



WITTERSHAM CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Held Virtually on Thursday, 27th January 2022 at 6.30 pm

*On a voyage of discovery: together we learn,
grow and achieve*

Christian Values of
Respect, Self-worth/Perseverance, Love,
Kindness, Forgiveness

PRESENT: John Collins (Chair), Jennifer Maynard (Vice Chair), Claire Frost (Headteacher), Lucy Avena (AHT/Staff governor), Donna Clifton, Oliver Walker, Rachel Georgiades, Kerry Dean and Stephen Rogers

CLERK: Jane Phillips

The meeting commenced at 6.31 pm and was quorate.

ITEM	PROCEDURAL	ACTION
1.	<u>WELCOME, APOLOGIES, QUORUM</u>	
1a	The Chair welcomed governors and recently appointed parent governor, Kerry Dean to the meeting. Introductions were made. The meeting was opened with a prayer. Governors had previously been asked to ensure that they were in a suitable environment which enabled each to maintain confidentiality.	
1b	There were no apologies for absence.	
1c	The Clerk advised the meeting was quorate.	
1d	Notes would be taken in the event the link with the Clerk was lost.	
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS INTEREST</u>	
2a	There were no declarations of business interest made against any agenda item.	
2b	Governors were reminded to declare any business interests which became relevant during the meeting.	
3.	<u>MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2ND DECEMBER 2021</u>	
3a	The confidential and non-confidential minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate account.	
3b	<u>A Review of Governor and Clerk's Actions Arising</u> All actions had been completed or would be discussed during this meeting.	
GOVERNANCE		
4.	<u>MEMBERSHIP</u> The Chair reported that he and the Headteacher (HT) were due to meet with two Foundation governor candidates after school on Wednesday, 2 nd February 2022. There was also a further Foundation governor candidate. The Chair was hopeful that there would be a full compliment of governors when the board next met in March.	

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

5.	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING</u></p> <p>The HT reported that in her role of Lead DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and the AHT as DSL, both had updated their Safeguarding qualification. The SENCo had also received a day's DSL training as she had previously been under a different Local Authority.</p> <p>The HT said the school continued to work with external agencies regarding a number of vulnerable families. The school had been fortunate to secure quite a lot of support depending upon family needs. This was in addition to the support provided by the school.</p> <p>There were no issues, incidents or concerns to report.</p>
6.	<p><u>RISK ASSESSMENT</u></p> <p>The HT explained the school was required to track the number of Covid cases within a ten day period. As of the following day, there would only have been two Covid cases within that period. The school would then fall below the threshold of the past couple of weeks. The majority of cases in January had been in Year R and Year 1.</p> <p>The HT said the school hadn't as yet come out of the contingency measures which had been put in place prior to Christmas 2021 which had enabled the number of Covid cases to be contained. A cautious approach would be taken to come together again as a school from Friday, 28th January.</p> <p>The HT reported the only change to the Risk Assessment and Outbreak Management Plan was in respect of whether the school went over the Department for Education (DfE) threshold. The HT explained the threshold was 10% or more positive cases (three children) in a class within a ten day period or five cases across the school. The number of cases were considered quite small. In response to the number of cases at school, masks had been introduced temporarily for staff in communal areas.</p> <p>The HT said she continued to review the risk assessment and contingency plans each week together with the government updates.</p> <p>A governor asked how often staff completed lateral flow tests. The HT said staff had continued to carry out lateral flow tests twice weekly. Tests were carried out every day when a staff member had been in contact with a Covid case. The HT explained that she preferred to communicate to parents when there was a case in the classroom. This would then enable them to make an informed decision as to who they would then come into contact with.</p>
7.	<p><u>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</u></p> <p>The HT provided a verbal report on this occasion.</p> <p><u>Additional Non-School Day</u></p> <p>The HT explained the Queen's platinum jubilee would fall during the April half term. The Local Authority thought it inappropriate that teaching and support staff should miss out on a Bank Holiday and had asked schools to choose an alternative date as a non-school day. The HT proposed that this should be Tuesday, 19th April 2022.</p> <p>Governors agreed there would be a non-school day on Tuesday, 19th April 2022.</p> <p><u>Pupils on Roll</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, there were 136 pupils on roll. There were four spaces available across the school to include two in Key Stage two.

- Enquiries for places continued and there were waiting lists for several year groups.
- Whilst the final numbers for the Year R intake for September 2022 hadn't as yet been confirmed, indications were that the school would be oversubscribed again for the fourth year running.
- Since the last meeting, one child had left who had previously be on dual roll at a different school under a different local authority. The family concerned had now moved to that geographical area.
- There had been one joiner.

Staffing Update

Staffing levels had been impacted by Covid but had been manageable. It hadn't been possible to secure supply staff given the level of wider demand. The school was very fortunate to have some highly experienced Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Higher Level TAs. Whilst teachers had been absent due to Covid, there was daily communication and their planning continued to be sent in which enabled the provision to remain in place for the children.

Attendance

As of 21st January 2022, attendance was 92.9% which was considered low for the school. The national average for the same date was 89.4% which reflected a downward trend.

A governor asked if the decrease in attendance was purely attributed to Covid. The HT explained that previously, absences due to Covid were coded with an 'X' code which didn't impact on attendance. A child's absence would continue to be coded in this way whilst awaiting the outcome of a test but once confirmed as a positive case, the absence would be coded as an illness which would affect attendance.

Statutory Tests

The HT explained there was a statutory requirement for children to take their phonics test at the end of Year 1. This hadn't been possible last year due to Covid. As all of the current Year 2 hadn't been able to take the test at the end of Year 1, they had been required to complete their phonics tests by the end of the second half of the autumn term 2021/22.

The HT reported that 80% of the current Year 2 pupils had achieved the threshold required for phonics. This showed that those really important early reading skills and that underpinning need of phonics which the children needed to have to build on their reading was quite secure. Of the four children who didn't pass their phonics screening, one had missed the threshold by one mark. The remaining three had quite specific needs but had still made progress.

School Improvement Advisor (SIA) Visit

The HT reported that the school's new SIA had visited the school on 7th December 2021. Three areas had been identified to be actioned.

- Governors to resume their monitoring activities as soon as it was safe to do so.
- To continue to embed 'Little Wandle', the school's new phonics programme.
- To continue to develop the curriculum and Subject Leader understanding of the sequencing, the vocabulary and key concepts so the children were clear, knew more and remembered more.

The HT said there were no surprises arising from the SIA's visit and there was nothing which the school wasn't already doing. The SIA would carry out a further visit during March.

8. SEF/SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP) 2021/22

The HT provided an update on progress made against the SDP priorities.

Priority One – The Quality of Education

- Following training received, staff were moving forward with the approach and format of the new Sonar tracking system which would be used for class curriculum mapping. Some initial technical issues had been experienced which the AHT was following up on with the provider. As Sonar was a new platform, the staff would continue to use the existing tracking system, Target Tracker, until the technical issues had been resolved.
- The new SENCo was tracking children and had brought in some new diagnostic tools to ensure the children's needs were met across the curriculum.
- The RE Leader had introduced some new assessment grids which would be used alongside the Diocese assessment grids.
- The new 'Little Wandle' phonics provider had been chosen and had been set up. The HT explained that this was one of the DfE's validated schemes. There had been a lot of research into the phonics provider and Little Wandle was chosen as it would most benefit the school. There had been one INSET day when there had been online training for Early Years, Key Stage 1 teachers, TA and the HT. The gaps in phonics had been identified and a teaching plan had been prepared to address gaps and accelerate progress. The HT commented that the lockdowns had particularly hit the children's early reading which then impacted on other subjects.
- The new maths mastery sessions were underway. The Subject Leader and teachers were attending training and were actioning the Maths action plan. There would be an evaluation of the impact of the mastery training at the end of the year.

Priority Two – Behaviour & Attitudes

- Pupil conference had been rescheduled which would begin with the Pupil Council at the end of term three/early term 4. The HT commented that the size of the school and relationships with the children and their parents provided an excellent insight into the children's wellbeing and behaviours for learning. Class teachers and TAs were very in tune with the children and were quick to identify their needs and address them to take away their barriers to learning.
- Attendance had been discussed under agenda item 7 (Headteacher's Report).
- The SENCo was robustly tracking the needs of pupils and groups of children. The SENCo had been highly proactive in working with parents to seek both internal and external support for the children. Possible barriers were identified which were then addressed.

Priority Three – Personal Development

- The Character Education and Social Action project and Young Leaders had started this term in the Year 3/4 class. If the pilot went well, it would then be put into a different class each year ensuring that every class would benefit from it.
- Clubs had resumed and had then stopped due to Covid. It was hoped to introduce further clubs once able.
- Several sports tournaments had been entered which the external organisers had then needed to cancel due to Covid.
- Extra-curricular enrichment activities were still taking place. A historian speaker from Tenterden museum had visited the school. More recently, the

AHT had secured the Charlton Athletic Community Trust who were delivering a six week programme for Key Stage 2 classes on healthy living, healthy eating and moving more.

Priority Four – Leadership & Management

- The pandemic continued to take its toll on staff wellbeing. Staff continued to provide learning for those children at home with Covid whilst managing the children in class. It was hoped that next term wouldn't be impacted to the same extent. Whilst the situation wasn't impacting on the children's standards, the HT continued to carefully monitor the wellbeing of staff. The parents remained a kind, supportive and understanding community which made a big difference.
- Subject Leaders continued to attend online subject and curriculum knowledge CPD sessions. There had been a real investment in the arts and all of the foundation subjects. Standards were raised in the academic subjects if there was an investment in the foundation subjects. Undoubtedly, there were gaps to be filled in maths and English to ensure that the children could cope with the Year 7 curriculum. However, a broad and balanced curriculum continued to be catered for.

Priority Five – Early Years Education

- The new baseline assessment test for Year R pupils had been completed within the first two terms. The purpose of the Year R assessment was to track their progress across the seven years from Year R to Year 6.
- The Mastering Number Work Group was underway.
- Whilst the school had secured funding for the NELI programme (Nuffield Early Language Intervention), the HT was uncertain as to whether it would proceed this year. There was a considerable amount of release time to train staff which came at a time when it would have impacted the whole class. Where there were children with speech and language issues, very beneficial input was being provided by Speech and Language specialists. An individual approach would be taken with these children. The NELI programme would be looked at again next year if it was then considered more appropriate.
- The HT signposted governors to the end of term 1 progress and impact data which had been included as a supporting paper for the December 2021 FGB meeting.

The HT summarised that whilst only in term 3 and in consideration of the number of Covid cases, pleasing progress had been made on the SDP priorities. Strategic thinking continued which was having a positive impact on the children's progress.

The Chair thanked the HT for her comprehensive feedback which evidenced significant progress on the SDP priorities. Whilst these were exceptional circumstances, the school carried on as normal as was possible.

The Clerk asked how Year 4 were progressing with their times tables given the statutory testing this year. The HT said the maths Subject Leader had participated in CPD online Local Authority training on the administering of the tests. A leaflet would also be sent out to parents imminently. The HT explained this was a new test which had been cancelled for the past two years. There were no undue concerns as to how the Year 4 pupils would fare.

A governor queried whether SATs tests were taking place this year and whether they would be reported. The HT explained Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs tests would take place. The results would not be reported publicly but would be reported to Ofsted and to the Local Authority. There would still be an IDSR (Inspection Data Summary Report) report for the school which wouldn't

	be published to parents. The HT commented that all schools had a different experience and sometimes much harder experience of Covid.	
9.	<p><u>GOVERNOR MONITORING</u></p> <p><u>SEN Monitoring Visit – Monday, 24th January 2022</u></p> <p>The SEN governor reported the SENCo had been clearly well prepared for the monitoring visit and was evidently very much on top of her role. The SENCo's RAG rated Action Plan was presented which was considered very impressive. It had been noted that this year's Reception class had come in with a higher level of need than in past years. There was a similar situation across Kent which was very much attributed to Covid.</p> <p>The SEN governor commented that many SEN children had found it harder to access and engage in remote learning during lockdown and had missed the structure of the school day and regular interventions. This had resulted in the SEN children falling further behind their peers. A recent Ofsted report stated that those children with SEN had been disproportionately affected by the pandemic as a result of not being able to access relevant support and external services. The SENCo was aware of the impact of Covid and the actions which were being put in place to help to alleviate this.</p> <p>The SEN governor understood there were a number of children with speech and language needs. The SENCo had been very complimentary about the support provided by external services. Anxiety groups had also been set up where the SENCo was working with individual children. An example of the children's anxiety about transitioning to secondary education was provided.</p> <p>The SEN governor's report would be circulated in due course.</p> <p><u>Governor Monitoring Activities During the Remainder of Term 3 and Term 4</u></p> <p>Action: The Health & Safety governor to carry out a H&S visit during week commencing 31st January 2022.</p> <p>Action: The EYFS and Safeguarding governors to carry out their monitoring visits.</p> <p>Action: The Pupil Premium/Covid Catch-up governor to meet with the HT.</p> <p>The Chair said it had been hoped to resume learning walks in term 3. However, due to the number of Covid cases, this had not been possible. However, they would resume in term 4. The Chair said he was very happy to accompany those governors who hadn't previously had the opportunity to carry out a learning walk since their appointment to the board.</p> <p>Action: The Local Authority governor to carry out a learning walk in term 4.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>Chair/ JM</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>RG</p>
10.	<p><u>SIAMS/CHRISTIAN VALUES AND DISTINCTIVENESS</u></p> <p>The HT said the school's Christian vision had been written by teachers and had been consulted on with all support staff and that very positive feedback had been provided. A display of the school's Christian vision had been placed in the staff room to remind staff of the vision which was lived each day. The HT said there were some artistic pupils, particularly in Year 6 whom she would ask to create some accompanying artwork around the encompassing vision of 'love'.</p> <p>The HT reported the second CAST (Church and School Together) meeting had taken place the previous week. A number of dates had been agreed for Christian worship to celebrate in Church. Some would be new for Wittersham, to include Ash Wednesday. Two dates had also been agreed for 'Experience Days'. There would be an 'Experience Easter Day' and a 'Pentecost Experience Day' which would help the children to better understand the Christian calendar. The HT explained the days usually took place outside the Church.</p>	

	<p>The HT said there would also be a 'Life Exhibition' at the Tenterden Baptist church in July which would involve all local schools. A meeting would take place in February to plan Wittersham's involvement for Years 4, 5 and 6.</p> <p>The HT explained that every year Tenterden had the 'Christmas Big Wrap' charity where new items were gathered, wrapped and given to families with particular needs. The school had contributed items to the charity. The school had also benefited from 'Christmas Cheer' which was a collection by the Tenterden Churches where families were anonymously named whom it was thought might benefit. It was understood that approximately £13,000 had been raised last year which had been used to purchase Amazon and Tesco vouchers. This had made a massive difference to some of the school's families over Christmas.</p>	
11.	<u>FINANCE</u>	
11a	<p><u>Finance Committee Meeting – 27th January 2022</u></p> <p>The nine month (December 2021) budget monitoring report was circulated as a supporting paper for this agenda item (filed with the minutes). The draft minutes of the meeting would be circulated in due course.</p> <p>The Finance Committee Chair provided a brief summary of their meeting which had taken place earlier that evening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both income and expenditure were higher than had previously been budgeted for. There was a positive variance of £48,701 for income and a negative variance in expenditure of £21,764 when compared to the original budget plan. • At the nine month position, £74,950 was predicted to be carried forward to 2022/23 financial year. • The school's Balance Control Mechanism (BCM) or the amount which it was permitted to carry over to 2022/23 was just over £85,000. • Overall, the school's finances were considered very healthy. • Governors had reviewed the DfE financial benchmarking report for the school for 2020/21 where no items of concern were identified. • There had been a review of the DfE's financial skills audit. It had been noted that for each of the DfE criteria, one or more governors with a financial role was highly competent. 	
11b	<p><u>Financial Risk Register (FRR)</u></p> <p>The FRR was recirculated in advance of the meeting (filed with the minutes).</p> <p>Governors ratified the FRR which would be reviewed again by the full governing body in one year's time.</p> <p>The FRR would be a standing agenda item for the Finance Committee.</p>	
11c	<p><u>Any Other Items</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
12.	<u>PAY PANEL</u>	
	(Discussions within this item were considered confidential and were contained in part two of the minutes).	
13.	<u>POLICIES</u>	
	<p>All policies due for review were circulated in advance of the meeting (filed with the minutes).</p> <p>A governor referenced the Collective Worship policy and asked who was now the CW Leader. The HT explained that whilst she had assumed the overall</p>	

responsibility for this, the Year 1/2 teacher had taken this on and was considered to be doing an extremely good job.

A governor queried that there wasn't a named governor in the Anti-Bullying policy. The HT said there wasn't a named governor but the Chair would assume responsibility if necessary.

A further governor referenced the GDPR policy which mentioned fines in euros. The HT explained this was the KCC model policy but this would be checked.

Governors ratified the following policies:

	Policy	Next Review
a)	Capability of Staff	January 2023
b)	Governor Allowances policy	"
c)	GDPR and Data Protection policy	"
d)	Anti-Bullying policy	"
e)	Attendance policy	January 2024
f)	SEND policy	January 2023
g)	Pay policy	"
h)	Feedback and Marking policy	January 2024
i)	Collective Worship policy	January 2023
j)	Accessibility Plan	January 2024
k)	Manual Handling policy	"

OTHER

14. WEBSITE/TEP GOVERNANCE MONTHLY BULLETINS

The January 2022 TEP monthly bulletin was recirculated as a supporting paper for this agenda item.

The Chair reported his understanding that Kent and Surrey County Councils had changed their guidelines for EHCPS (Education and Healthcare Plans) as they had been receiving far more parental applications for EHCPS when compared to other local authorities. This was because parents could instigate EHCPS without any input from the school. All EHCP applications would now require school input.

15. GOVERNOR TRAINING

15a Training Undertaken Since the Last Meeting

A governor reported she had completed two NGA Learning Link modules: 'Holding to account - How to Question and Challenge' and 'Holding to account - How to conduct a courageous conversation'. The governor commented that the scenarios were particularly helpful.

The Chair reminded governors to add any completed training to their record on GovernorHub. This would include training which governors had completed as a group or individual NGA Learning Link modules. This would ensure that the training record for the whole governing board was maintained and up-to-date.

15b NGA Skills Audit Questionnaire

The findings of the new NGA skills audit questionnaire were circulated in advance of the meeting (filed with the minutes).

The Chair referenced the average scores for each of the governance statements where the governing body as a collective predominantly scored a '3' or a '4' (agreed or strongly agreed with each of the statements). Governors were asked to identify their individual training needs which would help to fill their skills gap.

15c	<p><u>Learning Link Module</u></p> <p>Action: Governors to complete the new fifteen minute NGA Learning Link module 'Management of Workload and Wellbeing' prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>Whilst some governors had completed the Learning Link module 'Governance of a Church School' fairly recently, the Chair asked remaining governors to also complete this forty five minute module, particularly as the school was anticipating a SIAMS inspection next year.</p> <p>Action: Remaining governors to also complete the Learning Link module 'Governance of a Church school'. All certificates to be sent to the Training & Development governor.</p>	Govs
16.	<p><u>CHAIR'S ACTIONS/CORRESPONDENCE</u></p> <p>The Chair reported he had sent a letter of thanks to the treasurer of Appledore Parochial Church Council following receipt of a £100 donation towards the Year 6 leavers' bibles. There were no other Chair's actions to report and no correspondence had been received.</p>	
17.	<p><u>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</u></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
18.	<p><u>CONFIDENTIALITY</u></p>	
18a	All discussions contained within item 12 (Pay Committee) were considered confidential and were contained in part two of the minutes.	
18b	There were no papers which were considered confidential.	
19.	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next full governing board meeting would take place <u>virtually</u> on Thursday, 10th March 2022 at 6.30 pm.</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.43 pm

Signed: 
(Chair)

Date: 10th March 2022

ACTION SUMMARY

ITEM	AGENDA ITEM	TO BE ACTIONED BY	ACTION
1.	9	SR	To carry out a H&S visit during week commencing 31 st January 2022.
2.	9	Chair	To carry out an EYFS monitoring visit in term 4.
3.	9	JM	To carry out a Safeguarding monitoring visit in term 4.
4.	9	Chair	To carry out a term 4 Pupil Premium/Covid Catch-up monitoring visit.
5.	9	RG	To carry out a learning walk in term 4.
6.	15c	Governors	To complete the new NGA Learning Link module 'Management of Workload and Wellbeing' prior to the next meeting.
7.	15c	Remaining Governors	To also complete the Learning Link module 'Governance of a Church School'. All training certificates to be sent to the Training & Development Governor.