



MILVERTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday 22 November 2023

Present		Absent	
Linda Burton (Chair)	LA Governor	Andy Powell	Co-opted Governor
James Pyne (Vice-Chair)	Parent Governor	Richard Stead	Headteacher
Chris Barnes	Parent Governor		
Stephen Jones	Co-opted Governor		
Chris Mann (items 1-9)	Co-opted Governor		
Stephen Penny	Staff Governor		
Fiona Taylor	Co-opted Governor		
Emily Weiss	Co-opted Governor		
Gwil Wren	Co-opted Governor		
Katy Smith	Assistant Headteacher		
Gloria Hamlet (items 1-6)	Finance Officer		
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 Andy Powell.
- 1.2 There were no new declarations of interest.

Item 2 – Minutes of the last meeting (paper)

- 2.1 **The Board approved the minutes of the FGB meeting held on 8 November 2023.**

Item 3 – Matters Arising / Action Tracker (paper)

- 3.1 The Board noted completed actions from previous meetings and progress on outstanding items as follows:

FGB Meeting held on 12 July 2023			
Para 5.4	Create Asset Management Plan template	JP	By end of Autumn term
FGB Meeting held on 20 September 2023			
Para 5.2	Ensure ALL governors undertake safeguarding training	Clerk	See item 8b
Para 7.3	Board to approve final version of SDP	All	See item 11
FGB Meeting held on 8 November 2023			
Para 4.1	Review allocation of governor responsibilities	All	See item 14
Para 5.2	Review date of next FGB meeting	Chair/ Clerk	7 February – unless meeting required earlier
Para 11.2	Investigate report of gap in school fence	KS	Boundary comprises mainly fence but hedge in places. KS checked - all is secure

Item 4 – Finance Update (oral)

- 4.1 GH advised that she had completed Months 1-5 reconciliations and was now working on the Month 6 reconciliation. This had highlighted a few problems with the new County Finance Management System, for example information missing from cashiers, items miscoded and VAT being mistakenly applied. She still expected the Month 7 report to be ready by 4 December.

Question: do you feel the school is in a worse or better financial position than anticipated?

Response (GH): in addition to miscoding there has been some unexpected additional expenditure, for example a bill for £2k to apply safety film to the hut windows, plus other smaller items all of which were eroding the potential carry forward.

- 4.2 KS advised that the school had been asked by County to join a Deficit Budget Working Group and she had attended a half-hour meeting with GH earlier that day to present the school's current financial position, including actions taken and planned to reduce the deficit. The Working Group had not made any suggestions that GH had not already considered. GH was investigating the possibility of changing the insurance cover for support staff sickness absences so that it is triggered earlier than the current day 10 point.

Question: given the County Council's current financial position, is there any suggestion that school funding may be reduced?

Response (KS): there will be no additional funding but there is no suggestion that any funding will be removed. County has confirmed our need for a 7-class structure, but we have been asked to review the local demographic and how this might affect the school's future PAN (Published Admission Number).

Response (JP): funding for education comes from the DfE rather than County.

- 4.3 **The Board agreed that, as the next scheduled Board meeting was not until 7 February (by which time the Month 9 report should be ready) the Month 7 report would be emailed to them in December. FT would first review the report with GH and ensure that the covering email flags anything requiring governors' attention. An additional Board meeting would be convened should this be required.**

ACTION: GH / FT

Item 5 – Pay Policy 2023-24 (paper)

5.1 The Board approved:

- a) **the Pay Policy for 2023-24; and**
- b) **the appointment of GW to the Pay and Appraisal Committee.**

Item 6 – Schools Financial Value Standard Checklist 2023-24 (paper)

6.1 GH reminded governors that the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) checklist needed to be completed and submitted by 31 March each year and advised that a benchmarking exercise would be carried out in December to inform the response to Section E, Value for Money.

6.2 The Board agreed that:

- a) **GW would take the lead on producing a draft SFVS submission for discussion at the FGB meeting on 7 February and final approval at the FGB meeting on 20 March; and**
ACTION: GW
- b) **The Clerk would carry out a governor skills audit to inform the response to Question 1 regarding financial skills on the Board and also to identify any skills gaps to be taken into account when recruiting new governors.**

ACTION: Clerk

Gloria Hamlet left the meeting at this point.

Item 7 – Chair’s Update (oral)

Governor Appointments

7.1 The Chair advised that Andy Wooller had resigned from the Board and that Andy Powell would be stepping down at the end of December. She asked governors to consider whether they know anyone suitable who might be interested in joining the Board.

ACTION: All

Pay and Appraisal Committee

7.2 The Chair advised that the Pay and Appraisal Committee had met immediately prior to the Board meeting and had approved the movement of two members of staff to the next pay threshold.

Staffing arrangements during Headteacher’s absence

7.3 **The minutes of this discussion are confidential and are attached as Part B minutes.**

Item 8 – Clerk’s Update (papers)

8.1 The Board noted the latest briefing from Governor Services.

8.2 The Clerk confirmed that all governors had either undertaken safeguarding training this term or planned to do so by the end of the month.

8.3 It was recommended that school governors undertake Prevent training every two years. (The Board had last undertaken this training in 2021) and Cyber Security training annually. Governors were asked to keep their training log on GovernorHub up to date.

Prevent Training

<https://www.support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/portal#awareness-course>

ACTION: All

Item 9 – Headteacher’s Report (paper)

Attainment

- 9.1 SP drew governors’ attention to the latest data from the Fischer Family Trust which showed that the school’s provision for children last academic year was very good with Milverton pupils achieving in the top 11% in the country for progress and attainment in Reading and Maths combined, and the top 8% for progress and attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths combined.

Question: what are the scores benchmarked against?

Response (SP/KS): until recently Year 6 results were benchmarked against Year 2 test results with value added showing where, by the end of Year 6, pupils had exceeded their Year 2 prediction. Year 2 tests were now no longer compulsory and national benchmarking at Year 6 would be against cohort results from tests carried out in Reception. A school’s cohort could change significantly from Reception to Year 6 so benchmarking may be less accurate in future. Schools were likely to continue to carry out Year 2 tests for their own monitoring but were no longer required to publish the results.

Question: how is teacher-assessed writing moderated?

Response (SP): County has a lead practitioner who trains others to go into schools to review and moderate samples of writing.

School Development Plan (SDP)

- 9.2 SP updated governors on SDP Priority A, Curriculum. Action plans for all subjects were in place for the current academic year; and work to refine foundation subject concepts and key knowledge continued. Now the Curriculum was in good shape the focus would shift to assessing Impact (Priority C).
- 9.3 KS updated governors on SDP Priority B, Pastoral. Wellbeing Champion Training had begun for children in years 3-6 to help them support their peers by promoting positive mental health, and the Mental Health Support Team continued to work with a number of individual children across the school. The Parent and Family Support Advisor was currently working with 4 families in school. This post had previously been funded by County but the intention now was that schools in the Tone Valley Partnership would share the cost. A parent survey had been carried out at Parents’ Evening; responses seemed very positive but a full report would be provided to governors in due course.
- 9.4 KS had attended a meeting earlier in the day with the County Education Safeguarding Team to discuss children with persistent absence issues and there is one family they feel able to support.

Question: what does the Education Safeguarding Team do?

Response (KS): they look at any pupil with attendance below 70%. There are only three children at Milverton who fall into this category, two of whom have medical reasons for low attendance.

Question: has there been any County action on implementing fines for unauthorised absences?

Response (KS): there is a threshold for persistent offenders and I will clarify what this is with County.

- 9.5 KS reported that the Family Intervention Service was dealing with one family at Level 3. Two children were on part-time timetable this term and two were accessing alternative provision as part of their education.
- 9.6 SP updated governors on SDP Priority C, Impact and advised that staff were currently reviewing those assessments already in place. SP had received some training from Jeremy Handscomb, County Curriculum and Topic Lead, which he had cascaded to staff. Rather than carry out termly formal assessments in each subject for each child to monitor the impact of the school curriculum, JH had suggested a more holistic and innovative approach which involved different ways of developing question threads throughout each unit of work. This would enable teachers to check continuously the knowledge and skills developed by children.

Question: how many formal assessments do you have each year?

Response (SP): each year group has a grammar check and reading test twice a year, plus a termly maths test.

Staff

- 9.7 Governors noted that several new staff had joined the school this term and this had helped to offset a number of staff absences. A new learning assistant was also a qualified sports coach and was arranging for school sports teams to take part in external matches.

Health and Safety

- 9.8 Governors noted that Chloe Holt had been working on reducing the number of fire actions and overdue inspections; as a result compliance had improved from 74% at the beginning of September to 84%.

School Roll

- 9.9 Governors noted that there were currently 194 children on the school roll (this would drop to 193 at the end of the week).

Question: what is the ideal number?

Response (KS): ideally over 200. The projected figure in this year's Budget was 203; the figure in the October 2022 census was 196. The figures reflect falling rolls across the county.

CM left the meeting at this point.

Item 10 – Safeguarding and Wellbeing (oral)

- 10.1 Covered in item 9.

Item 11 – School Development Plan 2023-24 (paper)

- 11.1 **The Board approved the School Development Plan for 2023-24.**

Item 12 – School Development Plan monitoring (paper)

- 12.1 **The Board agreed that governors would monitor the SDP as follows:**

- **Priority A (Curriculum) – CM, GW (monitoring to take place in February and June)**
- **Priority B (Pastoral) – LB, CB, SJ (monitoring to take place in January and May)**
- **Priority C (Impact) – EW, JP, FT (monitoring to take place in March and July)**

Item 13 – SEND Report 2023-24 (paper)

13.1 JP introduced the SEND Report for 2023-24 which would appear on the school website. He outlined key points from his meeting with the SENDCo earlier in the day and the range of work being carried out to support children. The school currently had 28 children with identified needs, 4 of which had Education, Health and Care Plans. The graduated response toolkit from County, explaining levels of SEND and how to prove need, had now been cascaded to staff. Funding remained an overarching issue, particularly managing parental expectations.

Item 14 – Governor Roles (paper)

14.1 Governor monitoring roles were reviewed and confirmed as follows:

Name	Subject Monitoring	Other Monitoring
Linda Burton	PSHE, RE, Music	EYFS
Chris Barnes	IT	
Stephen Jones	Geography	Health and Safety
Chris Mann	Science, PE	
James Pyne	Maths	SEN
Fiona Taylor	DT, Art	
Emily Weiss	English	Safeguarding
Gwil Wren	History	SFVS

14.2 Governors should arrange to meet subject leads on a Friday afternoon during their PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) time. Meetings should be very light touch and focused so as not to eat into PPA time (15-20 minutes). Governors should complete a visit report form and upload this to GovernorHub for other governors to view.

Item 15 – Policy Schedule (paper)

15.1 Governors noted that Chloe Holt had been updating statutory school policies and governors noted progress with this.

Items 16 and 17 – Policies (papers)

16.1 **The Board approved the following policies and procedures:**

- **Early Career Teacher Induction Policy**
- **Grievance Resolution Procedure**
- **Disciplinary Procedure for staff**
- **Whistleblowing Policy**
- **SEND Policy**
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Medical Needs Policy**
- **Capability Procedure for Teaching Staff**
- **Capability Policy for Non-Teaching Staff**

16.2 The Board delegated approval of policies requiring further information as follows:

- **Data Protection and FoI Policy – CB**
- **Staff Appraisal Policy – LB**

ACTION: LB, CB

Item 18 – Any other business

18.1 There was no other business.

Item 19 – Date of next meeting

19.1 The next FGB meeting would be held on Wednesday 7 February 2024.

Kathryn Lanning
Clerk to Governors