

**Minutes from the Full Governing Body Meeting**  
**Held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023**  
**at The ACE Centre Nursery School**

Present Kate Barlow (KB) – Co-opted Governor and Chair  
Mike Cahill (MC) – Local Authority Governor and Vice-chair  
Topsy Fletcher (TF) – Co-opted Governor  
Cat Hemmings (CH) – Co-opted Governor  
Sally Pursell (SP) – Co-opted Governor  
Monica Ferguson (MF) – Parent Governor  
Lynn Jenkins (LJ) – Headteacher  
Isabelle Robinson (IR) – Staff Governor  
David Quick (DQ) – Associate Member  
Zoe Wakefield (ZW) – Associate Member

Apologies: None

Absent: None

In attendance Hazel Sheridan (HS) - Clerk

The meeting started at time 7:02pm and was quorate.

**1. Welcome and introductions**

IR and ZW were welcomed to the meeting as Staff Governor and Associate Member respectively (please refer to item 13.3 below).

**2. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for this meeting as everyone was present.

**3. Notification of any urgent business**

KB informed Governors that a Public Sector Equality Duty Statement was required to be approved before it is published on the website. (Please refer to item 16.1 below.)

**4. Declarations of pecuniary interests**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

**5. Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and matters arising**


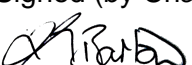
5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to send approved minutes to KB for signature and filing at the school.**

5.2. Previous actions were:

5.2.1. Item 6.3.2 KB to make enquiries about free tablet devices that Microsoft may be giving away free to schools – KB informed Governors that enquires have been made however there is no progress to report so far.

5.2.2. Item 9.1 Clerk to send approved minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 to KB for signature and filing at the school – completed.

Signed (by Chair):   


Date:

- 5.2.3. Item 10.2. KB to arrange meeting of the Performance, Standards and Curriculum meeting as soon as possible – meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Another meeting is to be held before the end of the academic year.
- 5.2.4. Item 10.3 KB to arrange meeting of the HR and Wellbeing Committee for mid-May – meeting arranged for 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
- 5.2.5. Item 11.2 – KB to approve SFVS online by 10th February 2023 – completed.
- 5.2.6. Item 12.2 – CH to contact Local Prevention Officer regarding a visit to the school to suggest possible options for screening off the playground area – CH has contacted the Local Prevention Officer, however no contact has yet been made with the school.

**ACTION: CH to give LJ's contact details to the Local Prevention Officer so a visit can be arranged.**


- 5.2.7. Item 12.5 – LJ to add safeguarding points raised by Governors to the safeguarding action plan in preparation for next visit on 6th March 2023 – safeguarding on agenda, please refer to item 11 below.
- 5.2.8. Item 12.6 – KB to arrange further Governors' meeting to discuss safeguarding – a meeting was held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (please refer to item 10 below.)
- 5.2.9. 5.9. Item 17.8 – Clerk to send all approved policies to KB for signature and update policy register – completed.
- 5.10 Item 18.2 – Clerk to amend Governor Hub after SP appointed as Co-opted Governor – completed.

## 6. Committee meetings

- 6.1. Finance, Premises and Health & Safety: No meetings have been held since the last FGB on 25<sup>th</sup> January. The next meeting will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 to look at the budget for 2023-2024.
- 6.2. Performance, Standards and Curriculum (includes Pupil Premium & SEND update): The meeting that was scheduled to take place this week had to be postponed. Another meeting will be arranged to take place before the end of the academic year.
- 6.3. HR & Wellbeing Committee: The next meeting is due to take place on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Policies that are due for approval by this Committee are in the meeting folder on Governor Hub.

## 7. Finance

- 7.1. Current budget and forecast: It was reported that the projected end of year carry forward deficit will be £186K; this is £31K lower than the original governor-approved plan. Although lower pupil numbers have resulted in the expected income being reduced, this has been more than offset by the savings made in building and energy costs and the increased income from additional SEN funding and Covid recovery training. LJ added that staff meeting time has been reduced, ZW's work for the charity has been recharged where applicable, the school is currently underspent on electricity charges (but this will change) and heating costs will be paid for by OCC while the boiler works are being carried out.
- 7.2. Budget 2023-2024: The Finance, Premises and Health & Safety Committee will be looking at the budget for 2023-2024 at their meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and it has to be formally signed-off on or by 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Ideally the school should show a balanced budget over a three-year period. As the school is currently in deficit, Andy Flowers (OCC) has been monitoring the budget on a quarterly basis. As there is not an FGB meeting scheduled

Signed (by Chair): 

Date:

to take place until 24<sup>th</sup> May, the FGB will need to meet to formally approve the budget before it is signed off on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

**ACTION: KB to arrange EGB via Zoom for Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May at 6pm to discuss and formally approve the budget for 2023-2024.**

- 7.2.1. **Governors asked** when the budget deficit started. LJ answered that it began when the family centre closed. The deficit has grown since, partly due to the building being too big for the current needs of the nursery school and child care (parts of it are not used), but running and maintenance costs still need to be paid.


## 8. School Development

- 8.1. School Development Plan (SDP) update: LJ informed Governors that red, amber and green ratings have been updated on the SDP since the last FGB meeting. Term 4 is a short term and there are still a number of actions rated 'amber' to be completed. ZW has been spending dedicated time on actions to get them completed.

**ACTION: LJ to put link to SDP into School Development Folder on Governor Hub so the updated version can be viewed by Governors.**

- 8.1.1. **Governors queried** if any support or assistance from them was needed to help actions get completed. LJ requested that Governors keep themselves up to date with progress on the SDP and contact her with any comments and / or questions. It is also the opportunity for Governors to check that the school is doing what they say will do when they visit, i.e., look for evidence during visits to support that the actions are being completed.
- 8.1.2. Following information from a recent Ofsted inspection at another school where questions were asked about the school's values, **Governors questioned** the text on the school website about the school's values and ethos. They found it very lengthy and it would be difficult to remember everything should they be questioned about them when the school is next visited by Ofsted. LJ responded that work on the school's vision and values was started in September 2022. There are now four values: joy, openness, trust and ambition. The vision is still being worked on. **Governors suggested** that the text on the website is replaced with a simpler version of "our vision is ....". LJ stated that this will be revisited at the beginning of the next academic year in September.
- 8.1.3. **Governors asked** about possibly being present at meetings with parents. LJ replied that Governors would be welcome.
- 8.1.4. The impact of Ofsted inspections was discussed, especially in light of recent tragic events when a Headteacher took their own life following an inspection where the school was downgraded to 'inadequate'. LJ informed Governors that she had looked at the Ofsted criteria and believes that the school is 'good' but not 'outstanding' (the school was rated 'outstanding' at the last inspection in 2019). The Ofsted grading process looks at the lowest common denominators to decide on a grading and for a school to be rated as 'good', every item on the criteria list needs to be 'good' or better.
- 8.2. Strategic aims 2023-23: As time is limited at FGB meetings with the number of agenda items to be discussed, it was **agreed** to hold a separate meeting during term 5 to discuss strategic aims for future years. Items that will also need consideration are to decide on the ambition for the school for the next few years, refresh the website and to have a communications plan.

**ACTION: KB to organise a Doodle poll for possible dates for a strategic aims meeting during term 5.**

Signed (by Chair): 

Date:

**ACTION: LJ to complete the School Evaluation Form (SEF) prior to the strategic aims meeting so Governors are provided with a starting point for discussion.**

## 9. Health and safety audit

9.1. The recent health and safety audit has highlighted several areas where actions have not been completed since last year. The school has scored below 90% for the health and safety audit for the last five years, which is unacceptable. It was noted that the member of staff dealing with health and safety does not have sufficient time to complete all the required tasks, it is not in their job description and the health and safety agenda has grown over the years. Some actions have been completed, e.g., chemicals being moved to a safer storage area. **Governors questioned** the scoring; 90% of what? LJ answered that the score relates to all areas that are assessed, so the school is currently less than 90% compliant with all assessed areas.

Due to the nature of the conversation, IR and ZW temporarily left the meeting as they are both staff members. They returned after item 9.2 had been discussed.

9.2. This item of the minutes can be viewed in Part 2, confidential minutes.

9.3. **Governors suggested** that members of staff could complete their own risk assessment forms and submit them for filing.

## 10. Safeguarding audit review

10.1. There are no further updates on the safeguarding audit review. KB and SP will be carrying out a safeguarding visit to the school next week.

10.2. LJ informed Governors that both doors are being monitored at school start and finish times. The alarm is turned off while doors are monitored and immediately turned on again when monitoring ends. **Governors reported** that the monitoring was sometimes inconsistent as staff attention is diverted if a parent or child wants to speak with them while they are monitoring entry / exit of the building. **Governors added** that it must be difficult when there are 40 children and four staff and two staff have to monitor the doors. LJ and MF **agreed** to discuss this further outside of the meeting.

10.2.1. MF has contacted Secure by Design regarding the height of the fences and they will visit the school to assess the situation.

10.2.2. **Governors asked** if there were separate, distinctive lanyards for contractors. LJ answered that currently they are given a visitor lanyard, however a specific colour lanyard will be sourced to make contractors more easily identifiable to everyone at the school.

## 11. Staffing

Due to the nature of the conversation, IR and ZW temporarily left the meeting as they are both staff members. They returned after item 11.1 had been discussed.


11.1. This item can be viewed in Part 2, confidential minutes.

11.2. LT leaves the school on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and she is receiving support in what she wants to move onto next. **Governors remarked** on how well the situation with LT is being handled.

11.3. Interviews for the Lead Teaching Assistant role are being held on Wednesday. LJ clarified that this role has a leadership aspect, which is necessary for the forthcoming collaboration with Grandpont Nursery School, and they will be expected to do substantially more than a Teaching Assistant.

## 12. Quality monitoring

12.1. Wellbeing: No visits have been made since the previous FGB meeting.

Signed (by Chair): 

Date:



- 12.2. SEN: No visits have been made since the previous FGB meeting.
- 12.3. Vulnerable children: No visits have been made since the previous FGB meeting.
- 12.4. Closing the gap: No visits have been made since the previous FGB meeting.
- 12.5. **Governors asked** if there were any other areas that could be added to the quality monitoring visits and it was suggested that the curriculum could be looked at (or any other specific areas on the SDP). SP **agreed** to take on this role.
- 12.6. Visit reports provide evidence of monitoring and Governor involvement for an Ofsted inspection. LJ requested that a schedule of visits is drawn up for terms 5 and 6.

**ACTION: All Governors to send visit reports for 2022-2023 to the Clerk for uploading onto Governor Hub and schedule visits for terms 5 and 6.**

### 13. Governance updates

- 13.1. Collaboration: KB has had numerous discussions with LJ, MC and OCC about the proposed collaboration with Grandpont Nursery School. Additional support for the collaboration was requested from OCC and Catherine Heywood (School Improvement Partner) has agreed to take on this role. Grandpont FGB met last week and queried the terms in the Memorandum of Understanding for LJ's travel expenses. It has been agreed that LJ will be able to claim mileage for travel to Grandpont, minus her usual mileage from home to The ACE Centre. LJ's salary will also be increased as she will become the Executive Headteacher for two nursery schools, however the cost will be split equally between the two schools. Discussions have been held about how LJ will split her time between the schools, including some working from home if necessary. LJ is in contact with another Executive Headteacher in Warwickshire and has gained some very useful information about the initial difficulties and period of adjustment required. Staff from each school will be able to visit the other to share information and good practice.
- 13.2. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): The start date for the collaboration is 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023. Although this was sooner than expected, it will mean adjustments by staff and parents can be made during term 6 so everyone is fully prepared for the new academic year in September. The draft MOU is based on a version used by two other schools and is yet to be agreed with the legal team at OCC.
- 13.2.1. **Governors queried** if this would affect how Ofsted inspect the school, i.e., would it be a joint inspection or individual schools. LJ replied that each school would be inspected independently.
- 13.2.2. **Governors asked** if the collaboration would have a big impact on The ACE Centre Nursery School. LJ responded that it was essential that the necessary structure was in place to make the collaboration successful. Staff structure and capacity will be impacted and staff at both schools will have the opportunity to learn from each other. Collaboration will not affect The ACE Centre Nursery School SDP.

**Decision: Governors agreed to the Memorandum of Understanding.**



- 13.3. Staff Governor: **Governors agreed** to IR becoming a Staff Governor and ZW an Associate Member.

**ACTION: Clerk to update Governor Hub and notify LJ/LRS to update GIAS.**

### 14. Governor Training and Development

SP has completed parts A and B of the OCC Governor Services Governor Induction training.

**ACTION: Clerk to send list of completed Governor training to LJ.**

Signed (by Chair):   


Date:

## 15. Policies

- 15.1. Pay policy for teachers: This policy was not available for approval at this meeting.
- 15.2. Pay policy for support staff: This policy was not available for approval at this meeting.
- 15.3. Charging and remissions for school activities: This policy was not available for approval at this meeting.

**ACTION: LJ to ensure policies available for FGB meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May. Clerk to note for agenda.**

## 16. Any other business

- 16.1. Public Sector Equality Duty Statement: A copy of this document is filed on Governor Hub and, following approval by Governors, needs to be published on the school website.

**ACTION: Clerk to send copy of Statement to Governors for comments or question by 31<sup>st</sup> March. After this date KB to publish on the website.**


- 16.2. Child care: The Government announced changes to the amount of free hours for child care in their recent budget. The impact of this will be discussed at the strategic aims meeting (date to be confirmed, please refer to item 8.2 above).

## 17. Next meeting date

- 17.1. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7pm.
- 17.2. Future meeting dates are as follows:  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023

The meeting closed at 9:02pm

*Hazel Sheridan*  
25<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Signed (by Chair): 

Date: