

**MILVERTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**  
**Wednesday 20 September 2023**

Present		Absent	
Linda Burton (Chair)	LA Governor	James Pyne	Parent Governor
Stephen Jones	Observer	Richard Stead	Headteacher
Chris Mann	Co-opted Governor		
Stephen Penny	Staff Governor		
Andy Powell	Co-opted Governor		
Fiona Taylor	Co-opted Governor		
Emily Weiss	Parent Governor		
Andy Wooller ( <i>from item 2d</i> )	Co-opted Governor		
Gwil Wren	Co-opted Governor		
Katy Smith	Assistant Headteacher		
Kathryn Lanning	Clerk		

**Item 1 – Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from James Pyne.
- 1.2 There were no new declarations of interest.

**Item 2 – Appointments**

**2.1 Governors:**

- a) **elected Linda Burton as Chair for 2023-24**
- b) **elected James Pyne as Vice-Chair for 2023-24**
- c) **approved the re-appointment of Andy Powell as a Co-opted Governor for 4 years from 23 September 2023 to 22 September 2027**
- d) **agreed that Emily Weiss should step down as a Parent Governor with immediate effect and approved her appointment as a Co-opted Governor for 4 years from 20 September 2023 to 19 September 2027**
- e) **agreed that Emily Weiss would continue as Safeguarding Link Governor**
- f) **agreed that James Pyne would continue as SEND Link Governor**
- g) **agreed that Linda Burton would continue as the EYFS Link Governor**
- h) **agreed that James Pyne would continue as the H&S Link Governor**
- i) **agreed that the Pay and Appraisal Committee would continue to comprise Linda Burton, Emily Weiss and Andy Wooller**

2.2 Governors also noted that, subject to the appointment of Stephen Jones as a Co-opted Governor, the board would have one vacancy – for a Parent Governor. This would be advertised as soon as possible.

**ACTION: Clerk**

2.3 SP commented that a governor would need to attend the school’s Online Safety Committee and noted that this would probably fall under the remit of the IT Link Governor (JP).

**Item 3 – Minutes of Previous Meetings (paper)**

3.1 The Board noted that minutes of the FGB meeting held on 1 February 2023 were still not available. AW had chaired and recorded the meeting. He would send the recording to the clerk so she could type up the minutes.

**ACTION: Andy Wooller**

3.2 **The Board approved the minutes of the last FGB meeting held on 12 July 2023.**

**Item 4 – Matters Arising (oral)**

4.1 The Board noted progress on actions from the last meeting as follows:

<b>Para</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress</b>
4.3	Create subject monitoring visit timetable and template	Done – see item 11
5.2	Circulate dates for cyber security training	Done – next course 22/11/23
5.3	Create draft Uniform Policy	Done – see item 12c
5.4	Create template for Asset Management Plan	JP to provide by Oct half term
5.5	Governors to update training details on GovernorHub	In progress
6.5	Arrange physical intervention training for staff	4 members of staff to receive training this half term
6.12	Follow up with Recreation Ground Committee proposal to rent tennis courts	Done – but little interest. However, some local residents interested in forming a tennis club. <b>ACTION: Chair to follow up</b>
7.1	Safeguarding governor to meet with staff	Done – see item 11b
11.1	Consider new governance model	On agenda – see item 9
11.2	Check parent governor can switch to co-opted governor role early	Done – see 2.1d above
11.3	Follow up with prospective co-opted governor candidate	Done – see item 14
13.2	Provide photograph and short biographical details for website	In progress

## **Item 5 – Updates**

### a) Chair (oral)

- 5.1 The Chair advised that Chloe Holt, Headteacher at Nether Stowey Primary School, was working at Milverton Primary one day a week to provide administrative support during the Headteacher's absence on sick leave. SP and KS would continue to be the 'face' of the school during this time. Governors expressed their best wishes to the Headteacher for a speedy recovery and their thanks to all staff for stepping up during his absence

Question: have parents been kept informed?

Response (KS): messages were sent to all parents at the end of last term and start of this term.

### Clerk (oral)

- 5.2 The Clerk reminded the Board that all governors were expected to undertake safeguarding training and she would circulate details after the meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk**

### Governors (oral)

- 5.3 EW reported that she had recently undertaken L3 Safeguarding training.

## **Item 6 – Headteacher's Report (oral)**

- 6.1 In the Headteacher's absence, the Assistant Heads (SP and KS) updated governors on the start of the new academic year. All staff were working well together and the Senior Leadership Team continued to operate effectively. The Assistant Headteachers were very grateful for the support provided to them by the Chair of Governors and by County staff.
- 6.2 There had been some staff illness at school but staff turnover was at a minimum with only one new member of staff starting this term, to support years 5 and 6.

## **Item 7 – School Development Plan (presentation)**

- 7.1 Governors received an update on the 3 categories in the School Development Plan (SDP) as follows:

### Priority A – The Curriculum

- 7.1.1 SP advised that work continued to refine the curriculum and ensure it is manageable and therefore deliverable by identifying key areas of focus. History had now been completed and only a few subjects remained. Links to maths and English as core subjects had been included in the plan. The focus for maths this year would be multiplication tables embedding teaching methods up to Year 6. The focus for English this year would either be phonics (dependent on the outcome of the County phonics audit taking place the following day) or writing.

Question: do you ask feeder schools if Milverton pupils are good or weak in any particular areas?

Response (KS): we have done this in the past – responses have been anecdotal rather than data driven but suggest that Milverton pupils are in a good position when they move to feeder schools.

### Priority B – Pastoral (primarily attendance and wellbeing)

- 7.1.2 KS advised that persistent absence was defined nationally as attendance at 90% or below. At the end of last year the national persistent absence figure was 22.3%. At Milverton the figure was 13.9% but the school continued to use and develop a range of measures to address this including:

- Raising parental awareness of the importance of children being in school
- Working with County safeguarding officers
- Offering support where needed, for example through interventions where children are struggling with work and feel unmotivated
- Helping with issues at home
- Training a second Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

7.1.3 KS reported that the Tone Valley Partnership intended to cease funding for the Parent and Family Support Advisor (PFSA) role that Milverton and other schools contributed towards. This was a very valuable service and helped to address issues in families with children in different educational settings. The school would need to review whether its current financial contribution towards this facility would be enough to buy in an equivalent service.

7.1.4 Measures to improve staff wellbeing included:

- reviewing/consolidating systems
- streamlining report templates and planning
- continuing to pay for Care First, provided by County
- making staff meetings shorter and more focused
- training staff to manage challenging behaviour and implement de-escalation techniques
- plans to carry out a staff audit to identify any areas where further support could be offered

7.1.5 Measures to improve community wellbeing included holding/planning events for parents such as:

- meet the teachers
- sessions to show parents how to help their children with school work at home
- Strawberry Fayre
- Harvest Festival service
- Christmas celebrations

Question: does organising these events put too much pressure on staff?

Response (KS): responsibility for organising these is shared amongst staff and such events are limited to no more than approximately one a month.

7.1.6 The Chair suggested it would be useful if one or two governors attended each parents' evening and she would email them with dates.

**ACTION: Chair**

Priority C – Impact (previously called Assessment)

7.2 SP advised that work continued to ensure assessments are in place across the curriculum and different assessment report formats for each subject would be trialled with staff this term. Work would also be carried out to consolidate reporting in one place such as BromCom rather than have documents held on different systems.

7.3 **It was agreed that SP would update the SDP to reflect the outcome of the phonics audit taking place on 21 September and then post the document on GovernorHub for governor comment. A final version of the SDP would then be brought to the next FGB meeting for approval.**

**ACTION: Stephen Penny**

## **Item 8 – Safeguarding and Wellbeing (oral)**

8.1 KS advised that one child currently had a level 4 Early Health Assessment (EHA) (Child in Need); one had a level 3 EHA (Intensive Family Support). Another Level 3 EHA had been submitted but refused and the school was trying to find alternative support for that family. PFSA support was being

provided to 3 families and there were a number of other low-level concerns. Staff were being encouraged to log any concerns that they might have about safeguarding.

Question: do you have a management system for this?

Response (KS): yes, My Concern which helps me to log, categorise and manage different concerns. Meera Pow, SENDCo is being trained as an extra Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead to provide additional safeguarding support during the Headteacher's absence and she also has access to the system.

- 8.3 KS reported that a member of pre-school staff had recently resigned and would be replaced; another member of staff had asked to reduce their hours after Christmas, but the hours would not be backfilled.

### **Item 9 – Future Governance Arrangements (oral)**

9.1 Governors revisited the proposal discussed at the last meeting that governor business be dealt with in FGB meetings rather than some being delegated to committees. The Chair advised that this would reduce the overall number of meetings held and avoid repetition of discussions. She also felt that it would be useful for all governors – several of whom are relatively recent appointees – to be present for all discussions, particularly on key issues such as finance and the curriculum. The Chair stressed that this would be an experiment and that the Board could return to a committee structure in the future if they wished.

9.2 The Chair had circulated proposed FGB meeting dates for 2023-24 and had suggested that two of these meetings should focus on finance. She also suggested that finance should be the first substantive item on each FGB agenda and advised that Gloria Hamlet, the school Finance Officer had agreed to attend for this. Governors commented that it would be useful to have some training in school finance and suggested that the GH could give a short overview at the next meeting. The clerk would also explore finance training options.

**ACTION: Clerk to discuss with Gloria Hamlet**

9.3 Governors noted that the Month 6 Finance Report had to be submitted to County by 20 October but that the next, finance-focused FGB was scheduled for 8 November. The clerk would check with the Finance Officer whether the meeting needed to be brought forward.

Post-meeting note: Finance Officer confirmed there was no need to bring the meeting forward.

#### **9.4 Governors agreed:**

- a) **to discontinue committees – other than the Pay and Appraisal Committee – with all business to be considered at FGB meetings**
- b) **that Fiona Taylor should be the Board Link Governor for Finance**
- c) **to attend meetings having read papers thoroughly beforehand and be prepared to challenge and scrutinise issues on the agenda**

### **Item 10 – Governance Documents (papers)**

10.1 Governors did not propose any changes to the following governance documents:

- Instrument of Government for Milverton Primary School
- Governor Code of Conduct
- Board Standing Orders

10.2 Governors noted that the following documents would be published on the school website:

- Board Register of Interests

- Board Attendance Register 2022/23 (once attendance at the February 2023 meeting had been confirmed)

### **Item 11 – Governor Monitoring (paper)**

- 11.1 Governors noted that the following Governor Monitoring Visits had taken place (reports included with papers):
- Curriculum – 7 July 2023 (AP)
  - Safeguarding – 13 July 2023 (EW)
- 11.2 A draft Governor Visits policy had been included with papers to guide governors on how to prepare themselves and staff for visits, focus on key issues and give appropriate feedback. Governors were asked to choose between two versions of the form for reporting back and felt that the shorter version was more appropriate. Governors also discussed a proposed monitoring timetable and the Chair advised that visits were scheduled to take place on Friday afternoons during teachers’ PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) time. Governors noted the importance of keeping these visits very light touch and focused so as not to eat into PPA time. It was suggested that 3-3.20pm might be appropriate (although governors may want to arrive earlier to avoid any parking issues at the end of the day).
- 11.3 **Governors approved:**
- a) the Governor Visits Policy document and the shorter version of the report form included with papers**
  - b) the governor monitoring visit timetable.**

**ACTION: Clerk to add these documents to GovernorHub Monitoring folder**

### **Item 12 – Policies (papers)**

- 12.1 Governors noted that the seconded Headteacher had started working her way through the policy schedule and would be updating those policies past their review date. EW said she would carry out the statutorily required governor check on the Single Central Record.

**ACTION: Emily Weiss**

- 12.2 **Governors approved:**
- **The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
  - **The Uniform Policy**
  - **The Governor Allowances Policy**

### **Item 13 – 2023/24 Meeting Dates**

- 13.1 **Governors approved FGB meeting dates for the current academic year as follows:**

- **Wednesday 8 November 2023 – Finance focus**
- **Wednesday 22 November 2023**
- **Wednesday 7 February 2024**
- **Wednesday 20 March 2024 – Finance focus**
- **Wednesday 8 May 2024**
- **Wednesday 17 July 2024**

**All 7-9pm at Milverton Primary School.**

**Item 14 – Appointment of Co-opted Governor**

**14.1 Governors approved the appointment of Stephen Jones as a Co-opted Governor from 20 September 2023 to 19 September 2027.**

**Item 15 – Any other business (oral)**

15.1 There was no other business.

**Item 16 – Date of next meeting**

16.1 To be confirmed.

Kathryn Lanning  
Clerk to Governors