

**Approved Minutes**  
**Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of**  
**WEST JESMOND PRIMARY SCHOOL (WJPS)**  
**Tuesday 5 December 2017**

**Present:**

Jane Edminson (Chair)

Ishy Bruce, Julia De Soyza, Adam Goldwater, Jill Hetherington, Cathy Hogan, Dominic Martin, Laura Robb, Paul Simpson, Freda Summerfield, Gary Wallis-Clarke (Executive Headteacher) and Nicky Wise

Governors in post - **19**; quorum - **10**; governors present – **12**

**The meeting was quorate**

**In attendance:**

Claire Hepple ~ Governor Services

Rebecca McVittie ~ Deputy Headteacher and Observer

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting at 6.04pm. Rebecca McVittie was welcomed as an Observer. Rebecca would attend future GB meetings to gain a greater understanding of the work of the GB.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received and were **accepted** from Arlene Ainsley, Clare Byatt, Henry Cave, Laura Cordy, Lee Cranston, David Griffiths and Xanthe Mills.

**3. a. Declaration of Interests**

Governors who had already completed Register of Interests forms at the first GB meeting of the academic year did not declare any additional interests or changes to interests already declared.

Nicky Wise completed a Register of Interests form and signed the GB Code of Conduct. Governors were informed that Nicky had become a governor at Broadway Primary School. GB meetings at Broadway Primary School coincided with those of West Jesmond and the Chair indicated that she would be happy for Nicky to focus on Broadwood for the time being.

**b. Data Protection**

Governors **agreed** that they were happy for their email addresses be shared among members of the GB.

Governors were informed that more information to assist schools with data protection compliance before the introduction of European Union General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018 would be available from the LA in due course.

The School Business Manager and Paul Simpson, Chair of Finance Committee, had recently attended training on the GDPR delivered by Ward Hadaway Law Firm. It was **agreed** that Data Protection would be an agenda item for the spring term.

**Action: Governor Services**

**c. Staff Register of Interests**

Staff in school had already completed a Register of Interests form.

**d. Get Information about Schools (GIAS)**

Governors were advised that the Edubase system had been replaced by GIAS. It was noted that information held on GIAS about governors at the school needed to be updated. The Headteacher would also check that the Chair's telephone number was recorded on the system should she need to be contacted by the Department for Education (DfE).

**Action: Headteacher**

*Julia De Soyza joined the meeting at this point, 6.06pm.*

**4. Appointments / membership update**

**Parent Governor**

Freda Summerfield's term of office as a Parent Governor would end on 8 December. Freda was thanked for her contribution to the work of the GB and a meal would be organised by Jill Hetherington to mark her departure from the GB. The Executive Headteacher would advertise the vacancy for a Parent Governor at the beginning of the spring term.

**Action: Jill Hetherington and Executive Headteacher**

**Staff Governor**

Clare Byatt's term of office as Staff Governor would end on 9 December 2017. The Executive Headteacher would arrange a Staff Governor election.

**Action: Executive Headteacher**

**5. Identification of additional items not on the agenda**

The Executive Headteacher advised that a staff member had taken time off work to care for their child who was ill. The Chair had sent a card with well wishes to the staff member on behalf of the GB.

The Chair advised that Heaton Manor School had embarked on a marketing campaign to ensure that pupil numbers were maintained. Conversion of Heaton Manor School to academy status may take place on 1 July 2018 or 1 September 2018 with the former date being more likely to allow time for everything to be in place for the start of the academic year.

**6. Draft minutes of previous governing body meeting**

The draft minutes of the GB meeting held on 10 October 2017 were attached and **approved** with no confidential items declared.

**7. Matters arising from the above minutes**

**Welcome (page 1)**

Governors were informed that a lovely assembly had taken place attended by the family of Deb Hainsworth. A cherry tree had been planted at the front of the school



and a plaque would be placed next to the tree. Dominic Martin, Head of School, advised that a quiet garden space in an area of the playground would be created. Aura, the company responsible for the maintenance of the school building, had, however, indicated that there may be contaminated materials underground.

**Review of: Plan for monitoring / Links 2017 – 2018 (page 3)**

Changes had been made to the Governor Monitoring / Information Gathering Plan and the Plan had been emailed to governors.

**Review of: GB Handbook (page 3)**

The GB Handbook required updating and would be circulated ahead of the next GB meeting.

**Action: Governor Services and Chair**

**Matters arising from the above minutes (page 3)**

Julia De Soyza would monitor the achievements of Looked after Children. Unfortunately, training in this area had been cancelled and would be re-arranged.

**Matters arising from the above minutes (page 4)**

The report which tracked Pupil Premium spending in 2017 – 2018 had been reviewed by members of the Finance Committee.

The Services to Schools Governors' Module was now available to governors. Paul Simpson advised that he had successfully accessed the Module. An email would be re-sent to other governors with details of how to access the Module.

**Action: Governor Services**

The Executive Headteacher would update the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) once validated data had been received and would then email the SEF to governors.

**Action: Executive Headteacher**

Dominic Martin advised that the Poverty Proofing Action Plan had been incorporated into the School Development Plan (SDP).

**Matters arising from the above minutes (page 5)**

Julia De Soyza, Dominic Martin and Rebecca McVittie had discussed the Managing Medicines in School Policy; the policy was now completed.

**Teaching School Update (page 7)**

The Chair confirmed that she had, at the behest of the Department for Education (DfE), written a letter to other schools asking them to become Teaching Schools. Her letter had drawn a response of thanks from one school. The Executive Headteacher informed governors that he had received a visit from a Headteacher in Sunderland who wished to become a National Leader of Education but did not wish for his school to become a Teaching School.

**Reports from committees / individual and link governors / governor visits (page 9)**

Nicky Wise would write a Visit Report following the visit to the school to look at Maths mastery.

**Action: Nicky Wise**

**Safeguarding / health and safety / risk management items (page 10)**

Jill Hetherington and Dominic Martin had met to discuss safeguarding training offered by Clennell Education Solutions.

**Local Authority (LA) reports – autumn term 2017 (page 11)**

The Executive Headteacher requested an amendment to the wording of comments made about the High Needs Review for SEND 2017 – 2018 Report.

**Action: Governor Services**

**8. GB Handbook**

The GB Handbook had been discussed earlier in the meeting, (Item 7), and would be updated and circulated for approval before the GB meeting in January 2018.

**9. School Improvement**

The Executive Headteacher's Report, 5 December 2017, had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting and was also tabled.

The Executive Headteacher advised that with the amount of activity in the school, his report represented an overview of life in the school rather than a detailed account. He highlighted the following:

- It had been seven years since his appointment as Headteacher and he noted how proud he was of the school, for its many achievements and way it had faced challenges. He highlighted events of this term which exemplified how well the school worked:
  - Support given to the family, friends and colleagues of Deb Hainsworth.
  - The Take One Object project co-ordinated by Rebecca McVittie and Dominic Martin.
  - Running concurrent activities in school, for example, an LA Science Network meeting, a Maths Mastery teacher research group, a Healthy Cookery club and an Early Years planning meeting.
  - Teaching staff from other schools had visited and had been stunned by work produced by Year 1 pupils; the Executive Headteacher noted that tiny interactions had impact.
  - Two children with profound Special Educational Needs had been admitted to the school until space in alternative appropriate provision could be found.
  - The school had been among 41 schools visited as part of an Ofsted inspection survey on Obesity, Healthy Eating and PE. The school had produced a great volume of evidence and staff had made a huge team effort which had impressed the inspector. The Chair thanked Freda Summerfield for attending the interview with her.
  - The Executive Headteacher, a member of the Education sub-group of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, expressed his pride at being invited to a recent All Party Parliamentary Group launch of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership in the Houses of Parliament. He had been reminded of his answer to a question about the purpose of education posed at his interview for the job of Headteacher. His response had been 'Choice'; he believed that education

opened doors to other worlds and commented that he would like to take members of the School Council to visit the Houses of Parliament.

- Whilst the school awaited validated data, unvalidated results had indicated that national results had been exceeded. Reception pupils, who had joined the school with the lowest baseline recorded for many years, had achieved results above the national average.
- The Executive Headteacher had attended Executive Leaders training and hoped to gain a National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL) and become the first Executive Headteacher to achieve this qualification in Newcastle upon Tyne.
- A Christmas Fair arranged by the Friends of West Jesmond Primary School would be held on Sunday 10 December 2017.
- The Executive Headteacher concluded this section of his report by noting that it was the school's job to make the dreams of children a reality and, in reference to a quotation by Shakespeare, wondered about the 'gorgeous palaces' pupils may have the opportunity to visit in their lifetimes.

**A governor asked if the school had received any complaints** to which the Executive Headteacher replied that it had not. Parents had been reminded to approach the school rather than airing issues online in order that they could be easily resolved.

#### **Data Summary**

- There were 613 pupils on the school roll.
- Attendance to 21 November 2017 was 97.8%, the highest attendance for a long time.
- 6.9% of pupils had been categorised as persistent absentees in 2016 – 2017; the national average was 8.2%.

**A governor asked how the school had managed to reduce the number of persistent absentees** and was informed by Rebecca McVittie that it had required much commitment from staff, persistent absence reviews had been conducted and it had become clearer to parents that absence would not be authorised. **A Parent Governor noted that she had been shocked to receive a letter from the school notifying her of her child's absence. She added that she had appreciated that the letter also mentioned her child's otherwise full attendance.** Rebecca McVittie advised that letters were arranged by groups or categories dependent upon the reason for absence.

**A governor asked how the school dealt with absence for underlying medical reasons.** Governors were informed that in this case, conversations with parents did not need to take place, however, the pupil would be categorised as a persistent absentee. **The governor felt that this was unfair if the pupil could not achieve 100% attendance.** It noted that consideration would be given to the class as a whole and adjustments could be made to ensure fairness.

The Executive Headteacher cautioned that because school would close on 22 December leaving little time for pupils to travel to their Christmas destinations, there may be an increase in absence. He felt that all pupils should be able to return to school by 8 January, the first day of the spring term.

### Academic Summary

- The Executive Headteacher confirmed that the school was above the Floor Standard and was not Coasting, both of which were key indicators.
- Training would be provided for governors in understanding the new Ofsted Inspection Dashboard Summary Report and Analyse School Performance (ASP). ASP was intended for online use, although, a summary report could be produced.
- Data from ASP would be added to the SDP.
- 83% of EYFS had achieved a Good Level of Development.
- 90% of Year 1 pupils had passed the Phonics Screening Check, compared to 81% nationally.
- It was likely that six pupils would be disapplied from KS2 results as they had only recently arrived in the UK.
- Average progress scores for all KS2 pupils were good: 2.2 for Reading, 1.48 for Writing and 3.91 for Maths. Average progress scores for disadvantaged pupils were also positive: 3.3 for Reading, 2.0 for Writing and 2.5 for Maths.
- Progress for Writing had not been as great because of the way marking schemes were applied. The example was given of a pupil who had attained a score of 112 which would be rounded down to 103. **The Chair asked whether this affected all schools equally;** this was confirmed by the Executive Headteacher.
- Margaret Armstrong, the school's Improvement Partner, would visit the school on 7 December and would analyse data. In preparation for her visit, the Executive Headteacher had compiled an analysis of data, predictions and targets for 2018.

### Curriculum

- The 'Take One Object' project in partnership with the Great North Museum had been a great success and two other schools in the Trust had also participated.
- Adam Goldwater would be named governor for the school's Artsmark application. A case study would be submitted in July 2018 with the aim of achieving a Platinum Artsmark.
- Governors were advised to keep up to date about curriculum developments via the weekly newsletter and by following the school's Facebook page and Twitter.

### Quality of Teaching

- There had been considerable monitoring of teaching in the form of scrutiny of work and lesson observations by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The Executive Headteacher highlighted differences between the quality of teaching seven years ago and the present day.
- Margaret Armstrong would validate the quality of teaching in spring 2018, three years since the Ofsted Inspection of the school.

**A governor asked how those monitoring teaching fed back to staff.** Rebecca McVittie replied that staff received feedback during Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) sessions and also received a written copy of findings. She noted that it was a two way process and on many occasions, feedback was made to teams rather than individuals. Staff had felt the process to be inclusive because they could add their perspective.

### Ouseburn Learning Trust

- The key priorities of the Trust were now:
  - Improvement of curriculum breadth and provision
  - School Improvement
  - Evaluation of impact
- Andy Gaskell, the Trust Manager had resigned.

**A governor asked if a new Trust Manager would be appointed** and was advised that the Trust would consider current and future requirements. Heaton Manor School would leave the Trust upon academisation and their financial contribution would also be lost. It was felt that there was capacity within the Trust to keep the 15 hour per week Administrator post. Headteachers had taken on strands of work.

### **Budget**

- The budget was on track and an expected outturn of £50,000 was envisaged. The Executive Headteacher felt that this amount would increase as payments from some schools were overdue.
- £11,250 of devolved capital had been retained for possible future structural work to the school.
- The School Fund had been externally audited by the LA and approved.
- The After School Club and Breakfast Clubs were successful, profitable and considered worthy of expansion. The Executive Headteacher informed governors that spacious premises opposite the school offered huge potential and were currently available for a relatively small rent.

**A governor asked about the timescale for availability of the building.** The Executive Headteacher advised that this was open ended.

Governors felt that such an opportunity was unlikely to present itself again and that it would free up space within the school. Governors **agreed** that the school should use their expertise to explore this further. David Griffiths, who had notified the school about the availability of the building, would look at the space and report his findings.

**Action: David Griffiths**

**The Chair asked about health and safety in any new premises** and was informed that the LA would advise the school on these matters.

### **Pupil numbers and attendance**

- There had been 455 pupils on the school roll seven years ago, there were currently 620. A number of new pupils to the school had significant SEN.
- Rebecca McVittie and the Attendance Officer had produced a detailed report on attendance.

A governor congratulated Wendy Mar, School Business Manager, on the fantastic job she did managing pupil numbers and admissions.

### **Teaching School**

Rebecca McVittie noted that there had been fewer mature applicants for teacher training.

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**A governor asked how the school acquired candidates** and was informed that this was managed by The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). An Open Day for interested candidates had been held at the school.

Dominic Martin advised that bursaries for teaching training were unavailable and that candidates made their own decisions about how to spend their money. **The Chair queried whether iPads should be given as enticements to match offers made by other establishments.** It was noted that the University of Northumbria was the awarding body and as such offered a training and marking service. Rebecca McVittie stated that the school would be judged by the number of candidates completing the course and obtaining employment as a result.

### **Teaching School Review**

Expectations and key performance indicators for Teaching Schools had been published. Targets were reported to be very challenging although they were only guidelines.

Dominic Martin noted that he was involved in a Local Delivery Board to bid for project work along with Sacred Heart High School as part of the Strategic School Improvement Fund.

### **10. Achievement Partner's Report**

It had already been noted that Margaret Armstrong, the school's Achievement Partner, would visit the school on 7 December 2017.

### **11. Teaching School Update**

A Teaching School Update had been provided at Item 9.

### **12. Policy Review**

The Finance and Premises Committee had reviewed the Policy for confidential reporting of concerns ('Whistleblowing') for staff employed in schools and had approved its use. The Policy would be emailed to all members of the GB and approval of the Policy would be sought from them via email.

**Action: Chair and Governors**

### **13. Trust Update**

A Trust Update had been provided at Item 9.

### **14. Reports from committees / individual and link governors / governor visits**

The following reports had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, 3 October 2017
- Minutes of Finance and Premises Committee meeting, 6 October 2017
- Minutes of Personnel Committee meeting, 15 November 2017
- Minutes of Finance and Premises Committee meeting, 21 November 2017
- Governor visit report on Take One Object Project by Laura Robb, 16 November 2017

The following reports had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting:



- Governor visit report on EYFS Take One Object by Ishy Bruce and Freda Summerfield, 15 November 2017, had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting.
- Governor visit report to EYFS by Ishy Bruce and Freda Summerfield, 15 November 2017, was tabled.

The Chair would email a report on her recent visit to Year 3.

**Action: Chair**

Jill Hetherington advised that she had monitored admissions on 1 December 2017 and had met the School Business Manager.

Jill Hetherington, Safeguarding Link Governor and Dominic Martin had met to discuss safeguarding. Dominic would send the completed report to the Chair.

**Action: Dominic Martin**

Freda Summerfield, PE Link Governor, had visited the school to monitor PE and would produce a report.

**Action: Freda Summerfield**

Julia De Soyza, Vulnerable pupils Link Governor, had met Rebecca McVittie and conducted a learning walk; Julia would produce a report.

**Action: Julia De Soyza**

Nicky Wise, Year 2 Link Governor, would circulate a report following her visit to Year 2.

**Action: Nicky Wise**

Adam Goldwater and Jill Hetherington, Link Governors for Year 1 and Year 4 respectively, would visit their year groups and write reports.

**Action: Adam Goldwater and Jill Hetherington**

Arlene Ainsley and Paul Simpson, Link Governors for Year 5, would visit their year group and write reports.

**Action: Arlene Ainsley and Paul Simpson**

### **Governor Training**

- The Executive Headteacher and Chair had attended training on employment tribunals which had been very good.
- Ishy Bruce had attended 'Know your school – EYFS' training which she noted had been very useful.
- Paul Simpson had attended 'Update on admissions and fair access' training and this had led to a review of practice.
- The Chair had attended a National Leaders of Governance (NLG) meeting, a local delivery board meeting, a National Co-ordinators of Governor Services (NCOGS) Conference and a SEN Review briefing.

## **15. Financial Items**

**SEN / Pupil Premium / Primary PE / Sports funding allocation, expenditure and**

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### **impact**

These items were documented in the SDP and on the school website.

### **Appointment of Independent School Fund Auditor**

It had already been noted that an auditor from the LA would audit the School Fund.

### **School Fund constitution**

Governor Services would send a copy of a School Fund constitution to the School Business Manager. Paul Simpson, Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee, advised that the School Fund was used to receive donations, commissions from photographers etc and that money received did not contribute to the school budget, nor was it money raised by the Friends of WJPS.

### **Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) update**

The School Business Manager had received details of all governors' skills and would update the SFVS accordingly. The SFVS would be presented to the GB at the meeting on 30 January 2018 for approval.

### **Annex D of Scheme for Financing Schools**

The Executive Headteacher advised that the school would not complete an Annex D Report because it would create a lot of extra work for the School Business Manager. He noted that he would happily supply the LA with Finance and Premises Committee meeting minutes and any relevant print outs from financial systems. He advised that the school was at least £50,000 in credit.

### **16. Safeguarding / health and safety / risk management items**

There were no issues reported.

### **17. Dates and times of future GB and Committee meetings**

The following dates for GB meetings had been agreed previously:

- 30 January 2018
- 27 March 2018
- 22 May 2018
- 10 July 2018

All GB meetings would begin at 5.45pm for 6pm.

Dominic Martin would provide a safeguarding update at the meeting on 30 January.

**Action: Dominic Martin**

Governors were reminded that they were invited out for a meal after the GB meeting on 30 January to mark the end of Freda Summerfield's term of office as a Parent Governor.

There was no further business; the Chair thanked governors for attending and closed the meeting at 7.40pm.

Signed .....  ..... Date ..... 30/1/18 .....

Chair of Governors