



Bishopswood School

Headteacher: Ms. P. Bhagrath Bsc (Hons), MA, NPQH
Chair of Governors: Mr. M. Winch

Grove Road, Sonning Common, Reading, Oxon RG4 9RH
☎ 0118 972 4311 | Fax: 0118 924 2730
office@bishopswoodschool.co.uk
www.bishopswoodschool.co.uk

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Monday 13th March 2023
5.00pm held virtually using Microsoft Teams

Item No.		Action
	<p>Present: Priya Bhagrath (PB, Headteacher) Kristine Hicks (KH, Parent Governor) Alan McPherson (AM, Community Governor) Mark Winch (MW, Community Governor, Chair of Governors)</p> <p>Also in Attendance: Lorraine Green (LG, Deputy Headteacher) Tom Pegler (TP, Chief Executive Officer, Propeller Academy Trust) David Stevinson (DS, Interim Deputy Headteacher) [arrived 5.40pm, left 6.06pm] Helen Roberts (Clerk to Governors)</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p>	
1.	<p>Attendance and apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW started the meeting at 5.00pm. - There were no apologies to record. 	
2.	<p>Declaration of pecuniary or other interests, confirmations that GovernorHub annual declarations have been completed by all new governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The governors and attendees confirmed there were no interests to declare in relation to the meeting agenda. - HR will follow up on the requirement for governors to complete GovernorHub. See Action Log. 	
3.	<p>Minutes from the last meeting for approval: (see attached paper)</p> <p>a. FGB Meeting 16th January 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The minutes were agreed as a true record and will be signed by the chair. <p>b. IEB (Interim Executive Board) Meeting 19th December 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR explained the advice from Oxfordshire Governor Services regarding the appropriate recording and approval of these meeting minutes. The governors were satisfied to hear that all those present at the meeting 19/12/2022 had confirmed via email that they approved the content of the minutes, therefore they can be signed and filed as necessary. 	
4.	<p>Action Log: (see attached paper)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several items from the Action Log had been completed and will be marked as such. With reference to the Staff Forum action, the governing body agreed that this area of focus had been picked up elsewhere and therefore the item will be closed. - Actions ongoing included a parent governor letter from MW, and the arrangement of a meeting with the ESAT team by TP. - MW agreed to check that he had received the Trust Policies Matrix sent by TP. This action will be carried over. 	

Signed by Chair..... Date..... 1

5.	<p>Items from the Chair and Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW provided a summary of the positive School Improvement Partner (SI Partner) visit to the school. He drew attention to an interesting point regarding the school's work on Vision and Values, noting the suggestion of the SI Partner to bring that work forwards. - MW informed the governors that he had met with PB, TP, and LG to look at the Strategic Aims, and noted that a draft document would be shared with governors shortly. - PB expressed her agreement with the SI Partner regarding the Vision and Values work being prioritised. She suggested that this work would be started in the staff development sessions. - PB shared her experience of the SI Partner visit and emphasised the importance of using this visit as a springboard. - MW reported a positive meeting with AM and KH, further details of which will be shared in the governor recruitment item later in the agenda. 	
6.	<p>Governor Administration and Core Responsibilities: <i>(see attached paper)</i></p> <p>a. Review and approve the Governance Maturity Matrix Assessment and Governing Board Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acknowledging that this would be discussed later in the agenda, governors expressed the important issue regarding capacity. They stated that it was a daunting workload for the three non-staff governors, and this raised concerns about their ability to deliver the development plan. - Governors agreed the self-assessment against the governance maturity matrix and the governing board development plan with the caveat of governor capacity. <p>b. Review and approve Risk Appetite Statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This document was approved. <p>c. Review and approve Link Governor Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW shared insight from the SI Partner process and the satisfaction that these were the correct areas to have governor overview. - This document was approved. <p>d. Review and approve the Governor Monitoring Plan 2022-23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors agreed the plan was sound but expressed again the caution regarding governor capacity to deliver it. - This document was approved. <p>e. Governor Visit Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several reports had been made available on GovernorHub. - MW confirmed that he had completed a Safeguarding monitoring visit following the prescribed checklist. - TP took the opportunity to offer his support during monitoring visits to AM and KH. - With reference to the Budget Monitoring Visit report from MW, he highlighted that the school continued to progress through the reconciliation process of transfer from OCC (Oxfordshire County Council) to The Propeller Trust. He concluded that the budget set to the end of August 2023 was well founded. <p>f. Review and approve Governor Induction Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This document was approved. - The governing body acknowledged that the Trust was working on a Trust-wide policy. They discussed a Governor Handbook, with appreciation that this took time to pull together. <p>g. Governor Training Opportunity Plan 2022-23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors were informed about their training expectations. - Q: Governors asked if NGA training modules would be included? A: MW agreed that this was a good idea and he will aim to update the programme options for the summer term. 	

Signed by Chair Date.....

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors were reminded that the school had paid for access to the OCC training courses for the current academic year. <p>h. Governor Training Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW shared insights from his attendance at a recent level 3 safeguarding training session including the LADO's focus on neglect. - Q: Governors asked what training LG had and would require to better support the DSL role she was assuming from DS? A: PB agreed that the course detailed by MW would be helpful for LG as she received a handover from DS. LG explained the handover process further and agreed that extra training would be welcome. <p>i. Governor Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW shared the challenges faced with governor recruitment and the routes pursued so far. This would start to have an impact on the Governing Boards ability to deliver the governance structure that had been implemented and highlighted as strong by the SI Partner. - The governing body discussed the school's position within the local community, noting that improving community links was a good starting point for recruitment. They considered this item in detail, including a list of suggestions for contacts and recruitment tactics and opportunities. They concluded that raising the profile of the school was an ongoing priority. - MW to provide a recruitment paragraph to TP. ACTION. - PB to advertise the parent governor vacancy via the parent/carer newsletter. ACTION. - Above actions to be supported by the existing action for MW to write to parents/carers. - [DS joined the meeting during this item, 5.40pm]. <p>j. Clerks update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No items for the minutes. <p>k. Trust update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TP provided an update of information from the Trust. This included details about the working groups, work being done to provide apprenticeships and the review process around the Scheme of Delegation. - Q: Governors commented on the inspiring work being done and the exciting times ahead. They asked if that message was reaching all staff members? A: TP acknowledged that more could be done around the communication of these projects and innovations and that PB had contacted him to provide information for a newsletter. - Q: With reference to the apprenticeships, and the Trust work around the 19-25 age group, governors suggested that with no sixth form provision at the school, how do the governors and the school make sure that pupils don't miss out? A: TP explained that he had met with a representative from OCC in the previous week where Bishopswood School's ambitions were discussed openly, including being on one site only and having sixth form provision. 	<p>MW</p> <p>PB</p>
7. and 8.	<p>To allow DS to present the items relevant to him and then leave the meeting, the following items were taken out of agenda order:</p> <p>7. Leadership and Management:</p> <p>c. Safeguarding update and data report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors drew attention to an item in the report and asked if the school had dealt with the individual member of staff concerned and if this was an opportunity to share a learning message with all staff? A: DS confirmed the message had been shared with all staff at the secondary site and PB noted that a further conversation would take place at primary. 	

Signed by Chair Date.....

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: With reference to an incident regarding medicines, governors asked if this was another learning opportunity? A: DS reassured the governors that this message was regularly being reinforced but agreed that it would do no harm to repeat it. TP commented that the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) involvement would support this particular incident, and that training was a focus. MW noted he would pick this up as part of his next safeguarding visit. <p>8. Behaviour and Attitudes:</p> <p>a. Attendance Data Autumn Term Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DS highlighted the Local Authority Audit where there was recognition regarding improving attendance data. - DS stated that the school's procedures had improved, attendance was above the national average, and several pupils had been identified as having very good attendance. - Governors recognised the issues with historic data. They asked the school to present their data against the national average percentages next time. <p>ACTION.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DS shared details about further data challenges presented by the academisation that also impacted the Admissions Register. - Q: Governors responded to the positive attendance picture. They identified 27 Persistently Absent pupils, reduced from 31, and asked if the remaining pupils were improving? A: DS agreed that a reduction would be seen in the data. TP reminded governors that it was harder to show this in the data as the year progresses because of the cumulative nature of the recording. - Governors recognised the above comment and noted that governors wanted to see that attendance was improving and also have an understanding around the narrative for reassurance around progress being made by PA and SA pupils to ensure there was an improving trajectory even if this would not mean they would be above the PA levels due to the nature of how the data was measured. <p>Behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DS summarised the ongoing recording of behaviour incidents in the school. He reminded governors about the issues with historical data and noted that there was more work to be done on consistency in reporting. - DS reported on positive feedback from visitors to the school regarding the calm atmosphere. - Q: Governors asked if staff are granted time during the day to record incidents on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System). A: PB confirmed they were and explained how the school handled this now, and the difference to how it was handled previously. - Q: With reference to the question above, governors asked for reassurance that everything should therefore be captured. A: PB agreed. - The governing board acknowledged that this was DS's last meeting before he left the school at the end of the term. They thanked him for all of the work he had done. - [DS left the meeting at the end of this item, 6.06pm]. 	PB/LG
7.	<p>Leadership and Management: (see attached paper)</p> <p>a. Receive Policies for approval in line with Policy Schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB stated that the three policies mentioned in the Headteacher Report needed attention and would be presented at the next meeting. <p>b. Health & Safety Report (focus on incident/accident reporting process):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The report had been uploaded to GovernorHub. 	

Signed by Chair Date.....

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors asked who was monitoring Smart Log (accident health and safety software)? A: PB stated the leadership team were responsible for monitoring. She provided an example about how an incident would be managed and followed up. - Q: Governors raised the high staff sickness level. A: PB agreed that the number was high. She informed the governors that informal discussions had been triggered with some staff members. She provided further details and considered a repeat of the staff survey as a priority. PB highlighted the impact of using agency staff and the pressure this put on permanent staff members. - Q: Governors emphasised that awareness of current vacancies and staff structure was key to their understanding. A: PB took the opportunity to demonstrate how some staff members' expectations regarding staffing levels needed to be addressed. This meant that risk assessments for classes to inform adult to child ratios were an important area of work. She explained that alongside LG she would look at the classes for next year and that will provide more information about the staff structure. - Q: Governors asked if the school was actively recruiting? A: PB informed the governors that she had met with GL (school administrator) to understand what adverts were live and where. GL will speak to a Trust member of staff for advice on management of this. - Q: Governors asked for clarification about the 'industrial injury' days, observing the high number. A: PB and TP gave more information about this category and the individuals involved. Governors were concerned with the high level of days taken under this absence code. - Q: Governors asked if the school had a medical referral facility? A: PB confirmed they did. - Q: Governors asked for reassurance that patterns of absence were being followed up strictly in line with the human resources processes. Governors also identified that unpaid authorised absence was high. A: PB was clear that from September 2022 adherence to the school's HRs policy had been tight. <p>c. Safeguarding update and data report (to include assessment of need and safe staffing levels):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This item had been taken earlier in the meeting. <p>d. Progress report on SDP including impact and milestone achievement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB explained that the original document (see SEF&SDP 01.2023) was large because it had been important to document the school's journey and include critical evidence. She noted that the SI Partner had commented that the document was very long. Therefore, a document has been put together as a Self-Evaluation form (SEF) and School Improvement Plan (SIP) Summary (see SEF overview) that has been RAG (red amber green) rated. - The governing body considered this helpful document. They discussed how best to demonstrate impact on the summary plan, noting the challenges with RAG rating when it came to evidencing impact. MW also noted that the length of the combined documents was long and that this had been picked up as part of the SI Partner visit and that senior leaders would be reviewing this. - Going forward PB agreed to update the SIP, with the SEF being assessed twice annually, once with Governors in attendance. <p>e. CPD/training programme implementation and impact report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This agenda item was included in the Headteacher report (item below). 	
--	---	--

Signed by Chair Date.....

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB and LG discussed the future inclusion of this element to the Teaching and Learning Report. - Governors acknowledged that the reporting formats would evolve as the school continued its journey and the new Governing Board expectations around reporting became clear. <p>f. Headteacher Report (to include update on Quality of Education monitoring process and impact, curriculum improvement work, and transition points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB provided a short summary. The report had been made available in advance on GovernorHub. - Governors identified that item 9a from the agenda, Personal Development Report, was included in the Headteacher Report. - Q: With reference to the PSHE (Personal Social Health Economic) curriculum, governors recognised that this was reviewed as part of the main curriculum and asked if it was fit for purpose and if it met national expectations? A: PB determined that it was not fit for purpose. She informed the governors that because the school was operating under reduced capacity this had not been addressed. She explained that when the Assistant Headteacher positions start it would enable the school to work on this. - Q: Governors praised the big step forward for the school arranging work experience for pupils. They offered congratulations. In terms of the personal development and extended curriculum offer they asked what that looked like? A: PB noted that it had been limited by staffing constraints. She reported that the school was tracking pupil engagement, and weekly monitoring was undertaken regarding these interventions. She suggested that the school would be able to report on those at the final FGB meeting this academic year. ACTION. - Q: Governors asked TP if the Trust could help with the capacity issues? A: TP suggested that the apprenticeship scheme was a positive way forward regarding Teaching Assistant (TA) recruitment. He explained that recruitment and retention work would be reinvigorated, the Trust Administrator had been tasked with looking at social media opportunities, and he felt strongly that a local mail drop within the local community would be worthwhile. ACTION. - Q: Governors suggested that TA recruitment was often more successful if role progression was integral to the offering. A: TP agreed with this comment noting that the Trust was optimistic that the apprenticeship scheme would support that. - The governing body considered other routes for recruitment including other local contacts being built up. - Q: Governors asked if the school was in competition with other local schools regarding recruitment, and if the school knew whether those other organisations were facing similar challenges. A: TP put forward the view that mainstream schools and SEN schools have different set ups, and a mainstream school would not have a requirement for as many teaching assistants. He reminded the governors that the school had looked closely at pay issues (Oxfordshire rates versus Berkshire rates). He argued that the mainstream schools were facing teacher recruitment challenges as opposed to TA recruitment. - Q: With reference to policies, governors asked if the school's Equality Duty was compliant. A: MW confirmed that this policy was on the annual work schedule and would be an agenda item for review later in the academic year. <p>g. Budget report plan v actual (to include overview of work being undertaken to set budget until August 2023 and staffing structure feeding into budget):</p>	<p>PB</p> <p>PB</p>
--	---	---------------------

Signed by Chair Date.....

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors recognised that there was no accompanying report included with the meeting documents. - PB acknowledged that she had not yet met with TS (Tracey Stratton, Chief Operations Officer). Therefore, this item will be carried over to the next meeting. ACTION. - TP noted that he would be involved in a meeting that looked at the six-monthly accounts at Trust level the following day. 	HR
8.	Behaviour and Attitudes: (see attached paper) a. Attendance Data Autumn Term Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Item taken earlier in the meeting. 	
9.	Personal Development: a. Personal Development Report (to include extended curriculum offer, PSHE/RSE curriculum implementation and impact and pastoral and nurture support and impact): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covered within item 7. 	
10.	School Events and Notices this term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB shared details. Governors demonstrated their enthusiasm to support events. 	
11.	Date of next meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 22nd May 2023 at 5pm - 26th June 2023 at 5pm 	
	The meeting closed at 6.45pm.	
	Attached papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda Item 03a - 2023.01.16 FGB Minutes - for approval - Agenda Item 03b - 2022.12.19 IEB Minutes - for approval - Agenda Item 04 - FGB Action Log March 2023mjw - Agenda Item 06a - Bishopswood School Maturity Matrix Self Assessment and Governing Board Development Plan v1 Jan 2023 - Agenda Item 06b - Risk Appetite Stmt DRAFT - Agenda Item 06c - Proposed Link Governor Roles DRAFT v3 - Agenda Item 06d - Draft Bishopswood Governor Monitoring Plan 22-23 - Agenda Item 06e - Governor Monitoring Checklist Safeguarding 23-02-23 - Agenda Item 06e - Governor Report on a School Visit 23-02-23 Budget Monitoring Visit - Agenda Item 06e - Governor Report on a School Visit 23-02-23 Safeguarding Visit - Agenda Item 06e - Governor Report on a School Visit 27-01-23 New Governor Tour and Meeting with Senior Leaders - Agenda Item 06f - Governor Induction Policy DRAFTv1.1 - Agenda Item 06g - Training Opportunity Plan 2022-23 - Agenda Item 7b - H&S report March 2023 - Agenda Item 7c - Safeguarding Report February 2023 Data from 16 - Agenda Item 7d - SEF overview Jan 2023 - Agenda Item 7d - SEF&SDP 01.2023 - Agenda Item 7f - HT report March 2023 - Agenda Item 7f - Spring 2 - Term 4 Pupil progress update report 2023 - Agenda Item 7f - Teaching and Learning report Spring 2 2023 - Agenda Item 8a - Attendance Feb 2023 - Agenda Item 8a - Behaviour Report Feb 23 	

Signed by Chair Date.....