

## GULDEN MORDEN PRIMARY GOVERNORS

### Minutes of Full Governing Body meeting On 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017 Held at Guilden Morden Primary School

#### Present

Jeremy Fisher (Head Teacher) Sarah Fryer, Anna Fettiplace, Mark Robinson, Ninette Taylor, Dorothy Dunnell, Judith Davis-Roache, Kristy Carter, Katie Roberts (Clerk of the meeting)

#### 1. Welcome, apologies for absence

MR welcomed Dorothy Dunnell (Year 6 Teacher) and Kristy Carter (Pre-School Leader) to the meeting and explained that the recommendation that they join the LGB team had been formally ratified by DEMAT. He also acknowledged the departure of AF from the LGB and thanked her for her contribution, particularly with regard to fundraising. There were no apologies for absence.

#### 2. Pecuniary Interests

KR agreed to send new Register of Interest Declaration forms to DD and KC. No Pecuniary Interests were declared.

**Action: KR**

#### 3. Confidential Minutes

There were no confidential minutes

#### 4. Minutes from previous meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### 6. Matters Arising from Minutes for items not on Agenda

JF reported that he would be delivering Prevent training to school staff and Nursery staff during the training day in January and that JDR had completed a skills audit.

#### 7. Head Teacher's report

In response to a query from JF, the Governors approved of the style and content of the Head Teacher's report. He explained that Owen Rhodes, the School Improvement Director at DEMAT, had recently conducted a reassuring bespoke leadership and management visit. He had commented on improvements that could be made, which JF had already considered, and mentioned that a cause for concern in other smaller schools, inspected by Ofsted, has been a similar lack of leadership team. SF suggested that it might be beneficial to read the comments on senior leadership in the Ofsted reports focused on smaller schools. JF also suggested it would be advantageous to ascertain whether any of the teaching staff were interested in taking on a more senior role, subject to financial constraints. MR commented that Leadership should be included as a priority on the School Development Plan (SDP) and that the issue should be addressed seriously by the end of the Spring term once JF has been able to meet with the teaching staff.

On a positive note, JF mentioned that Owen Rhodes had commented on the very good behaviour and engagement of the pupils, including during transitions between lessons, and on the quality and presentation of the work in the books he had scrutinised. He also concurred that the governance appeared to be good. In terms of teaching and learning improvements to be made, Owen Rhodes observed that there should be more evidence in English that pupils are improving their written work after it has been marked by the Teachers. The Governors expressed their delight after listening to further positive comments about children whose behaviour and attitude had been completely transformed by the school's approach.

JF expressed his concerns about the accuracy of some of the data from Summer 2017, which erroneously indicated a decline in the progress of some of the pupils. AF suggested that JF consult DEMAT about whether it would be acceptable to provide accurate data from the beginning of the Autumn term instead.

**Action: JF**

With regard to the SEF, JF mentioned that Owen Rhodes had agreed that it could be re-written over the course of the academic year with the aim of it being completed by July.

JF mentioned that he had conducted the performance management of all the Teachers, following his own performance management, and that the performance management of the Teaching Assistants and Kristy Carter would take place during the Spring term in preparation for the new financial year.

JF mentioned that the school's attendance levels have been affected by the long-term authorised absence of a pupil who has been signed off by the medical experts. He would work on producing a set of figures which more accurately represented the situation in the school in addition to the formal figures.

**Action: JF**

With regard to finance, JF commented that he had met with Julia Steed (Finance Manager, DEMAT) to review the spending and the budget plans. The Governors raised concerns that they had still not been provided with finance reports for the year from September 2017 and that these were long overdue. JF agreed and promised to raise the issue again with Julia Steed.

**Action: JF**

In terms of relationships with parents and the local community, JF mentioned that a recent parent questionnaire had indicated that all parents who had completed it agreed, or strongly agreed, with the Ofsted questions, which was a great improvement on the summer survey, but that the school would not be resting on its laurels. JF added that his aim was for all parents to express strong agreement and he had put the actions that they wished to take to improve further to Governors and in the newsletter to parents. He also mentioned that the members of 'Open the Book' who had conducted school collective worship recently had praised the children for their improved focus and attentiveness. In order to engage further with the community it was agreed to invite the Parish Councillors to the forthcoming Christmas production, together with those who had supported the history project. JDR volunteered to send contact details for the Parish Clerk to JF.

**Action: JDR**

With regard to the number of pupils on roll, JF commented that he had met all the parents of the children at the Pre-School who would be attending Guilden Morden Primary School and acknowledged the flexibility of Mrs Berrio (Reception/Year 1 Teacher) when he had shown parents to her classroom.

During a discussion about Governance, it was agreed that the Governors' visits should be linked to specific classes in order to make them more focused. It was agreed that NT would allocate these.

**Action: NT**

#### **8. Adoption of Pre-School policies**

After NT was thanked for her invaluable contribution reading the attached Pre-School policies, they were formally adopted by the LGB and MR was asked to sign them. SF (LGB Safeguarding) also confirmed that she had read the Pre-School Safeguarding Policies. A list was to be attached to the minutes as a record of those adopted. It was agreed that NT would send this to KR.

**Action: NT**

#### **9. Safeguarding**

SF reported that she had been into school to ask staff about the safeguarding culture and that she had been reassured by the responses she had received from them when she had asked hypothetical safeguarding questions. They had not been forewarned of her visit and were very clear that safeguarding was everyone's responsibility. It also provided an opportunity to point out the updated incident log form. SF mentioned that the specific issue of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which is not discussed in the same depth in safeguarding literature, required more training, possibly during the training day in January. It was also mentioned that, should members of staff suspect evidence of FGM, they have a legal obligation to inform the police (using the Head Teacher as a conduit, if necessary). JF reiterated that he would be providing Prevent training in January and MR added that he would be attending a basic safeguarding course, conducted by DEMAT, in January. SF stated that she had completed the online Prevent training and it was worth all Governors doing it.

KC reported that she had created mock scenarios to assess the responses of some of the Nursery staff to safeguarding concerns, which they had quickly brought to the attention of the Head Teacher. The exercise had also enabled one of the members of staff to write a log of concern for the first time. SF confirmed that this had been mentioned by staff as great training.

It had been raised that the Job Descriptions for the Designated safeguarding personnel needed to be amended to include the safeguarding role. To that end, JF volunteered to find model Job Descriptions on the EPM website by the end of January, or manually alter with staff in the interim.

**Action: JF**

**10. SEND**

JF explained that Heather Lewis (Executive SENDCo) had accepted another job, leaving him with the options of approaching her employer (the Diamond Learning Trust) or another existing SENDCo to establish if they could provide support. In addition, he mentioned consulting a staff member or performing the role himself. It was agreed that a decision about fulfilling the role would need to be made shortly.

**11. Pupil Progress**

Commenting on the levels of the pupils as at Autumn 1, JF observed that the percentage who have achieved Age Related Expectations (ARE) in maths is low, although the pupils are on target in reading and approaching the target in writing. In response to a concern raised by AF regarding the weaker maths levels across the school and what action is being taken to address these, JF explained the possible reasons, adding that it is hoped that a new maths curriculum across the school would have an impact soon and he was also working with Year 3 and running a booster group in Year 6.

JF suggested that the Governors reflect on the data and contact him with any further queries. MR suggested that it would be useful to have the data for each class in order for the class Governor to be able to ask JF detailed questions, including seeking information about boys and girls and pupil premium students.

**Action: all Governors, JF**

**12. Religious character**

With regard to Church School Distinctiveness, JF referred to the number of visitors who had attended school collective worship this term, including MR, and mentioned that Cannon Williams, who was developing a good relationship with the school, would attend a forthcoming Governors' meeting.

**13. Website**

SF thanked JF for his contribution in ensuring that the website is compliant, although it is still necessary to display the new procedures for Pupil Premium and Sports Premium expenditure for this academic year. JF commented that the focus now is to ensure the website is an effective tool for recruiting new pupils and to maximise the use of the galleries. JDR volunteered to liaise with Blue Chilli with a view to creating content in a Word document to send to JF.

**Action: JF/JDF**

**14. Health and Safety**

JF reported that the school had begun working with a new management company who were updating all of the maintenance schedules. SF also stated that a successful fire drill had taken place that term and that an 'invacuation' of the school would take place before the end of term. It was also reported that the button enabling the School Administrator to provide visitors access to the school had been moved to a more appropriate position, as had the door release button out of the school.

**15. Draft Code of Conduct**

It was agreed that the draft Code of Conduct would be circulated again to the Governors for review with the aim that it be approved at the next Governors' meeting in February.

**16. Pupil Premium**

JF explained that the Pupil Premium Report for 2017/18 was being compiled, but some of the sections had not yet been completed. He forecast that the report would be finalised by the Governors' meeting on 5 February, after he has had the opportunity to speak to the pupils, as well as their parents, to discuss what provision should be put in place to support the children.

MR reported that, following a review, in some cases the Pupil Premium children are out performing their peers He mentioned plans to buy some ipads for use by pupils in the school and the creation of a homework club, which would focus on pupil premium children. JF added that the Pre-School Pupil Premium Report would be completed separately.

**17. Any Other Business**

An email had been received from Annabelle Evans, Legal and Property Manager, DEMAT concerning the Governors' wish to access the Old School House Trust Fund. It is not possible for Governors to apply for a grant from this Trust.

**Action: NT to write an email requesting an email with Annabelle Evans.**

With regard to encouraging new admissions to the school, it was agreed that KC would forward the email address for Basingbourn Village College to JDR to enable her to place an advert there.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.