



Local Governing Committee meeting minutes,
held at St Issey C of E Primary School on Thursday 26th January 2023 at 2pm

Present	Chris Parham (CEO) - virtually Heather Holder-Powell (Chair) Rev. Katie Kirby Avril Heard Mark Durman Marjorie Smith Kirsty Fairclough Matt Collis
In attendance	Sam Newman - Governance professional.

Agenda point	Item	Person
1	Apologies, welcome and opening prayer Chair thanked those who attended the informal welcome meeting for the new governors on Jan 3rd 2023 and welcomed all. to the meeting and Rev KK to give the opening prayer. All governors were present, the meeting was quorate in line with Venture MAT's Terms of Reference. Expression of thanks was to be passed on to Shelley Francis for her time and support whilst on part of the Local Governing Board.	
2	Declaration of business and pecuniary interests There were no new declarations of business and pecuniary interests to declare. All declarations have been given to the governance professional, the declaration table has been added to the website.	
3	Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (17/11/22) The Chair will sign off the minutes from the previous meeting. The Vice Chair position will be discussed at the next meeting (May). Matters arising : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP to produce an up to date staff structure for the LGC. - completed • Look at self evaluation for the next meeting - see item 10 • Governance Professional to ensure, for future reference, all amendments are highlighted. 	SN

4	<p>AOB</p> <p>Chair raised an issue of recruitment to the board - see item 12</p> <p>No additional matters were raised.</p>	
5	<p>Head's report including safeguarding, Siams, Health and Safety & premises</p> <p>NOR (number on roll) was consistent with the last meeting, 122 in total, this included 86 in the school setting and an additional 36 in the nursery.</p> <p>Health & Safety - nothing to report</p> <p>Attendance is currently an issue, the school has a new attendance policy in place which they are utilising for all cases of absence, especially persistent absence. The policy sets out what letters are to be sent, at which stage. (See below)</p> <p>Safeguarding & Wellbeing. The safeguarding audit across the trust starts next week.</p> <p>Mental Health/Well being of staff - The headteacher shared the dashboard which is used by all staff to share how they are feeling and what their workload is like.</p> <p>A governor challenged the 59% positive check ins, and if that implies that 40% haven't responded.</p> <p>Answer: Yes, that is correct.</p> <p>A governor questioned whether or not it was felt that they could do anything further to support the staff members. It was suggested that there was a governor who monitored staff wellbeing in addition to the pastoral care - as some issues were related to workload. Agreed for chair to discuss further with CP. This issue was raised by a member of staff at the informal meeting on Jan 3rd.</p> <p>Answer: The headteacher suggested that they are a close support to each other, if they didn't want to talk to the headteacher, they have the CEO, the other teachers etc to discuss their issues with, however it was great that governors would like to offer their support if required.</p> <p>A governor asked if the check-ins were anonymous?</p> <p>Answer: No, they weren't.</p> <p>The governor questioned if it was the same people not responding. Another governor wanted to highlight the need for confidentiality when discussing this, which was adhered to.</p> <p>Answer: No, it was a range of staff members, not the same people every week not responding.</p> <p>A governor questioned how the headteacher could know at which point it went from a positive check to a negative check in, what was the tipping point.</p> <p>The key for the tracking data was shared with the governors.</p> <p>Safeguarding: A governor questioned the safeguarding statistics in the head's report. When they looked at the individual numbers they were shocked to see that one in ten were experiencing some sort of safeguarding issue, is this normal?</p> <p>Answer: At SIS the levels of safeguarding concerns raised were actually lower than the average school, the threshold within schools is very low to consider making a concern report, this is a good thing, however does impact the number of concerns that governors are seeing.</p>	

	<p>The headteacher shared that there had been six separate incidents where the police had attended the child's house, this then led to contact via 'operation encompass' to the school.</p> <p>Strike action was discussed, three teachers will be striking, staff don't need to give the headteacher the information, however they have told him and he was able to share this with the parents.</p> <p>Finance issues The pay rise for all staff was underfunded, the remainder has been taken from the reserves, however this was recovered due to some additional funding. SIS has received £16k funding (our part of the 2 billion committed to education budget) £6787 will be used during this academic year, with the remainder for next year, SIS funding gap was approximately £8k due to unfunded pay rises, this money will cover the deficit for this year and next year, however the pay awards for next year are yet to be published.</p> <p>£11K received for capital projects focussing on sustainability, it has yet to be determined what the money will be spent on.</p> <p>Assessment data discussed - internal data, not statutory assessment. Reading tests, phonics and writing all look strong.</p> <p>Priorities for the year discussed.</p> <p>A governor asked if there was any data for EYFS, are they tracked at the mid-year point.</p> <p>Answer: Yes we do, however it is assessed in a slightly different way, how it relates to the baseline is unclear, this will be updated for the next meeting.</p> <p>A governor asked about the reading and writing. Year 5 sticks out in terms of strength, is there a reason?</p> <p>Answer: Essentially, the school years 1 to 4 started their education with us, however year 5 and 6 didn't, a lot of theirs began elsewhere, homeschooled etc, this could lead to catch up work.</p> <p>Year 5 in particular struggled, with reception to year 3 all in one class when they started their SIS journey, it proved difficult for the students to adapt.</p> <p>A governor expressed that one member of staff is responsible for years 4, 5 and 6, and what an enormous amount of work that would be. The governor's perception is that in years 1, 2 and 3, the difference between the child (in age) compared to the difference between a child in year 4 versus a child in year 6 is vast. The teacher has a tough job looking after these three year groups.</p> <p>A governor expressed the need to support the staff.</p> <p>A governor asked what the children's progress looks like?</p> <p>Answer: Progress is looking good, the year 6 progress scores from last year are phenomenal.</p> <p>A governor shared that there may be a need to explore tracking data?</p> <p>Answer: Yes.</p> <p>A governor asked if it was sensible for a governor to look at this?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, all governors need to be aware of what is happening in regards to the data.</p> <p>Discussion for a governor to look specifically at the progress and attainment of children where data looks weaker will be discussed.</p> <p>Attendance: 29% were classed as PA (persistent absence)</p> <p>A governor asked if any of them were from the vulnerable groups?</p>	CP
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	<p>Answer: Yes, there would be some, however, typically the vulnerable groups tend to attend school most of the time.</p> <p>A governor challenged the high level of unauthorised holidays and whether fining parents was proving to be effective.</p> <p>Answer: We had never fined families until this year, it was never an issue, after covid everyone is going on holidays, which we get, it is so much cheaper during this time, however it cannot be supported. This led to why the attendance policy had been redeveloped.</p> <p>A governor asked about the lateness?</p> <p>Answer: Interesting point, we are targeting one issue and it is creating late problems. If you get the child into school at 9:20am it records it as no absence until the next attendance register at lunchtime.</p> <p>A governor asked about the family groups, are they within the data making the figures look worse, for example, when they go on holiday as a family with three children this impacts the figures significantly.</p> <p>Answer: This may need looking into in more detail.</p> <p>A huge chunk of it has been illness.</p> <p>A governor asked if the change to create the two week half term in October had proven to have any impact?</p> <p>Answer: There hasn't been enough time to evaluate that currently, people had already booked their holidays, however, the school would be looking at doing this again for the next academic year.</p> <p>A governor expressed that the feedback from a previous Ofsted inspection elsewhere was heavily involved with persistent absence, case studies of the families as supporting evidence could be a good idea.</p> <p>A governor shared that there wasn't anything in the Attendance policy up for review specific about holidays, for families that would be unable to take time off during high tourism seasons.(see item 8)</p> <p>Answer: There are families that are affected by the tourism industry, however as a school we are not able to authorise holidays for this, it is not considered an exceptional circumstance.</p> <p>Other points to note: SIS are still awaiting confirmation on a new minibus for the school.</p> <p>Go kart shelter has been completed.</p>	
6	<p>Staff wellbeing</p> <p>Staff wellbeing was discussed in detail during the heads report, the employees complete mental health checks on a weekly basis.</p> <p>The headteacher is halfway through the Senior Mental Health lead qualification. The mental health action plan has been developed and the research project is underway. The school has a mental health support worker beginning in February.</p>	
7	<p>Monitoring schedule for Spring Term.</p> <p>All governors to contact Zoe (Office) with prospective dates for the monitoring visits.</p> <p>All governors were happy with their specific areas of focus for this academic year.</p>	
8	<p>Policies for approval</p>	

	<p>It was commented that overall there were a lot of policies with a substantial amount of overlapping content and it was suggested some revision may be useful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance <p>One comment from a governor was about taking holidays, making it absolutely clear not to take holiday during the academic year. SN to update the SIS policy to reflect this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EYFS - no comment/approved ● Behaviour - no comment /approved ● RE - no comment/ approved ● Medical Needs -not approved <p>A governor expressed that there were lots of issues with this policy, feeling that it was heavily focused on asthma, with little mention of any other medical needs. There was no mention of Haemophilia/bleeding - which is pertinent to the school or other allergies and the use of an epipen, it was felt by some that it would be helpful if these were included in the policy.</p> <p>Answer: The headteacher understood that the asthma was heavily focused on in the policy due to the amount of children with the condition, it is a lot more prevalent than other medical needs. He also identified that all medical needs were risk assessed individually case by case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anti-bullying - approved ● Equality Objectives - approved ● Intimate Care - approved <p>Intimate care needing 2 people to deal with an incident was challenged by a governor, as it would leave the remainder of the class with limited staff which is a concern. It was however deemed mandatory, however inconvenient and is not possible to change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSHE and RSE - this was not approved <p>A governor challenged that the policy did not have any emphasis on drug awareness and internet safety.</p> <p>Answer: The governance professional explained that Online Safety was now a stand alone policy, it was adopted by the LGB in July 2022, with an annual review.</p> <p>The governance professional will take the challenge back to the trust regarding the little mention of drug awareness within the policy, the governors then agreed that it would be taken to the next LGB meeting for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive Handling - approved ● Visitors - approved ● Volunteers and students - approved ● Mental Health and Wellbeing <p>A governor (with professional expertise in this areas) expressed that there were lots of fundamental issues around the wording and understanding of the content within the policy, anxiety for one, they felt was completely misunderstood in the way it manifests, along with this was the mindfulness approach, which the governor suggested, after a big trial had proven not to be effective, however studies have shown that CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) has been.</p> <p>The governance professional will email with all the queries regarding</p>	
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	<p>policies to the CEO, for a direct response.</p> <p>All governors were happy to agree to all other policies, with the exception of the following until the questions raised have been addressed.</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>PHSE & RSE</p> <p>Medical Needs</p> <p>The governance professional will send the policy schedule to the governors.</p>	
9	<p>Safeguarding training - to discuss</p> <p>All safeguarding training had now taken place for the LGB, Certificates to be sent to the governance professional, if not already done so.</p>	
10	<p>Self evaluation for LGB</p> <p>Self evaluation was discussed with all governors.</p> <p>The governance professional handed out the '16 questions' for the governors to evaluate their governing board, the governance professional has requested that the governors fill them in and return them to St Issey school by the Easter holidays. A reminder will be sent to everyone before this date to remind people.</p> <p>From the results, the governance professional will collate an action plan for the next academic year, as well as an impact statement to send to parents with the help of all governors on the board.</p>	
11	<p>Working together</p> <p>There was discussion between all governors to ensure the board as a collective found the most efficient ways of communicating with each other.</p> <p>Chair stated it was not acceptable to use personal emails for however it was important for the governors to be able to communicate with each other between meetings confidentially and professionally and it was agreed and understood by all that forthwith the St Issey issued email addresses would be used for all correspondence.</p> <p>The Governance professional would also be happy to have anyone's contact numbers for reminders to check emails if that helped.</p> <p>Recruitment - the Chair shared that there was a meeting to discuss the governance structure and how to improve the effectiveness of the board with the trustees and changes to the current structure. Because of this the Chair had not pursued further additions to the LGB. Currently there are 26 governors and trustees for circa 650 children - which seems excessive and there is some difficulty in getting current positions filled. At the meeting it was stressed that LGB at individual schools was felt to be relevant and individuals were likely to be far more invested in one school. It was suggested that LGB governors could be co-opted / attend trust meetings if they had useful relevant experience to enhance the board - so anyone could be approached regarding this. No firm decisions were taken but it was agreed that we should continue to move forward with the current structure and not</p>	

	<p>stand still.</p> <p>The Chair shared that it was great to see the teachers and staff at the beginning of January.</p> <p>The Chair has asked if as a group, the governors could be more accessible to the teachers, ensuring they knew who they were and able to contact them if and when needed. The Chair felt, following the JAnuary 'Social' it was important teaching staff continued to feel they had access to the Governors.</p> <p>A governor questioned if it was possible for the governance professional to share the agendas.</p> <p>Answer: Yes, that's fine to do, this would give the teachers an idea of what the governors are focusing on at each meeting.</p> <p>The headteacher shared that we could potentially invite different subject leaders to the meetings for discussions.</p> <p>Rev. Ian from the local Church came to the catch up meeting in January, he asked if he could attend the LGB meetings?</p> <p>All governors were happy for him to be invited to the meeting.</p> <p>Governance Professional to share the next date with Reverend Ian.</p> <p><u>Kirsty Fairclough left the meeting.</u></p>	
12	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feedback from Diocese <p>Some feedback was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The full report was requested to be sent to all Governors This will be sent to the governance professional.</p>	CP
13	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <p>Thursday 18th May - 2pm</p> <p>Thursday 13th July - 2pm</p>	
14	<p>Closing prayer</p> <p>Rev. KK led the governors in the closing prayer.</p>	

Agenda point	Action	Person
3	Election of Vice Chair to be agreed at the next meeting (May)	SN
5	Headteacher to provide an update on EYFS data.	CP
5	Headteacher to discuss with Chair governance of Staff Well-being	CP/HHP
8	Governance professional to look at the policy for attendance and update.	SN / CP
8	Governance professional to send across a copy of SIS policy schedule.	SN
8	CEO to respond to the queries of the governor regarding certain policies.	WJ

11	Governance professional to share agenda's with the teachers.	SN
11	Governance professional to share the meeting date with Rev. Ian.	SN
12	Headteacher to share the report from the Diocese with the governance professional for distribution to the governors.	CP / SN

Meeting closed by Chair at 3:35pm

Signed as an accurate record.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Please note that these are draft minutes until signed off by the Chair at the next meeting.