

Minutes for Meeting of the Governing Body of Ladysmith Federation					
Date / Time	26 th January 2022 17:30		Location	Video conferencing	
Attendees	Initials		Attendees	Initials	
James Hewlett	JH	Co-opted Governor	Andy Thornhill	AT	Co-opted Governor
Karen Bates (Co-Chair)	KB	Co-opted Governor	Charlotte Hartland	CH	Staff Governor
Sarah Melhuish	SM	Co-opted Governor	Annie Fletcher	AF	Co-opted Governor
Farah Mihar	FM	Parent Governor	Tom Butcher	TB	Co-opted Governor
Emma Brennan	EB	Co-opted Governor	Mark Wilkinson	MW	Executive Headteacher
Present					
Jo Gawler-Collins	JGC	Clerk to Governors	Dave Broad	DB	LINS Head of School
Neil Williams	NW	LJS Head of School			
Apologies	Initials				
Greg Hawkins (Vice Chair)	GH	Co-opted Governor	Amy Grashoff	AG	Co-opted Governor (Co-Chair)
Jill Green	JG	LA Governor			

The Meeting was quorate.

Ref	Discussion, Action or Decision
1.	Apologies for Absence
	GH and AG sent apologies due to work commitments. Approved: Absences approved by Governors
2.	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests invited and declared
	No interests declared
3.	Governor Roles and Responsibilities, Recruitment and Skills Audit
	<p>JGC explained that RB's term of office as governor finished on 14th January and RB decided not to stand for another term of office. This leaves two outstanding lead governor areas for which KB asked for volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Community, staff and parental links – SM will consider taking this on GDPR – KB <p>Approved: Governors approved KB being Lead Governor for GDPR</p> <p>Action required: SM to investigate taking on Lead Community, Staff and Parental Links</p>

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	<p>KB explained that AF has been undertaking some consultancy work for LINS (Ladysmith Infant and Nursery School) for EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage). AF's current Lead Governor area is EYFS which was approved prior to AF undertaking the work. KB asked to prevent conflicts of interest, could a governor could volunteer swap their lead role to take on the EYFS Governor role. There were no volunteers to take on EYFS from those present. JGC said that there are now 3 governor vacancies and governor recruitment is on this meeting's agenda. AT and TB offered for the time being to independently verify AF's governor feedback until further governors are recruited where this can be looked at again.</p> <p>JGC said there are two co-opted governor vacancies and one parent governor vacancy. KB asked if the letter requesting potential governors can be circulated. EB and TB asked if it can be highlighted that applicants from diverse backgrounds would be welcomed. DB said that as well as the newsletter, the CPTT (Children, Parents, Teachers together) may widen the reach. MW said there is the website from Devon County Council for recruiting governors. Some governors said they might be able to circulate amongst their workplaces or other groups.</p> <p>Action required: JGC to send standard governor recruitment information to KB and AG so this can be put into one consistent form of communication. This will be circulated to governors and the school to share both inside and outside the school community.</p> <p>JGC said the governor skills audit will need to be completed again this year.</p> <p>Action required: JGC will ask GH if he can undertake the skills audit</p>
4.	Finance and Resources
	<p>Budgets were circulated to governors prior to the meeting and governors were asked to submit questions prior to the meeting.</p> <p>TB's Question Reviewing the budgets - really good to see that the LINS budget appears to be now balancing. Is there an update on bringing the budgets together?</p> <p>LC's Answer Financial Intervention Panel for schools (FIPS) have said that they will pay off the deficit if we can show a balanced budget from March 2022. We can balance the budget now and have shown this. I have locked and published the infant school budget for FIPS so we are all good to join the budgets in April.</p> <p>DB said that the budget is on track to join from April and that FIPS are satisfied the budgets are able to balance separately.</p> <p>DB said that there is a significant carry forward at present which is due to recruitment certain posts not having been filled.</p> <p>KB asked if there were further questions from governors. No further questions were tabled.</p>
5.	Headteacher Report including Teaching and Learning
	<p>Reports from LJS and LINS put together by NW and DB which were circulated and governors were asked to submit questions prior to the meeting.</p>

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	<p>TB's Question</p> <p>Noting that the pupil outcome data in comparison to the 18/19 National Averages I really appreciate the efforts underway to address these. I think I have asked this before, but do we have any sense of how these are comparing across other local primaries? (formal, or informal evidence)</p> <p>DB said that RELP (River Exe Learning Partnership) has previously provided a comparison but this group has hit a hiatus at the moment so there isn't currently any comparison.</p> <p>TB asked if COVID was the reason for the current numbers. DB said COVID is responsible for a lot of this but there are other factors as well.</p> <p>NW said that at the time of writing the report that staffing for LJS was accurate. However, since the report was written a couple of weeks ago, the school has been harder hit by staff and student absences. FM asked whether there is anything can be done to help this situation. NW said that support staff have been amazing and filled in as necessary. NW said they have some supply teachers and some teachers have been teaching virtually from home.</p> <p>MW said that at LJS last year there were a total of 260 absences and already this year there were already 272 in the autumn term. MW said that nationally schools are currently impacted massively with absences.</p> <p>FM asked whether this curve is over yet. DB said that at a recent meeting with health professionals regarding COVID, this indication is that they are not expecting it to be over yet.</p> <p>AT asked whether it might be possible to present the whole picture to parents because currently it seems to be only potentially affected parents who are being informed. DB said there has been a letter shared and items in the newsletter which have been presenting the situation. DB said at the moment their focus is being vigilant with spotting the symptoms in children.</p> <p>EB asked if parents could be encouraged to carry out an LFT (lateral flow test) twice-weekly as with secondary school parents. NW said that when a class hits outbreak point, which is 5 cases, then an outbreak letter is sent which recommends and LFT every day.</p> <p>NW said that two members of staff who are TAs have left to move onto other opportunities.</p> <p>DB said that the COVID update has changed, otherwise there isn't anything else to update governors on for LINS.</p> <p>JH asked how likely the positions referred to on the Headteacher Report are likely to be filled. NW said that the deadline for 3 positions is this Friday and so far they haven't received any applications. NW said that one of these roles is looking to develop a child counsellor role and NW would like to put an emphasis on developing skills in this area and include accredited training to support this. TA recruitment is difficult at this time. NW said that one post requires external recruitment to support a child with significant needs.</p>

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	<p>KB asked that if there are not applicants, whether there is the possibility of tweaking hours e.g. 10 minutes at the start and / or end of a school day may make a difference which may unlock a greater pool of candidates.</p> <p>EB asked if there might be scope to work with other schools for TA recruitment e.g. if they have a surplus of applicants, or schools working together to get a pool of applicants. MW said this has worked well in the past but currently recruitment is tricky nationally.</p> <p>EB asked at the point a special case to DCC (Devon County Council) can be made if schools are short on staff and paying over the usual level. KB said that this needs careful consideration because additional pay can be offered for additional skills as staff pay needs to be equal.</p> <p>MW said that staff retention is an area which is needing wider strategies because retaining staff has been proving more challenging especially as it might be possible to earn similar pay for alternative jobs which offer more flexibility.</p> <p>KB suggested offering apprenticeships and teaming up with colleges which would mean releasing the member of staff back to college.</p> <p>KB asked if governors can be kept up-to-date on this issue and if this might help, governors can form a separate working party group to address pay and recruitment to help support these issues.</p>
6.	School Improvement Plan (SIP)
	<p>TB met with NW at LJS but did not get to meet with DB at LINS. TB asked governors to update the BRAG ratings for the governor specific areas.</p> <p>DB will check the Early Years area and ensure this is shared with AT, TB and AF.</p> <p>Action required: TB will be emailing governors to request them to update their specific areas. TB will co-ordinate and update the SIP to reflect these changes.</p>
7.	Admissions
	<p>LJS, LINS and Nursery admissions policies for 2023 / 24 require approval. These were not available in time for this meeting.</p> <p>Action required: This will be deferred to the next FGB Meeting on Tuesday 22nd March.</p>
8.	Final Governing Body Meeting Minutes 30.11.21
	<p>Approved: Governors voted to approve minutes from the previous FGB Meeting on 30th November 2021.</p>
9.	Matters Arising
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGB 18.10.21 <p>Sign and Review of forms and documents</p>

Ref	Discussion, Action or Decision
	<p>JGC said there are a couple of outstanding Prevent training and safeguarding forms from governors.</p> <p>Action required: JGC asked governors to update this with priority as this is an Ofsted requirement. JGC has been in touch with governors with outstanding paperwork and / or training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30.11.21 <p>4. TB to undertake single central record checks for both schools once every half-term. TB has visited LINS and LJS and undertaken these visits. JGC updated the FGB documents with TB's report today.</p> <p>Action required: Governors can check TB's recent single central record check reports for LINS and LJS which were added to meeting documents on the day of this FGB meeting.</p> <p>JGC will include these reports for FGB meeting in the future.</p>
10.	Policies: -
10.1.	SEND Policy
	<p>EB said that she has liaised with Louise Williams regarding the amendments to the SEND Policy which were approved at the last meeting. EB said that some of the changes have been incorporated however, there are some areas that cannot be written or changed as this is restricted by a Code of Practice which is quite outdated for neurodiversity.</p> <p>EB said that all staff have the most up-to-date training, particularly LINS which has had a lot of recent training. Therefore, staff are up-to-date on the latest thinking around this.</p> <p>Approved: Governors approved the policy containing some of the amendments tabled at the previous meeting.</p>
10.2.	Federation Behaviour Principles
	Approved: Governors voted to approve the Behaviour Principles
10.3.	Federation Behaviour Policy
	<p>MW said that previously this policy has been earmarked to be looked at to try to develop it. Since COVID having had an impact on behaviour this would be useful to do.</p> <p>Approved: Governors voted to approve the Federation Behaviour Policy</p> <p>Action required: MW and EB to meet to work on developing this policy by the middle of the autumn term.</p>
10.4.	Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-site Activities Policy

Ref	Discussion, Action or Decision
	Approved: Governors voted to approve the Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-site Activities Policy.
10.5.	Federation Equality Policy
	FM had added some amendments to this policy. Action required: MW, EB and FM agreed to work on this policy and bring it to the next FGB meeting on Tuesday 22nd March.
10.6.	Staff Code of Conduct
	A couple of amendments were tabled at the meeting. Approved: Governors voted to approve the Staff Code of Conduct
10.7.	Safeguarding Policy
	Approved: Governors voted to approve the update to Section 26 of the Safeguarding Policy which has been advised by DCC since the Policy was approved on 22nd September 2021.
10.8.	Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy
	Approved: Governors voted to approve Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy.
11.	Training
	JGC drew Governors' attention to the new Q Cards. 20. Staff Workload and Wellbeing 21. Headteacher Work / Life Balance and Wellbeing 22. Ofsted Inspection Spring Term 2022 Action required: TB attended the Governance Briefing and will forward some information to Governors from this. JGC has attended Clerk's Update Briefing this term and incorporated items into the agenda from this.
12.	Governor Visits
	KB asked if governors if they can carry out a visit this term. KB said that governors can visit the school if they are happy to do so and if the member of staff is happy to meet in person. Alternatively, a remote meeting can take place. Either way will be fine and it depends on what will work best for both governors and staff. KB said that for newer governors not to worry about the paperwork too much at this stage but the important thing is that the visit has taken place. The next meeting will be at LINS where governors will have a tour of the school.

Ladysmith Federation

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	Action required: JGC to forward out governor visit paperwork for governors to complete after a governor visit.
13.	Review meeting dates for remainder of the year
	The next FGB Meeting has been pushed back to Tuesday 22 nd March 2022 and will take place at LINS.
14.	Date of next meeting: FGB (Resources and Finance) Tuesday 22 nd March 2022 at 5.30pm @ Ladysmith Infant and Nursery School
	Meeting Closed at 7.00pm

Signed.....

Dated.....