



**Minutes of Willingham Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting
Thursday 17th March 2022 at 7pm (Virtual)**

Present:

Chris Shaw (CS) – Chair
Jo Aldhouse (JA)
Sarah Ashworth (SA)
Hannah Bowran-Pavey (HBP)
Caroline Hyde (CH)
Louise Johnston (LJ)
Helen McCarthy (HM)
David Morel (DM) – Head Teacher
Nakita Partington (NP)
Katy Stevenson (KS)
Matt Unwin (MU)
Angela Walker (AW)
Kate Van Dort (KVD)

Also in attendance: Helen Andrews (Camclerk)

1.	<p>Welcome from the Chair & Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all by wishing everyone a happy St Patrick's Day!</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Richard Hughes, Sarah Morgan, Matt Lockyer and Chris Woodward.</p> <p>Governors were advised that HBP may be late.</p>
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no additional declarations of interest.</p>
3.	<p>Minutes (previously circulated)</p> <p>The minutes of the FGB meeting held on 18th January 2022 were submitted as a correct record and will be formally signed by the Chair who will send a copy to the Clerk and the school.</p> <p>Actions outstanding and matters arising (not covered in the agenda):</p> <p><u>Road closures/Parking</u> -</p> <p>CW has been in contact with the local authority and has a meeting arranged next week to support DM. He hopes to progress those discussions. A few more volunteers have also been in contact. Governors were informed that there had been no further incidents concerning the Marshalls since the last meeting. Marshalls have now received additional training. Road safety outside the school is an ongoing concern for DM. The current arrangement will cease on 31st March 2022.</p>

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	<p>Challenge: A governor asked, do you think there has been a change in mindset by parents.</p> <p>DM believes the number of pupils cycling to school seems higher than ever! Some of the younger children are also riding to school, since the Year 6 have had their Bikeability training.</p> <p><u>School Website (curriculum area) –</u></p> <p>The website is not altogether up to date; a lot of historical content has been removed. Some work around the curriculum is still necessary but the priority is to develop the curriculum first.</p> <p><u>New Governor Access to MS Teams –</u></p> <p>New governors confirmed that they all have access to MS Teams and the governor channel. Thanks to was given to the School Business Manager for enabling access.</p> <p><u>EPM Personnel Policies (confirmation of ratification) –</u></p> <p>Action: SA to send the clerk a list of previously ratified EPM policies approved by the Personnel Committee.</p> <p><u>Schedule of Monitoring Visits –</u></p> <p>Governors shared a brief discussion on the monitoring visits that have taken place since the last meeting. It was acknowledged that the C-19 outbreak across the school had prevented all in-person visits to the school site. Only 1 school tour completed to date.</p> <p>DM suggested that these spikes are not as high as before half-term. The circuit breaker has appeared to be successful, there have been no more staff test positive for C-19. A number of staff are expected to return to school before the Easter holidays.</p> <p><u>Academisation (not on the meeting agenda) –</u></p> <p>The Chair has read an interesting article about the ambition for all schools to become academies before 2030. It does not appear that the DfE will force schools to academise, but they will offer incentives. 37% of primary schools are in academies nationally. 53% of schools in the East of England are academies. The Chair suggested it would be useful to review the white paper when it is formally published, for review at a future meeting. Once published, LJ may be able to offer some additional information on the government's intentions.</p>
4.	<p>Governor Membership (previously circulated)</p> <p><u>Update on New Governor Inductions</u></p> <p>The Chair has met with all new governors, they have been partnered with buddies and working through the induction process. School tours will be arranged by the Head Teacher, once numbers of positive cases reduce. All new governors have been encouraged to attend local authority governor training and have been asked to advise the Chair which sessions they have attended.</p>
5.	<p>Head Teacher's Report (previously circulated)</p> <p>DM provided a highlight of his report and asked for questions from governors:</p> <p>Challenge: A governor asked, how will we measure the progress of the tuition groups?</p> <p>DM explained, children have been assessed going into tutor groups to provide a</p>

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baseline, he will ask for a mid-term progress report from teachers. This will include academic and pastoral observations to provide a holistic view of their progress. Assessments will include PUMA and PIRA for maths and reading tutoring groups. It may be that academic progress will only be made in areas highlighted as gaps in knowledge. All the children are happy, staff have taken on the logistics of setting up the tutoring groups. Parents have been communicating to the tutors themselves via the school office, there has not been any further communication via the school, which has freed up some staff capacity.

DM has taken the decision to stop assemblies and uphold the wearing of masks for adults in communal areas. The ringfencing of Year 4 was necessary as cases were so high. However, ringfencing classes creates a massive burden on staff. This week has seen the school low on staff, the mid-day staff have stepped up so that Year 4 are able to eat in a segregated area. DM hopes to reduce some restrictions before the end of term. In discussions with the Senior Management Team and the Chair, the school will go ahead with the evening performance with parents and carers of Years 3 and 4. Those classed as vulnerable have been asked to consider this before attending. They will need to wear a coat due to the hall being well ventilated. The school has asked parents not to attend if they feel unwell or have a high temperature. The school is not able to enforce lateral flow tests. The decision was not to have whole-school performance due to the increased risk of contamination it posed.

Challenge: A governor asked, how are teachers feeling about next week, are they supportive of the decisions made by the school?

DM explained that teachers are very supportive for going ahead with the performance. Covid numbers in school are not the same as they were towards the end of the autumn term in 2021.

Challenge: A governor asked, how are staff in general?

AW explained that staff are tired, but it is a different feeling than “normal” end of term fatigue. She explained that there has been four year groups across the school where one teacher has been planning for two classes at a time; there has been a lot of extra work for some teachers. In terms of C-19, there are not many outside Years 3 and 4. In terms of staffing, there have been 4-5 positive cases in quick succession, but has dropped. The anxieties of a week ago have reduced as there is no longer any direct contact with those who have tested positive.

DM commended AW and Becky for their work in ensuring all classes are being led by adults. For them each morning, arrangements for that day start at 7am. Without their hard work, it would have been necessary to close several classes. AW explained that, due to the staff at the school, many TAs have been able to step up and lead classes in teacher absence. She was appreciative of them all stepping up to the additional responsibility.

The Chair thanked the Head Teacher for his report and responses to governor challenge.

All other questions were addressed in writing from Head Teacher and saved into Teams for reference.

6. **Honeypots Report (previously circulated)**

KVD provided a verbal report for the purposes of the meeting.

She was pleased to report that Honeypots has been C-19 free so far, this half-term. The previous half-term was different, but it was possible to keep all classes open. Currently, everything seems to be coming together. The children have settled very

	<p>well.</p> <p>KVD plans to share at the next meeting the new cohort details for EYFS. Within this group, there is a considerable number of children with SEN. EHCPs are being applied for to get funding in place for those children ahead of the transition.</p> <p>Staff are in a good place, morale is high. Nursery attendance is currently at 88%, due to a nasty sickness bug and family holidays. KVD reminded governors that there is not a statutory requirement for children to attend at nursery age.</p> <p>Challenge: A governor asked, are we still having EYFS teachers visiting Honeypots on a Friday?</p> <p>KVD was hopeful that this will start after Easter. Hopefully, C-19 wise, these arrangements will go ahead to support the transition of this cohort into primary school.</p> <p>In terms of Honeypots, pupil numbers are high. September looks almost full, which is positive.</p> <p>Challenge: A governor asked for a vague idea of the SEN needs of the children joining school from September 2022.</p> <p>KVD was not sure of the percentages but estimated it to be around 5 children, 2 of which already have a diagnosis of autism. The remainder of these identified children have speech and language and communication challenges. Governors shared a discussion around the likelihood of those with severe SEN who may attend specialist schools as opposed to mainstream education.</p> <p>Challenge: A governor asked, does Honeypots have any relationship with any local special schools?</p> <p>KVD explained that she is working with 2 specialist teachers currently. Honeypots' involvement tends not to extend to work with special schools.</p> <p>DM pointed out that the school has a link with the new Cavendish school. He felt this was something to work on by the new INCo. He advised that local authority support is becoming more and more limited, school support is now being more relied upon. Hannah is doing a fantastic job seeking specialist support.</p> <p>At this point in the meeting, DM offered an update on INCo role that was gratefully received by governors:</p> <p>The consultation process has taken place, this has been a very positive process. The roles of the SENCo and PP champion have been combined to an Inclusion Lead, which will become part of the Senior Management Team. DM explained that 22% of pupils form the PP cohort. 30% of pupils are classed as vulnerable. The INCo role will oversee progress and provision for all those children. The new INCo has already been in touch with Blue Smile and other external provisions to establish links. DM confirmed that the INCo role will formally start from September 2022. An advert for KS1 Lead and EYFS Leader vacancies has been published.</p> <p>The Chair thanked KVD for her update.</p>
7.	<p>CONFIDENTIAL - School Structure for 2022-2023</p> <p>Governors were reminded that the school structure was discussed at last meeting. Currently there are 13 classes, included provision for 3-form for the new Years 3 and 4. It was an action from the last FGB that DM and AW were asked to report back on costings.</p> <p>DM proposed the first option: Retaining 13 classes, with the current Year 2 group moving into a mixed Year 3/4 cohort. He explained that this arrangement has its</p>

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positives in that the older children bring up the younger ones, and it is possible to spread the cost across both year groups. However, the arrangement also has its challenges; maths is challenging for teaching children 2 years apart.

The second option is to keep the year group arrangement but to split the Year 3/4 for maths and bring in someone to teach them for an hour.

A third option to split them for both maths and English and bring in someone for a whole morning.

The fourth option involved having two Year 3 classes and two Year 4 classes. Children would receive same curriculum content due to the 2-year rolling program.

DM explained, if there was an infinite pot of money and space, DM would like to go 2-form entry across the school. The way numbers are going, the current Year 3 is the smallest cohort. Once they leave school in Year 6, there is no sign in the village that numbers are getting smaller. It may be possible to create the After School Club into an Art Studio.

DM elaborated: the current thinking is that single year groups are the way forward. Financially, this is sustainable for the next academic year. However, it can't be guaranteed that this arrangement is financially sustainable thereafter. Governors were advised that this arrangement would create an In-year underspend of £100,000. The only issue is space and successful recruitment. DM has investigated with local authority about sourcing a portacabin, at a cost £150k per year. There is a slim possibility that another school may have a portacabin to put in storage, which the school could take advantage of at no cost but, the local authority will not fund a portacabin through any other arrangement due to cost.

Challenge: A governor asked if the driver was this option was due to a smaller Year 3 cohort?

DM suggested it was for several reasons; single form entry seems the better way forward but, with that in mind, the current Year 2 cohort is a huge concern. It would be wrong to do nothing to support them going through the school.

Challenge: A governor suggested that the current Year 2 seemed quite immature and might not be able to blend successfully with an older group of children.

DM explained that a pre-identified group of children from Year 2 will be taught out of their year group as they are so far behind their age-related expectations.

Challenge: A governor asked if the previous attempts to blend this cohort whilst in Year 1 was a positive experience?

DM explained that the impact of Covid on this year group has been immense. He clarified that moving the children about in terms of efficiency within a timetable means a loss of valuable learning time. DM feels the one-hour option will not be effective in terms of pupil progress. The half-day arrangement is a probability. Teachers have seen good improvements from this cohort after the partial closures last year. Teachers tend to find mixed year groups harder to teach.

CH agreed with DM. If the school is in a position to be able to afford the half-day option, it is a compromise to make, in consideration of the Art Studio. It is a real opportunity for all teachers to know what needs to happen for the children in terms of curriculum planning. There will be positives with teachers being focussed on classes, and it may reduce pressure on TAs going forward. CH believes this may be something that can be financially sustainable after the next academic year.

Governors were still concerned by the space issue.

DM explained that there are some options to consider, such as converting the staff

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room into a classroom. It could be possible to look at how we convert the PPA room into a smaller staff room. DM pointed out that this was difficult to plan in consideration of staff wellbeing.

The Chair felt this was not an option to consider currently, the staff need their space.

Challenge: A governor asked, could the staff room be put outside?

A governor discussion concluded that the staff room is not used massively, there is not more than 7 allowed in lunchtime. At its busiest, there is only ten members of staff in there for a short period during the morning break. Alternative arrangements were discussed in length. The Chair proposed that funding a bespoke temporary building for a staff room may be possible. DM pointed out that Section 106 hasn't been triggered, despite the developments in the local area.

Action: DM will share details of local authority personnel for CH to contact the Service Director for Education at the LA. CH will also contact a couple of her property contacts to explore other options.

Challenge: A governor asked, is there any possibility of renting space out to other parties to make some income from it?

DM suggested there was no capacity to research funding opportunities at this current time.

Governors discussed the overall need of the Art Studio by all children.

Challenge: A governor clarified, in terms of recruitment for the staffing arrangement, the school can afford it for one year. Will we recruit permanently for this provision?

DM suggested he would ideally recruit for a permanent teacher; if there are two great candidates, it would be good to offer the other a temporary contract for the additional provision. DM is not confident about the calibre of candidates currently. DM has shown several interested people around the school. The deadline for applications is next Wednesday. He reassured governors that there is still time to re-advertise if no-one meets the mark.

Action: KS offered to help the recruitment process. Any new governors who would like to get involved, let the Chair and HT know. Interviewing takes place on 29th and 30th March.

Ratification: Governors unanimously accepted DMs proposal to go ahead with the 13-class proposal, with maths and English being taught separately each morning.

8. **Ofsted Readiness**

DM expects a visit from Ofsted during the next academic year, around Easter. Currently, advice suggests that Ofsted are a year and a term out of synch due to the C-19 pandemic.

The Clerk advised governors that the Governor Services Team at the local authority can conduct a "Pre-Ofsted check" ahead of any anticipated inspection, should the governing body be interested.

Action: The Clerk to share the school's details with the Governor Services Team to arrange a Pre-Ofsted Check.

Governors were told they will be required to attend an inspection in various places on the inspection agenda. The Chair agreed, it is good to prepare.

The Chair proposed a working party to prepare the governing body for any potential inspection. Governors were supportive of the proposal.

The Clerk asked if the governing body had any access to other sources of training, other than the local authority led sessions. She advised governors that the governing body has access to the NGA Learning Link as part of the service level agreement with the Governor Services Team.

Action: The Clerk to initiate the governing body with accounts for the NGA Learning Link and to circulate resources from The Key, School Bus and NGA about Ofsted Readiness.

Action: The Chair will set up a folder on Teams for each governor to act as a key resource for sharing and referring to information and guidance. JA will try to find the previous resource based on the previous Ofsted framework to act as a baseline. SA and JA will set aside some time to focus on setting up the resource.

CS raised the Staff Governor elections last year, Mrs Pipe requested to participate in governors but after the deadline when JA was re-elected. CS is keen to offer other members of staff outside of the Senior Management Team the opportunity of becoming an Associate Governor, to be able to work on a specific project or committee.

The Chair proposed it would be worth having a teacher's perspective on the Ofsted Readiness Working Party, and perhaps on the Curriculum Committee, or sub team.

DM agreed it would be advantageous to have a staff perspective (non-SMT) on the governing body.

The Clerk suggested that Committee's refer to their Terms of Reference to explore and define the scope of any possible Associate Governor on the governing body going forward.

Action: Committee Chairs took an action to discuss the appointment of an Associate Governor and the added value they could provide at their next meetings.

Governors agreed staff interest was positive in terms of succession planning. Governors agreed that the Chair would contact interested parties to explain the governing body's next steps.

9. **Committee Updates**

- i. **Personnel** – SA raised the matter of a need for a Wellbeing Link to be appointed on the governing body to consider staff workload and wellbeing (HM volunteered).

Ratification: Governors unanimously agreed to appoint HM as Wellbeing Link.

The catering contract is out to tender, shortlisting takes place on the first Tuesday back after Easter. Four companies have visited school, it is likely all four will tender. Aspens have decided not to tender, who are the current contractors. It is unclear what the reasons are.

Challenge: A governor asked, has there been any discussions with kitchen staff about the retendering process?

JA confirmed that kitchen staff will be taken on by the new contractor by TUPE. Aspens has not communicated to them yet but, kitchen staff are happy with which every contractor is successful.

The Personnel Committee discussed the standards around the nutrition being offered to children during the school day. All contractors have been

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informed of school expectations.

Challenge: A governor asked if it was possible to get feedback from children at other schools?

JA reassured governors that references are being provided by each contractor, which includes pupil voice.

Chair reiterated the need to have the school ethos considered during the tendering process.

Action: LJ will explore suggestions for sources of information.

Action: Chair to sign off the Personnel Terms of Reference in Teams folder.

- ii. **Curriculum - KS** will circulate the minutes of the meeting in due course. It is brilliant to be allowed back into the school. The Curriculum Committee received an amazing presentation by the Art Lead, governors are overwhelmed by how amazing she is; her subject knowledge and lesson planning is simply fantastic!

Challenge: A governor asked if it gave the committee the confidence that the Art Lead can teach to that level without an Art Studio?

KS suggested this would be a challenge as the resources are so important. Art will continue with SV leading it in some dynamic way, she had no doubt.

KS confirmed that the committee were confident that art will be delivered to the current standard, regardless of the Art Studio. A governor felt the school would still be at a considerable advantage regardless of a dedicated art room.

DM explained that the challenge will be moving all the resources around each classroom. It will be a management issue as to how that happens at an operational level.

KS explained that during the first half of each term, a subject lead is invited to give a presentation to governors. The second half of the term includes a data presentation. At the last meeting, focus was given on drilling down into the data reviewing interventions and tutoring to filling specific gaps.

Ark will be reviewed at the next meeting. Ark is the new maths system that was rolled-out at the beginning of the academic year.

AW pointed out that, although there is a lot of support in place, the impact of C-19 affecting staff has had a massive impact on the rolling out of interventions across the school.

SM and AW will perform a deep dive into the data before further scrutiny at the next meeting.

- iii. **Finance & Premises** – LJ received an update about the drainage work funds, this equates to approximately £65k of funding in principle, coming from the DfE, Anglian Water and the local authority to cover various sustainable drainage schemes. Work should start in April 2022.

Challenge: A governor asked how much of that can be spent on the school?

The local authority will have some consultancy fees that will be taken from this amount. DM informed governors that it must be spent by the next financial year.

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	<p>LJ stated that it is coming to end of the financial year. The school is showing a carry forward of £74k, minus the HoneyPot charge. HoneyPots have had its most profitable term since it began. Children's numbers continue to grow.</p> <p>LJ confirmed the committee were planning on spending the capital budget on IT equipment throughout the school.</p> <p>HoneyPots will be decorated over the summer holiday.</p> <p>Energy costs were discussed at the meeting, the school is anticipating a massive hike in gas costs. The school has an ESPO contract currently, the SBM is exploring options going forward. The SBM has met with the Financial Adviser in terms of preparing for the budget build. Income is up, which looks favourable. The school is in receipt of an additional £40,000 to cover the increase in teacher National Insurance contributions. This funding has been based on pupil numbers.</p> <p>Action: CS to sign-off the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS), the committee have fully scrutinised which has been recorded in the minutes of the last meeting. The SFVS will be submitted by 31st March 2022. It has been uploaded to Teams ready to sign.</p>
10.	<p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>KS led this item. DM provided a dashboard overview of stats shared on screen. There have been twenty concerns logged already this month. Two cases are being reviewed at Section 47. Governors were advised of a small number of families with lots of ongoing concerns. Fortunately, there has not been an increase in online safety issues; current concerns seem to be mostly around home issues, domestic violence, and parental mental health. DM explained that there continues to be an ongoing, steady flow of concerns.</p> <p>Challenge: A governor asked, how are staff in terms of the more serious issues, are they supported?</p> <p>Governors were explained that the recent Staff Survey analysed a strong feeling of being supported. A recent serious incident took its toll on a few staff, school leaders have signposted where to get support. Regular team meetings are good for keeping on top of sibling cross overs and provides the opportunity to talk through concerns and anxieties amongst members of staff.</p> <p>KS said that it has not been possible to visit the school in person for a safeguarding visit. The first part of the monitoring was done remotely and has been completed. This session looked at staff training. There are systems in place to check staff understanding of safeguarding. The introduction of My Concern has revolutionised the reporting system. All staff have access to the system so the Designated Safeguarding Leads can keep on top of all logged concerns.</p> <p>DM confirmed that there have been a couple of extreme cases recently, the social care response has not been so proactive lately. There is not always the right level of support available at times of urgent need. DM explained that there are too many cases and recruitment challenges. It is a county-wide issue.</p> <p>Action: Governors were asked to ensure they have been on Safer Recruitment training course before partaking in any staff recruitment processes. The Key safeguarding resource has proved to be useful. Governors to complete a safeguarding course if they have not done so this academic year already.</p> <p>The 360° safeguarding review outcome saw an MS Form that will appear on all children's desktops so they can report any concerns online. It provides an</p>

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	<p>additional choice for children to log their concerns. KS will follow this up, and to consider how younger children will be able to share their concerns. Children are made aware of safeguarding issues in age appropriate PSHE lessons and learn how to report concerns through a variety of methods.</p>
11.	<p>Governor Business</p> <p>i. Governor Training and Board Development – Chair thanked all governors who have advised him of the local authority training they have attended recently.</p> <p>ii. School Monitoring Visit Reports – SA completed a compliance visit a couple of weeks ago. Her general request to all Committee Chairs is to get up to speed to ensure that all minutes, Terms of References, and all governance documents are up to date and on Teams.</p> <p>CH has a report to complete, which will be shared once approved. A couple of actions have come out of that visit, governors have been approached to help.</p> <p>iii. Recruitment Needs – Chair confirmed he will follow up on the Associate Governor role with a member of staff.</p> <p>iv. Policy Review – <u>Complaints Policy</u> Action: SA will provide a link for the Complaints Policy and Code of Conduct for governors to review and approve.</p>
12.	<p>Summary of Actions</p> <p>The Chair reviewed the actions from the meeting. These have been highlighted throughout the minutes.</p>
13.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>5th May 2022 at 7.00pm – KS and CH offered their apologies in advance.</p> <p>Calendar of Meetings: 5th May 2022 and 7th July 2022. All start at 7pm and will be virtual until agreed otherwise.</p> <p>Next sub committees: - Curriculum - 28 April - Personnel TBC - F&P – 20 April</p>
14.	<p>Impact of the Meeting</p> <p>The Chair felt it had been a valuable meeting; it is useful to talk openly, particularly about the school structure and Ofsted Readiness preparations.</p>
15.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There were no items of Any Other Business raised at the meeting.</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.</p>

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