



Bishopswood School

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

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Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting
Monday 26th June 2023
5.00pm held virtually using Microsoft Teams

Item No.		Action
	<p>Present: Priya Bhagrath (PB, Headteacher) Kristine Hicks (KH, Parent Governor) Ruth Kennell (RK, Community Governor) Alan McPherson (AM, Community Governor) Mark Winch (MW, Community Governor, Chair of Governors)</p> <p>Also in Attendance: Fay Bjornstad (FB, Assistant Headteacher) Sukh Colebourne (SC, Assistant Headteacher) Lorraine Green (LG, Deputy Headteacher) Tom Pegler (TP, Chief Executive Officer, Propeller Academy Trust) [left at 5.35pm] Helen Roberts (HR, Clerk to Governors) Tracey Stratton (TS, Chief Operations Office, Propeller Academy Trust) [left at 5.35pm]</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>TS and TP informed the governors that they would need to leave the meeting at 5.30pm. The governing board agreed to take agenda items out of the published order.</p>	
1.	<p>Attendance and apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	
5.	<p>Items from Chair and Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW drew attention to the supporting papers for the meeting. He commented that there were items missing and understood that this reflected the amount of pressure the school was under to drive improvement. He emphasised that this was not a criticism of the senior leadership team. - The governors considered this. They discussed the School Development Plan (SDP) and the school's ability to achieve the items within it, they reported that they had not seen budget monitoring documents since January, they noted that the Equality Statement agenda item had been carried over from a previous agenda and was not available for this meeting. They wanted to understand what additional support the Trust could offer and if the school had the capacity to deliver the ambitious SDP. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In response to governors' comments, TP acknowledged that the concern regarding capacity was valid. He explained that the Trust representatives worked with the senior leadership team on a weekly basis, and items such as the Equality Statement can certainly be supported if the team asks for assistance. He drew attention to the ongoing issue regarding recruitment and retention, pointing out that this was a national issue. - Q: With reference to staffing, governors asked about the significant staff vacancies for September 2023. A: PB explained that there were four teaching vacancies outlined in the headteacher report (to accompany agenda item 7b). She noted that since writing that report there had been some successful recruitment leaving 1.5 teaching vacancies for September. - Q: Governors asked about the 14 Teaching Assistant (TA) vacancies. A: PB explained this figure had been recorded in the wrong column and that TA vacancies at the time of the report being written was in fact 10 positions because they were filled by agency staff. She noted that of these 10, four individuals had accepted permanent contracts, and this meant there were currently six TA vacancies. - Q: Governors (referencing the Safeguarding report) saw the safeguarding referrals to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) regarding agency staff as a concern. A: LG acknowledged that some of the referrals had involved agency staff and one of the actions from the LADO was improved training for agency staff because inexperience was having an impact. - Q: Governors reiterated that the safeguarding impact was a concern for them. A: TP put forward that recruitment was the key to all the concerns being raised and commented that the school and Trust was doing all they could to manage this. He reminded governors about the re-evaluated recruitment strategy. - Q: Governors asked what the vacancy rates were in the other (Trust) schools. A: TP stated it was similar. TS further explained how the Trust was advertising vacancies and commented that they were seeing more applicants as a result. She informed the governors that the apprenticeship scheme had been launched. - Q: Governors asked for further clarification regarding vacancies in other schools and repeated their concern about the impact on safeguarding. A: TP considered that the school had proportionately more vacancies because there were fewer staff overall. He acknowledged that the other schools were not seeing the effect on safeguarding. 	
7.	<p>Leadership and Management: (see attached paper)</p> <p>f. Budget setting paper 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two documents had been uploaded to GovernorHub at the start of the meeting. - MW shared his screen to enable governors to view the documents. - TS summarised the budget papers. She explained the ongoing conversations with OCC (Oxfordshire County Council) regarding funding and the two scenarios presented based on the possible outcomes. - TS explained that once an answer had been received an adjusted document would be shared. - Q: Governors recalled the ongoing conversation with OCC regarding funding and asked if the school would have to revisit the staff structure if the money was not granted. They expressed concern that this would mean an unsatisfactory structure. 	

	<p>A: TS reassured the governors that the structure was safe and that it would become a conversation for the central Trust team to look at their structure and finances. She acknowledged how the school would be unsafe with less staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors asked exactly what they were being asked to acknowledge or agree. A: TS made it clear that the governors needed to be aware of, and sign off, the £213k deficit predicted in the budget. She reminded the governors that a revised version would be circulated as soon as she had more information. - Q: Governors asked if they would get a detailed breakdown as well as a revised budget? A: TS confirmed this. She emphasised however, that the school did not have a trend to base comparisons on and wanted governors to be aware of that. - Q: Governors asked PB if she was confident that the school would be able to deliver the priorities and plans for the next year given the budget available. A: PB said she was satisfied that the need for enrichment opportunities, staffing, and educational supplies would be met by the budget. - The governors acknowledged and recognised the overspend position, they understood that work was ongoing, and they would expect a revised budget. - [TS and TP left the meeting, 5.35pm]. 	
3.	<p>Minutes from the last meeting for approval: (see attached paper)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. FGB Meeting 13th March 2023 b. FGB Meeting 15th May 2023 c. FGB Meeting 22nd May 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For information the minutes for items a. and b. had not been approved at the previous FGB meeting because it was not quorate. - All the above meeting minutes were approved by the governing body. 	
4.	<p>Action Log: (see attached paper)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Items from the Action Log were considered in turn. The majority had been completed and will be marked as such. - With reference to the action '(ref agenda Item 7f) PB to update the SDP and RAG rating and circulate the plan to governors with a short explanatory email re: the two agreed priorities for completion this year' MW will revisit this to confirm governors' understanding of the action. - With reference to the actions regarding Sports Premium and Pupil Premium MW explained that he would pick these items up during his next monitoring visit to the school. 	MW
6.	<p>Governor Administration and Core Responsibilities: (see attached paper)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Governor Visit Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AM summarised his visit. MW asked if the follow up actions from the visit were underway and PB confirmed this had been considered as part of a phonics learning walk. b. Governor Training Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW summarised the recent OCC Governor Conference. - KH reported on her attendance at part A of the governor induction training. c. Governor Recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW introduced new community governor RK. She was welcomed to the governing board. - MW reviewed the ongoing recruitment possibilities and noted there were two potential candidates. - The parent governor vacancy was discussed and will be followed up. 	

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	<p>d. Clerk's update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR drew attention to the board's access to the NGA website, she asked governors to let her know if they had not received a joining email. <p>e. Trust update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The update will be provided via email. <p>f. Proposed meeting dates 2023-24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The meeting dates were considered and agreed. 	
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"> - The Accessibility Policy had been brought forward for review and approval. - The governing board discussed the aspirational nature of this policy, they understood that some aspects of the policy were outside of the school's control. They agreed that elements from the policy, for example lack of break out space, no access to a swimming pool or hydrotherapy suite, should be added to the Risk Register. ACTION. - Q: With reference to the limited break out space, governors asked if the school had other options available to them to mitigate this risk. A: PB explained how areas had been re-purposed as break out spaces, and that the secondary school site was more challenging. She noted that TS had recommended looking at some remedial work in existing spaces to create temporary areas, but this would take time and only be a short-term solution. - Q: Governors asked if PB was clear in her communication to the Trust about what elements of the policy cannot currently be delivered. A: PB confirmed that an Action Plan was in place. - Governors requested sight of this plan. ACTION. - Q: Governors asked how the school managed pupils' EHCP (education health care plans) if needs outlined in those plans were not being met. A: PB acknowledged that access to swimming and hydrotherapy, noted in some plans, was an issue. She explained how the school had tried to find external facilities to support these needs. - Q: Governors asked what other local schools, or schools within the Trust, do regarding these facilities. A: PB reported that they had contacted other local schools with no success and would try again in September. - The policy was approved. - Governors acknowledged that areas in the plan were not being met and they would therefore like to review the plan again. <p>b. Headteacher report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors asked for information about the Values day held with staff and if a working group had been arranged. A: PB summarised the inset day activities. She confirmed that six individuals had been identified to form the working group. - The governors emphasised how they were looking forward to starting the year with a clear set of values to support working with pupils and stakeholders. <p>c. Safeguarding update and Data Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors asked about the gaps identified during the Single Central Record (SCR) check carried out by LG and TP. A: LG explained that this activity was part of her training, and the session had been extremely thorough. She explained the nature of the gaps and emphasised that these were minor issues and primarily about tightening up working practices. - Q: Governors asked if the school included agency staff on the SCR. A: LG confirmed they did. She gave further information and illustrated how the school would not rely solely on agency checks. 	<p>MW</p> <p>PB</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: With reference to safeguarding reporting to the LADO in connection with agency staff (noted earlier in the meeting), governors asked for reassurance that this area was a top priority for the Senior Leadership Team, and that all staff understand the importance of their safeguarding responsibilities. A: LG explained how the school was working with agency staff members to support their recording of incidents. She noted that agency staff did not have access to CPOMS (child protection online management system) and therefore paper incident forms were provided to help people report things in a timely manner. She explained that these forms and training were provided in the Day 1 pack provided during induction. LG confirmed that FB had led training for existing agency staff to cover this. - Q: Governors acknowledged the steps that had been put in place. They asked if the school was following up on these procedures and practices to make sure that agency staff were adhering to the recommended working practices. A: LG confirmed that she had received a completed paper incident report and this demonstrated the training had impact. She reassured governors that senior leaders were carefully observing practice during learning walks. - PB provided the narrative alongside the school's LADO referrals to provide context. - Q: Governors asked if agency staff have completed generalist safeguarding training. A: LG explained that individuals would have completed this via their agency, however, longer term staff would be expected to attend school led training as well. - Q: Governors asked if the school held a preferred list of agencies and agency staff. A: PB confirmed that the school used two or three agencies as preferred suppliers. She clarified that the school did not use people for one day only, and most had been supporting the school since January 2023. <p>d. Health & Safety Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors asked if a fire drill had been carried out this term. A: PB confirmed this would be actioned. - Q: Governors asked if a lockdown drill had been carried out this academic year. A: PB noted that this hadn't been completed and would be actioned before the end of term. - Q: With reference to the injuries noted (included within the headteacher report) governors asked if this was driven by pupil behaviour issues and whether there were action plans to access external support. A: PB agreed it was and stated there were plans in place. She gave more details about the individuals involved. - Q: Recognising that a reduced timetable was one potential recommendation, the governors asked if the school had engaged with OCC regarding that. A: PB informed the governors that OCC agreed with the proposal. She also explained that the school was currently funding the extra support to manage the pupil. She described how the school would manage the situation to the end of term recognising the conflict between future safeguarding implications for the pupil and the school's responsibility to keep staff safe. <p>e. Parent Information Event feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB analysed the event and gave details about the conversations with parents/carers. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW shared his view noting the positives for example engaged parents. PB and LG agreed that parents/carers were excited about the introduction of Evidence for Learning. <p>f. Budget setting paper 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda item taken earlier in the meeting. <p>g. Budget monitoring report plan v actual period 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda item taken earlier in the meeting. - Governors asked that the school bursar circulated the budget v actual documents. ACTION. 	HR
8.	<p>Behaviour and Attitudes:</p> <p>a. Attendance Report including detail on Persistently Absent pupils and Severe Absence actions and impact term 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB reminded governors about the ongoing challenge aligning Integris (previous system) and Arbor (current system) data. - Governors commented on the challenge this presented when trying to look at trends. - Governors agreed that attendance was a positive area of change, and this demonstrated a culture shift within the school. - Q: Governors identified that Persistently Absent pupil percentages were below the national figure. They asked if the school agreed this was going in the right direction. A: PB highlighted the value of the Arbor system and explained how it had supported faster reactions to absence and opportunities to scrutinise the data. She noted that the school administration team was supporting senior leaders to follow up on absence. LG commented that this work had helped the school to successfully target the Home School Liaison worker. 	
9.	<p>Personal Development:</p> <p>a. Review equality objectives and accessibility plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not available for this meeting. <p>b. Personal Development Report (to include extended curriculum offer, PHSE (personal health social economic)/RSE (relationships and sex education) curriculum implementation and impact, pastoral and nurture support and impact):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB and LG provided an update. - LG emphasised safety around the internet and online activities was a priority area to focus on, and this was being developed alongside the five-year plan. - PB drew attention to the preparation for adulthood focus of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the commitment to support staff to promote pupil independence. - Q: Governors acknowledged comments about pupils picking up on issues through social media platforms. They asked if the school thought parents/carers were aware of this. A: PB gave her view and explained how the school had managed those instances. LG suggested that forming a working group of parents/carers to support e-safety would be a useful way to promote education in this area. 	
10.	<p>Quality of Education:</p> <p>a. Quality of Teaching Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This item was included in the Headteacher report (7b). <p>Teaching and Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FB summarised the Teaching and Learning report. - Q: With respect to CPD (continued professional development) governors asked if higher level areas were being picked up for inclusion into the SIP. A: PB said they were and she noted that with the new curriculum expectations the school will start afresh with training and CPD basics to ensure the foundations are in place. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The governing board emphasised how recruitment and retention of quality staff was the way to drive up teaching and learning standards in the classroom. - Q: On the matter of the SEF (self-evaluation form) governors took the view that this was an honest assessment. They asked the school when they thought the areas measured as 'Requires Improvement' would become 'Good'. A: PB highlighted the issue with senior leader capacity at present. She noted that the two assistant headteachers were currently in classrooms teaching. She declared that without recruitment of good teachers the school would not be able to meet the required pace of change. - The governing body acknowledged the barriers faced by the school and agreed that the senior leaders could not have done more. Assessment: - SC summarised the Assessment report. - Q: Governors asked about the review of the Marking Policy. They suggested that the school should be mindful of teacher workload. A: PB responded that the school anticipated Evidence for Learning reducing workload in this area. 	
11.	School Events and Notices this term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB was pleased to report that a recent staff development session had included planning for activities next year. She informed the governors that there was a lot planned. 	
12.	Date of next meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25th September 2023, 5pm. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW informed everyone that this was AM's last meeting as a governor for the school. The governing board thanked AM for his contribution. - All round thanks were offered to governors, the senior leadership team, staff, and MW for his chairing of the board. 	
	The meeting finished at 7.05pm.	
	Attached papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda Item 03a - 23.03.13 FGB Minutes - for approval (carried over from May meeting) - Agenda Item 03b - 2023.05.15 FGB (short) Minutes - for approval (carried over from May meeting) - Agenda Item 03c - 2023.05.22 FGB Minutes - for approval - Agenda Item 04 - FGB Action Log June 2023 DRAFT - Agenda Item 06a - Copy of Governor Report on a School Visit Phonics 110523 (carried over from May meeting) - Agenda Item 06f - Proposed FGB Meeting Dates for Bishopswood School 2023-24 - Agenda Item 07a - Accessibility Plan May 2023 (CARRIED OVER FROM MAY MEETING) - Agenda Item 07b - Headteacher report 26062023 - Agenda Item 07b - SEF overview June 2023 - Agenda Item 07c - Safeguarding_report June 2023 - Agenda Item 07f - Bishops Budget paper with central charge v2 - Agenda Item 07f - Bishopswood Budget paper 	

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