

Ryarsh Primary School
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
held at the school on Thursday 22 March 2018 at 7pm

Present: Ruth Austin (Headteacher), Claire Crome, Niall Gardener, Steve Hill, Steve Hughes, Jon Naylor, Rachel Rowland (Chair), Daniel Sproul, Carmel Sutton

In attendance: Vanessa Stevens (KCC Clerking Service)

		Action
1	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed those present. Apologies for absence were accepted from Daniel Childs (Deputy Headteacher) (unwell), John Macnab (travelling from Manchester) and Stewart Speake (family commitment). The meeting was quorate throughout.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk to send updated membership and attendance records to the Chair and the Head.</p>	Clerk
2	<p>Business interests</p> <p>No business interests were declared against agenda items.</p>	
3	<p>Governing Body (GB) matters</p> <p>3.1 Training – Niall Gardener had attended KCC’s Governors’ Induction training on 3 February 2018. The Chair, the Head and Daniel Sproul had attended collaboration training on Managing Parental Complaints on 5 February 2018; that session had focused on the complaints investigation procedure rather than social media which had been the expectation based on the course description. The next collaboration training session would focus on Ofsted readiness.</p> <p>3.2 Bulletin – Governors had received KCC’s governance monthly bulletin (copy filed with minutes). There were no relevant matters arising for discussion.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>4.1 Governors approved, and the Chair signed, minutes and confidential minutes of the FGB meeting held on 25 January 2018. Signed minutes were retained on file in school.</p> <p>4.2 Governors shared updates on agreed actions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chair had circulated the finalised skills matrix (copy filed with minutes). 2. Governors were reminded to review their website profiles and advise the Head of any changes. Governors reported inaccuracies with regard to some initial appointment dates recorded on KCC’s CPD Online database. It was agreed that terms of service would continue to be calculated from Governors’ own records. 3. The Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) dashboard was covered under agenda item 5. 4. The Pay Policy was covered under agenda item 8. 5. Road safety was covered under agenda item 10. <p>4.3 Matters arising – None.</p>	
5	<p>Headteacher’s update</p> <p>5.1 Overview – Governors had received for pre-reading the Headteacher’s Update, attendance information for parents, and the IDSR (copies filed with minutes). Governors received verbal updates and discussed matters arising as follows:</p> <p>5.2 Safeguarding – The Chair and the Head had monitored the single central record and confirmed that it was up to date.</p> <p>5.3 Staffing – The Caretaker was on a phased return to work. Governors expressed thanks and best wishes to Miss Carden who was leaving her teaching role after five successful years. The Vice Chair would conduct an exit interview with Miss Carden the following day. Governors commended the support and developmental opportunities provided to Miss Carden during her time at Ryarsh. The Head outlined plans to ensure the smoothest possible handover between</p>	

	<p>Miss Carden and the new Dolphin Class Teacher, Stephanie Batchelor. A Governor asked how many applications the school had received for the role and whether the decision to appoint a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) had been intentional. The Head said there had been five applicants and that the appointment of another NQT after Miss Carden had been coincidental and had, on reflection, provided a good balance in terms of the overall staff team.</p> <p>5.4 Admissions – The school had received 45 first choice applications for the September 2018 intake i.e. half as many again as could be accommodated in the published admission number (PAN) of 30.</p> <p>5.5 Attainment – The school had been selected and statutorily required to take part in a trial for a new format SATs test. Children would sit the new paper in addition to the real SATs papers, and results would be used to benchmark the two formats. A Governor asked whether pupils would benefit from participation in the trial. The Head said that, although participating schools would not receive feedback on pupils' performance, the experience would give pupils an opportunity to practice working under test conditions. Year 6 children had sat the Maths test which had been postponed from February due to severe weather; individual children's raw scores had improved since January, although probability scores for attainment of 'Expected plus' and 'High' had decreased from the previous month to, respectively, 80% (from 90%) and 30% (from 37%). A Governor asked how the probability scores were generated. The Head explained that they were modelled on previous cohorts' national test data.</p> <p>Based on prior attainment, it was anticipated that two of the current Year 6 children would not achieve Expected plus by the end of the year. A Governor asked whether there were any extenuating circumstances in those two cases. The Head identified test-related anxiety and absences related to medical needs. A Governor asked how the school was supporting children's preparation and revision for tests. The Head said that children would receive revision books to work on at home over Easter. Children were continuing to use the online Lexia reading resource discussed at the previous FGB meeting, and parents would be provided with printed reports of children's learning. A Governor asked how the school supported children who experienced stress and anxiety. The Head said that time was set aside each day for children to talk with Teachers. Children were taught individual techniques to cope with their anxiety, and the school was committed to avoiding unnecessary testing. Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) were very supportive of children throughout the revision and testing process. Children who ordinarily received one-to-one TA support in the classroom also received one-to-one support during tests. The Chair said she had observed the encouraging and calming influence of this TA support during a visit the previous year. Governors were invited to monitor the school's compliance with SATs procedures during w/c 14 May 2018 (Monday to Thursday mornings).</p> <p>Action: Governors to notify the Head of availability to monitor SATs procedure.</p> <p>5.6 Attendance – Governors commended the newsletter to parents which had clearly highlighted the positive association between children's attendance and attainment.</p> <p>5.7 IDSR – The Head reminded Governors of the importance of familiarity with the IDSR ahead of Ofsted. As the full report was not in the public domain, it was filed in the confidential minutes file.</p> <p>5.8 Severe weather – The Head said that staff were working hard to make up for time lost due to the recent severe weather. A Governor asked what factors had informed the decision to close the school. The Head said that the decision was based on the safety of the school site, the number of staff who were able to get to work (to ensure appropriate staffing ratios for the purpose of ensuring children's safety), and whether or not it was safe for children, parents and staff to make the journey. On a day when two Teachers had been unable to get to work, cover had been provided by the incoming NQT and a TA. The Head had managed to get to school on all except one of the days, and she and the Deputy Headteacher had gritted outside areas to ensure site safety. Governors supported all measures taken by the school during the extremely challenging circumstances.</p> <p>5.9 Surveys – The Head was collating and would analyse the survey results. 82 parental responses had been received and positive comments would be shared via the school's website and prospectus. Of parent respondents, 98% were happy with the school, 98% felt their children were safe at the school, 98% felt their children were making good progress, 89% (an increase on the previous year) felt that their children received appropriate homework, 99% felt that pupils were well behaved, and 91% felt that the school responded well to issues raised. In relation to the latter score, the Head advised that staff consistently addressed any arising issues directly with</p>	Govs
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	<p>the children concerned; as such, Governors recognised that any parental dissatisfaction was likely attributable to parents' negative opinion of outcomes reached.</p> <p>21 staff and 5 Governor responses had been received. 100% of respondents had agreed that they were proud to be a member of the Ryarsh Primary School community and that the school was well-led and managed. All staff respondents agreed that the school supported them in line with school priorities and in terms of CPD provision. One individual reported not feeling personally supported by the school. Comments by staff had covered issues including work-life balance, the new hall construction project, and the positive way in which staff worked together. Governors suggested amendments to the survey format in order to increase participation rates and facilitate collection of robust and representative data e.g. option menus plus free text boxes to encourage disclosure of dissatisfaction. Governors agreed the inclusion of a statement to the effect that they were concerned that not all staff had felt able to participate in the recent survey and that they welcomed all opinions and perspectives.</p>	
6	<p>School Action Plan and Governor monitoring</p> <p>Governors had completed all scheduled monitoring visits for Term 4; monitoring reports would be discussed at the next meeting. Jon Naylor relayed staff feedback from his and Stewart Speake's Leadership and Management monitoring visit that the new curriculum had caused an increase in staff workloads; this would be revisited during future monitoring.</p>	
7	<p>Finance</p> <p>7.1 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) – Governors approved, and the Chair signed, the SFVS self-assessment form for submission to the local authority.</p> <p>7.2 Budget monitoring – Budget closedown would take place the following day. The Finance Governors had arranged to meet on 4 May 2018.</p> <p>7.3 Pupil Premium expenditure and impact – Carried forward to Term 6 meeting.</p> <p>7.4 Sports funding expenditure and impact – Carried forward to Term 6 meeting.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk to place an item on the Term 6 agenda for discussion of Pupil Premium and sports funding.</p> <p>7.5 Pay review – The Chair, the Vice Chair, the Head and Steven Hughes had ratified the staff pay recommendations at a meeting immediately prior to this FGB. A Governor asked when teaching staff pay would be similarly reviewed; the Head said this would take place at the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Action: The Chair to write minutes of the support staff pay review meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Chair</p>
8	<p>Policies</p> <p>8.1 Online Safety Policy – Governors approved this Policy (copy filed with minutes).</p> <p>8.2 Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy – Governors approved this Policy (copy filed with minutes).</p> <p>8.3 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy – Governors approved this Policy (copy filed with minutes).</p> <p>8.4 Assessment Policy – Governors approved this Policy (copy filed with minutes).</p> <p>8.5 Pay Policy – The Finance monitoring group had discussed the Pay Policy. A Governor noted the requirement to state whether or not the school used local discretion for support staff pay. The Head confirmed that the school did. The Finance group had carefully considered five options set out in the Spring 2018 issue of The Governor magazine: retention of a reference point approach; differentiated percentage rates of progression; annually determined flat percentage increases; differentiated cash increases; and, annually determined cash increases. There had been a strong recommendation for schools to carefully consider the financial affordability of their chosen approach before reviews were undertaken. Governors noted that this was the opposite of Ryarsh's traditional approach. The Finance group recommended retention of the school's current arrangements. It was noted that, at 76% of the total budget (i.e. below the threshold of 80%), the budget would be able to absorb any pay increases. Governors agreed that it was reasonable for staff to be given details of any possible increments at the start of the year, and that the school needed to be able to recruit the best staff for the school.</p>	

	Action: The Head to redraft the Pay Policy ready for circulation and approval in Term 1.	Head
9	Child protection and safeguarding No matters arising.	
10	Health & safety and premises	
10.1	Road safety – The Head reported parents’ survey responses regarding travel to school (86% car; 12% walk; 1 % cycle) and their suggestions for improving road safety outside the school entrance (12 for zebra crossing; seven for a crossing patrol; seven for a decreased speed limit; five for improved road signs or a member of staff on duty). A Governor had witnessed a recent near miss in which a vehicle had almost injured a cyclist. The Head had contacted the local MP, KCC and the Parish Council to highlighted the issue of road safety. KCC’s response had referred to historical traffic calming measures which were no longer effective. Governors agreed that forthcoming road resurfacing work in Ryarsh provided a good opportunity for KCC to install new traffic calming measures outside the school. A Governor asked how the issue of road safety could be given higher profile throughout the school community. The Head suggested children’s workshops on road safety, including activities such as poster-making, which children could discuss with their parents. It was agreed that the Chair would write to parents on behalf of the GB to raise concerns about road safety. A Governor suggested inviting a member of the community who was also a Police Officer to be present at the school gate the day after the letter was distributed. Action: The Chair to write to parents on behalf of the GB concerning road safety. Action: The Head to contact the local Police Officer.	Chair Head
10.2	Health and safety – Steve Hill raised two issues arising from a recent health and safety monitoring visit: residual asbestos which was sealed and on the walls in the boiler room; and, a broken door closer on the pod. Action: Steve Hill to write up and circulate the health and safety monitoring report, including recommended actions.	S.Hill
11	Chair’s report The Chair reported that Ryarsh pupils had written compelling letters of objection to the proposed West Malling sand quarry. Governors agreed that the Chair would write to KCC on behalf of the GB to express concerns regarding air quality, stress, noise and health impacts associated with the proposed pit. Action: The Chair to submit an objection to the proposed West Malling quarry before the 29 March 2018 deadline.	Chair
12	Any other urgent business On behalf of the GB, the Chair thanked the Clerk, who was leaving KCC at the end of March, for her hard work and support over recent years. The Clerking Service Manager had identified a cover Clerk for Terms 5 and 6, with long-term clerking support for the school to be confirmed.	
13	Confidentiality No items were deemed confidential.	
14	Meeting date FGB: 10 May 2018 at 7pm. Apologies were offered in advance by Steven Hughes (work) and Claire Crome (prior commitment).	

Signed (Chair) _____

Date _____

Action Summary

1	Send updated membership and attendance records to Chair and Head.	Clerk
2	Notify the Head of availability to monitor SATs w/c 14 May 2018.	Govs
3	Place item on Term 6 agenda for Pupil Premium and sports funding.	Clerk
4	Write minutes of the support staff pay review meeting.	Chair
5	Redraft the Pay Policy ready for circulation and approval in Term 1.	Head
6	Write to parents on behalf of the GB concerning road safety.	Chair
7	Contact local Police Officer re site visit concerning safe safety.	Head
8	Write up and circulate the health and safety monitoring report, including recommended actions.	S.Hill
9	Submit West Malling quarry objection before the 29 March 2018 deadline.	Chair