

**Approved Minutes**  
**Meeting of the Governing Body (GB) of**  
**WEST JESMOND PRIMARY SCHOOL (WJPS)**  
**Tuesday 21 May 2019**

**Present:**

Laura Robb (Acting Chair)  
Ishy Bruce, Paul Catterson, Julia De Soyza, Hannah Evans, David Griffiths,  
Ayesha Hafiz, Cathy Hogan, Jill Maddison, Rebecca McVittie (Associate member),  
Paul Simpson, Gary Wallis-Clarke (Executive Headteacher), Laura Ward and  
Sally Watson

Governors in post - **19**; quorum - **10**; governors present – **13** (and 1 Associate member)

**The meeting was quorate**

**In attendance:**

Claire Hepple ~ Clerk, Governor Services

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**Business**

**1. Welcome**

In the absence of Jane Edminson, Chair of Governors, everyone was welcomed to the meeting by Laura Robb, Vice-Chair and Acting Chair, at 6pm. Paul Catterson and Sally Watson, new Parent Governors were especially welcomed and a round of introductions took place.

*Hannah Evans joined the meeting during this item, 6.03pm.*

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received and were **accepted** from Arlene Ainsley, Laura Cordy, Jane Edminson, Adam Goldwater, Jodie Leeson (maternity leave) and Dominic Martin.

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

Paul Catterson and Sally Watson completed Register of Interests forms and signed the GB Code of Conduct. There were no additional interests or revisions to interests declared by other governors.

**4. GB Appointments / membership update**

**Foundation Trust Governor vacancy**

A vacancy for a Foundation Trust Governor remained. Jill Maddison and Laura Robb would meet to discuss how the vacancy may be filled.

**Action: Jill Maddison and Laura Robb**

**Committee membership**

It was **agreed** that Paul Catterson would join the Finance Committee and Sally Watson would join the Curriculum Committee.

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

The Executive Headteacher identified three items:

- He thanked all governors who had participated in external monitoring of SATs. He noted that pupils in Year 6 had worked very hard and that all SATs papers had been dispatched that day. He thanked the Year 6 staff team for their endeavours and, on behalf of governors, Laura Robb also thanked the staff. Governors were informed that Year 2 pupils would complete their SATs papers the following day.
- The Executive Headteacher thanked those who had participated in the Greggs Cancer Run which had been well attended.
- 90 children had been confirmed for entry to Reception in September 2019. The Executive Headteacher commented that the catchment for this intake was the smallest it had been for some years, with pupils from NE2 and NE3 postcodes. The number of English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils would be small by comparison with other years. A number of pupils would join the school with significant medical needs.

## 6. Draft minutes of previous governing body meeting

The draft minutes of the GB meeting held on 26 March 2019 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were **approved** subject to an amendment to page 5 within the section 'School Pupil Data Summary'.

**Action: Governor Services**

## 7. Matters arising from the above minutes

### GB Appointments / membership update (page 2)

It had previously been recorded that Jill Maddison and Laura Robb would meet to discuss possible arrangements to fill the vacancy for a Foundation Trust Governor.

### Matters arising from the above minutes (pages 2 and 3)

- Governors would use their preferred email address for which they gave assurance of their exclusive access.
- David Griffiths and Laura Robb had met to discuss PE. Laura would meet Adam Goldwater to discuss this further.

**Action: Laura Robb and Adam Goldwater**

- Cathy Hogan informed governors that closer links had been established with the PE Lead and that more pupils with SEND would be encouraged to join in PE activities.
- Laura Cordy would visit the school in due course.

**Action: Laura Cordy**

### School Improvement (pages 5 and 8)

- Julia De Soyza, Link Governor for Looked After Children (LAC), had met Rebecca McVittie, Deputy Headteacher, the previous day to check progress made by a LAC pupil.
- Margaret Armstrong, the school's Achievement Partner, had been unable to attend this GB meeting and it was hoped that she would be able to attend a future meeting. It was confirmed that Margaret would identify where she had challenged the school in future reports.

### **Dates and times of future governing body and committee meetings (page 11)**

Governors were referred to need to organise Pupil Voice and Rebecca McVittie advised that every year group would have the opportunity to give their views which would help with transition to different year groups.

#### **8. School term and holiday dates 2019 – 2020**

Community Schools calendar 2019 – 2020 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Governors **agreed** that the term time and holiday dates would follow those on the calendar and **agreed** the following non-teaching days:

- 2 September 2019
- 3 September 2019
- 1 May 2020
- 26 June 2020 (an Ouseburn Learning Trust training day)

It was noted that the non-teaching day to be taken on 1 May 2020 would give families the opportunity to take a four day holiday over the weekend.

#### **9. Policy Review**

Nikki Corbett, Office Administrator, had developed a table for the timely review of policies which Rebecca McVittie would circulate to governors. Nikki would be responsible for alerting the GB to policies which required their attention and approval. Policies which could be reviewed by committee would be clearly indicated. Rebecca McVittie confirmed that the school's website was compliant with policies which were statutorily required to be published.

**Action: Nikki Corbett and Rebecca McVittie**

#### **10. GB meeting dates 2019 – 2020**

Governors **agreed** the following dates for GB meetings:

- 15 October 2019
- 3 December 2019
- 28 January 2020
- 24 March 2020
- 19 May 2020
- 14 July 2020

All GB meetings would begin at 6pm.

Committee meeting dates and dates for governor monitoring days would be available for the final GB meeting in July.

**Action: Laura Robb**

Laura Robb asked governors for their comments about monitoring days and received the following feedback:

- Monitoring visits should continue to take place on different days of the week.

- Staff should feel that governors were there as collaborative friends with whom they could be open and honest rather than as critical friends. **Another governor noted that whilst 'on the same side', there was a need to challenge.**
- It would be useful to consider questions in advance of the monitoring day
- Governors could ask about the barriers to learning.
- Governors discussed how they could be used as a resource and that a Link Governor may be appointed to liaise with the GB and staff. Jill Maddison, Chair of the Inclusion Committee, volunteered the Inclusion Committee as the Link and Rebecca McVittie would brief staff on this development.  
**Action: Inclusion Committee and Rebecca McVittie**

The Executive Headteacher noted his intention to give feedback to governors about how their monitoring had been perceived by staff.

**Action: Executive Headteacher**

## 11. Financial Items

### Budget 2019 – 2020

The following planned budgets for 2019 – 2020 were tabled:

- Main School
- Teaching School
- After School Club

The following points were made:

#### Main School

- A balance of £84,030 was forecast for 2019 – 2020 (based on income of £2,300,560 and expenditure of £2,216,530).
- Should the school receive the same income in 2020 – 2021 and 2021 – 2022 and expenditure continue to rise, a deficit of £75,130 was forecast for 2021 – 2022.
- It was felt that the school was currently in a very healthy position.

#### Teaching School

- Grants received from the government had helped the Teaching School run as a business and the Executive Headteacher remarked that the Teaching School was self-sustaining.
- This was the fourth year of the Teaching School and the school would receive a grant of £40,000 plus £6,000 as part of a new directive which required an exact itemised claim of £6,000 to ensure eligibility to receive it.
- The forecasted profit of £19,190 for 2019 – 2020 would be transferred to the main school budget.

#### After School Club

- The ASC, as a self-supporting enterprise, could not receive money from the main school budget.
- The forecasted figures were based on full capacity and with all payments being received on time.

- A profit of £11,570 was predicted for 2019 – 2020, with a reduction in profit to £3,540 by 2021 – 2022.

**A member of the Finance Committee advised that discussions about the ASC had taken place at a recent Committee meeting. A diminishing profit meant that there would need to be a big increase in charges or smaller increments over a period of time. The Executive Headteacher would discuss this with the ASC. The governor noted that there had been no increase of charges with inflation and that charges had remained static for 10 years. Laura Robb advised that a balance needed to be achieved to retain the service for those who needed it.**

**Action: Executive Headteacher**

Governors **approved** the Main School budget, Teaching School budget and After School budget for 2019 – 2020.

### **Scheme for Financing Schools, April 2019**

Scheme for Financing Schools, April 2019, had been emailed to governors prior to the meeting. Changes from the 2018 version were minor and included updates to out of date sections, removal of schools subject to academy conversion and guidance on the treatment of surpluses or deficits upon conversion to academy status.

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## **Achieving our Vision**

### **12. School Improvement**

#### **Visioning exercise, the 'smell' of the school**

Character of the school, spring 2019, had been circulated prior to the meeting.

This exercise, previously carried out on 29 January 2019, would be revisited in 2019 – 2020. Laura Robb observed that there had been consistency in the messages that public areas appeared unbranded. The Executive Headteacher added that large black and white photographs which had been on display for a number of years may be replaced.

#### **Teaching School**

Teaching School Update and Summary of Actions, May 2019, had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Executive Headteacher highlighted the following:

- This was the fourth year of the Teaching School and the Executive Headteacher felt that it was now fully established, akin to the time taken to start a successful business.
- It was likely that the Teaching School would remain in place until the end of March 2021. The idea of 'Super hubs' which would support between 200 – 300 schools had been floated by the Department for Education (DfE) but the scope was too

large for the school to take on.

- Rebecca McVittie had attended an All North Teaching Schools regional meeting on 20 May and provided the following update:
  - The meeting had been unfulfilling, attended by four representatives from the DfE who had arrived an hour late.
  - Funding for the Early Career Framework aimed at the retention of teachers was not yet in place.
  - There had been no mention of 'Super Hubs'.
  - All Teaching Schools had presented feedback.
  - There was no clarity about the long term future of Teaching Schools. Funding would be received for year 5, 2020 – 2021, but there was uncertainty beyond that date.
  - Many schools could not function satisfactorily because funding was constrained, although this did not apply to West Jesmond Primary School.
  - John Hardy, the regional Teaching School Council Leader, had presented feedback.

The Executive Headteacher advised that if Teaching School status ended, the school could still function albeit with a smaller remit without the £40,000 grant. Clarity was awaited from the government on this and the GB should be strategically aware of this situation. Support of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT)s which had been given to the Teaching School, had recently been returned to the Local Authority (LA) who had then commissioned West Jesmond Primary School for this work.

- As a National Leader of Education (NLE), the Executive Headteacher had supported a primary school in Bedlington and a middle school in Bellingham. **Governors asked how often the Executive Headteacher visited the schools and the nature of support given** and were informed that they received three days of his time, largely for counselling support. By contrast, at West Jesmond Primary School, there was a large staff team to give support.
- The Executive Headteacher also worked with schools in Cumbria which he described as very interesting and challenging. The schools were part of a Multi-academy Trust and the Executive Headteacher offered the Headteachers of the schools his support which was likely to generate income of £16,500 until July 2019. The Executive Headteacher reported that he felt both grounded and reinvigorated by the perspective gained through supporting other schools. Staff from the Cumbrian schools would visit West Jesmond Primary School to attend a staff briefing, assemblies and to observe life in the school.
- Upon academisation, Heaton Manor School, would change its name to Jesmond Park Academy and one set of free uniform would be given to all pupils.

### **Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF)**

Rebecca McVittie advised that representatives from the DfE and research team would visit the school on 19 and 20 June to speak to the Executive Headteacher, staff and pupils and perform external validation of the project. It was noted that the grant given for the project had been £281,000. The project had worked very well, however, the SSIF had now been scrapped.

### **School Direct Initial Teacher Training**

From September 2019, Gosforth First and Middle schools would join with schools in the Ouseburn Learning Trust to provide places for trainees. 8 School Direct Trainees would complete the training this academic year, two of whom would begin as NQTs at the school in September 2019.

### **Headteacher Coaching**

The Executive Headteacher continued to support a new Headteacher in the west of the city.

### **School Improvement Plan (SIP) 2019 – 2020**

The Executive Headteacher sought ideas from governors for the SIP and the following responses were given:

- The need for continuity; the school should continue with the focus of 2018 – 2019, embedding good practice rather than jumping to another focus.
- Use of iPads and additional resources.
- The need to look at the wider curriculum.
- More focus on PE would be beneficial.
- The physical aspects of the school may be given attention; more hedges could be planted to disperse pollution and minimise noise.

The Executive Headteacher noted that the new Ofsted framework would be in place from 1 September 2019 and that the school should be prepared. He felt that the school had made vast progress from 2015 – 2019 and that to continue to be outstanding, the school had to produce evidence that it was exceptional. He felt that the development of Reading, a life skill outcome in the new Framework, should be a focus with emphasis on reading for a purpose, to embed knowledge and not just for pleasure.

The Executive Headteacher also emphasised the need to 'refresh' as a priority of the Ouseburn Learning Trust and that schools should continue to work closely together.

The importance of future proofing around the Teaching School was also noted.

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### **For Information**

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

There were no items identified.

**14. Ouseburn Learning Trust (OLT) Update**

The work of the Ouseburn Learning Trust had been referred to earlier in the meeting, Item 12. The Executive Headteacher noted that the OLT would continue to work with Heaton Manor School / Jesmond Park Academy but that it would no longer be part of the Trust.

**15. Chair's Update**

Those governors who had helped with recent interviews for staff appointments were thanked.

**16. Reports from committees / individual and link governors / governor visits / training / GB self-evaluation**

The following reports had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Governor monitoring of lessons in action, 12 March 2019
- Personnel Committee meeting minutes, 1 May 2019

The DfE Governance Handbook, March 2019, had been emailed to governors. The revised Governance Handbook placed greater focus on parental engagement and community leadership, consideration of staff workload with the suggestion that a relevant committee look at this and the replacement of RAISE online with Analyse School Performance (ASP).

**Governor monitoring of lessons in action, 12 March 2019**

IT requirements to assist delivery of the curriculum had been discussed further by members of the Finance Committee.

**Safeguarding Link Governor visit, 12 February 2019**

Jill Maddison, Safeguarding Link Governor, provided a verbal update following her visit to the school:

- Security of the school and the state of buildings had been reviewed during a safeguarding walk.
- The way in which safeguarding matters were reported and followed up had been reviewed.
- A check that the school adhered to rules for recording on the Single Central Record (SCR) and Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) had taken place. The Executive Headteacher advised that he also checked the SCR twice a year.
- The visit had been thorough and twice yearly visits were recommended which would allow Jill to build upon knowledge acquired.
- Safeguarding systems were reported as both robust and compassionate.

**Governor training**

- Laura Robb had attended Safer Recruitment Refresher training and Understanding School Finances training.
- The Executive Headteacher would lead training for National Leaders of Governance.
- Rebecca McVittie would undertake Safer Recruitment training.
- Sally Watson would attend new governor Induction training on 8 June 2019.
- Laura Robb was currently undertaking National Governance Association (NGA) Chair training which included receiving 360-degree feedback appraisals.

**17. Next governing body meeting**

The next GB meeting would take place on 16 July 2019 at 6pm and governors were



invited to go for a drink after the meeting.

SATs results would have been received by then and **a governor asked how pupils were informed of their results.** The Executive Headteacher replied that all pupils had a one to one conversation with their teacher on 9 July and would be told that no one else needed to know their result. **A governor asked if any pupils had been upset last year** and was informed that no pupils had been upset although follow up conversations had taken place. Staff knew the pupils well and there were unlikely to be surprises.

### **Governor Monitoring Day**

The next Governor Monitoring visit day would take place on 6 June 2019. Governors were asked to let Laura Robb know if they would be unable to attend. Governors would look at Pupil Premium and the progress of disadvantaged pupils. A report of the visit would be written in the afternoon following lunch taken at the school.

### **Action: Governors**

### **Committee meeting dates**

- Personnel Committee meeting on 10 June 2019
- Curriculum Committee meeting on 4 July 2019 at 8.30am (not 8.15am)

Governors were reminded to dispose of GB papers as confidential waste. Alternatively, governors could opt to receive papers electronically. It was noted that the School Business Manager was required to log papers from governors which were put in the school's confidential waste bin.

There was no further business; Laura Robb thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.43pm.

Signed .....

Chair of Governors

Date .....

16/7/19

