

Minutes for Meeting of the Governing Body of Ladysmith Federation					
Date / Time	Wednesday 28 th June 2023		Location	Ladysmith Junior School	
Attendees	Initials		Attendees	Initials	
Tom Butcher Co-Chair	TB	Co-opted	James Hewlett	JH	Co-opted
Mark Wilkinson	MW	Exec Head			
Justine Brooker	JB	Co-opted	Karen Bates	KB	Co-opted
Greg Hawkins	GH	Co-opted	Kate DeBurgh	KD	Parent
James Lee	JL	Co-opted	Hannah Snowden	HS	Co-opted
Present					
Neil Williams	NW	LJS Head School			
Apologies	Initials				
Ana Salter	AS	Staff	Sarah Melhuish	SM	Co-opted
Richard Goodchild	RG	Parent	Annie Fletcher Co-Chair	AF	Co-opted
Andy Thornhill	AT	Co-opted			

The meeting was quorate.

Ref	Discussion, Action or Decision
1.	Apologies for Absence
	Ana Salter – personal Andy Thornhill - work Sarah Melhuish –work Richard Goodchild – work Annie Fletcher –illness Absences approved
2.	Declaration of Interests invited and declared
	No interests declared
3.	FGB Meeting Minutes 9.5.23
	Minutes were agreed by FGB and signed by co-chair.
3.1	Matters Arising:
	<p>Rental of community room / FISH MW / LC No further action on this as of the meeting.</p> <p>Staff survey actions – feedback from H of S Both H of S have shared the staff survey results with staff. At LJS fed back to teachers and Louise to share with TAs. Wellbeing group in place. At LINS teachers have been given feedback, but no further progress. <i>Action: Tom to arrange to have a walk around LJS with Annie and HoS.</i></p> <p>Staff curriculum lead contact sheet – MW Completed and shared with governors.</p>

	<p>Governor access to National College – NW Justine B has been given access. <i>Action: NW to set up a single email and log on for wider governors' access to National College.</i></p> <p>Equality Objectives – staff consult – DB/NW Ana has not received much feedback from school staff as of yet. Governors happy to sign off current statement of intent. <i>Action: Take a look over equality objectives over the summer and revisit.</i></p> <p>Self-Injury Policy – Guidance - MW MW unable to locate any specific guidance that self-harm should not be taught at Junior level. However – all materials for curriculum content found were aimed at secondary school level. <i>Action: The current decision of the governors is not to teach self-harm across the Federation. MW to add a sentence to the policy regarding self-harm.</i></p>
4.	<p>Finance and Resources</p> <p>Governors were given the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCSS Budget Dashboard – 23/24 • HCSS Income & Expenditure report – 23/24 • FRS Federation School Budget Share • FRS Federation Capital <p>This is an update on the approved budget from the last FGB.</p> <p>Staff structure for 2023/24 was shared with governors and agreed.</p> <p>Governors were given an update on the cleaning contract in that it is underway at LINS and that overall we are happy with it.</p> <p>Request for play equipment to go on the field at LJS in the form of a climbing structure (cost of £13,550) to be taken from the PE premium – agreed by governors.</p> <p>The following questions were asked about finance: Andy Thornhill: Budget Thank you for the helpful notes. Generally while it looks like we have got to a better place and the deficit in year 3 while not insignificant is better I think it is really concerning that we have in year deficits each year of over £100k. Do we as a governing group need to be speaking to DCC or FIPS about the funding gap they are creating as it is clearly unsustainable? <i>We agree that it is unsustainable. Unfortunately, the in year spend is created by us staffing at a level that we feel we need to support the pupils and to try and move the schools forward. If we were to cut staffing, which we can technically do (especially in the eyes of an external party), then our in year deficit would be much lower. The situation is caused by the high levels of need that we are experiencing and not getting appropriate support for. This is a similar picture across other schools until they cut their staffing.</i></p>
5.	<p>School Improvement Plan Update Parent Survey Feedback Governor Visits / Reports Governor Subject Roles</p>

	<p>BRAG rated school improvement plan shared with governors. Parent survey results shared. Questions / observations:</p> <p>Comments from James Lee</p> <p>Parent survey - results all look similar or better than last year (which is great, well done), with the exception of the Q3 'the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved' - I guess this goes back to the recent focus we've had on the behavioural policy and plan to focus on. On a side-note, I did the parent engagement training this month and have attached their suggested questions in case we wanted to borrow any for next time.</p> <p>Behavioural policy - really like the new policy. It would be good to get the 'Ready, Respectful, Safe' message weaved into a few of the other documents/policies/SIP for continuity and to get the message out there. Reflecting on the parent survey - is there a plan to communicate out to parents? Re. the positive behaviours - I remember there being some differences between LINS and LJS as to how this is done - is there a preferred way or is it ok to have two systems? Yes – plan is to launch behaviour policy with teachers / pupils / parents in September. Both schools will use class points as a reward system and will have class earned outcomes.</p> <p>Children in care policy - do we have a Designated Teacher to lead? It also say 'nominate a school governor to meet regularly with the designated teacher' - is this included in one of the governor ToR (and which one)? Apologies if already being done. Yes – we have a designated teacher – Louise Williams (AHT SEND and Inclusion). Hannah meets with Louise as a Governor. It is part of the SEND and Inclusion ToR.</p> <p>Health and safety policy - do we need to mention the defibrillator at LJS in there? And an update on the LINS one? Can be added to the first aid section but I'm not sure it is necessary to be in there. It is not a requirement legally as far as I am aware.</p> <p>Strategic Plan - good to see such clear progress across all areas. I wonder if a few of the EYFS governor actions can be turned to green/amber? Governors are able to update their section.</p> <p>At the engagement training they suggest governors should ask: Does the school have a parent engagement plan or strategy? Is parent engagement part of the School Improvement Plan/School Development Plan? No – not currently. I couldn't see parent engagement (outside of SEND) mentioned in the SIP and wonder if it should be? Point for discussion at FGB.</p> <p>The action on 'reviewing the approach to marking and feedback' - any update of any of these actions? Maths coordinator absent – no progress. New English lead and maths lead at LINS next year. Feedback will be agreed before end of Autumn Term.</p> <p>Is there any update on the Ofsted action plan? I think it was being taken back to LINS staff for comments? No – we need to produce a condensed version (relevant to staff) and go over this with them again. Staff are aware of the areas identified in the report and we will need to refocus on this. Tom raised that parents have asked for an update on school's plan following recent OFSTED. Parents have received a letter post OFSTED report. Discussion around how OFSTED can/should be communicated further in terms of progress. Governing body to produce an end of year letter.</p>

Action: NW and DB to produce a list of positive outcomes through the year for governors to report on. Email to Tom.

Action: Tom and Annie to conduct a walk around of LS before the end of summer term.

Action: James to meet SLT before 23/24 SIP is presented to governors.

Andy Thornhill

Behaviour policy:

Agree with James that this looks great and very clear.

Looking at the survey and from conversations with other parents and experiences with our child in LS I think there is a concern around behaviour, its management including the need to "evacuate" classes and the resulting impact on learning. Does this policy represent a shift in approach or is it documenting the current processes?

It is a new approach to a whole Federation common language and approach to behaviour. It will take time for all parties to understand and embed it.

It will not solve the need to evacuate classes. If a child is dysregulating and is in a classroom, refuses to move and is potentially dangerous / concerning to other children, evacuation of the other children will still be the probable outcome. The other option would be to physically restrain and forcefully remove the child (and no matter how big/old they are) this is not something that we, as a school are in favour of. We understand that the evacuation of a class is disturbing but at times, it is our only option.

When we release/communicate the policy I think we may need to do so with some context.

Do you see behaviour improving or getting worse over recent terms/years?

Behaviour in general has deteriorated significantly since the pandemic. We feel that this is mostly related to a higher number of children exhibiting more complex behaviour and severe dysregulation.

Tom Butcher

Building on James' comment on the Parent Survey - I am interested in the Heads/Staff thoughts on this. Are there any specific actions we should be taking in response to the feedback given? (Noting the work on the behavioural policy)

I worked through all the individual responses to behaviour in both surveys when drafting the behaviour policy. The new approach seems to fit a large number of the parent feedback. You will never satisfy all parties – to some we are too harsh and to others not punitive enough.

On the SEND reports - I note that these are not formally on the agenda. There seems to be lots of useful insight in these. I am wondering if we could spend a little time talking about them and whether there is anything further that we need to do in response to these?

The SEND reports have been looked at by SLT and some actions have taken place. MW has met with the Assistant Head SEND and the SENDco to determine roles and responsibilities and to work with the AHT SEND to ensure that they have time to be more strategic. More staff training will be in place from September with regards to some aspects of the audit.

I agree that the behaviour policy is looking really good - thanks to everyone who has put in the work on this. A couple of questions:

I am wondering whether there is a need to mention online behaviour (not just safety) in the bullet under Respectful? We could also mention it in terms of model behaviour from parents. Just a thought?

I understand the idea but am wary of putting too many specifics in. Point for discussion. The parent section mentions social media.

	<p>I am wondering whether the "Behaviour Principles" at Appendix 1 gel with the rest of the document? It feels like those principles are covered by Ready, Respectful and Safe higher in the document.</p> <p>Point for governor discussion.</p> <p>Governor Visits / Reports TB/AF governor surgery at LINS - HS – SEND visit and visit to work with MW on the Behaviour Policy. GH Safeguarding visit to both LINS / LJS KDB visited LJS to conduct SCR check and a tour Annie F – EYFS visit – notes to next FGB meeting</p>
6.	Governor Curriculum Engagement
	<p>Governors have contact list for curriculum areas (matters arising). Justine fed back to governors and referred to documents on sharepoint that governors can use to guide conversations when visiting subject leads. Questions include references to how we support specific learners across the curriculum, and where we see e.g. behaviour policy in areas of curriculum. Aim to complete curriculum visits before 2nd governor meeting in 23/24 (October '23)</p>
7.	Governor Training
	<p>List any training attended by governors: James Lee – Parent engagement training</p>
8.	Governor skills Matrix
	No further updates
9.	Governor succession planning
	<p>New pay committee governor needed: New LA governor needed: Mark to look into further advice and process regarding governor roles (LA specific) James H governance term to end in October 2023</p>
10.	Governor meeting dates 2023/24
	Draft dates shared for next academic year.
11.	Policies: -
11.1	Federation Behaviour Policy
	<p>MW worked on with SEND governor (HS) changes made accordingly. New policy to be introduced to staff, pupils, parents in September. APPROVED</p>
11.2	Equality Objectives
	APPROVED
11.3	Self-Injury Policy
	<p>See matters arising MW requested to be approved as is. APPROVED</p>
11.4	Education of Children in Care Policy
	<p>New model policy (Aug 2022) from DCC APPROVED</p>
11.5	Federation Emergency Management Plan and Business Continuity Plan
	Updated annually. No significant changes from 2022.

	APPROVED
11.6	Federation Health and Safety Policy
	Updated annually – first aid qualifications updated. APPROVED
11.7	Flexible Working Policy
	New model policy updated from DCC APPROVED.
11.8	Wellbeing Policy
	Updated with an additional sentence relating to duties of headteacher. APPROVED
12.	Future planning
	Discussion about the education landscape and the future of ‘maintained’ schools. <i>Action: Discussion with local federations [Stoke Hill & Martin Harding] (Mark) and Ventrus (Karen) for September.</i> <i>Small working party: Tom, Justine and Karen</i>
	Date of next meeting: 20th September 2023
	Meeting Closed at: 7:20