

Minutes from the Full Governing Body Meeting

Held on 23 March 2022

At 19:00 hrs virtually via Zoom

Present	Kate Barlow (KB) – Parent Governor and Chair Helen Ruff (HR) – Headteacher David Quick (DQ) – Co-opted Governor and Vice Chair Alexia (Lexy) Tuckwell (LT) – Staff Governor Mike Cahill (MC) – Co-opted Governor Cat Hemmings (CH) – Co-opted Governor Monica Ferguson (MF) – Parent Governor Lynn Jenkins (LJ) – Associate Member
Absent	None
Apologies	Peter Cosgrove, Co-opted Governor (has resigned as Co Opted Governor) Maria Ortin – Associate Member (has resigned as Associate Member)
In attendance	Georgie Clarke – LA Cover Clerk

The meeting was quorate

No	Item	Action
1	Apologies Apologies were accepted as detailed above. The Governors who had resigned have been taken off Governor Hub - completed. Maria Ortin expressed an interest in perhaps re-joining in the future once her children have grown.	Clerk
	Welcome KB welcomed everyone to the meeting. Governors welcomed MF to her first FGB as Parent Governor. Introductions took place.	
2	Declarations of interest None declared for this meeting	
3	Notification of Urgent Business None received.	
4	Minutes from the last meeting The minutes of the last meeting held in January 2022 were approved and signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising that are not already listed in the agenda for discussion.	
5	Finance SFVS compliance: (shared by Leigh Roscoe-Styler on 18/02/2022) This had been reviewed and the FGB formally agreed the SFVS. Budget monitoring:	

Signed (by Chair):



Date:

11/05/2022

	<p>DQ gave an update regarding the budget position – currently £9.5k under budget, meaning a £69,287 deficit. At year end the Centre’s forecasted deficit will be £142k.</p> <p>The CC paid for a consultancy firm to help the school with its deficit and have reported back to CC. The main issue out of the control of the Centre is that 83% of building costs being charged to the Centre, only 52% of building is being used. This was flagged up by the consultant as has been flagged up by the Centre previously. The CC as yet has made no comment on the issue.</p> <p>HR has been advised that schools showing a deficit will be taken through the deficit budget process next year. This will mean Governors will need to write to county to formally advise them we are unable to set a balanced budget for next year. The Centre will then be asked to produce an action plan of how the deficit will be handled, the plan will then be monitored and discussed with the CC. ACE will again request support with the expenses it faces for the building. ACE will refer to the report from the consultants and suggest that the CC produce an action plan for the Centre, as the budget costs are out of their control. The Centre will also look to write to the local MP to raise the issue.</p> <p>HR attended the All-Party Parliamentary Group recently. It is looking at funding for maintained nursery schools across the board.</p> <p>Funding for the long term for nursery schools needs to be secured at a realistic level. Disadvantaged children should also be given the same 30 hours offer that is given to their advantaged peers.</p> <p>LT – the Locality and Community Support Service, Safeguarding Services Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub have a push on 0-5 year olds as Covid has taken a toll on that age group. Supporting early years and SEND is a focal topic also being looked at.</p> <p>LJ referred to extra EYRs funding starting in September - hopefully some more funding will be received by the Centre.</p> <p>The core funding for nursery schools needs to be addressed but it is encouraging that people are starting to realise the priority and investment that is needed.</p> <p>MC – is it time to go and see Robert Courts MP regarding the finance issues the Centre faces together with other education issues?</p> <p>HR – Robert Courts MP did visit the Centre a while ago, when he was newly elected at MP and pre covid. It would be good to seek another meeting with him.</p> <p>MC will contact Robert Courts MP. KB is happy to be involved with any visit/meeting.</p> <p>HR will let DQ know who to write to at county regarding the budget situation and ask them how they will be able to address the building costs issue.</p> <p>Work is currently taking place on forecasting next year’s budget; county will need to be advised that the Centre is unable to set a balanced budget (as discussed above).</p>	<p>MC</p> <p>HR, DQ</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>COVID Update HR highlighted: On 4.3.22 four children were sent home with Covid symptoms.</p>	

Signed (by Chair): 

Date: 11/05/2022

Staff tested positive over the following weekend and on 7.3.22 half of the staff were positive, the number increasing over the week.

Three members of staff were available for work, the Centre remained open but went into lockdown principles and the priority was ensuring vulnerable children and key workers children could attend. There was a reduced register to offer children a place while remaining in ratio. Rotated the children who had 1:1 cover.

On 14.3.22 – the Centre was low on staff, but they started to return from 15.3.22. On 16.3.22 we returned to normal register.

There was a reduced register for 6 days due to the isolation of staff.

During that time the Centre was well supported by parents, they were understanding of the situation.

Teaching took place largely outdoors to reduce the infection spread as much as possible. HR has found that other local schools are being affected by the rapid spread of Covid. Up until this time, the Centre has been incredibly lucky.

The new variant has spread widely across Oxfordshire.

Staff who remained in school during the six days were amazing and worked flat out to cover maintain cover.

KB on behalf of Governors thanked staff for being so flexible which made a big difference during the six days.

HR – the reduction of children during the six days will impact on income as the families were not charged for the unattended sessions.

All children seem to be fully back in the swing now along with staff.

The Centre is keeping the controls as they were as the new variant is more transmissible.

From 1 April the rules will change again, guidance is awaited. The guidance may negate the need to self-isolate if staff are not ill.

Governors wished to formally record their thanks to the parents for their understanding.

The Centre was able to accommodate the most urgent requests for children to be at school during the six days which was positive.

Three children's absence has increased over the past weeks as they are vulnerable children. It was noted that any interruption to the most vulnerable children can upset their attendance. It was confirmed there will be ongoing support for those children in school and it will be flagged up with county as appropriate.

Discussion took place - Remote learning is difficult for the smaller children. Parents were sent links for early years learning. It would be interesting to conduct a survey to find out if any of the links were used by parents.

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11/05/2022

	<p>MF as a parent Governor commented – she thought the Centre handled the changes really well, the information given was really clear. The links she found to be effective. As feedback maybe consider the publication of an emergency remote learning pack (hard copy) might be useful for the parents of younger children to use as an alert of what they could learn over the days they are not at school.</p> <p>It is good to hear from a parent’s perspective, that the remote learning schoolwork sent out was well received.</p> <p>Tasks to take forward by staff in school - Make the existing videos more accessible so that parents can use them at any time. This work will start very soon and will be ongoing. HR to speak with staff to get permission, so that the videos can be added to the website to make that more accessible and improve things.</p> <p>Look at what can be done to enhance the website, make it into a resource that can be used if there are any further interruptions to school days, to also use as a resource library for children and parents to use.</p>	HR
7	<p>Governing Body Strategy Update</p> <p>KB - following on from previous work, it is suggested the best approach is to leave the charity as the charity and school as the school and look at ways to increase cross organisational working. Further discussions will take place to work out how to take things forward.</p> <p>DQ – following on from the meeting with Sue Brown – if the Trust want to buy in a consultancy service that is fine. It is thought it would cost around £1k a month to cover two sessions of 3 hours and a meeting. An SLA is being compiled to take this forward.</p> <p>HR - met with Michelle Jenkins, OCC Early Years Lead who understands we cannot do a full integration. With increased links between the school and charity together with the cross working she seems happy with that suggested way forward.</p>	
8	<p>Self Evaluation Form (SEF) – review new format</p> <p>HR highlighted the following:</p> <p>She had updated the SEF for the Autumn and Spring terms using the new simplified format, which is much shorter, easier to understand and update.</p> <p>HR hopes that it makes the information more accessible for Governors.</p> <p>In the document the areas for development are a summary of the main points from the school development plan (SDP).</p> <p>The headings used are the same as those used by the Ofsted and are in the SEF against the priority areas.</p> <p>Workload was the area that was raised at the last Ofsted Inspection as an area of concern. The Centre has taken advantage of the new EYFS provisions from last September:</p> <p>Have emphasised more staff interaction with children instead of completing paperwork.</p> <p>Have streamlined processes which seems to be working well and makes pertinent issues more obvious.</p> <p>Now assessing in a broader way - it has made it clearer what the main issues and priorities are.</p> <p>The other headings in the SEF are: Quality of education, Behaviours and attitudes, personal development, leadership and management, Overall effectiveness.</p>	

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	<p>The information contained within the SEF includes the evidence of action and activity that Ofsted will look at when they visit. It allows the Centre to articulate where we are, the priorities and the actions taken.</p> <p>It is a good document for each governor to get to know and understand the detail. when asked about it by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>One priority is the need to get back to governor visits in person. The SEF and SDP would give some ideas about what governors would like to focus on during a visit.</p> <p>LT confirmed she would circulate questions that can be asked by Governors. Completed.</p> <p>It would be helpful for governors to come into school and speak with staff and allow them to demonstrate their knowledge as practitioners prior to any Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>LJ – the team would appreciate the opportunity practicing answering questions – some staff have never been through an inspection.</p> <p>Suggestion – may be ask one question a week to allow them time to practice and consider what their answer might be. This could take place either on-line or face to face.</p> <p>MF asked do staff need help with developing communication skills generally not just for when Ofsted visit?</p> <p>LJ – a development of this kind is a good idea. It would give staff an opportunity to articulate what is in their head and to practice in front of different audiences eg governors who may ask questions in a different way to their colleagues/other staff.</p> <p>It is felt it would be better for questions to be raised with staff by governors during their visits. It would allow them proper time to respond especially in view of the new EYFS framework and the increased emphasis on using their professional judgement. The more they practice it will build their confidence.</p> <p>As an ex-Ofsted inspector, MC is happy to come into school and observe lessons, give feedback etc to help staff. MC was thanked for the offer. His help would be welcomed by staff.</p> <p>If any Governors could come into school and visit, please contact HR so date/time could be agreed.</p> <p>KB can visit this Friday at 2pm to look at the new curriculum as discussed at the P&S Committee.</p>	<p>MC</p> <p>Govs</p>
<p>8.1</p>	<p>Quality Monitoring Covered in discussions earlier in this meeting.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Safeguarding Update There was no documentation to update at this meeting.</p> <p>HR and LT are meeting weekly when reviews take place of the children, the action list is updated, and issues are followed up.</p>	

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11/05/2022

	<p>A date will be fixed after Easter for a meeting when KB and other governors will be invited into the Centre to look at the folders and safeguarding processes and procedures. HR and KB will suggest dates/times to governors to have the meeting fixed.</p>	HR, KB
10	<p>Health and Safety update, including H&S Audit feedback DQ referred to the recent H&S Inspection visit. No serious issues were raised. H&S update will be completed by Leigh Roscoe-Styler once the budget work has been completed. HR informed Governors that Michelle Jenkins from County had agreed they would pay for a mobile shredder (to dispose of old paperwork) and a skip for the school. This will most likely be completed over Summer holidays as prep will be needed before the shredding etc takes place.</p>	HR
11	<p>Committee Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance – as discussed earlier in the meeting. • Health & Safety – as discussed earlier in the meeting. • Performance & Standards (includes Pupil Premium & SEND update) HB the P&S Committee met on 21.3.22 and discussed assessments, new reporting format. HR and LT explained the streamlined system and how assessments are based on practitioners’ knowledge. It will be used to guide them for planning both in the moment and more strategically. The information is also used to identify children who need more action/targets set. The Committee discussed the new curriculum and how it was going. It was a useful meeting and good to get together to discuss matters. 	
12	<p>Governing Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resignation of Peter Cosgrove – there is a vacancy on Finance Committee. A letter has been drafted by KB and will be sent out across the local community to hopefully source a co opted governor with finance expertise to join the FGB, finance committee. - Parent Governor vacancies have not yet been filled. - Tribute to Eve Coles – Governors wish their tribute of thanks to be formally minuted – DQ emphasised that Eve will be greatly missed at the Ace Centre. She served as a Governor on the Finance and H&S Committees for years. She worked tirelessly as a Governor and Trustee, she also worked for many other local organisations in the town. She was always busy doing something on behalf of people in the town. She contributed a lot to the creation of the theatre. MC attended the private family funeral and was struck when the celebrant said during the service ‘if you seek a monument look around you’. We only need to look at the things around the town that Eve worked to achieve – recreation ground, replacement bollards outside the ACE centre. She was passionate about peace, was against war; she was a member of the Greenham Common Peace Women, she protested at Upper Heyford against war amongst other things. Her sense of humour was completely intact. 	

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	<p>HR – Eve was a very kind person and always encouraging to the ACE Centre, she understood the work the Centre does and spoke up for the people who worked there. She will be missed. She was an amazing lady.</p> <p>There will be a memorial service in the town at some point and ACE will be informed of the date.</p>	
13	<p>Policies Finance Policies to Review (action from last FGB) Leigh Roscoe-Styler sent out the policies a few weeks ago via Governor Hub. DQ will review the policies. This will be an agenda item for the May FGB.</p>	DQ, May FGB
14	<p>Correspondence and Chair's Action No correspondence had been received.</p>	
15	<p>Governor Training and Development:</p> <p>KB will contact MF to speak about Governor training. HR offered to take MF through the Safeguarding training. HR and MF will agree a date for the face-to-face training. On 7 March, MC attended an EYs governors' training session which he found beneficial. He will send the link to the presentation to all Governors for their use.</p>	KB, MF MF, HR MC, Govs
16	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jubilee Bank Holiday – KB HR – OCC has advised schools that they can choose to nominate an additional day's holiday as the extra bank holiday falls in the May half term week. Governors are asked to make the decision – if it is considered it would be better to tack the extra day onto the end of the school year, so they break up a day early or would they think the school should forego the extra day in view of the 6-day Covid closure. MF suggested - An extra day might be good for staff morale? Tack it onto the end of term? Perhaps the most democratic way is to survey the parents? If we make the change to end of term, they will have sufficient notice to the change and the impact would be minimal to parents. Following discussion, Governors agreed the extra day should be tacked onto the end of term, the last day of term will be 20 July 2022. The staff will be delighted with the news. It will be made known that Governors were keen for them to have the extra day in recognition of their hard work. - Teachers' Pensions Indexation & 2021 Pay Freeze – HR HR – the NAHT has advised members that was an issue regarding some teachers' pensions due to the pay freeze. It impacts upon staff who have not had an increase/decrease for over a year – three members of ACE Centre staff have been identified. A nominal uplift in salary will need to take place to start the indexation and remedy the situation. The uplift will cost £6 (£2 per staff member) to uplift the salary and start the indexation. Following discussion Governors approved the uplift figure. This will be completed by Leigh Roscoe-Styler as soon as possible. - Wellbeing App from Leafyard raise funds for subscription via fundraising at chiplit Fest 	HR HR

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	<p>KB referred to the Leafyard App – its aim is to improve wellbeing by promoting mindfulness, journaling, and other activities to improve stress levels and levels of wellbeing for the users. The price has been negotiated for 20 installations, at £1k if paid for up front (it would normally cost £2k).</p> <p>Regarding raising funds to pay for the App, it could be used to give a focus to the planned fundraising activities. People would be made aware that funds raised would be used to pay for the App (aimed to enhance teachers’ wellbeing). By using the focus it is hoped that sufficient funds would be raised.</p> <p>Governors discussed that the fundraising for the App could be used to launch the work need to prepare for the Chastleton event. The Centre will need to re energise a group to launch the ChipLit Fest at the end of April – 22-24 April – as yet the Friends of ACE Centre has not been re-instigated since pre pandemic.</p> <p>Discussion took place about what some of the assistance needed: have help on the Saturday (the main day of the event) and half day on the Sunday. It will be important to get a café up and running for the weekend, assist with children’s activities across the 1.5 days etc. A poster will be created outlining the focus and sourcing a local company to be involved. The idea of having a focus for the fundraising would be fantastic for the staff. It is important to have a plan of how to tackle wellbeing for staff going forward. Governors will look at the App on the website and see what is offers. If sufficient funds are raised, the Centre could look to get the App brought into school straight away.</p> <p>- Questions for Governor Visits</p> <p>LT confirmed she had sent questions to governors for to use in their forthcoming visits to the Centre.</p> <p>CH informed Governors that she will be changing job roles and may not be able to attend all the future meetings until her role settles down. KB – it may be that meetings could run both face to face with a digital link if that would assist CH.</p>	Govs																
17	<p>Meeting Dates 2021/22</p> <p>Governors agreed that it would be good to have the next meeting in person at the Centre. It can be combined with looking at the learning environments both indoors and outdoors and the changes that have taken place over the last two years.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="245 1518 1332 1662"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4">MEETING DATES 2021/22</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Day</th> <th>Date</th> <th>Time</th> <th>Focus</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>11 May 2021</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td>Face to face</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>29 June 2021</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td>tba</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	MEETING DATES 2021/22				Day	Date	Time	Focus	Wednesday	11 May 2021	7.00pm	Face to face	Wednesday	29 June 2021	7.00pm	tba	
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The meeting ended at 8.45pm

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