confirmed that they have been putting this information in the bulletin but everyone agreed this should be communicated separately.

JM suggested sending the planned communication to the three Governors who are parents for comment before releasing to all parents.

JM noted that 17 cases out of a cohort of 576 is extremely small percentage. **CC** agreed and advised that the DfE are told daily of numbers and the Trust are also advised when there is a new positive case.

Destination data

- Information for 2021 full Year 6 cohort provided - Majority go on to Chantry Academy, followed by Stoke High School – Ormiston Academy, East Bergholt High School and Holbrook Academy.
- Remainder are individual cases attending Debenham High School and Westbourne Academy, 3 EHCP pupils attending Specialist Provision and 1 pupil who has elected to have home education following an unsuccessful appeal for Chantry.

School Improvement Plan

- Copy of SIP provided to Governors before the meeting.
- Not a full review but will be at next meeting.
- SLT have worked through actions column and turned amber or green as appropriate.
- A lot that has not changed are linked to SEND and the SENDCo has already written an Action plan to progress on return to work.
- Some on track to be green by November review.
- Curriculum - every subject Leader has their own Action Plan now.
- Consistency, Curriculum and EYFS are top 3 focus points.

CC suggested that when Deputy Head returns to work it would be ideal for **LW** to complete an EYFS link visit. After half term would be most likely.

JM is keen for link visits to be booked in as soon as possible and asked **EC** is she would be willing to pick up Quality of Education (QoE) as a link area if **NG** is unable to continue as a Governor. **EC** agreed to this and **JM** will pick up as a matter of urgency. **CC** noted that the ALT School Improvement Adviser is coming in to do monitoring and suggested the QoE Governors attend at that time.

CC noted the need to keep momentum going on SIP progress and **JM** suggested it should be a standing item in their meetings every week.

JM was pleased to see the SIP is a live document that is continuously reviewed and RAG rated. **CC** noted that she has started to number the actions so that they can easily link to PMR activity.

LW asked if **CC** was pleased with how it is going and **CC** confirmed this but noted that some staff sickness had slowed things temporarily.

JM asked what **CC** believed is making her feel more confident and she highlighted the feedback from the PD days and the participation of all staff including TA's, Business Support and Cleaners. **JM** agreed that it is important to include everyone.

JE asked if it is the intention to revisit the SIP at every FGB meeting. **JM** confirmed this and **CC** confirmed that the RAG rating will be updated for each meeting too.

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| | <p><u>Actions Agreed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft communication for Parent’s regarding DfE guidance around COVID cases notifications to be sent to EC, SC and LW for comment before releasing to parents. • QoE link Governors to attend the school when ALT School Improvement Adviser is visiting. • SIP to be reviewed at every FGB Meeting. | <p>KH/CC</p> <p>CC/SC/NG</p> <p>CC</p> | <p>ASAP</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>7.</p> | <p>Business Manager’s Report [Standing Item]</p> | | |
| | <p>KH provided a verbal report at this meeting as staff absence data would not be available until after this meeting. Additionally, she has been asked by the Trust not to run any budget reports until Year End is completed. KH summarised as follows:</p> <p><u>Budget Monitoring Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is changing this report so she is having training on this. • All spend of the carry forward will be on a separate spreadsheet and shared with Governors. • KH noted that she will provide an update on the Catch-up Fund spending plan at the next FGB meeting. <p><u>HR</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Cleaners left and a MDSA retired. • Recruited two Cleaners for immediate start, one of whom is already an MDSA. • Recruited a new MDSA to start after half term. There were four for interview and all were strong candidates and offered to do volunteer work at the school. • Staff sickness absence comparison shows 3% higher this year compared to last year. This does not include absence for COVID. Days lost for COVID this year are also higher. CC noted that they have been clear about the Sickness Absence Policy and have had discussions with staff. <p><u>JM asked if there is a Trust wide protocol for volunteers</u> and KH confirmed this adding that they are also able to accept students now.</p> <p><u>Premises Update and H & S Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned fire drill completed following new fire and intruder alarm being fitted over the Summer break. • Call rota for emergency callouts. • Will complete an unannounced drill also. <p><u>JM asked if fire drills are completed every term</u> and KH clarified that this is usually one drill per half term.</p> <p><u>Charging & Remissions Policy</u> Charges have been increased by £5 per hour. <u>JM asked what the uptake was like</u> and CC advised that prior to COVID restrictions they had a Keep fit class, Women’s Guild and a Dance club but now have only Ipswich Symphony Orchestra and the Dance club. Governors happy to approve this Policy.</p> | | |

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| | <p><u>Lettings Policy</u> Charges have been increased by £5 per hour. Only two customers so far and KH would need to look at staffing to cover this if there was more interest.</p> <p><u>LW asked if there has to be anything COVID related in this policy</u> and KH advised not.</p> <p>Governors happy to approve this Policy.</p> <p><u>Business continuity plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for a copy without personal details to be shared with Governors. • A full copy will also be provided for the Chair’s records. <p>Please refer to Part B Confidential Minutes for further discussion in relation to this item.</p> | | |
| | <p><u>Actions Agreed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on the Catch-up Fund spending plan will be shared at the next FGB meeting. • Copy of Business Continuity Plan to be provided for Chair of Governors. | <p>KH</p> <p>KH</p> | <p>22/11/21</p> <p>ASAP</p> |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>School Visits & Link Governor Reports [Standing Item]</p> | | |
| | <p>The following virtual Visits/Meetings have taken place and reports been shared since the last meeting:</p> <p>No visits have taken place this half term.</p> | | |
| <p>9.</p> | <p>Safeguarding [Standing Item]</p> | | |
| | <p><u>Safeguarding Policy</u></p> <p>No changes needed following Governor agreement at last meeting.</p> | | |
| <p>10.</p> | <p>Policies and Papers for Acknowledgement/Approval</p> | | |
| | <p>CC summarised the changes made to the policies as follows:</p> <p><u>Early Career Teachers Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model policy adapted by ALT and personalised to the school. • Required by DfE for change of language – ECT1= Trainee; ECT2=NQT and ECT3=NQT plus one. • All need mentors and time out of class. • Training package for NQT’s is really good quality. • Also have to be registered with Suffolk CC. <p><u>Behaviour Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes are highlighted in yellow and were added following PD day discussions. • Missing a set of simple rules so 3 rights added as fits well with values. Easy to have conversations with children based around this. <p>JM noted that there was some missing grammar which needs tidying up and KH agreed this will be done before publishing.</p> <p>Governors were happy to approve these two Policies.</p> | | |

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| | <p><u>Menopause Policy</u> It was decided that this is an annex to another HR policy and does therefore not need reviewing by Governors.</p> | | |
| 11. | <p>Any Other Business</p> | | |
| | <p><u>Governor’s Strapline/Vision Statement</u></p> <p>As per discussion under Item 4 above.</p> <p><u>Questions raised by JW</u> Are Teaching staff doing the requisite number of hours since the change to the school day was implemented. CC advised that this change was approved by the Trust and nobody has lost any time. JM noted that this change should have been shared with Governors at the July meeting even though it needed to be signed off by the Trust. CC explained the change as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During COVID restrictions they had a 45-minute lunch and staggered finish times. Pre-COVID they had an hour for lunch and by retaining the 45-minute lunch, KS1 now finish at 3.15pm and KS2 finish at 3.20pm. These finish times are within the range of covid staggered times so no one has lost any lesson time. • Can start staff meetings at 3.35pm now. <p>The Newsletter went out half an hour after the end of term which gave parents no opportunity to question or comment before the school was closed for the holiday. CC confirmed that they try to get the communication out before collection time or even lunch time but there was some late information to include on this occasion. There was some further discussion about this which concluded that the weekly bulletin works best and the intention should continue to be that it is released before collection time or lunch time on the Friday. SC noted that the map of classrooms was excellent and should be used every year and KH confirmed she intends to do this.</p> <p>CC will email amended term dates for the extra bank holiday in 2022 to Governors for approval and then parents will be notified.</p> <p>CC noted that she is happy to hear from Parent Governors at any time about any communication issues that are raised by Parents.</p> <p>JM suggested the school provide an open event for Parents that is informal and is possibly a post-COVID celebration which Governors could also attend and may help to improve how people feel before the next Inspection. KH agreed to look at this again after the half term break.</p> <p>CC advised that they are not doing face 2 face (F2F) parent evenings again this term. SC asked if they will be F2F again in the future and CC confirmed this, adding that they are considering a split balance of F2F and online to suit parental needs.</p> <p>JM requested that communications is a standing item for all FGB Meetings going forwards and this was agreed.</p> | | |
| | <p><u>Actions Agreed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended term dates to be emailed to Governors for approval. | CC | ASAP |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open event for Parents to be considered further. • Communications to be a standing item on Agenda for all FGB meetings. | KH | 22/11/21 |
| | | LT | 22/11/21 |
| 12. | Date and Time of next meeting | | |
| | The next Full Governing Body Meeting has been arranged for: Monday 22nd November 2021 @ 5.00pm. | | |

The meeting closed at **6.55 pm**

Minutes Agreed:

Name:

Signature:

Date: