



WEST CROFT SCHOOL

'Enjoy Learn Achieve'



MINUTES FOR FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Autumn term 2019

15TH October 2019 5.30pm – 7.30pm

Present: : L Davies, J Ebsworthy, D Ford, A Hoare, M Mills, C Neale, G Morris (Headteacher), K Kelly (Chair) and E Paine (Clerk)

NOTES TO MEMBERS:

Chair- Katrin Kelly

Please note: This is a 2 hour meeting. Governors cannot leave early as it may affect quorum
Please send apologies at least the day before as if the group is not quorate the meeting cannot go ahead.

Key :

Green = decision

Red = challenge

Blue = action

ITEM NUMBER	NOTE	ACTION	LINK
A. Apologies for absence	A.Hoare sent her apologies as she will be late due to parents evening.		
B. Declaration of Conflict of Interests	Staff members present for Agenda Item 2 – staff will need to leave for this section		
C. Minutes of the last meeting	24 th September 2019 – to be agreed as a true record Unanimously agreed. 2 nd October 2019 – to be agreed as a true record Unanimously agreed.		
D. Matters arising	*Appointment of Acting Headteacher Chair gave an overview of the interview day to Governors who weren't on the interview panel. Candidates had been given a tour, presented an assembly, met with the School Council and debated some key issues with members of the SLT. This had been followed by lunch with the children and an interview conducted by the panel. A.Betts had provided support for the shortlisting and on the interview day. Decision to appoint Mr T Page had been agreed unanimously by all involved. He was the clear candidate out of the 3. There was an option not to appoint any of the interviewees if that was the best option for the School but it was felt that TP was suitable. TP can start after October Half Term which is a great positive and means that there will be half a terms handover with GM.		

	<p>Staff were informed the day after the interviews of TP's appointment.</p> <p>Governors asked questions regarding Mr Page's experience and professional background and were reassured by the response.</p> <p>Appointment was ratified and salary was agreed.</p> <p>GM asked for clarification as to who is officially responsible when TP starts after October Half Term. S.Bissett had indicated to GM that TP will be the accountable and responsible Head from the 1st November. Governors will honour GM's contract until she retires in December and there will be no MB supporting as Executive Head. There is a legal requirement to be clear about who is accountable.</p> <p>Chair responded that she had been under the impression that GM would remain the responsible Head and TP would shadow, working with GM, gradually swapping over so that towards the end of the Half Term GM had stepped back.</p> <p>AH arrived at 17.55pm</p> <p>Chair asked GM what her preference was.</p> <p>GM indicated that she didn't mind personally which scenario it was. It just needed clarifying for legal purposes.</p> <p>Chair expressed her concerns that if a major incident happened within TP's first few days, it wasn't professionally fair for it to be deemed his fault or responsibility. He would be picking up other people's errors or mistakes. GM should be Head until Christmas as was the original plan.</p> <p>GM explained that there had obviously been slightly conflicting information and that was why she had raised it. Clarification is needed.</p> <p>Chair suggested she asked TP's opinion tomorrow when he visits the school.</p> <p>GM agreed, TP may want to start doing things right away and be able to make changes which would be easier if he is the named Head.</p> <p>Chair suggested it be appropriate that TP be more and more visible as the term goes on.</p> <p>GM suggested talking to A.Betts and S.Bissett so that all involved are on the same page.</p> <p>Agreed that Chair will start this conversation. Governors preference is that GM is officially Head until Christmas.</p> <p>Chair moved on to clarifying the situation with the Management Partnership and Exeter Children's Federation. Chair has had numerous conversations with A.Betts and</p>	<p>Clerk to complete the notification of new Head form on return to the office tomorrow.</p>	
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D.Clapshaw amongst others as to how the issue can be resolved.
Governors had agreed on the 2nd October that Partnership should be dissolved so Chair of ECF and MB have had written acknowledgement of this.
The letter is currently sat with them and Chair understands that they are calling an emergency meeting to discuss. We are currently waiting for response.

Chair made it clear that it is more than reasonable for Governors to challenge someone in that position receiving such a high fee. It had only been professional challenge for the good of the school. We have to see more 'green shoots' if we are paying someone to provide a certain level of expertise and support.

LD agreed, comments regarding Governors being poor for not challenging had been made and then when challenge was made it was taken personally and not as constructive challenge, which is what it was.

Chair expressed concerns that an invoice for MB's services has never been received.

Governors were unaware of this until recently which is unsettling. An invoice has now been promised and it has been indicated that ECF would be unwise to charge for services since September.

ECF will presumably want to work with other schools professionally in the future and this is a consideration for that.

Chair will feedback to Governors as soon as she has an update.

***Co-opted Governor term of office – renewal of current member**

DF's current term of office has come to an end.
DF left the meeting so that remaining Governors could discuss his membership.

Governors asked Clerk for clarification of the different types of membership and how they come to an end.

Governors agreed that DF's experience as a Governor over many years is a benefit to the Board and the Health and Safety and Site information he brings to the meetings is vital.

Governors unanimously agreed that DF would be reappointed as a co-opted Governor for a new term of 4 years.

DF returned to the meeting and was informed of the decision.

Agreed that discussion moved to Agenda Item 2 at this point – DF and AH left the meeting at this point. Meeting moved to Part II.

<p>E. Any actions completed/not completed/next steps</p>	<p>Clerk to continue compiling list of policies clearly showing delegated responsibility</p> <p>Meeting moved out of Part II and AH and DF re-joined the meeting at this point.</p> <p>GM noted that it had been agreed that we could keep the policies provided by ECF but we would need to take the headers/logos off and they would have to be re-ratified.</p> <p>Chair observed that everyone needs confidence of where delegated authority lies and that is why the issue had been raised.</p> <p>AH suggested having a committee to look through all the policies in one go.</p> <p>GM noted that the behaviour policy for example is likely to change soon.</p> <p>MM also commented that the DCC policies' also need looking at. Just because they are model policies doesn't mean there isn't holes. This was the case during the recent staff disciplinary.</p> <p>Chair suggested that Governors receive one a week, to realistically get through them. Go through them, make notes and then ratify them at the next FGB.</p> <p>Agreed that agenda would move to Policies, Agenda Item 3 since policies were being discussed anyway.</p>	<p>Clerk to continue compiling a list of which policies have delegated powers.</p> <p>Clerk to send Governors one policy a week for reviewing.</p>	
<p>F. SIP review (I)</p>			
	<p>1. Standards Committee</p>		
	<p>1.1 Report regarding Standards including School on a Page (SOAP) data</p> <p>Received in advance of the meeting for Governors to read. Standards Committee meeting didn't take place so report is being tabled at FGB.</p> <p>Guidance sheet to help understand SOAP data distributed to Governors.</p> <p>GM talked through the report. Early Years doing well. KS1 not doing so well, especially compared against national data. KS2 clearly not very good.</p> <p>Report shows an internal data table provided by SIM's. Beginning of term data so hopeful it will look better at the end of the term.</p> <p>Observations and book scrutiny in Year 6 show that they are working at Year 3 and 4 levels.</p>		

	<p>KK – so this is the data at close of play before Summer? GM – yes, although very poor it is accurate. Worked hard at making sure internal data is accurate even if poor reading. Teachers have been asked for prior attainment but there was some confusion about what this actually meant amongst teachers. End of Early Years and KS1 has been provided for comparisons.</p> <p>AH – what is the reason for this? GM – mismatch between EYFS curriculum and KS1 curriculum. Don't meet criteria to be 'at' in KS1 but did in EYFS. Big gap between transitions.</p> <p>MM – why do the curriculums for Key Stages not fit easily and work well together? AH – curriculum hasn't met between Key Stages for years. GM - is about transition. Would love to work in Year 1 a lot for the support. Very concerned about Year 1 and Year 2. Phonics very low. Difficulty finding the expertise to support in Early Years. Myself and LJ are doing what we can.</p> <p>KK – LJ is Sendco isn't she? So she isn't teaching anymore.</p> <p>GM – yes but LJ likes to do that support. Only thing the data really shows is that the school has been on a downward trend in the last four years.</p> <p>KK – at some point you have to stop talking about trends and just do. GM – we have to plug the gaps. We've done some research in to these children and they have not had consistent teachers. Number of them have had numerous teachers across one academic year.</p> <p>KK – this data gives Governors authority to make changes. Data can't just keep getting worse. At which point do we go to FIPS because this trend can't carry on.</p> <p>MM – where are the four teachers who are meeting the professional standards? As indicated in the staff table provided within the report. Only four are really meeting the standards? GM – spread across the school. Best we could do.</p> <p>MM – are there enough bodies currently at school to give the support needed to move all the teachers in to meeting the standards? GM – no. I spoke to a lady called Teresa today, Teaching Alliances are providing 3 days of free support. It will be someone from the Dartmoor Teaching Alliance. Tried contacting Babcock for support but no response yet received.</p> <p>MM – what would we get from FIPS?</p> <p>KK – these sorts of figures are so poor we can't keep looking at them and not doing anything.</p> <p>DF – the LSA in 6.2 has been taken away in the afternoons to complete SEN admin and yet that class based on the data presented clearly needs support. Can we not pay someone else to do SEN paperwork?</p> <p>KK – terrible state that the school is in. We need to work with T.Page in the most positive and professional way to move forward.</p>		
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DF – staff here are passionate and are here because they want to be for this community school. Initially there may be an influx of opinions given to T.Page in regards to moving the school forward.

KK – everyone needs to be involved in discussions about moving forward.

GM – a change of culture is needed at West Croft. The aim is for everyone to be professional in their roles.

JE – have teachers had this report?

GM – yes.

MM – it's very difficult for teachers to set work for a large range of abilities especially if pupils have arrived in your class with a different ability than you first thought. Teachers are only human and can only do their best. The gaps in progress are probably overwhelming; especially by the time you reach Year 6.

JE – can this data be turned around at all?

GM – yes, hopeful by Christmas should be better as things are already turning around.

AH – should SLT be included on the table of quality teaching assessment? Not fair that staff are observed and judged and told what to do by an SLT that aren't deemed good by OFSTED either.

MM – how are our RQT's doing?

GM – on training programmes too so that they are still supported. One doing brilliantly well, one has made great improvements and the other is having a few personal issues.

KK – Dartmoor Teaching Alliance we pay for yes? If we ask for help do we get it straight away?

GM – yes, but we do pay for that in addition to joining fee of £1,300. DTA are very good at getting back to us, often the same day.

KK – is Dartmoor Teaching Alliance in competition with Babcock? Babcock clearly isn't in a healthy state either. Based on delivery should we not be asking DTA more?

Whatever Babcock have suggested we have done. We have tried their ideas. Can we move more towards things like DTA?

GM – I decided to join DTA so yes. Oracy project being used which should bring huge benefit.

KK – as a school we need to be brave. No obligation to follow Babcock. Local Authority have contract with Babcock but we don't directly.

GM – any further questions about report?

KK – I whole heartedly disagree with the line regarding the Governing Body being inexperienced and unable to support and challenge.

MM – did MB write this or you?

GM – we've all had input.

KK – we have all challenged appropriately. Everything I have done is about challenge. Very disappointed with that statement. In fact appalled and disappointed.

	<p>AH – DF and I have been here for a number of years and this Governing Body is one that has challenged the most. MM – I would second that.</p> <p>KK – I would also add if we are talking about self-evaluation, that there is no mention in this report of SLT and Head or Executive Head. There is always something to learn and improve on for everyone. We can't have documents that look so poor without saying that it's everyone's responsibility.</p> <p>DF – I have a couple of issues with the report. States that rapid progress has been made with Executive Head – clearly not shown with data presented. Also states that staff have outdated views of reward and punishment, processes being used by the staff were brought in by Executive Headteacher and staff have been trying to implement them since January.</p> <p>AH – behaviour policy is not a strength to this school.</p> <p>CN – where does this report go? GM – only internal. For us as self-evaluation.</p> <p>DF – we had good middle leaders, and they were removed by Executive Head. Again report is saying that there is a lack of middle leaders.</p> <p>AH – staff asking if Governors were aware of how low morale is. Reassured them that it was being discussed.</p> <p>KK – I hope to think that MB wrote this and not GM. It is an unpleasant document. Hope this isn't going to our new HT about where we are as a school as it isn't a fair representation. Data might be accurate but self-evaluation certainly isn't.</p> <p>AH – behaviour point of view within the report is blaming staff members for dysregulating children and that is unfair. Low level behaviour is teachers' responsibility yes but not the extreme behaviour sometimes being shown such as damaging school property.</p> <p>KK – line about Governors not strategically planning is untrue. Strategic planning is exactly what we are currently doing. Hasn't been possible to do it long term but when we can we will.</p> <p>CN – as a Governor I have been involved in way more in my first year than I ever thought I would. So I would say I am experienced. Especially everyone who is been here longer too.</p> <p>GM – report will be reviewed after Half Term. Can be amended as is only for us.</p> <p>KK – we have a duty of care to move forward positively and professionally.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting closed at this point – 7.55pm</p>		
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	2. Pay Policy and Committee		
	2.1 Amendment to Pay Policy 2.2 Headteacher recommendations regarding pay scales from recent appraisals	Item moved to Part II	
	3. Policies		
	3.1 Safeguarding amendments Clerk confirmed that there were just two amendments to the already agreed policy. Amendments were provided by LJ, Safeguarding Lead. Amendments were mainly due to changes in staff names. Unanimously agreed. 3.2 Code of Conduct for Staff Model DCC Policy – to be looked at as part of the policies arrangement. 3.3 Finance Policy LD - Executive Headteacher needs to be removed from the policy in light of partnership being dissolved. LD had also queried the delegated authority in advance of the meeting. Table was provided to Governors for clarity. Delegated authority unanimously agreed. Policy recommended and ratified. 3.4 Probationary Policy for School Support Staff Model DCC Policy – to be looked at as part of the policies arrangement. 3.5 Health and Safety Policy 2019 DF explained that the policy had been submitted for staff consultation and two comments had been returned. They had been amended on the policy which was mainly around names and First Aid. DF confirmed that no other changes have been made. Policy unanimously agreed.		
	Meeting closed at 7.55pm		
	Clerk		
	HT & Chair of SC		
	Clerk		
	All SC members		
Extension time	Meeting extended for the following items:-		

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