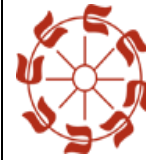




Local Governing Board (LGB) to
The Learning Partnership (TLP)
Wheelock Primary School
Minutes – Part I



**Wheelock
Primary School**

Date: Monday 15th January 2024 at 5:00pm at Wheelock Primary School

Governors Present:

Rachel Cornes - Staff Governor (RS)
Janet Diamond - Appointed Governor (JD)
Kim French - Staff Governor (KF)
Sheila Manzano - Appointed Governor (SM)
Mark Stowe – Chair (MS)
Kate Windle - Appointed Governor (KW)

Apologies:

Margaret Frost - Parent Governor
Paul Phipps - Parent Governor

In attendance:

Sally Whitehead - Headteacher
Allan Howells - Director of Quality TLP (AH)

Clerk: Sharon Dutton – Entrust Clerk

The following documentation had been uploaded onto GovernorHub prior to the meeting:

- Headteachers Report Spring 2024 – agenda item 3
- School Improvement Dashboard Nov 2023 – agenda item 3
- Performance by Group KS2 – agenda items 8 & 9
- Performance by Subject KS2 – agenda items 8 & 9
- Pupil Premium Strategy 2023-2024 – agenda item 11
- Safeguarding Report to LAB January 2024 – agenda item 12
- Mental Health LAB January 2024 – agenda items 13 & 14
- Wellbeing QA Visit – agenda items 13 & 14.

Governance and Administration

1. Welcome, Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy

The meeting started at 5:06pm.
The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

Apologies for absence was received from Margaret Frost and Paul Phipps.

Resolved:

That the apologies for absence were accepted from Margaret Frost and Paul Phipps.

AH confirmed the constitutional makeup of the LGB as being a maximum of 9 governor. The Chair observed how pleased he was with the current numbers (there are 2 vacancies), particularly with the national difficulty in governor recruitment. A discussion ensued as to why this existed and suggestions were put forward in order to make recruitment an opportunity instead of a challenge. It was agreed that training with the possibility of

certification as a CV line-item might be encouraging. Governors remarked on the valuable training session on Governor role and responsibilities held immediately prior to this meeting.

The Chair asked JD what her school's process was in governor recruitment and she confirmed there was an emphasis on training, understanding the role and emphasising an "eyes on, hands off" approach. SM also suggested a survey of parents to gauge their understanding of the role of a governor and it was agreed this was a good idea. The Headteacher announced it was the school's 50th year celebrations this term which might have some relevance.

ACTION:

AH to supply the Headteacher with a "Role of Governor FAQ's" to go out with the next school newsletter.

AH confirmed that there was a planned move away from recruiting staff governors to serve within their own school, however there would be opportunities for staff to sit as governors on other TLP school LGB's.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th October 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record. It was noted that the name Haughton had been incorrectly recorded as Horton.

There were no matters arising from the minutes and there was only 1 outstanding action from the action log:

17	ACTION: All Governors to complete the declaration of Interest on GovernorHub	ALL	IN PROGRESS
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Strategic Direction and Progress Against Priorities

3. School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Update

The Headteacher presented the Headteacher's Report Spring 2024 as a Power Point presentation which had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. She confirmed the 3 Wheelock values and behaviours which remained unchanged. These are referred to daily with the pupils starting from assembly.

She went on to outline the School Improvement Priorities of which there were 3. The action plan was presented in black script and the impact of that plan presented in blue.

PRIORITY 1 – Implementation of an ambitious curriculum and effective teaching and learning strategies.

This is based on the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) "5 a day" strategies. The Headteacher had shared the monitoring schedule from the last meeting and confirmed that this monitoring should take the form of work scrutiny, learning walks and lesson observations which could include the videoing of themselves whilst teaching.

PRIORITY 2 – Promotion of high levels of progress in phonics and early reading.

The Headteacher explained that the phonics data outcomes had been disappointing and the school was working hard to attain the 85% target pass rate. It was investing in additional training from Ruth Miskin Literacy (Read Write Inc) and investigating the reason why the results were below par when the standard of teaching was high. In line with this the Phonics Lead was working closely with staff to monitor and support their practice.

Governor challenge:

Are there interventions for underachievers?

Answer:

The Headteacher confirmed that there were daily catch-ups for the lowest scoring 20%. Timetables were being shuffled so that the intervention teaching assistant who had proved invaluable in this area can proceed and after every 6 weeks these pupils are reassessed so that they do not get left behind for a protracted length of time.

Governor challenge:

Whilst it's good to see that phonics is being prioritised; could the Headteacher foresee the next area of concern?

Answer:

The Headteacher speculated that it was probably writing which was going to be an area prioritised for additional development for at least the next 3 years.

PRIORITY 3 – Implementation of an ambitious writing curriculum.

The Headteacher confirmed she wanted the progress made in writing to continue with more children gaining greater depth. To support this, a local leading educationalist with specialisms in this area from Dove Bank Primary School was supporting Wheelock, along with other schools within the Trust.

Governor question:

Are the literacy results based solely on past teacher's assessments?

Answer:

The Headteacher replied that in addition to internal moderation, 25% of the schools were moderated externally. This was considered essential to measuring improvement. The school had external moderation last year.

Governor challenge:

Why was there an emphasis on Year 2 and 6 teachers having greater depth training?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that these two years are at the end of the two Key Stages (1 & 2). She went on to explain that previous to her appointment external benchmarking of results had not been happening systematically. The HT viewed external benchmarking as essential, not only for results but also for progress, particularly when considering the demographics of the school.

The Headteacher referred the Governors to the School Improvement Dashboard November 2023 which was uploaded onto GovernorHub.

4. OFSTED Preparedness

The Headteacher explained that there had been a revisit by the Trust's external consultant Mike Cladingbowl (A senior Ofsted Inspector and former CEO of the Learning Alliance) on 14th December 2023 and that he had confirmed the school had acted on all his recommendations from the September 2023 review meeting. These were highlighted on pages 7 and 8 of her report.

Governor challenge:

Are the agreed teaching approaches, such as count downs and the use of talking partners exhibited in the classroom?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that they were not as they would risk becoming "wallpaper" but that the children were totally aware of the approaches. Governors agreed that the "don't laminate it, live it" approach was an effective one.

Governor challenge:

Could the Headteacher expand on the how the school was intending to "adapt teaching in music further, and other subjects" as outlined in her report?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that this was taking the form of deep dives into music and geography and the results were so far overwhelmingly positive.

Governor question:

Do Ofsted "cross the bridge between management and governance" (referring to the training workshop on effective Governance which had been delivered by AH prior to the meeting?)

Answer:

The Headteacher confirmed that during an Ofsted inspection members of the governing board would be asked to meet with Ofsted for a short time. This would usually include the clerk or governance professional from the Trust and the Chair of Governors depending on availability.
The Headteacher went on to explain, for the benefit of a new governor, how the Ofsted inspection process took place and confirmed that she felt the inspection was imminent.

Education

5. Admissions and Pupil Numbers

Governors were referred to Pages 9 and 10 of the Headteacher's Report and given a brief update on admissions. The school continued to remain popular. Whilst there was a small number of in-year places available at this time, these were likely to be filled.

Governor question:

Does the school advertise available positions?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that the vacant Reception place would be filled by Cheshire East (the LA) so all vacancies were considered filled. The Headteacher went on to explain that there had been two requests for places in Year 2 but these had had to be turned down as the following Year 3 class was bigger.

Governor question:

When a pupil leaves the school (for whatever reason), is it mandatory for their place to be filled?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that the admissions process was managed by Cheshire East, and that the popularity of the school would mean a waiting list in place for places. The Head also outlined census timings which could have an impact on the school's funding.

The Headteacher also shared an example where individual pupil SEND needs have to be accommodated, for example a situation where a pupil needed to be moved from a small class to a larger class to support their anxiety issues.

6. Attendance

Governors were referred to Page 11 of the Headteacher's Report and given a brief update on attendance. The data demonstrated that attendance was good and remained above national level.

Governor question:

Is there any negotiation made between the schools and the health service with regards to persistent absenteeism due to ill health?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that any pupil with below 90% attendance was categorised as persistently absent. An Education Welfare Officer then came into the school to assess the statistics and repeat offenders were referred to the health services where necessary. She reported that the Minister for Education had written a generic letter to Governors asking them to support schools in encouraging attendance wherever possible.

She also pointed out rates could be influenced by pupils on that a reduced timetable, often necessary for certain pupils, or for those who were marked absent but were actually late. Whilst this would also affect the headline statistics in the same way that, for example, pupils absent on holiday would, the school did have a strong understanding of individual cases which made up the headlines statistics. However, the government was now acknowledging the challenges the schools were facing (particularly since Covid) and that it was important for governors to understand the full picture behind the figures. JD suggested that the use of the resource Insight Tracking did allow the removal of "outliers" to enable more accurate statistics.

Where required, fixed penalty notices for persistent absenteeism were issued by the local authority.

7. Behaviour

Governors were referred to Page 12 of the Headteacher's Report and given a brief update on behaviour. The frequency and number of incidents was comparatively low.

The Headteacher highlighted the 3 successful Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) which can take up to 18 months to be approved. RC announced that the National Collage of Education had created a new course on EHCP which could prove very useful.

Governor challenge:

In relation to the breakdown of incidents, which categories were considered to be a worrying problem?

Answer:

The Headteacher explained that whilst the 10 children involved with 6-10 incidents (which meant they were each involved with approximately one incident a week) was not ideal it was the 5 children involved in 11-20 incidents that she was most focussed on. One of these pupils had an ECHP. For the remainder of the group, the school was covering the costs of supply support staff. In addition the school was training support staff internally and this strategy was gradually improving matters. It was pointed out that the remaining 2 "outliers" were accounting for 20% of the behavioural instances.

Governor question:

How is the school as a whole being affected by these behavioural issues?

Answer:

The Headteacher answered that it was too early to measure but that the increased budget was of great assistance and that extra classrooms available meant that one staff member was able to look after more than 1 child in the same place which was a timetabling advantage.

Governor question:

Are there any national statistics on behavioural issues?

Answer:

The Headteacher confirmed that there was no national average and no national behavioural policy. Governors felt that additional information would be beneficial.

ACTION: The Headteacher agreed to present a graph showing the direction behavioural issues were going within the school at the next Governor meeting.

8. Curriculum – Progress

9. Curriculum - Attainment

Governors were referred to Pages 13 to 17 of the Headteacher's Report and given a brief update on curriculum progress and attainment. She confirmed with governors that the figures had been validated since the last Governors meeting and that the figures were being looked at in greater depth. It was noted that by addressing the lower results in Writing, all the combined figures would improve greatly.

The Headteacher directed the governors to the following documents which had been uploaded onto GovernorHub:

- Performance by Group KS2
- Performance by Subject KS2

10. Curriculum – Link Governor Monitoring

Governors were referred to Page 18 of the Headteacher's Report which outlined the areas of responsibility in governor link monitoring. Governors confirmed that were happy to continue with the system as it was. The Headteacher brought the governors attention to the fact that the JD was covering the bulk of this monitoring and that there was now a vacancy in the areas of Religious Education (RE), (Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHE), Relationships & Sex Education (RSE), RRSa and No Outsiders.

SM agreed to consider taking over this monitoring and that initially she could pair up with JD until she felt more confident.

ACTION: SM to update the Headteacher on her willingness to carry out link monitoring.

ACTION: The Headteacher to approach MF to assist with some of JD's monitoring as Health & Safety/Premises is unlikely to be a focus for Ofsted.

Governor question:

Are there dates for monitoring visits in the school diary?

Answer:

The Headteacher asked that the governor identified their availability and then contact her to plan their visits.

Governor question:

When is a good time to plan a visit?

Answer:

The Headteacher confirmed that the date agreed between themselves and the school lead was the best time and that staff were always offered additional hours in order to fit round governors visits.

ACTION: Governors to continue to plan their link monitoring visits and update the Headteacher.

11. Review of Pupil Premium (PP) strategy 2023-2024 (action log from 05.10.2023)

The Headteacher confirmed that the Pupil Premium strategy statement had been uploaded onto GovernorHub for the Governors consideration.

This document covered the following areas:

- School Overview
- Funding Overview
- Part A – Statement of Intent
 - Challenges
 - Intended outcomes
 - Activities
- Part B – Review of Previous Year
 - Outcomes
 - Externally provided programme
 - Fund Servicing

Governor question:

Had the Headteacher provided a three year plan?

Answer:

The Headteacher answered that her intention was to eventually provide a three year plan but that at present the document only covered 1 year due to the Pupil Premium lead being a new appointee.

Governor challenge:

Was the Headteacher happy with the strategy?

Answer:

The Headteacher replied that she was satisfied with the PP strategy. She pointed out that across the school the PP students did not perform as well as the rest of the pupils and that the numbers of PP students at the school were lower than the national average. She also confirmed for the governors that schools were autonomous when selecting where their PP money was utilised within the school.

The Headteacher confirmed that it was mandatory that the final PP strategy document be posted onto the school website by the end of the year. Governors were asked to ensure they had read the PP document before any Ofsted inspection was announced.

Welfare

12. Safeguarding

The Chair requested that going forward those items which form the Welfare section of the agenda be included before the Education section of the agenda. He explained that this was to ensure that important welfare items were not rushed due to meeting time constraints.

ACTION: The Clerk to ensure the agenda template is amended for Wheelock Primary School to cover this request.

The Headteacher confirmed the Safeguarding report had been uploaded onto GovernorHub and requested that all Governors read it prior to the next LGB meeting.

ACTION: All Governors to read the safeguarding report before the next LGB meeting.

She outlined the case numbers and informed governors that there were many children on the waiting list due to the departure of a staff member but that additional training was being given to existing staff.

Governor question:

The governors asked if there was additional support which they could offer.

Answer:

The Headteacher informed them that the numbers were high as Christmas was always a problematic time and that these numbers would improve as the year progressed.

She confirmed that high-vis jackets had been ordered for all the Junior Safety Officers.

13. Welfare and Wellbeing – Students

Governors were referred to Page 21 of the Headteacher's Report.

14. Welfare and Wellbeing – Staff

Governors were referred to Page 22 of the Headteacher's Report.

The Headteacher reported that David Twambley and an human resources representative from the Trust had visited the school. An independent but complementary strategic trust exercise was conducted to survey all staff and the school were awaiting the resulting report and action plan.

In support of agenda items 13 and 14, the following documents had been uploaded onto GovernorHub:

- Mental Health LAB January 2024
- Wellbeing QA Visit

Local Matters and Stakeholder Engagement

15. Local Policy Approval

Nothing to report.

16. Stakeholders Engagement – Parents/Carers

Governors were referred to Page 24 of the Headteacher's Report.

17. Stakeholders Engagement – Parents/Carers

Governors were referred to Page 25 of the Headteacher's Report.

18. Communication – to Trust Executive, Board, ESP Com

Nothing to report.

19. Communication – from Trust Executive, Board, ESP Com

Nothing to report.

20. AOB

Nothing to report.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: 2nd May 2024 at 5.00pm

Meeting Closed at 7.13pm

Minutes approved:

Date:.....

ACTION LOG FROM MEETING 15.01.2024

Agenda item	Action	By	When
1	Supply the Headteacher with a list of FAQ's to go out with the next school newsletter.	AH	After meeting
7	Present a graph showing the direction behavioural issues were going within the school at the next Governor meeting.	Headteacher	02.05.2024
10	Update the Headteacher on her willingness to carry out link monitoring.	SM	After meeting
10	Approach MF to assist with some of JD's monitoring as Health & Safety/Premises is unlikely to be a focus for Ofsted.	Headteacher	After meeting
10	Plan link monitoring visits and update the Headteacher.	ALL	After meeting
12	Ensure the agenda template is amended to place Welfare agenda items before Strategic Direction & Progress Against Priorities.	Clerk	02.05.2024
12	Read the safeguarding report before the next LGB meeting.	Clerk	02.05.2024