



MINUTES

PENKETH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY – SUMMER TERM 2023

Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 5.00pm

PRESENT:

Mrs Angela Grace (Headteacher)	Mrs Carolyn Williams (Chairperson)
Mr Howard Platt	Mrs Kathryn Bullivant
Mrs Claire Roper	Mr Jake Smith
Mr Steven Hennessey	Mrs Jane Evans (Vice Chairperson)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Maria Warburton (LA Minute Clerk)	Miss Lorraine Browne (Observer)
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Part One – non confidential business

1 Welcome

The Vice Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Absence and apologies

It was reported that Mrs Williams may arrive late.

3 Declaration of personal interests for any item on this agenda

Governors were asked to declare any interest they may have, pecuniary or otherwise, relating to this meeting.

No interests were declared for any item on the agenda.

4 Items for any other business

The headteacher reported that there are two staffing items to be discussed under Part Two (confidential). Miss Browne and Mrs Roper will leave the meeting for one of those discussions.

5 Chair's emergency decisions

There were no chair's emergency decisions to report.

6 Governing body membership

There are currently two co-opted governor vacancies and one community governor vacancy.

The following terms of office are due to end:

- Mrs Evans (co-opted governor) – 6.7.23
- Mrs Williams (co-opted governor) – 9.6.23
- Miss Browne (observer) – 31.8.23

AGREED: **In her absence, governors agreed to co-opt Mrs Williams for a further term of office.**

7 Previous full governing body minutes, matters arising and action log

- a) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023 (copy enclosed) and discuss any matters arising

AGREED: **The minutes from the previous meeting held on 28 March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chair.**

- b) Action log

The headteacher confirmed that all DBS checks have been carried out.

The headteacher reported that she had spoken with primary headteachers to ask if they had any SLT members that would be interested in becoming a governor at Penketh South Primary. The headteacher at Great Sankey Primary had expressed an interest in becoming a governor; however, having discussed this with Mrs Briggs and the chair it was suggested that there may be a conflict of interest, ie: same area and same academy trust. No SLT staff members have come forward.

It was confirmed that Mr Platt has completed the safeguarding training.

The following actions were carried forward:

ACTION: **C/F: The Code of Conduct to be signed (electronically) by the chair on behalf of the governing body.**

C/F: An equality link governor to be agreed in the autumn term (linked with another role, ie: inclusion).

The headteacher reported that staff carried out a lockdown and a fire test in one day. The bomb threat test had been carried out earlier in the year. The lockdown went very well. Some amendments were made to the policy as a result of the practice.

The following action was carried forward:

ACTION: **C/F: Debt Recovery Policy: To be amended to suit the needs of the school and brought to a future full governing body meeting for approval.**

The headteacher informed governors that she had missed the date for the response to the consultation paper relating to the proposed changes at St Vincent's CPS. Having spoken to Dominic Vernon, she was advised that this would not have made a difference.

8 Statutory assessments

The headteacher informed governors that the SATs tests went remarkably well. With regards to the reading paper, the vocabulary was easy and accessible, although the questions were ambiguous. There is a document circulating which states that there were 500 more words in it compared to the test last year. The children were given 23 seconds to answer each question. Schools have a legitimate complaint with this.

The children coped well. Some of the brightest children commented that it was difficult and there was a lot of reading. One young child became upset due to his additional needs; he was supported to keep him calm, they may attempt to go for special consideration with that.

The headteacher informed governors that Mrs Briggs came into school on the Thursday prior to the tests (not to moderate). They went through some questions that Ofsted would ask, ie: with regards to additional reading time and where the papers are stored to ensure that the school is following procedures.

The headteacher added that the KS1 tests have started this week and she sat in yesterday morning to observe them administering the reading test.

9 Policies

There were no policies for review.

10 Approve budget for next academic year/end of year accounts

The headteacher informed governors that due to personal circumstances, the new finance officer has not been able to attend.

Mrs Williams entered the meeting at 5.19pm.

Draft Budget 2023/24

The headteacher explained that staffing is unknown due to her own situation. They have received another request for flexible working and they do not know what the pay award will be, or if it will be funded. The headteacher added that she has gone through the budget with the finance officer.

They have included an increase across all headings. They are showing a deficit – the same as every other school at this stage due to unknowns. They have been told that they will receive some additional funding; however, they do not know how much this will be. **A governor asked** if this will be for a specific purpose. The headteacher explained that they do not expect it to be for something specific.

The finance officer has recommended that they agree the draft budget in principle at this stage and they should have more information available at the next full governing body meeting.

A governor highlighted that they need to be careful agreeing a deficit budget; as this can trigger a number of actions.

A governor asked if it has to be agreed at this stage. The headteacher confirmed that it does not.

A governor suggested that they do not agree the draft budget until the situation becomes clearer.

ACTION: The draft budget to be agreed at the next full governing body meeting.

The chair explained that she was not present earlier in the meeting when they discussed the action log and she confirmed that she did contact TCAT regarding equality training. TCAT are looking at a new training provider (The National College) and they plan to become members. This will give them access to a wide range of training material and equality training will feature as a part of that. This will be launching in September 2023 and the information will be shared at the governors' seminar in June 2023. The chair recommended that if governors require training beforehand they have the Hayes training module which the headteacher has access to.

The following action was carried forward:

ACTION: C/F: The chair to check if she has uploaded and electronically signed the correct version of the Code of Conduct.

Mrs Williams chaired the meeting from this point.

11 Monthly management accounts

The headteacher explained that due to the reasons previously mentioned, they have not received the monthly management accounts from the finance officer.

12 Business meeting and associated actions update

The headteacher informed governors that she is still awaiting the feedback report.

The chair explained that there are two meetings per year. The last meeting took place at the school and included health and safety. Andrew Moorcroft, Ben Logan (HR), Adrienne Laing (operations), Lisa Gannon and Damian McGuire (finance) attended this. They had a tour of the school and looked at the works that had been completed and those that need to be done, which was useful.

The headteacher reported that the pupil demographic numbers continue to rise and the numbers in nursery are healthy. Their EAL numbers are also rising; this stands at 14. Some children are not registered as EAL; however, they do not speak English at home. Some of the children are from Hong Kong and many are from Eastern Europe. TCAT has now started an EAL hub.

Action tracker: This has been RAG rated. There is one outstanding action, which they cannot complete as they are awaiting a meeting for IT to improve the Wi-Fi.

HR: This was to ensure that they are following procedures for absence (which has improved since last year).

Health and safety: The headteacher informed governors that a couple of items were raised which they did not agree with, ie: they mentioned chasing contractors and they disputed that. On the report from Adele Partridge it mentions that a gas safety check had not been carried out; this had been done (they confused this with the electrical check). They contacted TCAT for support and asked what the priorities were; they have not had any feedback.

A governor asked if they have received the notes from the meeting. The headteacher explained that they have not yet received these.

The headteacher informed governors that Ms Laing had mentioned the projects which had happened at the school and that a form should have been returned. On checking, this was returned in March 2023. iAM Compliant is at 93%; therefore, the school has a high compliance rating.

The chair explained that she had taken some notes from the meeting and was informed that they would issue a note with actions.

The headteacher added that she has access to the form but was not aware of any issues. Additionally, the form they used was not up-to-date. This is the same form used for all schools. The headteacher noted that TCAT has still not amended the document to green to say that the gas safety check has been done. With regards to the actions for the electric checks – they were given a grading for how serious some of these are. Ms Gannon had said that some were potentially dangerous and could cost £6,000-£7,000. The headteacher explained that she had responded and said that they were not at the highest rating and they would like some support to know what they were, and which to prioritise as that amount is their whole budget for maintenance. There was also a lack of clarity around roles and this has now been received. The headteacher informed governors that a meeting will be arranged with Mr Smith (health and safety link governor).

The headteacher explained that there were some jobs that were carried out in school where they thought that TCAT or E3Cubed were overseeing these; and were later informed that the school's site manager should now oversee these. Understandably, he was reluctant to do so when he has not been involved in the planning of it. Moving forward the school will lead on contracting and source three quotes unless it is a big project. Quotes have now been obtained for the upstairs carpeting. They have some funding for the windows and doors and they will include the potential folding door in the community room. Paul Sinnett (facilities manager) came out to school and supported them with that bid.

The chair acknowledged that the school has received a great deal of funding which is positive for improvements to the school.

GDPR: The headteacher informed governors that there was a breach yesterday, which has been reported; no sensitive information was shared. A training session has taken place with Ms Laing for GDPR.

It was decided to move to Part Two (agenda item 25) at this point to discuss complaints.

Governance: The terms of office were mentioned earlier. The headteacher informed governors that she will review some of the actions for governance with Mr Smith. The DBS details have already been added; these are now on Governor Hub.

ACTION: The headteacher and Mr Smith to review the governance actions.

Website compliance: The headteacher reported that there are still some things to do in relation to governance, which will be reviewed with Mr Smith as previously mentioned.

13 Health and Safety (including link governor feedback)

- Fire Risk Assessment

The headteacher reported that this has just taken place and there will be actions. They will need to replace some of their ceiling tiles. They had some fire doors fitted and the door upstairs is cracked and has not been fitted properly. E3Cubed have said this is down to user error, which they disagree with. The door is no longer fire compliant and Mr Sinnett has visited the school to look at this. There is a gap with this door and other doors. Also, the concertina door is difficult to open due to the different floor levels and this has caused damage to the door. Mr Sinnett is following this up with E3Cubed.

A shutter has been installed in the kitchen since the previous risk assessment; this will shut automatically in the event of a fire. They also discussed aspects of the fire policy and the fire wardens.

With regards to the electrical checks they are awaiting a price from a company for the more urgent jobs. The health and safety link governor could visit the school to see if the jobs have been completed within the required three month timeline.

ACTION: Mr Smith (health and safety link governor) to visit the school in three months' time to see if the jobs highlighted from the risk assessment have been completed within the required three month time limit. A general health and safety walk round to take place at the same visit.

14 Buildings and premises

A governor asked if they would be having a new boiler. The headteacher informed governors that they would not be having one; she has discussed with the site manager and Paul Sinnott what will be prioritised. Mr Sinnott had suggested that potentially a carbon neutral bid (SALIX) could be made and that they could potentially have a ground source option. He also suggested that air conditioner units for hot and cold could be installed to reduce gas costs. This is a longer-term project. In the short term, he suggested they try window film upstairs.

15 Safeguarding and welfare (including link governor feedback)

Safeguarding Report – J Evans

Mrs Evans reported that she attended the safe and sound meeting which happens every week at the moment. This is indicative of the increase in numbers of pupils and families causing concern. Numbers are high across the LA and it is positive that they are looking to put some things in place, ie: Oakwood Primary are providing behaviour support and there is access to the Early Help team at the LA.

There has been an increase in electively home-educated pupils across Warrington. The headteacher informed governors that out of three pupils that have left, one is potentially now returning.

Mrs Evans reported that parents are submitting their own applications to the LA for SEND. This has had repercussions for Miss Browne who has to deal with this and complete the paperwork as normal. The headteacher acknowledged that the LA are seeing more and more requests from parents.

Mrs Evans explained that it was very clear that the team knows the needs of the children and families well; strategies are being put in place and they are engaging with local special schools.

The headteacher explained that they had spent a great deal of time today dealing with an incident; four members of staff were involved in de-escalating the situation. The child has EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) and finds it difficult to separate from both parents. They have useful strategies to deploy; however, they do not have anywhere safe for the child, staff and other children when he is at that crisis point. They are contacting every agency they can think of that may be able to help.

A governor asked if ADDvanced Solutions could provide support. The headteacher informed governors that this is another option; she would like to adapt the area next to the office. They try to de-escalate the situation; however, the child is already in a heightened state of anxiety before he comes in to school.

A governor asked about the safety of staff. The headteacher informed governors that the child has not attacked a member of staff. Every school requires additional needs provision. It has also been very distressing for the parents.

Mrs Evans reported that the number of pupils on the SEND register is high. The waiting time for speech and language is approximately 56 weeks or more. Mrs Roper explained that because of that she starts a referral as soon as possible, ie: from the age of two.

A governor asked if there is anything that TCAT can do to support. The headteacher explained that she has spoken with Mrs Briggs. The nearest alternative provision is Dallam Primary. Even if they had the capacity, it is the practicalities of transporting there. Mrs Briggs has said that there is a project in a secondary school in Padgate where they are trialling a provision and they would like to do something in primary schools.

A governor asked if anything has happened with the bid for the special school. The headteacher reported that this has been allocated elsewhere.

Mrs Evans reported that for mental health support the school has been given a contact at the LA due to the increase in numbers. They are working with the NHS Bridgewater Trust and working with a secondary model.

Mrs Evans explained that she is concerned about the effects on staff and the need to ensure that they are not emotionally distressed; governors have a duty of care to staff as well as to the children and the families. The headteacher informed governors that there is training for staff within TCAT to provide that service. It is not yet formal with regular half termly supervision but it will come in the future. The chair added that it is important that they have identified that there is an increase and also the severity in what they are dealing with.

The headteacher highlighted that the safeguarding and behaviour report has been uploaded to Governor Hub for information. The headteacher added that they have a counsellor come into school once a week.

The chair and headteacher thanked Mrs Evans for her report.

16 Staffing (non-confidential)

There was no information to report.

17 Behaviour and attendance (including link governor feedback)

The headteacher highlighted that a child in Year 2 - who they have been trying to support - affects the persistent absence (PA) figures; his attendance has been very poor. The LA agreed to a part time timetable and he has been coming into school most days until lunchtime. Other figures relate to EBSA, which is affecting some of their children. Holidays in term time are also having an effect.

The LA attendance officer has requested a meeting with parents. A new letter has been sent to parents regarding PA under 90%. The LA has decided it will meet with headteachers in the final term to look at families with issues of PA and holidays taken during term time and they will start a prosecution route in September (fast track to prosecution) if they do not meet the targets. The fine is just over £1,000 if prosecuted.

18 LA Governor briefing paper

Governors noted the contents of the report.

19 Governor training

Governors noted the training on offer.

20 Any other business

There were no other items.

