

Bevendean Primary School

Heath Hill Avenue

Full Governing Body Business Meeting

Minutes of the meeting on Thursday 24th September 2020
at 4.30pm. VIRTUAL MEETING (due to Covid-19 pandemic)

Present: Eugene Arnold, Stuart Cager, Helen Emerson, Martyn Giddens (Headteacher), Lydia Majic, Emily Winslade, Mark Dally (Associate Member), Sarah Miller (Associate Member), Andy Thomas (Clerk), Jenny Barnard-Langston (guest).

Apologies: James Baird, Rachal Daniels, Hasan Kara, Adrian Strange, Katharine Winks.

Absent: Daniel Hewitt, Juliet McCaffery.

1. **Opening remarks**

LM opened the meeting [which she and HE jointly chaired].

2. **Quoracy of meeting**

The meeting was not quorate as only 6 Governors were present. The required quorum was 7 Governors. It was agreed that the meeting should continue pending the arrival of JM [which did not occur].

3. **Apologies/ attendance list**

Apologies and attendance were noted as above.

4. **Consideration of apologies**

Apologies were duly accepted.

5. **Declarations of interest**

There were none.

6. **Minutes of previous meeting(s)**

a. **Minutes of FGB meeting held on Thursday 16th July 2020**

The draft minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance. Reference was made to the final two questions under Item 11, relating to Covid-19 and Attendance. It was agreed that the respective answers would be amended to read:

- *“There would be no penalty for being out of school for Covid-19 related reasons.”*
- *“Figures were presented in DfE format and would be separated if possible.”*

It was noted that the issues had been addressed.

b. **Approval of minutes**

Refer minutes to next meeting. **ACTION – AT**

c. **Action Log**

It was agreed that the Co-Chairs would review the Action Log following the meeting. **ACTION – HE/ LM**

It was also agreed that Governors should address any Actions assigned to them and that AT would in addition issue a reminder a week before meetings.

7. **Governing Body Co-Chairing proposals**

HE and LM were working on proposals in relation to the operation of the Co-Chairing arrangement. A proposal document was added to the meeting papers and was presented by LM.

It was stated that the intention would be that the Co-Chairs would be facilitating and not necessarily dealing with matters. Issues would be delegated out to other Governors as necessary.

The document would be referred to the next meeting. **ACTION – HE/ LM**

8. **Headteacher's Report**

MG made reference to his written report, which had been circulated in advance. It was hoped that Governors had had the opportunity to review this. The report covered the first 8 days back following the start of the new academic year. This was the most settled start that MG had experienced. This had been a surprise, however appropriate systems of control had been put in place. Attendance was positive and the number of late arrivals had dropped. It had been a positive start.

There were additional staff on short-term leave of absence. This was not Covid-19 related. RD was leaving her post at the school [but would continue as a Co-Opted Governor].

Reference was made to Summer Works as detailed in the written Report.

The SPA had come in. This had been positive and the report would be circulated. **ACTION – MG**

The following questions were asked:

- ***Had Learning gaps arisen as a result of Covid-19 and were these gaps recoverable?*** Measures were in place and these were making an impact. Gaps were closeable and were being addressed according to priority. There was a focus on the lower school in order to avoid future issues.
- ***Did the school have objectives in this area? What was the status of the Covid-19 contingency plan?*** Staff had been asked to place work in a folder e.g. revision and key skills. There would therefore be a “body of work” which could be deployed. The school would be prepared for a “worse case scenario”.

The Governing Body expressed its thanks to staff.

MG stated that schools would not close. The Government had made this clear.

Parents and carers were very supportive. This was really positive.

9. **Link Governors**

a. ***Programme of Visits/ staff allocations***

Difficulties associated with going into the school were noted. Governors still needed to make contact and have meaningful conversations with staff leads (by telephone or email if necessary).

It was noted that formal Visits had been timed to take place according to various frequencies e.g. every 3 or 6 months [see below].

b. ***Reports***

Visit reports should still be completed, even if interaction was not formal.

These would in due course be included in the Governing Body Annual Report. **ACTION – Govs.**

MG confirmed that he would update both the meeting programme/ staff allocation list. **ACTION – MG**

The following question was asked:

- ***Were there any Link Governor Visits that needed to take place in person at the school?*** The infrastructure was in place for remote engagement. Governors could also come into the school – procedures

were in place for this. It was a matter for individual Governors to decide. A virtual approach was likely to be more efficient however.

It was remarked that H&S and Safeguarding may benefit from physical visits. It was agreed that Governors should give plenty of notice of any visits to the school; ensure that associated protocols were followed; and ensure that appointments were kept.

Any concerns on Governors' parts regarding the Link Governor should be raised with HE and LM.

c. **Allocations**

The requirement for an SFVS Link Governor was noted. [EJW subsequently came forward].

10. **Committee Membership**

Current Committee memberships were noted.

It was agreed that Link Governor allocations, Committee memberships and Link Governor Visit dates should be issued as a "package" to seek both comments and commitments as required.

11. **Safeguarding/ Child Protection training – September 2020**

Reference was made to the Safeguarding Report which had been issued in advance of the meeting. There were no questions on this.

MG confirmed that the planned training had been cancelled [due to the Covid-19 situation]. No further training was planned in the immediate future.

It was agreed that the relevant Local Authority training should be advertised.

12. **Governors' Visit – Thursday 26th November**

MG confirmed that this had been cancelled due to the Covid-19 situation. The next scheduled Visit was in March and there would be a focus on that.

The following questions were asked:

- **Would a virtual event be possible on the 26th November?** Potentially something could be prepared around some elements of what had been planned.
- **Could Governors guest at staff meetings?** [Noted].
- **Could staff leads take part and could the event be recorded for Governors' benefit?** This would be very challenging.
- **Could pupil videos be produced?** There would be data protection issues and parental consent would be needed. Pupils might be able to write to Governors.

Following discussion it was agreed that:

- HE, LM and MG would meet to discuss possible arrangements for a virtual Governors' Visit on 26th November.
- Governors would record video introductions for the benefit of staff.
- The above videos would be uploaded to the school website along with Governor biographies.
- Consideration would be given to pupils writing to Governors.

ACTION – HE/ LM/ MG

13. **Governing Body issues**

a. **Declarations of interest**

There were 4 declarations outstanding. These would be followed up.

b. **Code of Conduct**

A proposed Code of Conduct had been issued. Thanks were expressed to AT for his work on this.

The meeting was not quorate, so it was not possible to formally adopt the Code of Conduct. It was agreed that Governors should review the document and the matter should be deferred to the next meeting. **ACTION – Govs./ AT**

There was a discussion about Governing Body engagement. It was noted that there were issues with a number of Governors. There was a need to establish reasons and offer support as required. There was one Co-Opted Governor vacancy at present. A strategy to recruit Governors going forward was required.

It was agreed that:

- There should be a focus on the induction process to highlight the degree of commitment required and the support available.
- Individual Governors should speak to HE and LM about any barriers.

c. **Terms of Reference**

EA was taking the lead on redrafting the Terms of Reference. A separate meeting would be arranged with a view to amended TORs being signed off at the next FGB. **ACTION – EA/ AT**

d. **Training**

• **Chairs' Development Programme**

HE reported that she had completed the training. It appeared that a Co-Chairing arrangement was becoming more common in schools. Meetings of Chairs to co-ordinate matters took place and this was productive.

• **Local Authority training**

Governors should attend training pertinent to their role. In particular Safeguarding refresher training should be undertaken every couple of years or so.

It was noted that training for Chairs was very good and useful for all Governors.

e. **Website pages**

LM would assume overall responsibility of the Governor pages on the school website. She would liaise with others as necessary.

14. **Current membership of Governing Body/ vacancy filling**

a. **Skills Audit**

Governors were asked to submit any outstanding returns.

b. **Co-Opted Governor vacancy**

It was noted that there was one Co-Opted Governor vacancy. RD would also be leaving employment with the school but would continue as a Co-Opted Governor.

c. **Other forthcoming/ potential vacancies**

There were a number of other vacancies due to arise over the year. AT had provided details and a timeline to HE and LM. Those Governors with a term of office coming to an end were asked to express interest in continuing.

14. **Policy reviews**

a. **Behaviour**

MD referred to the two versions of the policy which had been issued before the meeting. The core policy had been brought up-to-date but there were no major changes.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, there were some elements that were not possible due to physical constraints, hence the second version. This was

envisaged as a temporary measure. Again, there were no significant changes - rather references to the current situation.

The following questions were asked:

- ***Would the school revert to the standard policy when things returned to a more normal position?*** Reversion to the standard policy would take place when possible. The main body of the policy was no different.
- ***Why was the school physical restraint policy not on the website or otherwise available?*** This was not a statutory policy. The school did not restrain children.

Following discussion it was agreed that reference to the physical restraint policy should be removed from the behaviour policy. **ACTION – MG**

It was also agreed that the behaviour policy should be agreed at the next meeting. **ACTION – MG/ AT**

b. **RSE**

- ***Dfe Update***

Not discussed.

- ***Deferral to next meeting***

It was noted/ agreed that this policy would be deferred to the next meeting. **ACTION – MG/ AT**

15.Chair's Correspondence

Nothing to report.

16.Clerk's matters

There were no items.

17.A.O.B:

- a. ***Items notified in advance (5 days' notice required)***

There were no items.

- b. ***Emergency items (requiring advance discussion with the Chair)***

There were no items.

18.Review of Action Points

HE and LM would review the Action Points arising from the meeting. **ACTION – HE/ LM**

19.Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on **21st January 2021**.

Meetings would continue to be virtual for the time being.

It was possible that there would be an additional FGB meeting prior to Christmas. There would also possibly be a training event facilitated by JB-L.

It was noted that EJW and HE had received safeguarding training through their own school employments. The KCSIE document would be sent to Governors to read/ review. [Completed].

20.Close of Meeting

It was noted that the Co-Chair arrangement was potentially positive and productive.

Thanks were expressed to those in attendance. There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

***** Please see Action Points from this meeting on the following page**

Action points from FGB meeting held on 24th September 2020

Action	By	Person responsible
1. Refer previous minutes (as amended) to next meeting [Item 6b].	Next meeting	AT
2. Address assigned Actions and issue associated reminder [Item 6c].	In due course/ one week before meetings	Govs./ AT
3. Refer Co-Chairing document to next meeting [Item 7].	Next meeting	HE/ LM
4. Circulate SPA report [Item 8].	Next meeting	MG
5. Continue to complete and submit Link Governor Visit Reports [Item 9b].	Ongoing	Govs.
6. Circulate updated Link Governor Visit programme/ staff allocations [Item 9b].	ASAP	MG
7. Organise Governors' Visit to be virtual, Governor videos/ bios and pupil engagement as detailed in the minutes [Item 12].	ASAP	HE/ LM/ MG
8. Governors to review proposed Code of Conduct in advance of discussion at the next meeting [Item 13b].	Next FGB	Govs./ AT
9. Arrange separate meeting re: Terms of Reference and subsequently discuss at next FGB [Item 13c].	Next FGB	EA/ AT
10. Amend Behaviour Policy and remove reference to physical restraint [Item 14a].	ASAP	MG
11. Agree behaviour policy at the next meeting [Item 14a].	Next FGB	MG/ AT
12. Defer RSE policy to the next meeting [Item 14b].	Next FGB	MG/ AT
13. Review Action Points arising from the 24 th September FGB [Item 18].	Next FGB	HE/ AT