

**Approved Minutes
Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of
WEST JESMOND PRIMARY SCHOOL (WJPS)
Tuesday 30 January 2018**

Present:

Jane Edminson (Chair)
Arlene Ainsley, Ishy Bruce, Laura Cordy, Lee Cranston, Julia De Soyza,
David Griffiths, Cathy Hogan, Dominic Martin, Xanthe Mills, Laura Robb,
Paul Simpson and Gary Wallis-Clarke (Executive Headteacher)

Governors in post - **17**; quorum - **9**; governors present – **13**

The meeting was quorate

In attendance:

Claire Hepple ~ Governor Services
Rebecca McVittie ~ Deputy Headteacher and Observer

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 6.07pm. She noted that, on behalf of the GB, she would email well wishes to a former governor who had been injured in a road traffic accident.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received and were **accepted** from Henry Cave, Adam Goldwater, Jill Hetherington and Nicky Wise.

3. Declaration of Interests

Lee Cranston completed a Register of Interests form. Other governors were asked to declare any changes or additions to previously declared interests; none were declared.

Lee Cranston signed his agreement to abide by the GB Code of Conduct.

4. Appointments / membership update

Parent Governor vacancy

The vacancy which had arisen following the end of Freda Summerfield's term of office had been advertised in the school newsletter.

Staff Governor and Co-opted Staff Governor vacancies

Laura Ward, Year 1 Teacher, had been elected as Staff Governor.

Governors **agreed** the appointment of Jodie Leeson, Teaching Assistant, as Co-opted Staff Governor.

5. Identification of additional items not on the agenda

There were no additional items, however, the Chair observed that there had been a considerable number of extra papers circulated via email since the papers for the meeting had been issued.

6. Draft minutes of previous governing body meeting

The draft minutes of the GB meeting held on 5 December 2017 were attached and **approved** with no confidential items declared.

7. Matters arising from the above minutes

Declaration of Interests (page 2)

Data Protection had been added as an agenda item for this meeting.

Get Information about Schools (GIAS) (page 2)

The Executive Headteacher confirmed that GIAS was up to date with governors' details.

Appointments / membership update (page 2)

Jill Hetherington had organised a meal to mark the departure of Freda Summerfield from the GB. The vacancy for a Parent Governor had been advertised.

Laura Ward had been elected Staff Governor.

Matters arising from the above minutes (page 3)

The updated GB Handbook had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting; its approval would be covered at Item 8.

Governor Services had re-issued the email which explained how governors could access the Governor Module.

A report on Maths mastery, written by Nicky Wise, had been circulated with papers for the meeting, (Item 14).

Matters arising from the above minutes (page 4)

An amendment to the wording regarding the High Needs Review for SEND 2017 – 2018 had been made.

School Improvement (page 5)

The Executive Headteacher informed governors that there had been a dramatic increase in pupil absence during the last week of the autumn term; a sickness bug was partially responsible, however, it was believed that many parents had taken their children on holiday. Over 100 pupils had been absent from school on the last day of term.

School Improvement (page 7)

David Griffiths reported that he had registered the school's interest in the building opposite the school with its landlady and owner.

Policy Review (page 8)

The Policy for confidential reporting of concerns ('Whistleblowing') for staff employed in schools had been emailed to governors; governors confirmed their **approval** of this policy.

Reports from committees / individual and link governors / governor visits

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(page 9)

The following reports had been circulated with papers for this meeting:

- Chair's report on a Take One Object in Year 3, autumn term
- Julia De Soyza's report on a meeting with Rebecca McVittie, 16 November 2017
- Xanthe Mills and Nicky Wise's report on a visit to Year 2, 1 December 2017

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

- Freda Summerfield's report on PE
- The Safeguarding report

The following reports were awaited:

- Visit to Year 1 by Adam Goldwater

Action: Adam Goldwater

- Visit to Year 4

Action: Jill Hetherington

- Visit to Year 5

Action: Arlene Ainsley and Paul Simpson

Dates and times of future GB and Committee meetings (page 10)

Dominic Martin would provide a safeguarding update when the business of the GB meeting had concluded, (Item 19).

8. GB Handbook

The GB Handbook had been emailed to governors. A revised version of the Delegation Planner edited by Laura Robb to include reference to the Executive Headteacher and the Head of School had also been emailed to governors. Governors **approved** the use of the GB Handbook and the Delegation Planner.

9. Data Protection

A separate meeting would be held to discuss progress towards compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations which would come into force on 25 May 2018. A checklist had been circulated to governors and governors were referred to the Information Commissioners Office website for further advice.

Action: Paul Simpson

10. Achievement Partner's Report

Margaret Armstrong, the school's Achievement Partner, had visited the school on 7 December 2017 and a copy of her Notes of Visit had been circulated in advance of the GB meeting. The Executive Headteacher noted that Margaret had requested a considerable amount of preparation from him in advance of the meeting. He advised that the data summary had helped Margaret to confirm her judgements.

The Chair queried Margaret's assertion that 'Governors have stepped up their role in monitoring'. The Executive Headteacher replied that this had referred to the greater level of analysis and depth made by governors during visits rather than an increase in the number of visits.

Margaret Armstrong had referred to pupils' skills on entry to Early Years as

being broadly in line with what was typical and the Chair queried what was meant by 'typical'. The Executive Headteacher replied that this was by comparison with the National average for Early Years.

The report featured a table of 2018 Predictions and Targets for the percentages of pupils expected to reach the national standard and greater depth. **The Chair asked if it was harder to predict the percentage of pupils who may achieve greater depth than the expected standard** to which the Executive Headteacher replied that it was. He added that there were pupils who may be either and that the two standards were differentiated by only one mark.

In response to a query, the Executive Headteacher clarified that targets set remained internal to the school and were set at the beginning of the academic year. A 'data drop' would be made in February and predictions would be updated then.

11. Teaching School Update

The following points were highlighted:

- The Executive Headteacher continued to work towards the National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL). The focus of this work was the development of the role of the Teaching School.
- Initial Teacher Training (ITT) was a big focus. The five School Direct students currently placed across schools within The Quayside Teaching Alliance had progressed well. Next academic year, ten students would embark on the course.
- Six Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT)s would be accredited this year.
- The Teaching School data return had been completed correctly.
- There had been several visits from other schools. Our Lady and St Anne's RC Primary School had visited the school twice and had been appreciative of assistance offered.
- The school had supported Hawthorn Primary School with funding direct from the DfE but this had now come to an end and the project had been completed and formally evaluated.
- Interviews for a Specialist Leader of Education (SLE) would be held after half term.
- Training had been undertaken in the monitoring of other Teaching Schools. Teaching Schools would undertake a reciprocal checking arrangement.
- Feedback from training provided had been very positive.
- Dominic Martin, Head of School, was a National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL) Lecturer at Newcastle University as part of the North East Teaching Schools Partnership (NETSP). The training would be attended by Assistant Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers.
- The Executive Headteacher was the primary school representative for the Northern Powerhouse.
- Dominic Martin had led a bid with a focus on Maths and linked with another primary school for more funding through the Strategic School Improvement Fund. Within the bid criteria, it had been necessary to show that other schools with weaknesses in data would also benefit.
- The Executive Headteacher represented Headteachers on various groups such as Schools Forum, National Funding Formula and the Science Hub.

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- It was felt that the Teaching School had established itself as a presence this term and that the school was meeting its responsibilities as a Teaching School.
- Funding for the Teaching School would decrease to £40,000 for the next two years.

The Chair asked about the new key performance indicators for Teaching Schools and was advised that the school would meet them.

A governor asked what the most challenging key performance indicator was. It was noted that it was a challenge to recruit fifteen teachers to be trained during a single academic year. Rebecca McVittie added that the school had to ensure that 90% of the trainees gained employment within six months of the completion of their training.

Laura Robb responded to Dominic Martin's request for volunteers to conduct mock interviews for ITTs.

Action: Laura Robb

12. Policy Review

Policy for administering medication and supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, version 5.0

The Policy had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting; governors **approved** this Policy.

Admissions Policy 2019 -2020

Governors **agreed** the school's Admission Policy 2019 – 2020 and the adoption of the LA's Coordinated Admissions Scheme 2019 – 2020 for the annual Reception and transfers round 2019 – 2020.

The Chair and Paul Simpson would check when the school would be required to consult regarding the Admissions Policy, as part of the Ouseburn Learning Trust.

Action: Chair and Paul Simpson

The Executive Headteacher advised that the In-Year Admissions Policy may require review. It was noted that there may be a requirement for a working group on Admissions in the future.

The Behaviour Policy would be considered for approval following the safeguarding training delivered after the business of the meeting.

13. Trust Update

The following update was provided:

- A meeting of the Trust Board would take place the following day.
- Finances appeared healthy, which were, in part, attributed to the non-payment of a salary for a Trust Manager. It was reported that there would be a surplus of funds even if Heaton Manor School left the Trust. Heaton Manor School would be required to make a financial contribution to the Trust until they converted to academy status.

- An executive group had met to discuss a School Improvement Lead and had reviewed the role of the Administrative Assistant. The Executive Headteacher had been approached to take on the School Improvement Lead. It was reported that the Executive Headteacher would offer approximately five days to each school which would total 30 days annually. The Trust's priorities would be looked at alongside schools' own priorities. The Chair felt that working in other schools would help to strengthen the work of the school. The arrangement would also help the Executive Headteacher to acquire the NPQEL qualification which required work across a group of schools. The arrangement would continue until July 2018 and would then be subject to review.

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

The following reports had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Governor Monitoring Report on Maths mastery by Nicky Wise, 6 June 2017
- Visit Report of meeting with Rebecca McVittie by Julia De Soyza, 16 November 2017
- Visit Report on Take One Object by Jane Edminson, autumn term
- Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, 28 November 2017
- Visit to Year 2 Report by Xanthe Mills and Nicky Wise, 1 December 2017
- Minutes of Pupil Support Committee meeting, 11 December 2017
- Minutes of Personnel Committee meeting, 10 January 2018

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

- PE Link Governor's report by Freda Summerfield
- Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, 23 January 2018 (also tabled)
- Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 29 January 2018 (also tabled)

The Chair requested that, in future, the Executive Headteacher or Head of School complete the comments section on governors' reports.

Action: Executive Headteacher / Head of School

The Chair commented that she had found the report from Julia De Soyza very informative and interesting.

With reference to the Pupil Support Committee meeting minutes, 11 December 2017, a governor asked about the use of Survey Monkey to communicate with parents about mental health. Rebecca McVittie advised that feedback obtained would be reviewed after half term. A staff survey had been conducted and a survey for pupils was ongoing.

David Griffiths responded to a request from the Chair for a volunteer to become the new PE Link Governor. It was noted that this role would include the monitoring of PE and Sports Premium funding.

Action: David Griffiths

The Safeguarding visit report had been emailed to governors earlier that day. It was noted that the visit had been thorough.



The Chair advised that a discussion would take place during the summer term about the year group arrangements for governor monitoring. She suggested that it may be easier to manage visits by Phases or Key Stages. Governors felt that the success of year group level monitoring relied upon good communications with staff. They commented that it would be great to be invited to attend class events; the Executive Headteacher would relay this message to staff.

Action: Governor Services to add to summer term agenda; Executive Headteacher to advise staff

The Chair would remind governors of the date for the Maths monitoring visit.

Action: Chair

Chair's update

The Chair reported that she had met Jean Jackson, the Regional School Commissioner's lead for academisation. Dates for the change to academy status for Heaton Manor School had been considered; the aim was for July 2018 although September 2018 was also a possibility.

Governor Training

- Ishy Bruce and Jane Edminson had attended Knowing your school through data training on 30 January 2018.
- Jane Edminson had attended training on School Finances.
- Jane Edminson had attended the LA briefing on 16 January 2018.
- The School Business Manager and Paul Simpson had attended General Data Protection Regulations training at Schools North East on 12 December 2017.

15. Financial Items

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

The SFVS, March 2017, had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting.

Governors were informed that Lee Cranston, the Chair, Paul Simpson and the Executive Headteacher had reviewed the final version of the SFVS which had been subject to many updates this year. Governors **approved** the SFVS and it was duly signed by the Chair.

School Fund Constitution

The School Fund Constitution had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting and was **approved** by governors.

16. Safeguarding / health and safety / risk management items

There were no issues reported.

17. School term and holiday dates 2018 – 2019

A Community Schools Calendar for 2018 – 2019 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Three non-teaching days would be agreed at a subsequent GB meeting.

18. Local Authority Reports – spring term 2018

The following spring term reports were tabled:

- High Needs Review for Vulnerable Learners 2017/18 – Update

- High Needs Review for SEND 2017/18 – Update
- School Admissions update
- Alternative Provision, Reduced Timetables and Exclusion Procedures
- Newcastle Virtual School
- Update on HR Issues

High Needs Review for Vulnerable Learners 2017/18 – Update

The report outlined progress made since the autumn term which had included two meetings of stakeholders and the development of a VL score card (a core set of indicators against which the extent of support, provision and services could be assessed). Current challenges included the rising rate of permanent exclusions, attendance, particularly at primary level, levels of persistent absence and pupil mobility from school to school. Amber Burton had been appointed LA Head of SEND and Vulnerable Pupils.

This report would be considered by the Pupil Support Committee.

Action: Pupil Support Committee

High Needs Review for SEND 2017/18 – Update

Newcastle spent 2.8% of its budget on special schools compared to a national percentage of 1.4% which had led to an erosion of mainstream budgets. Key documents were highlighted: SEN & Disability Policy, SEN Information Report, Accessibility Plan and Annual SEN Report. A draft framework which described best practice would be published by the LA after the spring term half term holiday. Schools SEN Link Governors and SENCOs were asked to carry out an audit of the training needs of all staff (including caretaking, cleaning and kitchen staff).

This report was also referred to the Pupil Support Committee for further consideration.

Action: Pupil Support Committee

School Admissions update

Governors were reminded of key dates by which they should determine admissions arrangements for 2019 – 2020 (28 February 2018) and for the publication of admissions arrangements on school websites (15 March 2018). The report covered the admission of children with challenging behaviour. Governors were reminded of their duty to ensure statutory compliance.

The Chair advised that all governors read this report for information.

Action: Governors

Alternative Provision, Reduced Timetables and Exclusion Procedures

Governors were reminded of the LA Resources webpage which provided guidance on the above listed areas. The report contained a number of questions which governors were urged to ask the leadership and management of their schools to ensure legal compliance. Governors could attend a training session on regulations and duties on 16 March 2018.

This report was referred to the Pupil Support Committee.

Action: Pupil Support Committee

Newcastle Virtual School

Two Government guidance documents were expected to come into force in April 2018: 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children' (Statutory guidance for local authorities) and 'The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children' (Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities). The report listed questions which governors should ask their schools to ensure compliance. A training session on roles and responsibilities in relation to Looked after children (LAC) would take place on 22 February 2018.

This report was referred to the Pupil Support Committee.

Action: Pupil Support Committee

Update on HR Issues

The following points were noted:

- From 6 April 2018 the childcare voucher scheme would not be open to new applicants.
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) would come into effect from 25 May 2018.
- Trade Unions were assessing the merits of an Employers offer on a pay award for support staff.
- Consultation on changes to the DfE's Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance would end on 22 February 2018. New guidance would be effective from September 2018.
- There would be increases to some statutory payments from April 2018 including the national living wage which would increase from £7.50 per hour to £7.83 per hour.
- A Safer Recruitment Training session would be held on 8 February 2018.

This report was referred to the Personnel Committee for consideration.

Action: Personnel Committee

19. Safeguarding and Curriculum Update

The following documents had been emailed in advance of the meeting:

- Sexualised Behaviour, 2017 – 2018, Clennell Education Solutions
- Sexual Behaviours, Guidance for using the sexual behaviours traffic light tool, Brook
- Sexual Behaviours, Behaviours by age 0 – 17, Brook
- Behaviour Policy, version 4.0
- Weaving Together – The West Jesmond Curriculum

Dominic Martin, Head of School, delivered a safeguarding training session on Sexualised Behaviour using a presentation developed by Clennell Education Solutions. The following points were highlighted:

- The importance of being aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse
- The Brook threshold levels of red, amber and green:
 - Green behaviours were those displayed between young people of similar age or developmental ability and were reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choice.

- Amber behaviours were of potential concern due to age or developmental ability differences and were of concern due to the type of behaviour, frequency, duration or the context in which they occurred.
- Red behaviours could be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening. They may involve significant age, developmental or power differences and were of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occurred. They would be referred to Social Care, the Police or both.
- Governors could visit the Brook website which covered different scenarios. Dominic noted that there were many grey areas and staff could only make their best judgement.
- The Pupil Support Committee would discuss, review and update the school's sex and relationship education policy, programme and resources, in light of new legislation.

Action: Pupil Support Committee

A governor felt that the Brook organisation represented a particular outlook. She felt that the school should be honest about the type of situations eleven year olds may be faced with in relation to the use of mobile phones and computers. Dominic acknowledged that school needed to talk about what was and what was not appropriate to share and send. Rebecca McVittie advised that the school treated incidents with mobile phones very seriously and used them as learning opportunities in school. Pupils were aware that sexting was illegal and that there were consequences. On some occasions staff had held difficult conversations with parents; some parents had felt that the school should not intervene when incidents had taken place out of school. Pupils were taught to keep control of their own phones when out of school. Phones brought into school were locked away at the beginning of the day.

The Chair raised the issue of how women were viewed in society and noted that some boys viewed girls as lesser beings.

Governors were advised that the school worked with all pupils to discuss body image.

A governor felt that it was important to identify vulnerable pupils. The Executive Headteacher acknowledged a common pattern in the targeting of vulnerable young people.

A governor asked if pupil behaviour was monitored in the playground; this was confirmed. It was also noted that behaviour was recorded on the Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS).

A governor asked if staff had received training in how they should talk to parents. Dominic responded that staff would normally liaise with Rebecca McVittie or himself on any issues of concern; if there was any level of doubt, a referral to Social Care would be made.



A governor asked if pupils had received a talk about puberty and was informed that advice was delivered by NHS nurses around April each year for Year 5 pupils. A minority of parents opted their children out of this.

Behaviour Policy

The Policy had been amended to refer to dealing with sexualised behaviour and the traffic light system; the Policy was **approved** by governors.

Rebecca McVittie advised that a parent had raised the issue of gender imbalance in the membership of the School Council; there were 11 boys and 7 girls. When asked, School Council members had felt that their selection was unconnected with gender and that they had been chosen because their peers wanted them to represent their class. **A governor noted that the current method of election was via a show of hands for their chosen class representative and felt that this method may not be entirely fair. A governor pointed out that women were generally under represented in roles and there was a need for positive encouragement.**

Weaving Together – The West Jesmond Curriculum

- Amanda Spielman, Ofsted Chief Inspector, had talked about the quality of curriculum and the choices that schools could make.
- Dominic Martin noted that he wanted to open a conversation with staff and other stakeholders regarding the need for decisions to be 'rooted in a solid consensus about what education should deliver for each pupil'.
- The importance of publishing what was distinct about the school was noted.
- Two different curriculum models were shown, one which was restricted to a bare minimum of knowledge and the other which offered many opportunities and a breadth of curriculum. Dominic stated that the school had a duty of care to provide a rich curriculum.
- The design of a curriculum centred on the question 'What / How do we want our pupils to be?' It would be necessary to have this discussion with staff and governors. Dominic noted the balance required between skills and knowledge and invited governors to consider 'What skills do we want our children to have?'

Action: Governors

- The school had considered the curriculum in 2014 and the overall aims, the Arts and Humanities were documented. **A governor noted that the theme of 'To know who we are and where we've come from' was vital and was woven through all sorts of things. She referred to pupils' experience of watching an artisan baker make stotties in the school. Pupils had gained an understanding of the process, the skills involved and the origins of this type of bread.**
- Pupils were expected to move through the programme of study at 'broadly the same pace' with those pupils who had grasped the concept rapidly being 'challenged through rich and sophisticated problem solving and enquiry'. Dominic noted that there was equality of entry with tasks becoming more complex.
- Progress from Pre-structural, to Uni-structural, to Multi-structural to Relational to Extended Abstract were shown. **The Chair asked if a lesson would begin at Pre-structural;** Dominic replied that the lesson would not start at this point because the teacher would have pre-assessed pupils. **The Chair noted that this approach appeared time consuming and wondered if there would be sufficient time for it to play through.** Dominic noted that there would be

naming, recalling, ordering, reflecting and the development of question systems. Dominic would train teaching staff in the use of this approach. It was a model for learning which all pupils could access at different levels with layers of complexity and no ceiling on learning. Dominic guided governors through the example given for Key Stage 2 Habitats and Adaptions about barnacles.

20. Dates and times of future GB and Committee meetings

The following dates for GB meetings had been agreed previously:

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

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

There was no further business; the Chair thanked governors for attending and closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

Signed.......... Date..........
Vice Chair of Governors

