

Heathwood Lower School
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
Held on Wednesday 1 December 2021 at 7:00pm
(virtual meeting using Google)

In attendance:	Jackie Wright (JW)	Acting Headteacher
	Susanne Dove (SD)	Headteacher
	Paula Bangs (PB)	Co-opted Governor(Chair)
	Rose Gunter (RG)	Co-opted Governor (Vice Chair)
	Hayley Fitch (HF)	Co-opted Governor
	Bryony Leary (BL)	Staff Governor
	Beth Sedgwick (BS)	Parent Governor
	Jonathan Young (JY)	Parent Governor
	Sarah Sandiford	Clerk

No	Item	Action
1.0	<p>Welcome and Apologies for Absence PB welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.</p>	
2.0	<p>Minutes of previous meetings The draft minutes from the previous meetings had been circulated to all governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><i>Agreed: to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 22 September 2021 and on 28 October 2021.</i></p>	
3.0	<p>Matters arising from the minutes None.</p>	
4.0	<p>Declarations of interest Governors were asked to please return their forms as soon as possible so the website could be updated. PB/RG would meet with JW once per term to audit and tidy up the website.</p>	
5.0	<p>Management & Resources Committee report The draft minutes of previous meeting were on the shared drive. The last meeting had mainly been about the budget. JY advised he had emailed Keith about the I.T. issues and been through the books with Simon.</p>	
6.0	<p>Teaching & Learning Committee report The draft minutes of the previous meeting were on the shared drive and PB had prepared a report. It was noted that the Eco Council was trying to get an award. There were no questions or comments on the report.</p>	
7.0	<p>Headteacher's report</p>	

Signed as a true and accurate record

Chair:

Date:

Prepared by Sarah Sandiford, Clerk to the Governing Body

	<p>The Head's report was in a new format, taken from a template on The School Bus and feedback was sought from governors. Governors felt some information which had previously been in reports was lacking, i.e. staffing matters including CPD and absence, plus tracking through the year groups. There was also no narrative or headlines which was always useful. It was suggested that some of the useful information tables could be merged with the previous report format.</p> <p>Covid continued to have a huge impact with significant staff absence daily. The new variant meant there was daily staff sickness absence with repeated tests being needed. There was currently a 20% reduction in staff across the school including teaching staff, TA's, kitchen and midday supervisors. Managing the situation and trying to keep the school open was made even more difficult when trying to minimise mixing of year groups and movement around the school. A particular concern was the high proportion of children with EHCPs as the level of staff absence met the children's needs could not always be met. Classes 1 and 2 were currently closed but it was hoped they would re-open on Monday.</p> <p>Public Health England classed this as an "outbreak" and had advised they were satisfied with the mitigation measures put in place such as increased ventilation. Governors asked if the scenario was clear for when closure was required and what parental reaction to closures had been. Parental reaction had been mixed with some very supportive and appreciative of remote learning but others unhappy with the situation.</p> <p>Governors asked about use of supply staff; this was virtually impossible as many schools were in a similar position. Some schools were giving less notice of closure – Heathwood was trying to advise the day before but it was noted that with staffing so skeleton, one more absence could make the difference between opening or closing, so perhaps advising by 7:30am in the morning would be better.</p> <p>The situation was not expected to improve over the last two weeks of term as a further complication was staff having booster jabs and experiencing side effects.</p> <p>Governors expressed their support to staff and BS offered to help in drafting communications about closures to parents.</p>	
8.0	<p>School Development Plan This had been red/amber/green rated. RG asked a question about numbers for wraparound care.</p>	
9.0	<p>SEND There were some children with significant additional needs and managing this was very challenging in the current circumstances.</p>	

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10.0	<p>Schools for the Future</p> <p>An email received from Central Bedfordshire Council had been circulated to governors and it was noted that no changes were now expected before 2024.</p>	
11.0	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>Lots of work on site had been completed over the holiday, including the car park lighting which was much appreciated now it was winter.</p>	
12.0	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Information was provided in the Head's report. RG advised she had done a lot of training recently including safeguarding.</p>	
13.0	<p>Policies.</p> <p>BS advised that following the recent complaint, the Behaviour policy needed to be reviewed and possibly the disability policy. It would also be useful to review the complaints policy now that a level 4 complaint had been processed.</p> <p>It was suggested that a working party of staff and governors review the behaviour policy.</p> <p>BS reported to the Board on the complaints panel decision following several meetings. The panel had agreed that the decision making in the situation had been appropriate and in line with school policy and legislation. The panel had made a number of recommendations which would require further action.</p>	
14.0	<p>AOB</p> <p>Ofsted preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were INSET plans to look carefully at the curriculum. - All staff and governors to be clearly aware of safeguarding and SEND requirements as in the event of an inspection, it was not necessarily the designated leads who would be asked about this. - Could information for governors to help prepare for Ofsted be added to the Ofsted folder on the governors' shared drive. <p>SD advised her sick note would expire next week and she hoped to start a phased return to school.</p> <p>In light of the recent complaint and difficulty in convening a panel, it was suggested to look at recruiting additional co-opted governors. It was agreed to do a governor skills audit first to identify any gaps. Governors were asked to think about any possible contacts who might be suitable and interested. Approaching local press or local companies was another option.</p>	

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	<p>Governors asked about staff wellbeing in light of the difficult circumstances at school. SD advised she had raised this with the School Improvement Partner but there were no easy answers.</p> <p>Governors expressed their thanks and support to all staff and particularly thanked JW for doing an amazing job in extremely tough circumstances. PB also thanked fellow governors for their support and wished everyone a happy and peaceful festive holiday.</p>	
15.0	<p>Close of meeting The meeting closed at 20:45.</p>	

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