



WEST CROFT SCHOOL

'Enjoy Learn Achieve'

MINUTES FOR FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Autumn term 2019

26th November 2019 5.30pm – 7.30pm

Present: : L Davies, J Ebsworthy, D Ford, A Hoare, G Morris (Outgoing Headteacher), T Page (Incoming Headteacher)
K Kelly (Chair) and E Paine (Clerk)

Visitors: K Dixon (staff member reporting on GDPR)

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	Apologises received from C.Neale and M.Mills who both had child care issues. Apologises sanctioned.		
B. Declaration of Conflict of Interests			
C. Minutes of the last meeting	15 th October 2019 including Part II Main body of minutes agreed as a true record. Part II minutes distributed to those present for the item. Agreed as a true record. Proposed by KK, seconded by LD, unanimously agreed.		
D. Matters arising	1. Goodbye to Mrs Morris 2. Future leadership of the school To be added as agenda item 7 – any other business.		
E. Any actions completed/ not completed/ next steps	Clerk to continue compiling list of policies clearly showing delegated responsibility	Ongoing task	
F. SIP review (I)			
	1. GDPR Report		

	<p>GDPR audit report had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>KD gave a brief overview of the report. Report provided is from 11th October so some things from the report have already moved to green. No red which is good. A very big positive for the school. Shows we are taking GDPR seriously. We have had 5 data breaches but none had to be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). All staff have recently received GDPR training with Alvin our Data Protection Officer. Those that missed it will receive a mop up session.</p> <p>TP congratulated and thanked KD for her work on this.</p> <p>TP asked if following the audit there was an action plan. KD replied yes, we already had an ongoing one and now there are new actions from this report too. GDPR is a constantly changing landscape though so no one is ever full up to date. Goalposts change often so will always be ongoing.</p> <p>TP asked if there was a timeline for moving actions on amber to green. Realistic approach is needed from us including workload for KD. KD replied that although she is supposed to do two days a week for GDPR purpose is currently not doing that. A focus day is needed and will have to ignore everything else.</p> <p>TP asked if this was a yearly audit. KD replied yes. Should be roughly the same time every year.</p> <p>TP asked if it was realistic for amber actions to be green by end of the academic year. KD replied yes, I would say so. We are compliant and up to date but this would be bring us even more so in to green.</p> <p>Governors asked KD how her recent agreed break was. KD replied amazing. Thank you for approving. Break was just what I needed.</p> <p>KD left the meeting at this point.</p>		
	<p>2. Headteacher report</p>		
	<p>Headteachers' report provided by TP had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Report focuses on first three weeks of TP's West Croft life.</p> <p>TP explained that the report provides an accurate picture of where we currently are; data is obviously very concerning. Our job as SLT is to fix, recognising where focus is needed and deploying all staff appropriately. Behaviour policy has been active for two weeks and has been well received. Policy was designed with pupils, parents and staff all having been consulted.</p> <p>AH agreed that the behaviour policy has been well received. Staff feel supported and the steps within the policy are good. Behaviour texts seem to be effective.</p> <p>KK asked what a behaviour text says. TP explained that the text explains to parents/carers that their child has escalated to step 3 of the behaviour policy. The idea behind the text is to open conversation at home regarding behaviour at school, to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and choices.</p> <p>GM added that a number of pupils are receiving numerous texts. Perhaps it should be agreed what the next step is if you receive a number of step 3 texts but it never escalates to step 4.</p>		

TP agreed that this is missing from the policy. Perhaps 5 texts in a row should mean parents are invited in to school for a chat.

JE asked if parents have been informed, do they understand the process of the texts.

TP replied yes, parents/carers have received the policy, the slide show launched with the children, and an explanation regarding the idea behind the step 3 texts after a few queries. All emailed and texted to parents/carers.

GM added that the policy being designed internally is good because it is workable, it becomes a working document. Can be tweaked and new changes applied from after Christmas.

TP explained that golden tokens have also been introduced. Golden tokens can be given by any member of staff, including during break and lunch time to reinforce good behaviour choices. Golden tokens can then be exchanged with the class teacher for a house point.

JE asked if this was across all the age groups.

TP responded across all year groups except Reception. Golden tokens are another good opportunity for pupils to articulate to their teacher why they received it. Trying to change the culture in school, time to reinforce good behaviour and choices.

KK asked how things were at lunchtimes now, has been a big conversation of late.

DF replied better, but still a few issues. MTA's now have leadership support which is making a difference. We've just got to constantly sit on top of behaviour. MTA's are pleased to be included and are not feeling as isolated. Definitely a difference already though, for example I took a child to see TP as I knew he had been talked to about the same issue yesterday and it was backed up and followed through.

KK responded that we need to keep on building those expectations with parents too.

DF replied that of course a few pupils are still not bothered about the texts. But generally everyone has responded well.

GM added that some pupils have been sent to clubs at lunchtime to dissipate the trouble.

DF agreed that is working well, in lower school too.

KK asked for thoughts on football. It seems to cause issues but KK had always thought of it as a way to let off steam.

GM added there is often fighting over the ball. An argument starts in the morning and festers throughout the day.

TP added that he was thinking of stopping play time in the mornings.

When you arrive at school go straight in to class, staggered start to the day almost. There could be a task in class as soon as it is open. The big rush when the bell goes in the cloakroom and class doesn't help.

KK asked for an explanation of diamond 9 as mentioned in the report.

AH explained that is was an activity the teachers did regarding quality of teaching. Were asked to consider what quality teaching involves and how you would prioritise those. Each teacher wrote ideas on a post note and engaged in discussions regarding the priority. 9 post it notes were then chosen and made in to a diamond shape to reflect the order of priority.

KK asked if everyone had different ideas.

TP replied yes but with very similar themes. Top 3 were subject knowledge, feedback and pitch/challenge.

	<p>Feedback has been focused on first. Action research groups established so cross referenced across the entire school. Gap task in between, read research and action things they haven't done before. Core business is quality teaching and learning so going back to that.</p> <p>JE asked if the data figures presented in the report are in real time. At the previous meeting we were told the picture would be better but it clearly isn't on that table.</p> <p>GM explained that the data will drop next week so next data table should show improvement.</p> <p>KK asked if that meant we were reverting back to more critical focused interventions.</p> <p>TP replied, potentially. Quality teaching provision is for everyone but some children will require extra intervention.</p> <p>TP highlighted the Parent Survey feedback provided to Governors. Generally fairly happy but key response was behaviour. Survey is a good line in the sand as it was before the change in policy. Let's do the survey again in April to compare. My personal goal is to improve 'I would recommend this school' percentage. Pleased with 100 responses given previous parental engagement.</p> <p>KK responded that this survey is a powerful bit of kit. Clear improvement in April can be feedback for parents. I don't think you can overshare on things like this.</p> <p>TP agreed; honesty and transparency is what parents want.</p> <p>LD commented that the number of comments about bullying is very worrying.</p> <p>TP noted that there was perhaps a slightly skewed view of bullying, culture from parents. Misconception from both pupils and parents though.</p> <p>DF agreed, pupils often say that they are being bullied but are not. For example they will come to you in the playground and say that someone has called them a name. When you ask them the details, the name, how many times etc it is only the once it has happened which although is wrong and is dealt with, it isn't bullying. Football is a trigger for this.</p> <p>GM added that sometimes children think and say they are being bullied when they can't get their own way.</p> <p>KK commented that you do hear parents use the wrong terminology in the playground.</p> <p>AH added that the use of the word anxiety is starting to be over used and incorrectly in the same way. It is ok to be worried and everyone worries but that doesn't automatically make it anxiety.</p> <p>TP suggested teachers do a task in class.</p> <p>KK also suggested an assembly on what actually defines bullying.</p> <p>AH agreed, both would be beneficial. Name calling and not being very nice is all unpleasant but in different degrees to become bullying.</p> <p>TP finalised the report by talking through the potential leadership restructure with an update as he had met with WAM that day. Current staffing structure had been looked at and financial implications need to be considered. Staff and Governors have been sent a survey to give their opinion on the leadership and structure of the school so hopefully some ideas will come from this that can help form a few examples of model structures. Governors will be kept informed of any developments and will be involved in any decision making. Being financially stable needs to be a consideration.</p>		
<p>3. Devon Association of Governance – Annual Conference</p>			

	<p>JE gave feedback on behalf of himself and CN who attended the conference.</p> <p>JE told the group he found the conference very informative. Under funding received in Devon was one of the main topics discussed.</p> <p>JE asked if we were members of the Oracy Project that was discussed. It was a free project and sounded like a great resource.</p> <p>GM explained that we were already signed up. Year 6 teacher, KS is signed up for the whole year and will attend various training sessions.</p> <p>JE also mentioned the programme Champions for Change. Explained that a group of students with SEND needs come and talk to your school about special needs and what it is like to have one in an education environment. A really informative video was shown which can be found on You Tube.</p> <p>JE continued that two OFSTED inspectors who had been present at the conference had indicated that as a school we should be clear on home elective education. Safeguarding the main concern so we should have clear policy and understanding. Guidance is available. They also talked about the change in framework and how deep dives in to different subjects not the core ones will be conducted. Be aware for inspection.</p> <p>KK asked if that was to encourage a broader curriculum. TP responded yes, but it needs to be a synced thing. Intent of curriculum needs to be clear and concise to everyone. KK noted that we need to be using the same language as OFSTED then. Should we resync which Governor is doing what? Link roles. TP replied yes that would be sensible, LF should come to a Governor meeting and explain curriculum intent.</p> <p>JE asked if Governors should be having extra meetings and preparing for OFSTED. Devon Association of Governors 'are you fit for purpose' table of questions is quite good. Table given to Governors.</p> <p>KK noted that our next inspection is really sink or swim. As a school we need to be neat and pinned down so that we can be left alone to fix our bigger problems. JE added that hopefully guidance from the conference is a good starting point.</p> <p>JE asked if as a school we provide welfare support to staff particularly in terms of SEND requirement. OFSTED inspectors again implied this would be looked at. GM replied that she had started a HLTA's provision pro forma. This gives LSA's 10 minutes to talk through any problems, including at home. Exists for teachers too. JE commented that we ask staff to deal with very emotive issues. GM agreed, sometimes you are plugging away at stuff and no one asks you if you are ok. KK also agreed, saying sometimes that's all you need.</p> <p>KK thanked JE for his work on this. As a new Governor you are doing brilliantly and really involving yourself. We are pleased to have you.</p>		
4. Term dates			

	<p>Need to be agreed and sent to County for publishing.</p> <p>TP explained that himself and SLT had proposed the 7 non-pupil days to marry with Bideford College for ease for parents.</p> <p>4.1 Term dates for 2020-21 Unanimously agreed.</p> <p>4.2 Term dates for 2021-22 Unanimously agreed.</p>	<p>Clerk to send agreed term dates to County.</p>	
<p>5. Policies</p>			
	<p>5.1 Behaviour Policy Governors had sight of the proposed new behaviour policy and agreed that it could be used in advance of being ratified at the meeting.</p> <p>TP suggested an amendment as discussed above for behaviour step 3 texts. Shall we agree 5 texts and parents/carers are called in for a meeting?</p> <p>DF asked what the timeline would be for the 5 texts. TP confirmed 5 in a half term.</p> <p>DF asked who would record the amount of texts sent. TP questioned if it would be better for the office or class teachers to do. DF suggested office start doing it and see how it goes. Spreadsheet could be created and keep a tally. TP agreed. To start after Christmas.</p> <p>AH asked if there was also a template text for positive behaviour. Clerk advised that one could also be set up in the same way the step 3 has.</p> <p>DF suggested that these are mainly used for the children who pretty much always make good behaviour choices and not just for when the normally challenging pupils have a good day.</p> <p>Policy unanimously agreed with amendment.</p> <p>5.2 Finance Policy to also include Budget Monitoring Update Policy and budget monitoring notes were provided to Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>LD led the item confirming there were a couple of items needing to be agreed on.</p> <p>Note 69 regarding pupil premium income, additional £36,800 given due to a clerical error. We will have to wait until January to see the actual clawback.</p> <p>Note 49 regarding supply general, there are currently long term sickness absences, an additional £20,000 will affect bottom line. This is expenditure from now until March to cover any issues, mutual fund claims have been submitted but expenditure is just in case.</p> <p>Note 45 regarding catering provisions, overspend on food seems to be the main reason. Invoices have been closely looked at but just seems to be increase of food prices. Will monitor closely.</p> <p>Note 34 regarding catering equipment, includes £5,000 expenditure as a new van might be needed if current one doesn't pass MOT test. Van</p>		

	<p>delivers lunches to Appledore and Lower School but is helpful for other small jobs. Appledore contribute towards equipment budget. DF added that a minibus or people carrier had been mentioned as a replacement. This could be used for sports trip as well but would definitely need to be here for lunch time and moving meals. Discussion still happening about which route to take. KK asked if we could approach The Bideford Bridge Trust for funding towards a school minibus. Isn't that the sort of thing they are willing to support? DF replied that he wasn't sure, but agreed that if the vehicle was also going to be used for sports and not just meals perhaps that is something the school could get funding for. GM agreed; minibus might be funded because it's for the children. DF added that using a school minibus for sporting events would get us back on the map in terms of community.</p> <p>Note 17 regarding school improvement includes expenditure for the appointment of a seconded Assistant Headteacher until Summer 2020 and a reserve for Exeter Children Federation fees for the Executive Headteacher which unfortunately still hasn't been received. TP confirmed that he had chased with Alan Betts. Has big impact on our budgets.</p> <p>LD confirmed vote was needed to approve extra £20,000 expenditure in note 49.</p> <p>Expenditure proposed by LD, seconded by KK and unanimously agreed.</p> <p>Finance Policy unanimously agreed with changes to delegated authority table.</p> <p>A small discussion was had around events that could happen to increase school dinner uptake on particular days which in turn could increase income.</p> <p>5.3 New requirements from the Department of Education Clerk provided Governors with a new table of policies which shows new policy requirements from the Department of Education. As policies, particularly those with delegated authority are on the radar for Governors anyway we need to just make sure we have these new requirements.</p>		
6. Health and Safety			
	<p>JE provided two reports in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>JE explained that he had met with DF and started working through risk assessments. Completing first site tour on Friday of this week. DF added that he recently attended a Health and Safety briefing. Changing goalposts all the time. Templates changed in September so has to be on new format. April or May next year will be audit time. Asbestos is big on the agenda. All low level except one area. Between gas meter and boiling room. Battling with Nigel Coleman at Devon County Council. I don't see why we should pay for it.</p> <p>JE commented that the reports will evolve over time. For now they are just to show engagement and challenge. A formal report will probably follow.</p>		

	<p>TP asked what our RAG rating was. DF replied 100% last time, was a few years ago but was good and we are aiming for that again. TP clarified that we will be under the new template this time. DF replied yes, but you do get six weeks' notice to do a self-evaluation.</p>		
	<p>7. AOB – matters arising</p>		
	<p>7.1 Goodbye to Mrs Morris Governors presented GM with a gift and card. Chair thanked GM on behalf of the Governors and West Croft. GM thanked Governors for allowing her to be Head. KK replied thank you for stepping up when West Croft needed it. At times has been difficult. GM agreed but commented that West Croft has a good person in TP to take over. TP expressed his thanks to GM as well. Explained that GM has been brilliant with him. Could have been awkward but it hasn't been. GM has been great. KK commented that it was very brave of GM to take on the challenge. GM thanked again. Hopefully I helped for a small while. No experience of being a Head and I certainly have learnt a lot.</p> <p>TP left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>7.2 Future Leadership of the School KK thanked Governors for agreeing to the extra agenda item. KK informed Governors that although still very early days in terms of TP's life with us we need to think about the future of the Headship. We need to decide: a) Do we extend TP's temporary contract. b) Do we offer TP a permanent contract TP would need to start looking for a job this Christmas if he wasn't staying at West Croft. We are aware a local school is also looking for a new Head and sure they would snap him up. TP has said he would like to stay and has told staff that.</p> <p>GM expressed her opinion that TP has had a positive impact at the school already. He has even been planning for the future, for September 2020. He is happy to leave things as they are for the next two terms but does have ideas and plans he would like to implement from September 2020. He seems the right character for the school.</p> <p>KK agreed; TP's interaction with parents is good and he is 'out there, doing the job'. Difficult as it is so soon and Governors are conscious of previous negative events. GM added that TP has the right demeanour for West Croft, but feels that he will need support for his own wellbeing. LD agreed; we don't want repeat of the previous Head. We also don't want to be in the same position again. Is it too soon to offer a permanent contract? KK agreed but added that the general vibe seems to be that everyone wants to keep TP on board. TP would like security of a permanent job and a certain level of pay.</p> <p>GM noted that if it is a choice between keep him or not keep him, definitely keep him. Could always ask if he is willing to do the extension. KK responded that she was personally on the fence just from being scarred by previous events but is feeling aware that the calibre of</p>		

	<p>applicants before has been poor and worrying.</p> <p>DF commented that TP has done everything he said he would do. Especially being on the gate every morning which was a big tick for West Croft.</p> <p>GM added that TP has also had difficult conversations with parents. He doesn't shy away from that.</p> <p>DF added further that TP has created a good work life balance. He has a good work ethic and has shown commitment.</p> <p>GM commented that perhaps if Governors were undecided, a chat with TP's previous school could be a good idea.</p> <p>KK noted that everything including references came back all in order. No concerns there.</p> <p>DF observed that given the school's current circumstances if no improvement is shown by the next OFSTED inspection County may intervene anyway. There may become no choice as to the Leadership of the school.</p> <p>KK noted that we only have one applicant for the Assistant Head post currently advertised. We just aren't getting high volumes of good calibre applying for West Croft right now.</p> <p>JE clarified that if the OFSTED inspection doesn't go well, TP would go anyway?</p> <p>KK responded yes, we would all probably be required to leave.</p> <p>DF commented that as a Governor he would like to see stability.</p> <p>JE clarified that the current contract covers until the end of the academic year?</p> <p>KK replied yes, but if you are a Headteacher you need to start looking for jobs now.</p> <p>GM added that incentive to do best for the school is long term security. If I had retired in July you would have offered the next person from September a permanent contract so it isn't different.</p> <p>KK agreed, anyone could leave and drop us in it at any time, doesn't really matter the contract type.</p> <p>JE added that he thinks parents would be happy, especially based on survey results, if we made TP permanent. Announcement would be positive.</p> <p>GM noted that it's not going to be easy to take the school forward and TP is willing to do it. He isn't going to shy away from the challenge.</p> <p>DF proposed that we offer a permanent contract from 1st January 2020.</p> <p>Unanimously agreed by Governors present.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting closed 7.20pm</p>		
7.30pm	Meeting ends		
	Clerk		
	HT & Chair of SC		
	Clerk		
	All SC members		
Extension time	Meeting extended for the following items:-		