



Bethersden Primary School
Minutes (part 1) of the Full Governing Body (FGB) Meeting
held at the School on Wednesday, 23 May 2018 at 0800 hrs

Present: Mrs S Buckman (Chair); Mr S Gawthorpe (Headteacher); Mrs S Carysforth; Reverend C Denyer; Mrs W Grace; Mrs G Foley; Mr A Jones; Mrs J Read; Ms S Beale (Associate)

Clerk: Lynne Clemitson (KCC Clerking Service)

*For Action
by:*

Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 0800 hrs and welcomed governors.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Governors received and accepted apologies from Ms A Morgan (work). The meeting was quorate.

2. **Declaration of Business & Pecuniary Interests**

Governors confirmed they had no business interests to declare against any item on the agenda for this meeting.

3. **Governing Body (GB): Succession Planning**

Governors discussed and agreed that, as the current GB composition worked, efforts to recruit new members should be put on hold for the time being.

4. **Approve Minutes**

Minutes (parts 1 and part 2) from 14 March were reviewed and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Confidential Minutes were handed to the Headteacher for secure filing in school.

5. **Matters Arising**

Single Central Record (SCR)

The Chair undertook to ensure that the SCR had been updated to include Mr Prentice's DBS information.

Chair

Skills Matrix

The clerk collated information at the meeting; the updated Matrix would be sent to the Headteacher for uploading in the Governors' secure area.

Clerk

Letters of Appreciation

The Chair undertook to write to Mr Jones' employer, and to Mrs Brignall.

Chair

6. **Headteacher's Report linked to School Plan**

The Headteacher presented his report and gave a verbal summary.

School Context

The school roll stood at 128, including 7 new pupils and 3 leavers (for geographical reasons/relocation). Pupil premium funding would increase, but not until April 2020; The number of Special Needs had also increased.

Leadership and Management

The dedication of teachers was evident at pupil progress meetings, and the support and challenge from the GB remained strong. The Chair had been present for the Impact meeting with the School Improvement Adviser (SIA) Ruth Swailes, who had been impressed and commented 'it was nice to see the school loved again'. She had noticed an uplift in every classroom and commented positively on the learning environment, behaviour for learning, and the confidence of staff in their delivery.

The school was supporting other schools with data: Mrs Grace was undertaking outreach at St Michael's on Reading, Writing Excellence. The results in Years R and 1 were phenomenal, with 100% of children already at or exceeding 'age appropriate' in phonics – end of year targets had already been attained. Internal moderation of Early Years had been completed and judgements confirmed. The Chair had been present and had been most impressed with the presentation of children's books and commented positively on the teaching in Elm class. Bethersden were also in touch with four other schools offering support on attendance.

The Headteacher outlined training delivered or arranged for staff in support of their professional development. Performance management had been completed for all support staff in line with KCC recommendations (as agreed by governors at their last meeting).

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment



Teaching was 100% good, with 14% outstanding (latest SIA judgement). The Marking and Feedback system had been revised to reduce workloads for teachers and was working well. The Staff Governor added that, from his perspective, the new system was more beneficial, and children were receiving better collective feedback.

Governors questioned:

- **How does the marking and feedback policy work in practice?**

Governors were informed that lesson plans included daily reflection sheets which enabled teaching staff to more easily track the stage of learning of each child. If there was a misconception, it was addressed quickly with a bespoke action whilst the learning was still fresh. Reflection sheets were annotated and lesson plans adapted to reflect progress in learning.

The Staff Governor clarified how teaching and learning was now managed in the classroom, e.g. work on board which promoted independent learning. This was facilitating higher quality lessons, and freed up the teacher to offer support where it was needed.

The Headteacher explained how the new Home Learning policy worked with ‘must do’, ‘should do’, and ‘could do’ tasks. Governors discussed the purpose of ‘talk time’ and suggested it would be useful for the school to brief parents so that they understood the importance and impact of it. The Headteacher said he was planning to review it in Term 6, and would be seeking feedback from parents.

Confidence with Target Tracker had increased. The transition from ‘21 Steps’ had its own difficulties but this would not be an issue next year. Early Years was also now using Target Tracker.

The Headteacher described the system in place for transition between Early Years, KS1 and KS2 which provided an opportunity for teaching staff to challenge assessments before accepting them as the benchmark for moving forward.

Governors were advised that Bethersden had been chosen as one of the Science sampling schools, with a random selection of five pupils. He explained why it was necessary for him to challenge the selection. Governors were content.

The Headteacher invited the Staff Governor to provide an update on Reading, Writing Excellence. Overall it was going well, though there had been a few concerns about some boys lower down. To address this, the Elm class teacher had tailored her approach for those children by taking sounds on the playground and the latest assessments indicated they were now making strong progress. An example of tailoring Reading, Writing Excellence to get it to work for them.

On phonics screening just after half term a few children had been on the cusp and booster sessions were put in place to support them.

- **Are you confident this is making a difference?**

The Staff Governor explained that Year 1 was doing regular phonics, and any gaps were highlighted to reading teachers so that they could also focus on embedding those sounds.

Children had been assessed using the past screening test and progress was evident. Two children were on the cusp, two just under; they were receiving booster sessions with Mrs Grace in the mornings.

- **How many re-takes are there, and do you consider those children will achieve this year?**

There were five re-takes, plus one joiner. Four out of five had a good chance of achieving; they would all be given booster sessions in readiness for Year 2.

Last year phonics attainment was 57%. The prediction this year was 85%, above national.

Governors thanked the Staff Governor for her informative insight.

Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

Attendance up to the week ending 11 May stood at 95.24% - a 4% increase on the same time last year. The Headteacher had met with the School Liaison Officer (SLO) and explained that some children could not meet 95%, and had set revised targets for them. Now every family has an achievable target for attendance. The SLO welcomed this model, and had taken it out to other schools. In terms of persistent absentees, 10% of children were off more than one day per fortnight (compared to 20% this time last year). However there were still 13 children not coming to school every day; the school was working with those families to move them from the fifth to third quintile.

HT to provide guidance for parents on talk time.



There had been no exclusions. One safeguarding incident had been dealt with appropriately and the Chair and Safeguarding Governor had been briefed. Three staff had received Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training since January. Supervision was in place for key members of staff and it had been described as 'invaluable' by one of them; the Headteacher hoped to be able to extend this provision next year and had allocated money for it in the budget.

In terms of professional development, lots of good practice was coming into school as demonstrated by the level of CPD as set out in the Headteacher's report.

Outcomes for pupils

In the absence of the Outcomes link governor, the Training Governor led the questioning in this section.

- **Progress and attainment in writing was not in line with reading – why was this?**
This was a common trend nationally. Children had to be able to read and understand words in order to write them. Also, assessment in writing was more subjective, and there was a tendency to err on the side of caution.
- **When speaking with teaching staff (Mrs Swann), there appeared to be an issue around stamina. How was this being addressed?**
This was in hand. The feedback and Marking policy allowed time to put effort into stamina. Penny Bill had delivered bespoke training about choosing high quality texts. A co-opted governor (also member of staff) advised that he would be introducing visual story books to stimulate writing.
- **Year 6 made really good progress. However, 4 children have not reached age expected in English and 5 in Maths. Have those children been 'below' throughout their school life?**
Yes. They have made significant progress but have not reached 'expected'.
- **What measures are in place going forward?**
The Headteacher described the significant level of support which had been put in place for those pupils with multiple vulnerabilities and/or attendance issues. Two pupils were working at Year 2 level and had had 1:2 support for most of the year. Progress had been phenomenal.
- **How will those pupils be supported in transition to Secondary?**
Governors were advised of arrangements in place for transition, including 1:1 briefings between the Headteacher and Secondary teachers. Some secondaries had nurture units and he would push this for those children who would benefit. Some pupils would be supported through specialist teaching services and/or voluntary organisations. Arrangements were made for the SENCo to visit the school.
- **Would those pupils be given more time for transition?**
Yes, they have more time. The Headteacher described a transition arrangement which had been set up for a child to be escorted on transition days by a key worker.
- **If those children had been at Bethersden from Early Years would there have been a different outcome?**
No, not for 4 of them. The Headteacher explained why, e.g. 68.4% attendance in one instance. He referred to developing provision maps, and was going through the first year cycle, reviewing type and timing of interventions. He believed quality first teaching was the key. What made the difference was being in a classroom with an outstanding teacher delivering what the child needed at the right time with their peers. They would pick up the language when exposed to it. Maths was slightly different. But quality first teaching was the key and would have the biggest impact.
- **Year 5 progress was not in line with expectations. Historically it has been a strong cohort so can you explain why this has come about?**
The Headteacher referred to the teaching arrangement in Term 1 which had impacted on progress. Children had made accelerated progress from the end of Term 1 to present.
- **What has made the difference?**
Quality first teaching. The class had two strong teachers, with a positive impact on behaviour for learning.
- **Could Year 5 have been over-levelled at the end of Year 4?**
The Headteacher advised that he would have to go back and review the data; he could not answer that now.



- **In year 4, why were boys not making as much progress in reading as girls?**
This was down to the choice of texts earlier in the year. There had been lots of fiction at the outset, and this had now moved to factual which boys tended to prefer. Books chosen for Terms 3 and 4 had been selected specifically for that cohort, with adventure tales to get the boys hooked. The Headteacher added that there were few boys in Year 4, and outlined the various vulnerabilities.
- **Is there a danger of the girls missing out because of the focus on boys?**
It was always a balance. Most texts could be made engaging for their learners, depending on the level.
- **Can you tell me about SEN progress in that cohort?**
We held a Special Needs review with the Specialist Teaching Learning Service (STLS), and we are tracking that cohort through school (boys especially) and they are a particular focus at pupil progress meetings. Feedback from STLS was in relation to creating the right environment for those children to learn; we are considering how we minimise distractions for those pupils by decluttering classrooms. We expect to have this in place in Term 6.
- **Do you expect those children to get to 'expected' in Term 6?**
There was potential to attain expected with the right support.
- **Will you continue with the same staffing/class structure next year?**
The Headteacher explained that any teacher could hand in their notice until 31 May. No decisions would be made until the team composition for next year was certain. He had held some discussions with staff but no announcement would be made until 1 June.
- **In Year 1, why was the progress of girls and pupil premium children in maths and writing below that of boys?**
New children (girls and PP) had joined the cohort; they had not had Reading, Writing Excellence and the gap with their peers was more noticeable.
- **In relation to PP progress, it appears to have gone off target in Term 4 – why was this?**
The Headteacher advised of the number of additional children who had joined the PP register between Terms 3 and 4. He explained how Target Tracker managed data: zero points progress were awarded for terms in which the pupils were not in school; although sender schools were asked to supply data to overcome this issue, it was not always forthcoming.

The school now identified a 'best fit' for end of year progress so that they could gain a more accurate measure of progress. However because of the number who had to be added with no prior data, the percentage for progress had inevitably dropped.

The Headteacher advised that EAL (English as an Additional Language) pupils, or those who join from another country or before doing SATS, were entered on the system as 'expected'. Ofsted accept this and the issue had been addressed at the IDSR training earlier that week. Case studies were therefore critical. At Bethersden, staff knew every single child very well.
- **What is the level of progress for high achieving children compared to lower attainers (a point picked up in last year's Ofsted)?**
The Headteacher explained that this group hadn't been tracked, but he would add it to the Target Tracker report going forward. He pointed out that PP funding was also applicable to more able children.

There were no further questions.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The SIA had been impressed with the outdoor area. The Headteacher was most grateful for all the donations and volunteer's time which had helped to transform it; the only cost to the school had been for the paint.

Pupil Premium (PP)

PP was used to support those children to attend after school clubs. The school had taken on 2 new Beanstalk readers – the Headteacher shared the special rate he had negotiated for them. The school now received 9 hours of trained reading support each week, targeted at PP children. Pupils were tracked on a provision map for reading age and fluency. When assessments had been completed, if progress had not been made, the school would review.



The Headteacher and Mrs Green (teacher) would, in June, be attending training on Whole School Language Development to support children in receipt of PP funding. It would inform the new curriculum and every child would benefit from that training. Mrs Green would spend one day per week raising attainment for children in receipt of PP funding.

Questions on PP outcomes had been addressed – see ‘Outcomes’ section above. The Headteacher reiterated that the school was diminishing the difference.

Sports Premium

The school was paying for cricket club through Bethersden CC. The wording around sports premium had changed, allowing greater flexibility with its use. A meeting was planned on 23 May (that afternoon) to look at the outdoor area and opportunities for physical play (which could be funded by sports premium). Governors commented on the positive impact of the recent ‘skipping’ visitor.

- **Is the arrangement with the Cricket Club linked to sports premium, or PE in general?**
The Chair advised that it was PE in general. The PE curriculum was vague, and the Staff Governor commented on the scope to develop it.

Governors noted that there had been a fall-away in competitions. Although the school had paid into the Ashford fund for sports, many competitions had been cancelled at the last minute. They were advised that this was partly due to the impact on parents who were not always available to accompany children, and PE was often viewed as a voluntary part of the curriculum. Using community links was a way to raise the profile of sporting activities. Governors discussed the depth and breadth of the sporting professionals who had visited school as part of the programme.

In relation to cricket, the children had received a taster session and it was being promoted. A competition with High Halden was in the offing.

Governors suggested using sports day to focus on inclusive sports. The Staff Governor highlighted the issues with accessibility of facilities, equipment and the environment. A complaint had been lodged with Landscape Services regarding the school field which was likened to a bog. It was so dipped and rutted from heavy (tractor) traffic during the wet weather that it was unusable. Landscape Services would address it, but they had capacity issues at the current time. The Headteacher confirmed that the school was tied into the Landscape Services contract. However, he highlighted potential support on offer from another school.

Governors discussed the need for hedge trimming on the pathway alongside the school. The Headteacher explained the law on cutting back during nesting season, and the scope to have some limited work undertaken (sides, not top) if there had been two complaints in relation to safety. Mrs Foley undertook to write.

Finance

Mrs Brignall (Finance Officer) joined the meeting for part of this item. Reported at Item 9 below.

Governor Monitoring linked to School Plan & Ofsted Action Points:

Monitoring completed since last meeting

- Moderation of Early Years, 10 May (Mrs Buckman) – commented on above and report to follow.
- School Council (Revd Denyer) – awaited.
- Outcomes , Terms 3 & 4 (Ms Morgan and Mrs Read) – completed. To be uploaded to website.
- Attendance (Revd Denyer) – completed. To be uploaded to website.

Monitoring for Term 5

The Chair had drawn up a plan for monitoring to be undertaken immediately following the full governors’ meeting.

7. Chair’s Report, including Strategic Planning

The Chair provided a verbal report (some discussion recorded in minutes, part 2).

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Headteacher, Revd Denyer, Mrs Read and Chair of Governors had all attended GDPR training hosted by the TST (Tenterden Schools Trust). They highlighted the need to be proactive and engage with the new regulation; TST had agreed to provide DPO (Data Protection Officer) cover for Bethersden for now.



Governors discussed the right to be forgotten, and the option for parents of children up to the age of 13 to request data to be deleted. The Headteacher outlined some data which needed to be held by the school (e.g. Special Needs records to be held for 25 years).

Governance Communication and Paperwork

In response to governor questioning about GB data handling, the Headteacher advised that he had completed a risk assessment and had determined that the encrypted system for uploading data to the school website was acceptable. However, whilst documents could be accessed by governors in their secure area on the school website (password protection), they could not be downloaded. The Chair said she had spoken with other schools about how they protected governance data. Those with whom the Headteacher had spoken were reportedly not taking any action.

Governors were content with the Protocol outlined: accessing password protected data in the governance area of the school website, but under no circumstances was it to be downloaded. The Chair, Headteacher and Clerk all had KLZ emails for communicating securely. Governors were content to continue to receive notifications (e.g. papers now available; training opportunities) and to share details of their personal outlook accounts with members of the GB for governance purposes. Governors would be asked to sign a declaration to this effect at the next meeting.

KCC Governor Services Privacy Notice

Governors confirmed they had received this and raised no issues.

8. **Safeguarding**

The Headteacher advised of one incident which had been dealt with. The Chair and Safeguarding Governor had been briefed.

The bespoke safeguarding training for Mrs Foley had necessarily to be cancelled because of the provider’s work commitments. The training had been rescheduled for 8 June.

GF Training 8/6

Health & Safety Update

The Health and Safety Governor undertook to complete a visit and present his report at the next meeting in July.

AJ for H&S visit

9. **Finance**

Benchmarking

Not available for this meeting. Defer to July.

Agenda Item

End of Year Budget Analysis

Not available for this meeting.

Agenda Item

3 Year Budget Plan and Staffing Structure

Mrs Brignall (Finance Officer) joined the meeting for part of this item. She advised that KCC SFS had visited and they had, together, reviewed last year’s spending in an attempt to identify areas for savings. Some small savings had been identified (e.g. fuel). Money for curriculum resources (E19) had been pooled (i.e. no longer separate class budgets). Everything had been checked against the budget planning tool and this was used to forecast over the period of the budget plan, including what was in the School Improvement Plan this year.

The Chair thanked Mrs Brignall for her work on the budget close down and in budget preparation this year. [Mrs Brignall left the meeting at this point.]

The Headteacher was delighted to be able to present a balanced 3 Year Budget plan which had been a phenomenal turn-around as a result of stringent cost control. A number of outgoings had been significant reduced, including spending on teaching (down 2%) and teaching support (down 14%) without any negative impact on outcomes. Vacancies had been filled internally avoiding expensive advertising campaigns, and no money had been spent on Supply. Local contractors were now also used where possible, and the school was indebted to parents who had made significant donations, particularly of their time, in order to support the school. A number had used their skills and trades and had chosen not to invoice the school. On behalf of the GB, the Chair asked that the minutes reflect their gratitude for this incredible support.

The Headteacher advised that staff had also self-funded a number of activities to benefit the children. Whilst much appreciated, governors were concerned that this should not continue. However, they were very glad that appreciation would be shown in other ways, e.g. Wellbeing Wednesday, Inset Day.



The Headteacher highlighted outreach activities which generated income for the school; the Pastoral Support Lead worked part of the week for other LA schools making his appointment cost neutral for Bethersden. Collaboration with other schools had also resulted in savings, e.g. for staff training.

Governors raised no concerns and unanimously endorsed the 3 Year budget plan, which included the budget for the staffing structure. They noted that the Revenue carry forward in 2018/19 was £21,590.58; in 2019/20 the carry forward was forecast to be £21,256.66; with a projected carry forward in 2020/21 of £11,048.61.

Premises

The Headteacher updated governors. He explained that the Planning Department would provide retrospective permission for the mobiles (earlier permission had expired in 2016), and that refurbishment would take place over the summer break at KCC expense. KCC had also agreed to fund work on the flat roof, and had funded work on windows. The Headteacher was waiting to find out whether the subsidence issue could be covered under Class Care.

10. Tenterden Rural Alliance (TRA)

There was nothing to report as all scheduled meetings had been cancelled. There would be no TRA Inset Day. In terms of value for money next academic year, the Headteacher was recommending working with a triad of local schools for support.

11. Policies

Governors discussed policies which were due for review at this meeting.

- **Pay and Rewards** – governors unanimously agreed to defer based on the Headteacher's recommendation.
- **Behaviour** – unanimously agreed following discussion, recorded below. Next review: 2 years.

Governors raised some issues in relation to consequences of bad behaviour and consistency of approach. The Headteacher explained why the approach needed to be adapted to suit the particular circumstances, e.g. for a special needs pupil, and that was why the process was not documented. He assured governors that the same level of consistency was applied, though the approach was different. The Headteacher explained that when the senior leadership team was involved, the decision was made by more than one person, and was backed up by an audit trail.

Governors asked about the procedure in the event of a physical assault child on child. The Headteacher reiterated that it would depend on the circumstances, the level of aggression.

- **Home Learning** – unanimously agreed. Next review: 1 year.
- **Capability** – unanimously agreed. Next review: 2 years.
- **Appraisal** – unanimously agreed. Next review: 1 year.
- **Sex Education** – unanimously agreed. Next review: 3 years.

In response to governor questioning about updating the Child Protection policy to include sexual violence, the Headteacher advised that the current policy was based on the KCC template. KCC were re-writing the policy but existing advice was to continue with the current model until the new one was introduced. It had been updated in September and January.

Governor Services Monthly Bulletin

The Monthly Bulletins for March and April had been seen by governors.

Governors raised the issue of music funding available to all Kent schools. The Headteacher confirmed that Bethersden had already submitted an application. Last year had been the only year the school hadn't received it. Previously it had been used to pay for KS2 recorder lessons.

12. Training and Development



Mrs Read had attended the Solihull training and her report was on the website. The Chair had also attended part of one of the sessions.

13. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

14. **Confidentiality**

Governors agreed that some discussion should be treated as confidential and recorded in minutes part 2.

15. **Meeting Dates for remainder of 2017-18**, followed by GB monitoring.

Wed 11 July at 0800 hrs.

Signed: Date:
Chair of Governors
Bethersden Primary School