



## Minutes from the Full Governing Body Meeting

### Held on date at The ACE Centre Nursery School

Present	Catherine Hayward (CH) – LA Governor & Chair Phoebe O'Donnell (POD) – Parent Governor Lynn Jenkins (LJ) – Headteacher Sarah O'Leary (SOL) – Interim Headteacher Zoe Wakefield (ZW) – Staff Governor
Apologies:	Rob Horsfall (RH) – Co-opted Governor Tia Ouma (TO) – Co-opted Governor Sally Purssell (SP) – Co-opted Governor & Vice-chair
Absent:	
In attendance	Hazel Sheridan (HS) – Governance Professional

The meeting started at time 6:05pm and was quorate. Governors welcomed LJ back to the school and expressed their thanks to SOL for all her hard work while LJ was away.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Rob Horsfall, Tia Ouma and Sally Purssell.

#### 2. Notification of any urgent business

There were two items of urgent business raised that were confidential and notes can be seen in Part 2 confidential minutes.

#### 3. Declarations of pecuniary interests

There were no declarations of interests.

#### 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and matters arising

- 4.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**ACTION: HS to send approved minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 to CH for signature and filing at the school.**

Previous actions were:

- 4.2. Item 3.1 HS to send email to TO with information and document links and add TO to Governor Hub. CH to do induction with TO – induction with CH completed on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025. TO added to Governor Hub.
- 4.3. Item 4.1 HS to amend Governor Hub to show CH as Local Authority Governor – completed.
- 4.4. Item 6.1 HS to send approved minutes of 3rd September 2024 to CH for signature and filing at the school – completed.
- 4.5. Item 6.3 HS to follow up completion of Declaration of Interests with RC - completed.
- 4.6. Item 6.9 SOL to provide generalist safeguarding training to POD and one other via MS Teams on 9th December 2024 – moved to 16th December, completed.

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- 4.7. Item 6.2.3 HS to follow up confirmation of reading KCSiE 2024 and agreeing to Code of Conduct with RC - completed.
- 4.8. Item 9.3 CH to circulate Leadership Report to Governors when it is finalised – CH informed Governors that the content of the proposed Leadership Report mirrored what was already shared by SOL in her Headteacher's Report; the leadership report was therefore not necessary. Action closed.
- 4.9. Item 12.3 CH and SOL to meet to discuss the red items on the risk register and CH to amend other colour ratings as necessary – on agenda, item 12.
- 4.10. Item 13 CH to amend any typos and send revised policies to HS. HS to send approved policies to CH for signature, then to SOL for school records and update the policy register - completed.
- 4.11. Item 15.1 HS to note RH apologies for meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 – noted.

## 5. Finance

- 5.1. The budget details and monitoring notes were circulated to Governors prior to the meeting and are filed on Governor Hub. **Governors commented** that the budget information supplied by LW (School Business Manager (SBM)) was much clearer and the monitoring notes were very useful; **Governors expressed** their thanks to LW for the work she has put in. LJ will be meeting with LW to discuss finance matters at the school after the health and safety issues have been dealt with.
- 5.2. LJ informed Governors that she is trying to protect the funding streams for the school and has been looking at projected pupil numbers. A document was shared with Governors which showed that based on the current waiting list, eight pupils could be joining the nursery school in January 2025, nine in April 2025 and 12 in September 2025. However, with St. Mary's CofE Primary School and Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Aided Primary School both opening nursery school provision for two to four-year olds in Chipping Norton, this could impact on how many of these children actually come to The ACE Centre nursery school, especially if siblings already attend these primary schools.

### Q1. Will these primary schools offer wrap-around care?

**A1.** This is not known at present. However, many primary schools offer such provision and if they do, it does not always include nursery school children.

- 5.3. SOL stated that the Local Authority has said there is a surplus of nursery school places available for three and four-year-olds but this is not the case for two-year-olds. LJ added that it is important to attract parents to send their children to The ACE Centre nursery school. The projected intake for September 2025 is 25 children, which is lower than in previous years. In the past the intake has increased in January and April and a supply teacher has had to be employed for this period.

**ACTION: LJ to ask LW to input projected pupil numbers into financial system to see how this impacts on the financial viability of the nursery school.**

- 5.4. RC reminded Governors that the worst-case scenario must be considered when looking at the budget, together with how this might impact on the quality of education provision.
- 5.5. **Governors raised** questions about how the financial matters of the school will be dealt with going forward. As this discussion was confidential it is noted in Part 2 of the minutes.

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- 5.6. **Governors noted** that LW has been unable to determine the accuracy of energy bills as The ACE Centre nursery school does not receive utility bills but has an internal recharge from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). The budget is currently showing an underspend however LW has arranged for an electricity meter to be installed, and charges are likely to increase.
- 5.7. LW has also uncovered that the nursery school is paying for business/enterprise ICT licences when they should have been paying for educational licences that are much cheaper. The transfer to educational licences will be investigated. Some IT equipment also needs to be replaced as it will not be able to cope with the necessary Windows 11 software.
- 5.8. **Governors were confident** that LW will resolve the energy and ICT issues. LJ reported that LW has said she is willing to stay at 2.5 days until the end of the academic year so this will need to be factored into the budget for 2025-26.
- 5.9. Governors were asked if they felt the financial management of the school is now more robust. **Governors replied** yes it was more robust, and it was important that the quality of the financial information is maintained.

## 6. Schools Financial Values Standard (SFVS)

- 6.1. The SFVS is filed on Governor Hub and was circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. **Governors expressed** their thanks to LW for all her support in completing this document.

**Q2. The comments in item 4 state that 'Procurement card holders declare pecuniary interests to the headteacher in accordance with terms of employment'; is this the case?**

**A2.** LJ answered that there was no system in place at present. The previous SBM had a procurement card, Alison has one and LJ will be applying for one. **Governors requested** that a system for declaring any pecuniary interests for procurement card holders is set up.

**ACTION: LJ to set up system for procurement card holders to declare any pecuniary interests.**

**ACTION: CH to change wording in the comments of item 4 to say a system will be set up. CH to submit form to OCC by 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025.**

## 7. Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024-25

- 7.1. The Pupil Premium Strategy Statement was issued to Governors before the meeting and a copy is filed on Governor Hub.
- 7.2. There were no questions or comments and **Governors approved** the document to be published on the website.

**ACTION: CH to publish Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024-25 on the school website.**

## 8. Headteacher's report

- 8.1. SOL has evaluated the SEF and used the Quality of Education information to inform the SDP. However, SOL removed the emotional coaching and vocabulary work items to create capacity to start building staff confidence in what they were doing, ensure staff

*Catherine Hayman*

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understood the next steps on the curriculum and then work on how to assess the curriculum and feed that back into planning.

- 8.2. SOL gave an example of assessment and planning processes: Together with ZW, they looked at seven children who had not reached the age expected level for cardinal numbers and their wellbeing information, then collated and entered data on their attainment which was then shared with staff. Staff were able to identify why the children's scores may have been lower than expected and what needs to be put into place to help move the children forward. SOL and ZW also looked at what core books should be used and decided on four. The same book is read every day for a week and ZW reported that each time it sparks a different conversation.

**Q3. One of the concerns raised by Ofsted was the consistency of implementing the curriculum and staff have since received training. Can you see the impact of this training?**

**A3.** SOL replied that week-on-week she can see the small steps being made. When questioned about why they do something the way they do, staff have previously said it was because someone told them to do it that way in the past. SOL has asked staff 'what is the intention?' which leads to the staff thinking about what the children are achieving and how they can help them do that. Staff are now coming to meetings with focused ideas.

**Q4. What do you do differently with assessments?**

**A4.** SOL answered that when she first came to the school staff were stressed about what had been happening at the school; she advised them to concentrate on what was happening now and to keep things simple. She suggested that assessments were carried out only for identified areas and should be meaningful – bring it back to what the child did not achieve last term and work from there. ZW added that staff felt they got to know the children better.

- 8.3. SOL also informed Governors that:
- Communication with parents via the monthly newsletter is important;
  - She has introduced folders containing job description information;
  - Staff can now access their HR file for any information they wish to view;
  - Staff are sent a weekly update containing details of observations made, an article to read and questions are asked. SOL has received positive feedback from staff on this; and
  - ZW has passed her leadership course.

**Governors congratulated ZW on her recent achievement.**

## 9. School Development Plan (SDP)

- 9.1. SOL updated the SDP with reference to the Quality of Education and this document was available to Governors prior to the meeting and is filed on Governor Hub. Please refer to item 8 above.

## 10. School Evaluation Form (SEF)

- 10.1. This item was covered in item 8 above.

## 11. Health and Safety (H&S)

- 11.1. Paul Lundy (PL), OCC H&S Manager, and Nicky Jones (NJ), H&S Advisor, visited the nursery school on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 as a pre-inspection following changes in the

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school's governance and leadership. Their report is filed on Governor Hub and was shared with Governors prior to the meeting.

- 11.2. The subsequent discussion was confidential and notes can be seen in Part 2 of the minutes.

## 12. Safeguarding

- 12.1. ESAT safeguarding review: SOL submitted the relevant paperwork and worked with staff on gaps in their knowledge, e.g. contextual safeguarding and filtering and monitoring. Staff were also reminded about checking on visitors to the building before they are admitted. Staff safeguarding training was completed in September, however SOL found that this had not included Alison and Martin (caretaker) so arrangements are being made for them to complete this training.
- 12.2. The ESAT review team triangulated all the information they were given with what was in files and/or logged on systems to ensure it was correct. The outcome of the review was very positive, with only a few actions.
- 12.3. There must be a process for children not collected from school and children who go missing. It was noted that the school has policies covering these matters.
- 12.4. LW is doing her ICO Certificate.
- 12.5. It has been identified that the filtering and monitoring system is not picking up swearing so this must be rectified.
- 12.6. There was previously a file for logging low level concerns, however all such issues should now be logged on CPOMS.
- 12.7. **Governors expressed their thanks** to all the team for their work on this.

## 13. Risk Register

- 13.1. The risk register has not been updated since the last FGB due other matters having to take priority.

**ACTION: CH and LJ to meet and update risk register for next FGB meeting.**

## 14. Link Governor reports

- 14.1. There were no Link Governor reports submitted for discussion as no visits had taken place since the previous FGB.

## 15. Governance

- 15.1. Scheme of Delegation: RH had raised queries about four items on the Scheme of Delegation (SoD) regarding if both Governors and Headteacher should be responsible. There was a brief discussion about who did the work and who monitored, however Governors are still responsible for overall monitoring and this cannot be delegated. RC clarified that there should only be one tick per item.

**Governors agreed** that for the remainder of this academic year they would accept RH's suggested amendments and it will be discussed and decided upon in more detail at the first FGB meeting of the next academic year.

**ACTION: HS to amend SoD and send to CH for publication on the website. HS to note SoD for detailed discussion in September 2025.**

*Catherine Hayman*

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15.2. Governor training: Governors were asked to note that the Governor Induction training is now termed as part 1 and part 2 (was previously A and B). CH has completed TO's induction.

15.3. Clerks' briefing: HS attended a Clerks' Briefing on 21<sup>st</sup> January and there were some DfE updates and information that Governors need to be aware of.

**ACTION: HS to complete summary of Clerks' briefing and circulate to Governors via the Noticeboard.**

## 16. Policies

16.1. Health and Safety Policy (OCC Corporate): This policy replaces Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the previous Health and Safety Policy. **Governors approved** this policy.

16.2. Teachers' Pay Policy (OCC) 2024: **Governors approved** this policy.

**ACTION: HS to send approved policies to CH for signature and update the policy register.**

*ZW left the meeting at 8:02pm*

## 17. HR matters

17.1. HR matters are confidential and notes can be seen in Part 2 of the minutes.

## 18. Any other business

18.1. No items were raised.

## 19. Next meeting date

19.1. The next meeting was due to be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, however as the school will be submitting a deficit budget the meeting will need to be brought forward so FGB can approve it before it is submitted by the end of March deadline.

**ACTION: HS to circulate new FGB date to meet before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**

19.2. Future meeting dates are as follows:

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025

The meeting closed at 8:18pm

*Hazel Sheridan*  
23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025

*Sent to Chair/Head on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and FGB on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025*

Signed (by Chair): *Catherine Hayman* ..... Date.....

# ACE Centre FGB minutes 20250121







## APPROVED

Final Audit Report

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