

**Approved Minutes**  
**Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of**  
**WEST JESMOND PRIMARY SCHOOL (WJPS)**  
**Tuesday 6 December 2016**

**Present:**

Jane Edminson (Chair),  
Ishy Bruce, Clare Byatt, Henry Cave, Laura Cordy, Lee Cranston, Julia De Soyza, David Griffiths, Deb Hainsworth, Jill Hetherington, Cathy Hogan, Dominic Martin, Xanthe Mills, Laura Robb, Paul Simpson, Freda Summerfield, Gary Wallis-Clarke (Headteacher) and Nicky Wise.

Governors in post - **19**; quorum - **10**; governors present – **18**

**The meeting was quorate**

**In attendance:**

Claire Hepple ~ Governor Services

**1. Welcome / Introductions**

The meeting was opened at 6.05pm by the Chair who welcomed new Parent Governors, Ishy Bruce and Laura Cordy, and new Co-opted Governor, Lee Cranston, to the meeting. A round of introductions took place.

The Chair thanked Jill Hetherington for organising a farewell meal for Gavin Aarvold, former Co-opted Governor, who had resigned from the GB in August 2016. The Chair also expressed her thanks to Gavin for the great contribution he had made to the GB.

The Chair thanked Jill Hetherington and Nicky Wise for completing the submission for the GB to be considered outstanding GB of the year to the National Governors Association. The Chair felt that it had been fantastic that governors had stepped up to do this.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher and Dominic Martin, Head of School, for their work over the last few weeks in dealing with a difficult staffing issue.

**2. Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence had been received and was **accepted** from Arlene Ainsley.

**3. Declaration of Interests / Code of Conduct**

Register of Interests 2016 – 2017 forms had been sent to new governors and to those governors absent from the GB meeting held in October. Completed Register of Interests forms were received by the Clerk.

Country of Birth information was required for the Department for Education's register of educational establishments, Edubase, and a form was circulated to capture that information. **Governors queried the necessity of providing this information and remained uncertain as to how the information would be used.**

New governors and those governors absent from the GB meeting held on 11 October signed the GB Code of Conduct which had been approved at that meeting.

**4. Appointments / membership update**

The Chair thanked Laura Robb for organising elections for Parent Governors. She noted that Xanthe Mills would now take over this role.

There was one vacancy for a Co-opted Governor and the Chair remarked that she felt there was no rush to fill it as existing governors brought a good range of skills. The Head of School mentioned that an employee of the Great North Museum may be interested in the role; the Chair stated that she would be happy to meet this person to discuss this further.

**Action: Head of School / Chair**

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

The Chair advised that the withdrawal of all but two of the School Crossing Patrol Officers in the city would need to be discussed although felt that the issue could be more appropriately addressed at a meeting of the Pupil Support Committee. The school would be affected by the removal of the School Crossing Patrol Officer on Osborne Road at the traffic lights. It was possible that the school could obtain sponsorship to pay the £5,000 per annum required for a Patrol Officer.

**Action: Pupil Support Committee**

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

The draft minutes of the GB meeting held on 11 October 2016 were attached and approved with no confidential items declared.

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

**Welcome / Introductions (page 1)**

The Chair noted that the Headteacher and Chair of Ivy Road Primary School had expressed their gratitude and thanks for being allowed to attend the last GB meeting.

**Review of: Committees (page 5)**

**In response to a query**, the Chair felt that unless new governors particularly enjoyed data analysis, they may like to attend other committee meetings in preference to the Data Committee.

**Review of: Delegation arrangements (page 7)**

In order to fulfill Function 39 of the Delegation Planner, the Chair and Laura Robb were still to locate the written principles for the school behaviour policy and to present these for circulation.

**Action: Chair and Laura Robb**

**Reports from committees / individual and link governors / governor visits (page 11)**

Nicky Wise would email the Community Relations Committee meeting minutes held on 28 June 2016.

**Action: Nicky Wise**

**Safeguarding / health and safety / risk management items (page 13)**

Following the Chair's attendance at a talk given by Belita Scott, HMI, it was

suggested that the Headteacher would review the Single Central Record (SCR) on a termly basis. The Chair would review the SCR in the company of the Headteacher on an annual basis. The Safeguarding Link Governor would monitor the SCR. This process would be reviewed at the next full GB meeting.

It was noted that a Parent Workshop would be held from 6pm – 7pm on 14 December 2016 to be delivered by Julian Hughes; governors would be welcome to attend.

### **School Cook (page 15)**

A new School Cook had been appointed. As part of the selection process, candidates for the position had been asked to make a meat pie and a chocolate sponge. The Head of School, members of the School Council and office staff had conducted taste, smell and appearance tests on the pies and sponges labelled A, B and C. Helen Short had been the successful candidate; her passion for the school and for being a significant person in the school had been very apparent.

## **8. School Improvement**

The Headteacher's Report and Ofsted Inspection Dashboard, unvalidated 2016, 24 October 2016, had been emailed to governors in advance of the meeting and were also tabled.

The Headteacher highlighted the following:

- The first term as a National Teaching School had been very busy with many activities taking place. Teaching schools were seen as drivers of school improvement and were regarded as the heart of a school led system.
- Representatives from the Department for Education (DfE) and the National Audit Office had visited the school to seek the views of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- The Head of School was credited with the idea of the 'Take One Object' project which had been a phenomenal piece of curriculum work across the school run in conjunction with the Great North Museum. The Great North Museum had been delighted by the project which had demonstrated how the museum could be utilised in a different way.
- The school had welcomed 65 teachers from Northumberland to view the standards of pupils' work in Years 5 and 6 and to talk to teachers. The Headteacher thanked the Head of School and Rebecca McVittie for their work to make this a great success.
- Data published on the Inspection Dashboard would be the data set Ofsted inspectors would use. The excellent results had been testament to the hard work of the staff and the Headteacher thanked the staff of Year 2 and Year 6.
- There was a new temporary staffing structure of three Assistant Headteachers, Tom Jones, Kevin McVittie and Rebecca McVittie, all of whom would be excellent future school leaders.
- The school would need to think strategically as it moved forward. £2.5 million from central government had been allocated to the Regional Schools Commissioner for North of England.
- The school had received great feedback from parents about the weekly newsletters.
- The School Development Plan (SDP) priorities were acknowledged as correct and

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good progress had been made towards meeting them. The Headteacher thanked governors for their support and for their work at committee level.

- Year 4 and Year 6 had made Christmas cakes and the Headteacher noted the pupils' excitement, enthusiasm and whoops of joy which he had been delighted to hear as he prepared his Headteacher's Report.
- Challenges faced during the term had reminded the Headteacher of a Rabbi's words: 'Without pain and struggle the lobster will never grow. Only by facing the challenge and harsh reality of shedding an old shell can it grow and become stronger.'
- Attendance continued to be closely monitored and stood at 96.6% for 2016 – 2017 to date. Parents continued to request holidays during term time and the later closure date for the Christmas holiday had not helped with this. The school had no powers other than the Head of School would refuse to grant permission in all but exceptional circumstances.

### School Data

- There were 606 pupils on the school roll.
- 6.9% of pupils received Free School Meals compared with a national average of 25.2%; **a governor asked whether the percentage had increased or decreased** and the Headteacher responded that it had decreased.
- The social deprivation indicator was 0.11 for the school compared to a national average of 0.21. The government had recently regraded some Newcastle postcodes as more affluent and this had had a detrimental effect upon the income of schools. **In response to a query about social deprivation at the school**, the Headteacher advised that this was largely static.
- The percentage of pupils classed as 'stable' was 77.4%. This had been calculated from census day in October 2015 and included pupils who had attended the school since Reception. The school would be regarded as one of the most turbulent. The Headteacher stated that turbulence would continue to rise during the course of the year because of pupil movements. A private school in the vicinity had recently introduced an entrance test for Year 5 pupils and a number of pupils had applied to take the test. **A governor commented that turbulence did not assist with the understanding of data.**

### Ofsted Inspection Dashboard

The Headteacher guided governors through the Ofsted Inspection Dashboard which would be the template used by Ofsted inspectors.

**A governor asked whether the Headteacher was responsible for supplying governors with the Ofsted Inspection Dashboard or whether they could obtain it themselves.** Whilst it would be possible for governors to access the website, it was considered prudent for the report to be generated and circulated by the Headteacher because of password sensitivity.

- The data presented in the Dashboard was unvalidated. The final report when disappplied pupils had been removed would be available in February 2017 and this would improve figures even more.
- Governors should be wary of the first page of the report which covered strengths and weaknesses in 2016 because it was misleading and did not represent the data of the school.

- The Headteacher noted the importance of the pink line which appeared over the bars in the graphs signifying national averages.

### **Page 13: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile**

- In 2015, 84% of pupils had achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) compared to a national average of 69%. Standards of attainment in EYFS were very good.
- The Headteacher emphasised the importance of consideration of the size of the cohort. For example, in 2015, 100% of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals had achieved GLD, however, the cohort size was 1 pupil.
- There was no national average for Special Educational Needs (SEN) EYFS pupils as yet.

### **Page 12: Phonics**

- In 2016, the Year 1 pass rate was 94% compared to a national figure of 81%. In 2016, the Year 2 pass rate was 96% compared to a national figure of 91%. The Headteacher noted that some of those pupils had been new admissions to Year 2.

**Governors considered the excellent pass rates for disadvantaged pupils and asked if the Headteacher was confident that any pupil eligible to receive FSM had accessed the provision** to which the Headteacher replied that he was not.

**A governor asked if the data presented in the report was a useful tool for planning.** The Headteacher replied that planning had already been in place and he did not regard the report as useful other than to illustrate the great progress made by the Year 1 team in Phonics.

**A governor asked if it was possible to track an individual pupil's data** to which the Headteacher replied that this was achieved through the school's own data.

**A governor asked what happened if a Year 2 pupil did not meet the expected standard in Phonics.** The Headteacher replied that extra support would be given, however, the pupil would not be required to re-sit the test. A new cumulative rolling programme was in place to identify pupils who had not passed the Phonics test.

**A governor noted that it was difficult to assess the impact of FSM and asked if there been a modal shift between years?** The Headteacher stated that it was unusual to have one pupil, there was not a steady pattern and it was difficult to make comparisons year on year.

### **Page 2: Reading Key Stage (KS) 2**

- The Headteacher explained that it was important that results were above 0 as this represented the national progress score. In KS2, 59 pupils had achieved an average score of 4.46 and the difference of 4.46 was highlighted dark green which indicated that pupils were significantly above the national average and in the top 10% in the country.
- The average scaled score was 106.8 which compared favourably to the national

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scaled score of 102.6.

- The Headteacher drew governors' attention to the blue 'wingspan' which signified the range of scores. He noted that the 'wingspan' had fallen below 0 for the group identified as prior low attaining pupils. He stated that this represented one pupil and the average score for this category of pupils had been 3.04.
- Disadvantaged pupils had performed very well with a score of 5.86 and a difference of 5.52.

**A governor queried the size of the 'wingspan' for high prior attainment of disadvantaged pupils because it represented only one pupil who had scored 8.42. The Headteacher would query this via the online portal.**

**Action: Headteacher**

The Headteacher clarified that 'disadvantaged' pupils were those in receipt of FSM. A pupil would be categorised in this way if they had been eligible for FSM at any point during their years in primary school. The categorisation continued for six years irrespective of the length of time a pupil remained eligible for FSM, hence use of the term 'Ever 6'. The Headteacher noted that language and postcode were not factored in to 'disadvantaged'.

**There was acknowledgement that it was difficult to draw conclusions from the data because the pupils whose results appeared in the report had not necessarily attended the school since Reception.**

#### **Page 8: Reading KS1**

- 81% of pupils in a cohort of 90 had attained the expected standard in Reading. **Two pupils who had been expected to achieve the required standard had not done so and a governor queried whether this was an issue.** The Headteacher replied that they were two non-disadvantaged, English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils and were not regarded as an issue. He noted that this example was one reason why he had advised governors to disregard the statements on strengths and weaknesses presented on the front of the report as the results of these pupils had been highlighted as a weakness.

#### **Page 10: Maths KS1**

- 86% of pupils in the cohort of 90 had attained the expected standard in Maths. The national average had been 73%. Figures had also been produced for pupils categorised as emerging, expected and exceeding based upon how pupils had performed two years earlier whilst in Reception.

**In response to questions from governors,** it was noted that only 84 pupils comprising 25 emerging, 44 expected and 15 exceeding in a cohort of 90 pupils could be tracked back in this way although as the Headteacher pointed out they were not necessarily pupils who had attended this school from Reception onwards. It was therefore concluded that attainment was represented by the data but progress was not. The turbulent nature of pupil admissions and departures from the school were not useful in consideration of data presented by the Inspection Dashboard.

**A governor asked whether staff reviewed the report.** The Headteacher stated that the report was available in the staff room and would be studied at pupil progress meetings when cohorts were reviewed and at transition points between Key Stages.

#### **Pupil Premium funding**

Pupil Premium funding details could be obtained from the school's website.

**A governor asked where Pupil Premium funding discussions would take place.** The most appropriate venue for this would be the Pupil Support Committee. In the absence of Arlene Ainsley, Chair of the Pupil Support Committee, Nicky Wise would check that the matter had been discussed there.

**Action: Nicky Wise**

#### **PE funding**

PE funding was up to date and a new Sports Plan would be written up.

#### **SEND funding**

SEND funding had not been published. The Chair advised that governors should be aware how SEND funding was spent.

**Action: Headteacher**

#### **Achievement Partner's visit**

Three meetings to visit the school had been cancelled by Karen Smith, the school's Achievement Partner. The school anticipated a new Achievement Partner.

*Henry Cave joined the meeting during this item, 6.37pm.*

*Paul Simpson and Julia De Soyza left the meeting during this item, 7.30pm and 7.40pm respectively.*

### **9. Teaching School Update**

The Headteacher highlighted the following:

- The school had provided intensive support to address key teaching issues for approximately thirty new Year 5 teachers from Ponteland and Darras Hall schools. A charge had been made for each teacher. In due course, a similar offer would be made for Year 6 teachers.
- The school would find out later this month whether it would receive a grant for £20,000 to support Reading at another primary school.
- New specialist leaders in education would be recruited.
- The Headteacher had met Janet Renou, Regional Schools Commissioner for the North of England, at a recent event. He reported that there was pressure as a Teaching School to lead the way with academisation. The school had been offered a substantial amount of money to set up a Multi-academy Trust (MAT). **A governor queried whether this would be likely to include the other schools in the Ouseburn Learning Trust;** the Headteacher replied that this would not necessarily be the case. **A governor asked if the money offered would be sufficient to finance the building of an extension to the school;** the Headteacher replied that it would not but would be considerably more than £25,000 usually offered to schools upon conversion and that the school would be

able to achieve a lot with the money.

**A governor asked how the school managed Teaching School accounts.** The Headteacher replied that this was managed well and the work was quite modest at the moment, however, next term the school would generate more invoices as work increased.

**A governor queried whether an accounts system would be required.** The Headteacher noted that all monies were received into the school budget and subsequently itemised to the Teaching School. The School Business Manager would ensure the compatibility of any future accounts system with LA systems.

#### 10. **Policy Review**

The following policies were tabled:

- Attendance Policy, version 6.0
- Behaviour Policy, version 3.0

The Head of School explained that whilst terminology in both policies had been updated there had been no significant changes made to the content and spirit of the policies. Governors were asked to review the policies and feedback any comments to the Head of School. Both policies would be submitted for approval at the next GB meeting.

**Action: Governors**

The Chair requested that, in future, policies be emailed to governors for consideration.

The Whistle Blowing Policy was **approved**.

The Headteacher explained that the Fair Access Protocol, administered by the LA, existed to ensure fairness around the placement of children into schools. The family of a child not in a school would identify their preferred school and a child may be placed in that school if places were available. **A governor queried whether any siblings would also be included in the placement of children through the Fair Access Protocol** to which the Headteacher replied that they would not.

#### 11. **Trust update**

A Trust update had been provided in the Headteacher's Report.

The Headteacher added that all Headteachers in the Trust had undertaken a Maths Learning Walk at different schools within the Trust; the Headteacher had visited Chillingham Road Primary School. **A governor asked if any lessons had been learnt from the experience.** The Headteacher responded that each Headteacher had written a report of their findings and the activity had been considered very worthwhile. Reading would be the focus of Headteachers' visits in the spring term.

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

The following reports were circulated prior to the meeting:



- Minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, 4 October 2016
- Minutes of Personnel Committee meeting, 16 November 2016
- Minutes of Finance & Premises Committee meeting, 22 November 2016

Learning Walk conducted by Dominic Martin and Laura Robb, 21 September 2016 was tabled.

The GB Handbook was **approved**.

### **Outstanding GB application**

Nicky Wise advised that the GB had entered a national competition to be considered for an award as an outstanding GB. The Headteacher had written a statement to support the GB's entry and good evidence had substantiated the application.

### **Link Governor arrangements**

Link governor arrangements for new governors were **agreed** as follows:

- Ishy Bruce would be Link Governor for Reception along with Freda Summerfield.
- Laura Cordy would be Link Governor for Year 4 along with Jill Hetherington.

Dates for Link Governor visits would be: **10 February 2017** and **6 June 2017**.

### **Electronic sharing of governor information**

The Chair informed governors of the likelihood that governor information would soon be accessed online. The LA would promote one system whilst Paul Simpson, IT & Website Link Governor, advocated use of another system. Paul would provide background information at the next GB meeting.

**Action: Paul Simpson**

## **13. Financial Items**

### **Expenditure update**

Summary budget monitoring information, period 7, 2016 – 2017 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

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

The Independent School Fund Auditor was the LA.

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

Henry Cave and David Griffiths reported that the SFVS was on track for completion by the required date.

### **LA Financial Regulations**

The LA Financial Regulations were **approved**.

### **Terms of reference and delegation of financial responsibilities**

The Terms of reference and delegation of financial responsibilities were **approved**.

**14. Safeguarding / health and safety / risk management items**

The Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) was used to record all incidents concerning behaviour, child protection and complaints from parents. The Chair received notification of some entries.

**A governor asked where information recorded on CPOMS was held.** The Headteacher advised that use of CPOMS had been sanctioned by the LA and that information was held centrally on a CPOMS server which was secure. Entries made to CPOMS could not be amended and passwords changed frequently. Information on CPOMS would transfer with the child when they moved to another school. Schools in the Trust had agreed to subscribe to the system for an annual fee of £1,000 per school. The Headteacher noted that the system was useful for the recording of low level issues and provided clear procedural advice regarding next steps. Henry Cave, Safeguarding Link Governor, would review the use of CPOMS during his next visit to the school.

**A governor asked how staff felt about using CPOMS.** The Headteacher responded that staff were aware of the increasing culture of accountability and understood that data should be recorded with care.

**15. Dates and times of future governing body and committee meetings**

The dates of governing body meetings had been previously agreed as:

- 31 January 2017
- 21 March 2017
- 23 May 2017
- 11 July 2017

All GB meetings would begin at 6pm.

**National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)**

The Head of School had nearly completed his NPQH and would write a report to be circulated to governors.

**Action: Head of School**

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

Signed .....  
Chair of Governors

Date .....

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