



Full Governing Body Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday 22 April 2020, 7.30pm via Microsoft Teams

Please note that advice given by governors at this school is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity. Governors respect the confidential nature of discussions and do not disclose governor business or decisions. When minutes of governing body meetings, Part 1, are approved they are made available to any member of the public who requests sight of them and are posted on the school website.

Attendees: Greg Clements, Helene Goddings, Emma Hardy (Co-Chairman), Mel Isherwood (Co-Chairman), Dan Keat, Andrew Stear (Headteacher), Helen Szczepanski

In attendance: Rachel Dunnage (Clerk); Lorraine Breen, School Business Manager (SBM); Nicola Jones, Deputy Headteacher

Meeting is quorate 7/7

	TOPIC	ACTION Who & when
1.	APOLOGIES: None received, all members are present.	
2.	DECLARATION OF INTEREST (<i>conflict and pecuniary</i>) Governors declared no interests in specific agenda items at this meeting.	
3.	<p>RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC</p> <p>MI thanked the senior leaders and all the staff for the exemplary way they have handled the school closure, opening to key worker and vulnerable children, provision of online learning as well as food to those families that require it; they have been an excellent team.</p> <p>a. Initial response</p> <p>Governors confirmed receipt of report (below) from senior leaders on the original response to partial school closure, and thanked them for taking the time to put it together</p> <p><i>1. How are we managing safeguarding of children in our care and those vulnerable children not in school?</i></p> <p>ASt has now taken over as Lead DSL following the SENDCo's resignation, effective 19.4.20. The Deputy DSL will be the Deputy HT with further training being provided for both her and the SBM in due course (it was booked but cancelled due to Covid 19). Systems have been set up with regular welfare calls by the SENDCo prior to Easter and she is continuing this element for the foreseeable as part of her 1 day a week contract until end of Summer term. Vulnerable children have been checked in on via video calls, emails, and correspondence with Social Care teams and also visit to households to deliver food vouchers; this will continue. Staff have been made aware of who to contact should they have any safeguarding concerns. So far all vulnerable children except one (regular contact with Social Worker) have been participating in classes through the website and Google classroom. This is being monitored by ASt and phone calls will be made should this drop off.</p> <p><i>2. How are we managing continuing education provision for all children?</i></p> <p>Google Classroom and secure, password protected Zoom lessons are happening across the week. Resources and activities are being posted and submitted through Google Classroom. We have almost every child and family signed in and accessing now. The children coming into school are now beginning to access lessons and activities when they are in school and have been allocated a chromebook to do this when in school.</p> <p><i>3. How are we managing our staff and ensuring their well-being, including senior leaders?</i></p> <p>We have set up WhatsApp group for teachers and Learning Support Assistants and have been holding a weekly video call staff meeting to discuss any pressing issues. Staff have been rota'd to ensure there isn't undue pressure on staff. Google Classroom provides more efficient working for staff as tasks can easily be set and responded to as a whole year group. I will be listening to staff feedback over time and making adjustments as necessary. Parental feedback</p>	

so far has been very positive despite some expected teething problems for some. We are almost fully up and running in this respect. Staff are being directed to the new National Academy lessons and resources which should help to ease their workload and give them greater opportunities to focus on their own and the children's wellbeing.

4. To what extent are we meeting Local Authority (LA) expectations?

As things stand we are fully meeting LA expectations and in many regards exceeding them due to early planning and setup of remote learning platforms and trials prior to Easter holidays with some parents, classes and year groups. It's a time of learning for us all. We are trying to balance meeting LA expectations, staff expectations, parents' expectations and government expectations. We were able to provide a holiday club out of Witley School for some of our children through the Easter Holidays. This worked well.

5. What financial, staffing, premises decisions actually need to be taken in the coming weeks to ensure the school is ready for normal business in September?

On 22 April the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and a Co-Chairman will be video interviewing two strong candidates for the position of part-time class teacher (Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) or lower main scale) to enable our new SENDCo to undertake her duties. This will give her the afternoons for the SENDCo role, with regular training and handover sessions planned in with the previous SENDCo. One candidate is a trainee with us currently. This should save the school some money going forward.

6. How is budget preparation going?

The SBM has provided budget update for governors. Although as I'm sure you can imagine, this is an area to keep a close eye on with a shifting picture currently and likely changes following re-opening and continuation of Covid 19 measures over the coming weeks or months.

7. How are we planning to keep in touch with parents & the community over the coming weeks?

We are regularly discussing learning with parents through our class emails and using our website, video calls, twitter, classlist and Google Classroom to stay in touch. We aim to do a survey of parents in the next couple of weeks regarding the provision that is in place. It seems sensible to wait a couple of weeks until we are confident and smoothly running to do this.

8. How are we ensuring Pupil Premium children access free school lunch provision/alternatives?

We were one of the few schools that managed to get the Edenred website set up and have been providing either emailed codes with top ups for parents or dropping round a print off if there are issues with this. The system isn't really fit for purpose and many schools have been struggling. So far we appear to be fortunate in that it has worked ok (ish) for us. We have provided food parcels for some families that need it too.

9. Do children in school receive the same educational input as the children at home?

This is something we are looking to improve and 20 April was the first day that children in school were given a chromebook to access learning. LSAs in classroom have helped the children join in 'live teaching' today with our two year 2 children accessing a maths lesson led by 2 teachers for the first time.

AS agreed that ensuring the children in school have the same educational experience as those at home is proving difficult. We are trying to ensure we read with each child, include the children in Zoom sessions and are record the work they have done in a book that is referred to by whichever staff member is in charge to that we can ensure they cover a range of areas.

10. How is our school distinguishing between education provision and childcare?

Initially we stuck to the remit of in school provision being child care although we did listen to every child read prior to Easter. We are continuing this and have to be realistic with what we can do with the wide range of children. We are aiming to ensure every child accesses the resources on Google Classroom at school with the hope that they may complete some of it at home outside of school hours and some in school hours.

AS flagged up to governors:

- that there are a limited number of our vulnerable children coming in to school, in common with the national picture. AS has taken the lead Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role with the one child who has a social worker.
- The food voucher scheme is chaotic. We were one of the schools actually able to get on the Edenred system, but unfortunately are having real problems retrieving the vouchers from the system this week.

Governor questions:

MI: *Have you had any response from the LA with regard to how well we are doing in terms of managing the school through this process?*

Not specifically us. However, anecdotally, we seem to be in a good position with regard to other local schools

GC: *Will you be able to share the parental responses to your questionnaire when they come in?*

Yes, absolutely. Some GLP schools have sent out questionnaires already which we are going to adapt for our parents and we will of course share the outcomes.

EH: *How will you let parents know what the outcomes are?*

I will almost certainly respond via email as I normally do once we have agreed with the SLT and governors about actions that we are taking to respond to the results.

MI: *Is there anything that governors can do to help the school and staff, do you have all you need?*

AS cannot think of anything at the moment. There is still much information coming out from the government which changes how we might need to work; the pace of change is thankfully much slower than in the first few weeks. Most of the HT unions have been very clear that schools need to have control of how schools re-open. AS would like governors to come up with an integrated plan with the whole of the GLP so that we all go forward in the same way at the same time.

HS: *Are all the GLP schools open at the moment?*

Most are. We have hosted two children over the Easter holiday and continue to have a child from one school, who comes with a member of staff from that school.

HS: *We have lost our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA), is there any way we can make sure someone is in place for September?*

This could well be a challenge given the lockdown. However, we might have the option of using ELSAs in other GLP schools. The SBM reported that we have received grant funding to improve our emotional literacy support but it does not cover staff. HS pointed out to governors that we need to be mindful of when the children come back with potentially very different circumstances. We will need to ensure staff have the time to help them re-acclimatise, particularly those in vulnerable families.

EH: *Is there any online training for ELSA?*

Sadly not at the moment. AS is considering if we could perhaps use any spare ELSA capacity within the Godalming Learning Partnership (GLP).

GC: *Given the decent training budget, is it worth spending some on training staff on how to use Google classroom and home-learning teaching?*

AS judges that this is not necessary as staff have been very flexible, patient and have really embraced the new way of working.

DK: *How are staff generally?*

AS reported that it is proving difficult for those staff members who are spending time in school and also delivering their Google classroom sessions. HS agreed but explained that she has worked out a system with the other Reception teacher to share setting work on the days that they are not with children. AS agreed that as we develop our understanding of the platform better, we will be able to give more group feedback rather than individual comments and this will free up time.

b. Plans for response over the coming month

There is nothing in particular to add other than making sure that when we receive the trigger to open the school again we have control over helping the children settle back in a measured and safe way.

c. Admissions and transition

Governors considered how school might plan for Admissions and transition if the school closure lasts beyond May half-term. They agreed that this is a really difficult area to predict.

	<p>ASt sees that perhaps schools will be expected to take children in the transition years back into school first to prepare them for the change. EH suggested that we might put together a virtual tour of the school online and record hello messages for the new parents and children.</p> <p>ASt confirmed that we have had all our places offered and will be full for September – the vast majority were first preference and we still have 7 children for whom we were first preferences on our waiting list.</p> <p>Governors wished to formally record their heartfelt thanks to ASt and all the staff for all they have done and continue to do to keep education and learning going for Milford's children.</p>	
4.	<p>FINANCE UPDATE</p> <p>A: <i>SBM will investigate what other GLP schools are doing with accessing LA money and service to replace our school roof.</i> Carry forward.</p> <p>a. Financial Monitoring Report (FMR) Governors reviewed the March FMR and had no further questions.</p> <p>b. Budget 2020-2021 Governors scrutinised the budget plan for 2020-2021 in the light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. The School Business Manager (SBM) explained that the budget does not have a contingency in it for the expenses we are incurring regarding COVID-19 because we are assured that we will be reimbursed these by the government (we can apply in June), with the exception of staffing costs for covering the school being open during the Easter holiday. We are continuing to pay our suppliers as directed to by the government because we are still being funded as normal by the government We are fortunate that we haven't relied on generating income to cover our budget cost.</p> <p>The SBM has put together a 3-yr budget plan even though it was not required by the Local Authority (LA) this time. She cautioned governors that if we continue with our in-year deficit (which we have along with many schools) we will be in an overall deficit position by Yr3 as all our reserves will have been used. It is also worth noting that the figures have been prepared assuming a full school so if admissions numbers decrease we will hit the overall deficit position earlier.</p> <p>We have not been able to complete the Yr2 toilet project and so this has had to be included in the 2020-2021 budget. We were relying on the Friends to help us to the tune of £14k. However, they are not in the position to provide this (only have £4k) now that their fundraising opportunities have been taken away by the lockdown. It is quite possible that families will not be in a position to donate money to the school in the same way once lockdown has ended. The SBM asked that governors consider whether or not we should go ahead with this project which is likely to cost c£14k whilst we only have £8k available at the moment, although we do have the option of using the £5k from our devolved formula capital. She advised that governors could leave the project in the budget and make the decision about whether or not we go ahead at a later point in the year.</p> <p>GC: <i>With money carried forward, does that come off next year?</i> No, the money keeps rolling forward. However, we have to be careful about how much we try to carry forward because the LA can claw back money over a certain amount.</p> <p>HG: <i>What are the repairs that need doing?</i> We have a flat roof that needs repair and this will be covered by the LA along with our boiler. However, the main roof also has a problem but this does not cause a consistent leak. We have considered with the Finance and Premises governors whether or not we can do something either on our own or with the GLP schools to see if there is a cheaper way of managing premises because the LA buyback costs us £10k per year. We will keep this under review.</p> <p>The SBM flagged up the request from Innovate, our catering company, who have furloughed their staff. They are asking us to cover the remaining 20% of staff's salary. They would then charge us for the average number of meals we took from November to February (160 per day) for the whole period that we are in partial closure when in reality they are only providing 5-9</p>	

	<p>meals. The governors felt that this request required further investigation and were happy that the SBM did not go ahead at this stage. GC expressed concern that we should be asked to pay 20% of the salary whilst also being expected to pay for meals we are not using and the company is receiving benefit from the government's furlough scheme. It looks rather that the company may be benefitting from 2 sets of government money for the same thing. DK sought clarification that the contract runs on financial years and it does; so we would have this year to look at whether or not we need to consider a different provider.</p> <p>HS asked if we will continue to pay Planet Education through the summer term, even though they have furloughed their staff. The SBM confirmed that we are because this is what the government is asking us to do. HS is concerned that this means that the both companies are actually making more money by receiving payments from the school for their contract whilst also getting the government to pay for 80% of the staff's salaries.</p> <p>Governors thanked the SBM for so effectively preparing the budget and her reports in very trying circumstances. Governors agreed that the budget as presented should be submitted to the Local Authority by the 01 May deadline.</p> <p><i>Staffing</i> AS noted that we have today appointed one of our excellent GLP School Direct trainees to our part-time teacher vacancy.</p> <p><i>Lorraine Breen left the meeting.</i></p>	
5.	<p>SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNT (statutory) Not covered at this meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>SAFEGUARDING UPDATE</p> <p>a. Update to child protection policy Governors agreed the addendum to the child protection policy. This is the model policy issued by the government to cover children protection and safeguarding during the partial closure of the school. It has been modified according to Milford's particular circumstances.</p> <p>b. The arrangements in place to keep children not physically attending the school safe, especially online, and how concerns about these children should be progressed. We have implemented a number of additional measures regarding how the school uses online learning, in particular live meetings, and this means we are now well covered; If any areas are changed we send out updates to parents and staff straight away.</p>	
7.	<p>CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY (Statutory) Governors confirm all appointments/elections will be informed by the skills required to ensure effective governance of the school.</p> <p>a. No governor has been appointed since the last meeting.</p> <p>b. No governor has resigned since the last meeting.</p> <p>c. The following governors' terms of office are due to expire within the next year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Co-opted Governor, Mel Isherwood, 15.09.20 ii. Parent Governor, Emma Hardy, 30.11.20 See d. iii. below. iii. Foundation Governor, Luke Bozeat Luke Bozeat has resigned his position as Foundation Governor but has been kindly delaying the date he leaves due to the number of vacancies we are currently carrying. MI will write to LB thanking him for his commitment to the Governing Body and accepting his resignation with effect from the beginning of May. <p>d. Vacancies Governors confirm that they are still seeking suitable nominees who have finance or premises skills/experience and/or are prepared to take on a leadership role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 2x Co-opted Governor ii. 1x Foundation Governor iii. 1x Local Authority Governor 	<p>M Isherwood 05 May</p>

	<p>Governors agreed with the proposal to nominate EH to this role leaving a parent governor vacancy for the new academic year.</p> <p>RD to begin the paperwork for this move.</p> <p>Governors considered our remaining possible candidate for the above roles, Mrs Jane Harrap. They agreed unanimously that her skills, experience and availability would be a real asset to the school and they would like to invite her to join the Governing Body.</p> <p>RD to contact Mrs Harrap regarding the Co-opted Governor role.</p>	<p>R Dunnage 05 May</p> <p>R Dunnage 05 May</p>						
8.	<p>GOVERNOR TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>A: RD to send out the Godalming Learning Partnership GLP skills audit.</p> <p>RD to issue this week.</p> <p>Governors</p> <p>a. Governors to confirm the training they have planned for this term.</p> <p>Governors confirmed that they have read the Clerk’s <i>Managing governance during C-19 pandemic</i> briefing.</p> <p>b. Training review</p> <p>A: All governors to check their training entries are up-to-date.</p> <p>A: RD will investigate the cost of online training for governors.</p> <p>Completed.</p> <p>RD explained the availability of online training some of which is free. She recommended that governors join the National Governance Association (NGA) and pay for their online learning package <i>Learning Link</i>. She explained the very wide range of modules that are available and regularly updated. Membership also gives governors access to very useful articles and updates to education policy and statutory obligations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the NGA is offering its GOLD level advice line free to all NGA members.</p> <p>See Appendix 1 for full details.</p> <p>Governors decided to stick with the free and Better Governor options as Better Governor is quickly improving the breadth of its online modules and webinars.</p> <p>c. Annual school improvement calendar & additional tools</p> <p>Not covered at this meeting.</p>	<p>R Dunnage 05 May</p>						
9.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>Governors agreed the minutes of the February meeting as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed digitally by the Co-Chairman. Once normal working has resumed the Clerk will ensure paper copies are signed in person and stored in the Governors’ file at school.</p>							
10.	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>All relevant actions and matters arising from the previous meeting are already covered in the agenda. Actions relating to monitoring in school are on hold.</p>							
11.	<p>To note any Part 2 business</p> <p>Governors confirmed no items to be considered Part 2 business and excluded from the public minutes.</p>							
12.	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS</p> <p>a. Dates:</p> <table><tr><th>DATE</th><th>FOCUS</th></tr><tr><td>22 Apr</td><td>Spring term data analysis; Budget approval</td></tr><tr><td>08 Jul</td><td>HT report ; Summer term data analysis; GB business</td></tr></table> <p>b. Future Agenda items:</p> <p>We could review Spring term data at another short meeting in late May, or through Teams whichever works best in the circumstances at the time.</p>	DATE	FOCUS	22 Apr	Spring term data analysis; Budget approval	08 Jul	HT report ; Summer term data analysis; GB business	
DATE	FOCUS							
22 Apr	Spring term data analysis; Budget approval							
08 Jul	HT report ; Summer term data analysis; GB business							

Meeting closed 9.15pm

Chairman's signature: *Mel Isherwood*

Date: 08.07.2020

Governors for schools

Register quickly and easily for **free** training: <https://www.governorsforschools.org.uk/register/>

Their training page is only available once you register and login: <https://www.governorsforschools.org.uk/elearning/>

Each module takes approx 1 hr and you get a certificate at the end!

Good modules to start with are:

- Governor induction
- Finance for new governors
- Performance data for new governors
- Short course: special educational needs and disabilities for governors

National Governance Association

Your school will need to have **purchased** the E-learning module *LearningLink*. Costs are:

- Learning Link (with no NGA membership) £159
- NGA standard membership plus e-learning £90 + £119 = £209
- NGA Gold membership costs £270 + £79 = £349

(Gold membership gets you more magazines, discounts on paper copies of guides and, more interestingly, unlimited access to their advice line for Chairman, Clerk and Headteacher)

More info is available on:

<https://www.nga.org.uk/Membership/Membership-types.aspx>

NOTE: During the COVID-19 pandemic, the NGA is offering its GOLD level advice line free to all NGA members.

Governors [self-register](#) and select their school from the drop-down menu. You will then have access to a wide range of training modules; good ones to start with are:

- Governance: your role, your responsibilities, your organisation
- Key Functions of the Governing Board
- Governance of a Church School (if you are in a faith school)
- Early Years Education
- Safeguarding: The Governor's Role
- The Governing Board's Role in School Improvement
- Progress and attainment: using data to improve educational outcomes
- Understanding Schools Finance
- Monitoring Performance Data and Targets
- Governors' Visits to Schools
- Health & Safety
- The role of the SEND governor
- Compliance - Governing Board Duties on Compliance
- Assuring your organisation and keeping it safe, secure and solvent

BetterGovernor

Better Governor is run by Strictly Education4S. You can register for free to access some of the articles and join their training sessions (lots of webinars at the moment) most at a cost of £10. You can currently **set up a free trial** of the webinars at: <https://www.bettermgovernor.co.uk/free-trial>