

Ryarsh Primary School
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
held at the school on Thursday 24 January 2019 at 7pm

Present: Ruth Austin (Headteacher), Daniel Childs (Deputy Headteacher), Claire Crome, Niall Gardener, Steve Hughes, John Macnab, Rachel Rowland (Chair), Stewart Speake, Daniel Sproul, Carmel Sutton

In attendance: Vanessa Stevens (Clerk)

		Action
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed those present. Apologies for absence were accepted from Steve Hill (holiday) and Jon Naylor (work). The meeting was quorate throughout.</p>	
2	<p>Business Interests</p> <p>Governors were reminded to declare any business interests including those relating to agenda items. No new interests were declared during the meeting.</p>	
3	<p>Governing Body (GB) Matters</p> <p>3.1 GB impact – The Chair reminded Governors of the need to think carefully about the impacts that their work, including their discussions during FGB meetings, had on outcomes for pupils at the school.</p> <p>3.2 Joint Governor Panel – The Chair said that, although a formal response was awaited from Mereworth Community Primary School's GB, indications remained that the proposed Joint Governor Panel would be approved in due course.</p> <p>3.3 Training – No further training had been completed by Governors since the previous FGB meeting.</p> <p>3.4 Governance bulletin – Governors noted receipt of the most recent governance monthly bulletin.</p> <p>3.5 GB self-review – Governors had been asked to send feedback to the Chair on the 20 Questions self-evaluation toolkit created by The Key, the National Governors' Association and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Education Governance and Leadership. Governors reviewed the document with a view to collating a set of questions that could be used annually to evaluate the GB's performance and identify areas for further development. With reference to Q13 ('How do we make regular reports on the work of the governing board to our parents and local community?') Governors discussed ways in which to raise the profile of the GB and its work e.g. via the school website and a termly update in the school newsletter.</p> <p>Action: The Chair to revise and circulate the 20 Questions document.</p>	Chair
4	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>4.1 Governors approved, and the Chair signed, minutes and confidential minutes of the Full Governing Body (FGB) meeting held on 22 November 2018. Signed minutes were placed 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 Clerk had updated the GB and CPD Online records to reflect reappointments of Steve Hill, Jon Naylor, Stewart Speake and Carmel Sutton as Co-opted Governors. 2. The Chair had removed reference to a Governor Visits Policy from the GB Terms of Reference. 3. The School Action Plan was discussed under agenda item 6. 4. The 20 Questions toolkit was discussed under agenda item 3.5. 	

	<p>5. The Chair had updated the GB impact statement and shared it via KLZ. Governors were invited to send feedback to the Chair before the statement was published on the school's website.</p> <p>Action: Governors to send feedback to the Chair regarding the GB impact statement.</p> <p>6. The Headteacher had amended the Teaching, Learning and Assessment wording in the SEF Summary to '100% of teaching is now at least good with outstanding features...'. 7. The Headteacher had spoken to the PE Leader regarding administration of a sport participation survey to measure the school's effectiveness in promoting healthy active lifestyles. 8. The Headteacher reported that the leaves had been removed from the steps to the pod and that there had been no recurrence of the previous accumulation.</p>	Govs
<p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p>	<p>Headteacher's update</p> <p>Overview – Governors had received for pre-reading the Headteacher's Update (filed as confidential due to identifying details) and the Primary Inspection Data Summary Report (ISDR) (filed with minutes). Governors received verbal updates and discussed matters arising as follows:</p> <p>Safeguarding – The Headteacher said that a safeguarding referral made the previous day had been actioned by the local authority.</p> <p>Staffing – Governors expressed their thanks to the outgoing Caretaker for his hard work at the school over eight years. Interviews had been offered to two of the three applicants for the arising vacancy; both of the two had building trade experience although no school caretaking experience. The role was for 15 hours per week, with very flexible hours to enable responses to emergency situations. A Governor asked whether the Headteacher had approached other schools in the collaboration regarding possible candidates for the role. The Headteacher said that the first step had been to advertise the role more widely and that this approach had yielded two interviews.</p> <p>A Governor asked about recruitment for new cleaners. The Headteacher said that she had considered directly employing cleaners as an alternative to agency cleaners, and that recruitment would take place following the appointment of a new Caretaker. Two people had expressed interest in working as directly-employed cleaners. A Governor asked about recruitment for the maternity cover teaching role. The Headteacher said that there had been four applications for the vacancy which closed the following day. A Governor asked for an update on the recent Teaching Assistant (TA) appointments. The Headteacher said that all of the new appointees had good skills, and that she was considering the possibility of introducing a one-year TA apprenticeship to provide high quality in-house training. Governors were supportive of this proposal, and noted that the school would be eligible to apply for apprenticeship funding due its payment of the apprenticeship levy.</p> <p>A Governor asked whether exit interviews with departing members of staff had identified any actions that would positively impact on the school community. The Headteacher relayed a suggestion for the introduction of a buddying system for new staff, to include familiarisation with the site and reminders about staff meetings. The proposed buddying system had already been implemented.</p> <p>ISDR – Steve Hughes gave a brief verbal report on his and Niall Gardener's most recent data monitoring visit. The visit had identified boys' reading and Year 4 reading as main focus areas.</p> <p>Buildings update – The Headteacher reported that the building contractors had that day knocked through from the staffroom and Lion Class's room. The hall floor base had been screeded and the floor would be laid in due course. Work was underway on the corridor; the windows and roof were in place and the floor had been screeded; doors would be installed the next day. During the half term break, the old hall would be partitioned to create two new classrooms. For one week the school would have a reduced sized hall which would prohibit whole-school assemblies and necessitate the use of smaller tables at lunchtime. In February, classes would move to their new rooms. The building project was on course for completion before Easter.</p> <p>A Governor raised a concern about the lighting level in the staffroom and asked whether it would be improved. The Headteacher confirmed that it would, in part by knocking</p>	

	<p>down the old corridor. The Headteacher said that there would be natural light in all rooms used by children and all rooms in which staff were permanently based. A Governor asked whether there were plans to celebrate the completion of the building project. The Headteacher outlined plans for a Ryarsh history exhibition event to which parents and the local community would be invited. Governors supported a suggestion for a new building opening event at the start of the summer, to be followed by the Ryarsh history exhibition later in the summer term.</p> <p>The Headteacher said that work on the old kitchen corridor was scheduled for the summer holiday as it would not be possible to retain functionality of the kitchen during the work. Payment would be made for the drawing up of documents by Ted Dingley (Kier) although not for project management as this would be undertaken by the school. A Governor asked whether the school had had to go via KCC to engage Kier. The Headteacher said it had not because the school itself was managing the project. A Governor asked about the logistics involved in moving classes into their new classrooms. The Headteacher said it had been arranged for the contractor to assist with moving furniture.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>School Action Plan and Governor monitoring</p> <p>Overview – Governors had received the updated School Action Plan for 2018-19 (SAP, copy filed with minutes). The Chair invited Governors to share feedback from monitoring visits against allocated areas of responsibility.</p> <p>Effectiveness of Leadership and Management – With reference to pp3-5 of the SAP, Stewart Speake presented a summary of his and the Vice Chair’s visit on 30 November 2018. He noted that Teachers’ comfort and confidence in using video-based self reflection had increased since its introduction and that they had reported finding it useful in their development. A Governor asked when TAs would have the opportunity to visit the John Stainer School in Brockley, Lewisham, as part of the staff swap programme. The Headteacher said that five TAs would visit the John Stainer School in March and each would have the opportunity to shadow a colleague who undertook a similar role to their own. Claire Crome said that strong working relationships had formed between staff from the two schools.</p> <p>The Headteacher and DHT said that Ryarsh Teachers had identified elements of outstanding pupil behaviour at the John Stainer School that could be implemented at Ryarsh to further raise standards. While in-class behaviour at Ryarsh was notable for pupils’ articulation, communication and concentration skills, there was scope to improve out-of-class behaviour by adopting best practice modelled at the other school This included movement around the school site and the high level of courtesy and respect that was ingrained into the whole culture of the school. The DHT commended the respectful behaviour of John Stainer pupils on the playground, as well as the way in which they returned to class without lining up after breaks. The DHT also commended Ryarsh pupils’ sensible negotiation of their own school site during the current building works.</p> <p>A Governor asked whether the staff swap with the John Stainer School was the first time such a project had been undertaken at Ryarsh. The Headteacher confirmed that it was and said that, previously, Teachers had visited three different outstanding schools to share best practice. A Governor asked whether the school would benefit from more frequent staff swaps with other outstanding schools. The Headteacher said that it would as the swap provided a powerful way of broadening horizons and identifying new areas for improvement. The staff swap was also beneficial in terms of broadening pupils’ experiences and understanding, including with respect to ethnic diversity. A Governor asked whether feedback on Ryarsh Primary School had been sought from the John Stainer School. The Headteacher said that Teachers from the latter school had given feedback via questionnaires. A Governor asked whether that feedback had been shared with Ryarsh Teachers. The Headteacher said that it had been shared at a staff meeting; overall the feedback was positive, although it had been suggested that displays at Ryarsh could be developed to celebrate children’s work more.</p> <p>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment – With reference to pp5-9 of the SAP, John Macnab shared feedback from his and Steve Hill’s monitoring visit on 11 December 2018. The visit had included detailed discussion of Teachers’ use of verbal feedback, in particular around ensuring consistent adherence to best practice and communicating the new approach to parents. A Governor asked about the impact of the verbal feedback strategy and said that it would be useful to capture this information in the SAP.</p>	

<p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p>	<p>Action: John Macnab to add further detail to the SAP regarding the impact of the verbal feedback strategy.</p> <p>Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare – Claire Crome shared feedback on her and Jon Naylor’s monitoring visit held on 23 November 2018 (pp9-12 of SAP). The visit had included monitoring of pupil attendance which had increased since the previous term; attendance rates for the whole school and for disadvantaged groups had both been above the school’s targets (whole school actual 97.7% versus target 97.5%, and disadvantaged actual 99.2% versus target 97.1%). A Governor asked about the definition of pupil conferencing. The Headteacher explained that it referred to a one-to-one pupil-Teacher meeting to review the pupil’s current assessment at the end of the term; this had been trialed for all Year groups from Reception to Year 6. In addition to pupil conferencing, the Year 5 and 6 children also attended parent consultations. With reference to the SAP’s mention of community attendance at school events, Claire reported that unfortunately no older people had been able to attend the Christmas performance.</p> <p>Outcomes for Pupils – Niall Gardener and Steve Hughes highlighted key points from their monitoring visit held on 3 January 2019 (pp12-19 of SAP), including the commendable proportions of children regularly reading at home: over 52% of children reading more than five times per week and a further 30% reading more than three times per week. The holiday support scheme had had a positive take-up, and plans were in place for theatre visits. Governors considered the frequency with which Steve Hughes would feed back on his monitoring of special educational needs (SEN) and it was agreed that any arising matters would be notified to the Clerk for inclusion on FGB agendas. The Chair suggested that the next monitoring visit on Outcomes could include discussions with children about the impact of activities such as the theatre trips.</p> <p>Action: Steve Hughes to notify the Clerk of any SEN matters to be added to FGB agendas.</p> <p>Action: During next monitoring visit, Niall Gardener and Steve Hughes to follow up on impact of theatre visits.</p> <p>Effectiveness of the Early Years – The Vice Chair presented key points from her and Dan Sproul’s monitoring visit carried out on 2 December 2018 (pp19-21 of SAP). Key questions had been identified for further discussion at the next visit; these related to improvements to the outside area and to progress against outcomes targets including good level of development (GLD).</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>S.Hu</p> <p>NG & S.Hu</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>Governors had received for pre-reading the minutes of the budget monitoring pair meeting held on 11 January 2019 (approved minutes placed on school file). The Chair had asked the Clerk to attend and minute the finance meetings in response to recommendations arising from the recent compliance visit. The Chair presented key headlines from the meeting which had covered six and nine month budget monitoring, unspent balances, balance control, benchmarking, compliance, the voluntary fund and the asset register. Governors considered a suggestion to develop the school’s online payment system in order to streamline the receipt of payments via the school office. A Governor asked whether there was scope to increase income from lettings. The Chair explained that the school did not wish to set up in competition with the village hall. Governors supported this position and also recognised the logistical complications involved with lettings e.g. opening and locking up the site.</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>Collective Worship Policy – Governors approved the adoption of the draft Collective Worship Policy that had been shared via KLZ for pre-reading (copy filed with minutes).</p> <p>Health and Safety Policy – Governors approved the draft Health and Safety Policy that had been shared via KLZ for pre-reading (copy filed with minutes).</p> <p>Staff Code of Conduct Policy – The Headteacher said that staff had been invited to give feedback on all staff policies. Staff had suggested that the financial value threshold could be set higher for gifts bought collaboratively by parents. Governors agreed that the wording of section 33 (p13) should be amended to specify a £25 per pupil limit. Staff had fed back that the wording of section 26 (p11) did not adequately cover situations in which new appointees were already in contact via social media with members of the school’s community e.g. by virtue of themselves having a child at the school. Governors agreed that the wording of that</p>	

	<p>section should be amended to specify that no new contacts should be created once the new member of staff was in post. With reference to section 35 (p14), staff had asked whether they were permitted to talk to the media about education issues that were not directly related to the school. Governors agreed that such instances would constitute personal opinions and were therefore already covered within the scope of the Policy. Governors approved the draft Staff Code of Conduct Policy subject to the agreed amendments set out above.</p> <p>Action: The Headteacher to amend the draft Staff Code of Conduct Policy as agreed by Governors.</p>	Head
8.4	Staff Discipline and Conduct Policy – Governors approved the draft Staff Discipline and Conduct Policy that had been shared via KLZ for pre-reading (copy filed with minutes).	
8.5	Managing Absence and Ill Health Policy – Governors approved the draft Managing Absence and Ill Health Policy that had been shared via KLZ for pre-reading (copy filed with minutes).	
9	<p>Safeguarding, Child Protection and Wellbeing</p> <p>The Headteacher said that Growth Mindset Week had been held after Christmas. The Week had focused on coping with difficulties and the school had hosted visits from speakers with experience of disability and blindness.</p>	
10	<p>Health & safety and premises</p>	
10.1	School site – Stewart Speake said that a c£37k quote had been received from High Point to replace the school playground. An alternative quote, which would include materials at cost, was awaited from a different contractor. Steve Hughes said that an audit of site accessibility would need to be carried out following completion of the building work.	
10.2	Dogs – Governors discussed a concern about the increasing presence of dogs in the carpark at end-of-day pick up time. There had recently been a dogfight which, although had not resulted in any injuries or damage to people or property, gave cause for concern in case of recurrence. Governors considered options for addressing the issue and agreed that parents would be encouraged to keep children and dogs out of the carpark. The reason for encouraging parents with dogs not to gather in the car park was that it presented a safety issue for children who would then join them there.	
11	<p>General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)</p> <p>The Chair presented the Data Protection Officer's (DPO's) report that had been shared via KLZ. There had been no data breaches in the reporting period.</p>	
12	<p>Chair's report</p> <p>The Chair said that external advisory support from The Education People had been used for the Headteacher's performance management (HTPM) meeting in Term 2. The adviser had reported in very positive terms on the Headteacher's performance. The adviser had also confirmed that the recommendation to not appoint both the Chair and the Vice Chair to the HTPM group was only advisory. Governors agreed that the membership of the HTPM group, which included the Chair and Vice Chair, had been fully considered and continued to be appropriate.</p>	
13	<p>Any other urgent business</p>	
13.1	<p>Brexit – Governors had received for pre-reading the Guidance to Kent Schools to plan for any logistical or organisational challenges following the UK leaving the European Union on Friday, 29 March 2019 (copy filed with minutes). Governors agreed that the school's existing contingency plans for severe weather events was sufficient to meet the school's needs in the event of any disruption caused by Brexit. A Governor asked whether the school needed to stock up on any items as a precaution against delivery delays and whether the catering company might be affected. The Headteacher said she would speak with the catering company regarding its contingency arrangements.</p> <p>Action: The Headteacher to speak with the catering company regarding its Brexit contingency plans.</p>	Head
13.2	Ofsted consultation – Ofsted was consulting on its proposed new inspection framework which would take effect from September 2019.	

14	Impact of Meeting Governors had identified positive impacts of their SAP monitoring visits and of recent exit interviews. They had formulated a set of questions to use in robust annual GB self-evaluation. Governors had monitored progress on the building project and had made progress in obtaining quotes for resurfacing the playground.	
15	Confidentiality No items were deemed to be confidential.	
16	Date of Next Meeting Thursday 21 March 2019 at 7pm.	

The meeting closed at 9.34pm.

Signed (Chair) _____

Date _____

Action Summary

1	Revise and circulate the 20 Questions document.	Chair
2	Send feedback to the Chair regarding the GB impact statement.	Govs
3	Add further detail to the School Action Plan regarding the impact of the verbal feedback strategy.	JM
4	Notify the Clerk of any SEN matters to be added to FGB agendas.	S.Hu
5	During next monitoring visit, follow up on impact of theatre visits.	NG & S.Hu
6	Amend Staff Code of Conduct Policy as agreed by Governors.	Head
7	Speak with catering company regarding its Brexit contingency plans.	Head