

Hopton Primary Academy
Full Meeting of Local Governing Body
Wednesday 9th December 2020, 18.30
Held Remotely via Zoom



Name	Initials	Role	Present / Apologies / Absent
Chris Grogan	CG	Foundation Governor	Present
Rosemary Barker	RB	Foundation Governor	Present
Emma Plane (Chair)	EP	Foundation Governor	Apologies
Serena Curtis	SC	Parent Governor	Present
Waheedat Owodeyi	WO	Parent Governor	Present
Christabelle Whiteley-Tye	HT	Headteacher/Governor	Present
John Waters	JW	Foundation Governor	Present
Sandra Smith	SS	Foundation Governor	Present
Diane Moore	DM	Staff Governor	Present
Chelsea Burton	CB	Year 6 Teacher	Present
Justine Petersen	JP	Clerk	Present

1. Opening formalities

Opening Prayer

CG welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. He chaired the meeting in the absence of EP. HT, DM and CB opened the meeting with the school prayer.

Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Emma Plane.

Consent/Non-consent to absence

Governors gave consent to the apologies noted above.

Declaration of Pecuniary and Personal Interests with regards to items on the agenda

None.

2. Minutes and Actions

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2020.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

To review actions from previous meetings

Not all actions have been completed because of the short time between meetings.

EP monitored the website. CG will monitor it again before the next LGB meeting.

AP – CG to monitor website before next meeting.

RB attended both RSHE meetings remotely.

EP monitored safeguarding and provided a report. Governors should email any questions to her. Safeguarding in school is strong. EP will address the small number of action points next term.

JW will complete the outside health and safety walk in January. HT confirmed that all PAT testing has been done.

Gov: Are we up to date with the fire safety logs?

Yes.

Governors have not completed the required training but most will do so over the Christmas break. HT stressed the need for all governors to complete online safeguarding training in order to be able to challenge the school and EP.

It was agreed that governor updates in the newsletter will begin in January. All governors will write a pen portrait and send to CB.

AP – All governors to write a pen portrait and send to CB before January.

AP – HT to check whether EP forwarded her pen portrait and include in December newsletter if available.

WO joined the meeting at 18.20

The parent questionnaire will be done in the spring term before the learning conversations.

AP – Parent questionnaire to be done in spring term before learning conversations.

HT is monitoring knowledge organisers.

SC was unable to meet with the SENCo before the lockdown. She will do so when the SENCo is back in school.

Knowledge organisers will be added to the agenda of the next S&C meeting.

AP - Knowledge organisers to be added to the agenda of the next S&C meeting.

All other actions were marked as complete or had been superseded by the pandemic.

To discuss matters arising from the minutes

None.

3. LBG Membership, Committees and Designated Governor Responsibility

Review and record appointments, resignations and vacancies

The school has received an expression of interest from a parent in YrR in one of the vacant Trust governor positions. EP and HT met with him on 30th November. He is in the process of completing the paperwork.

Gov: How many vacancies do we have?

Only one assuming the parent joins. EP is hopeful he will do so.

4. Presentation from Senior/Curriculum Leader

CB provided an update on the autumn 2 BIF.

The autumn 1 BIF was successful in getting everyone back in school and feeling well. Teachers were given time to identify gaps in learning. This half term it was important for staff to have the guidance they needed to continue to fill these gaps. The focus has been on Maths, English, RE, Science and PHSE. Specific days will cover other curriculum areas in the new year.

Yr6 are covering English and Maths moments in the afternoon. Hopton is above other PiXL schools in Maths, Reading and GPS.

DM agreed that the BIF is working very well. All classes are confident in what they are doing.

The BIF has solidified the school's ethos. It is hoped that the normal curriculum will be back in place in the summer term.

The Single Change Plan emulates this. Science and outdoor learning will be continued from last year.

High challenge for all pupils in order to plug the gaps from lockdown is a priority.

The use of grammar within writing is a focus area. Writing is showing lower than maths and reading, and it was more difficult to see quality writing in lockdown.

HT stressed that this half term has been focused more on helping the children settle back into the formal side of learning. The curriculum has been reduced to allow staff time to spend on Maths, English and PHSE. Some children are still struggling with what has happened and they are showing this in their behaviour. Some are anxious about coming into school. Some had a 6-month gap in their learning.

The teachers know their classes well and the BIFs have allowed them to build up relationships. DM and CB were able to take their classes up to the next year group. The school feels calm and settled.

The impact of both BIFs can be seen and felt across the school.

5. Headteacher's Report

HT apologised to governors because she had not had time to write a formal report for this meeting because of the high workload in school. The report is written through the SEF, and HT has not had time to finish it. She asked governors to consider areas on which they would like her to report, and she will write a brief report before the end of term.

Governors requested the following be included:

- Where the school has lost members of staff by category.
- Different incidents, such as exclusions.
- Overall numbers in each class and the general structure of the school – classes by male/female, SEND, PP etc.

Governors should email any other areas to HT.

AP – Governors to forward any other items they would like included in HT's report as a matter of urgency.

HT was clear during the AIR meeting that formal assessments have only just taken place and the PiXL assessments need to come in and be analysed so staff can feed back in terms of key marginals, those with gaps in learning and those who will need more intervention. The school received around £9k in catch up funding, and this must be targeted appropriately. HT would like to use the staff currently in school and also add after school clubs. She has not yet analysed vulnerable groups.

There is a core group of SEND children who have tipped attendance to very low – around 70% for EHCP/SEND joint. HT provided 2 anonymised examples.

Gov: What is attendance for that vulnerable group with those 2 children removed?

It is the combined SEND/EHCP group that is causing real concern, but this group is very small. The overall SEND group is around 32 children.

Gov: It would be interesting to know whether we are in a similar place to where we would be excluding those 2 children.

HT will provide this information.

AP – HT to provide attendance figure for overall SEND cohort with 2 specific children removed.

One child has been absent since half term. The Attendance Policy will be applied.

Gov: What has been the impact of COVID on attendance?

Attendance overall is 96% and DNEAT complimented the school on this success during the AIR.

Gov: This is very positive and it should be celebrated.

There have been children out of school for COVID reasons, but their attendance is not scored in the same way. There have been some absent with seasonal illnesses, but comparatively few.

The Single Change Plan is in place. English has been a focus this term, but the impact cannot be shown via the SCP because the school has been working on the BIFs. The SCP will come into its own with Science next term. The focus on writing and outdoor learning will continue.

Staff and governors have access to the SCP. HT has also uploaded the headlines for Yrs R, 2 and 6 to Governorhub, and how Yr6 have done against the PiXL cohort.

6. Health and Safety

Review health and safety policy to ensure it is being implemented in line with the DNEAT policy framework

The policy is complete and HT will upload it to Governorhub. All governors will familiarise themselves with the contents before the next meeting. Clerk to add to agenda.

AP - All governors to read Health & Safety Policy. Clerk to add to next agenda.

7. Reports from Committees and Designated/Link Governors

Ethos & Community – 03.12.20:

RB provided an update. The meeting dealt with the different SIAMS strands in light of how they were being met during COVID. The school is doing everything it can but there is an overload of work on HT.

Class activity bubbles are working well but staff have additional pressures because they cannot mix. Staff wellbeing is a huge priority.

DNEAT will not allow HT to spend money where it is needed, such as on staffing. The operational running of the school should be a matter for HT, and DNEAT should not block money being spent where needed. Staff workload is already excessive, and this will be exacerbated next term.

Collective worship was discussed and RB attended a remote session.

Gov: Does HT lead all assemblies?

HT does collective worship on Mondays and staff lead it with their own classes for the rest of the week. This might change slightly after Christmas.

Parental feedback on the Superstars assemblies has been positive. RE and collective worship are still happening in school despite COVID.

The newsletters are being published and the school will start contributing to the Village News again soon.

Christmas is still happening in school and within COVID safety regulations.

Staff are showing a high commitment to ensuring daily practice is upheld, and the ethos has not changed.

Finance is the main concern overall.

Resources – 18.11.20

CG provided an update. This was the first Resources meeting to be held in a year.

The budget position finished £14k favourable to what was assumed in the budget, but there was still an overspend.

The school has a positive accumulated surplus of £62k. It has taken prudent financial action in the past.

There is real concern about the approach taken by DNEAT around staffing decisions, and the wellbeing of the remaining staff is one of the LGB's main concerns. CG suggested that governors who are not members of the Resources Committee spend time reading what was discussed.

The school has received an additional £27k in high needs funding, and this also plays against the decision taken by DNEAT on staffing. DNEAT is not allowing the school the autonomy it needs to operate in the most effective manner.

The exterior of the school has been painted.
Consideration may be needed around how the field will recover during the summer. It has been used extensively.
Parents in Yr2 have complained that the walkway they use is very muddy, but the school cannot afford matting. Governors suggested sand or sawdust could be an option.

Gov: What is happening with periodic services such as grounds maintenance?

The school has a new provider and they are very good.

Gov: Is there recommended best practice?

HT will contact them.

AP - HT to ask premises contractor about possible remedy to muddy walkway for Yr2 parents.

Risk management was discussed and all committee members are familiar with the risk register. COVID remains the main risk.

Receive verbal report from designated/link governors regarding any activity they have undertaken since the last meeting

RB attended and RSHE staff meeting and she has all paperwork and plans. RSHE is quite challenging for some teachers and the concepts involved are advanced. Teaching will start after a parent meeting.

Gov: Do all children have to attend because it is statutory?

Yes, but there is one element from which they can be withdrawn – media and body image.

RB monitored collective worship.

SC and RB will take pupil voice later this week.

EP monitored safeguarding and the website.

There are no LAC children in school.

Receive verbal feedback from Chair regarding Autumn AIR meeting – 08.12.20

HT provided an update in EP's absence. The AIR was very positive.

The risk rating was dark green, meaning Hopton is good and improving, and it was on a path to be outstanding within 3 years. HT expressed real concern that staffing is being depleted, and this will make continued improvements very difficult. The school will continue to do the best it can with what it has. Hopefully the improvements can be sustained but HT is concerned. The school is a solid good and some teaching is outstanding. The team is extremely strong.

Gov: This should be celebrated. The situation over the last 10 months has been very challenging, and governors could not have asked for more in terms of the way the school has handled it. CG asked HT to pass on governors thanks to staff.

AP - HT to pass on governors thanks to staff for the way they have handled the pandemic.

8. Planned Admission Number Consultation 2022/23

It was unanimously agreed that there would be no change to the PAN of 30. There were no comments or concerns.

9. Governor Monitoring

Receive Governor Visit reports with regard to any remote monitoring carried out and discuss actions required

Covered above.

Discuss monitoring requirements for Spring term

CG and WO will meet with HT to discuss PP and PE Premium monitoring in the spring term.

AP – HT, WO and CG to meet to discuss PP and PE monitoring in the spring term.

There are no LAC children in school.

RSHE discussed above. Monitoring is ongoing.

Safeguarding and website monitoring are ongoing.

SS will consider how to monitor EAL. RB can provide pointers.

SC will be part of the SENCo handover meeting with HT and Mrs Greenacre next term. If Mrs Greenacre is not back in school, SC will meet with HT.

Gov: There is no governor link for staff wellbeing as there has been in the past. This has been a very challenging time, and ensuring staff feel supported is a key responsibility of the LGB.

It was agreed that JW would take on this role.

HT plans to send out a staff wellbeing survey as part of the BIF, and wellbeing has been discussed in staff meetings. There are 2 wellbeing coordinators in school, and they can feed back to HT.

Governors would like to convey their thanks to staff for their continued efforts. They understand how difficult this term has been. EP will write to them.

10. Continuous Professional Development for Governors

Discuss training requirements for whole LGB and individual governors, particularly for those with designated responsibilities

HT stressed the need for all governors to complete online safeguarding training in order to be able to challenge the school and EP effectively. They should also choose one other module of their own choice.

AP - All governors to complete online safeguarding training module via Modern Governor and at least one other of their choice.

Resources Committee members should ensure they complete any finance refresher training.

Notice of any training completed should be passed to the Clerk so the training log can be updated.

Training Log – Is this accurate?

Confirmed as accurate.

11. Policies

Adopt the following Core Trust Policies:

The following were adopted without comment or concern:

Safeguarding, Statement of Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse, Accessibility Plan, Health & Safety, Code of Conduct for Adult, Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation, Staff Adjustment, Business Continuity Plan, Admissions, Whole School Pay, Staff Adjustment, Management of Sickness Absence, Maternity & Maternity Support Leave.

Adopt the following Academy Policies

Gov: Is the Behaviour Policy consistent with what we have had in the past?

Yes, although a COVID element has been added. Children know the expectations and this addition should only be temporary.

Gov: Behaviour in school shows that the policy is working.

Gov: Has the Home School Agreement changed?

No.

The Behaviour Policy and Home School Agreement were unanimously approved without amendment.

HT asked governors to read the Remote Learning Policy. This is new for the school. HT feels it already needs updating in light of new guidance from the DfE around taught hours for bubbles.

The Equality & Diversity Policy was uploaded late to Governorhub and not all governors had been able to read it.

AP – All governors to read Remote Learning Policy and Equality & Diversity Policy. CG to contact them for any comments or concerns. Clerk to add approval to next agenda.

12. Agree Meeting Dates for Remainder of Academic Year

Proposed dates were circulated in advance of the meeting. It was felt that the date of the March meeting of the Ethos & Community Committee may need to be changed, but this could be done nearer the time. All other dates were confirmed. WO had not been able to access the meeting calendar.

AP – Clerk to forward meeting dates to WO by email.

13. Any Other Business

EP has received a letter from the Bishop of Norwich thanking governors for their continuing commitment during such challenging times.

EP will write to staff to thank them for their hard work this term.

The school received some funding from DNEAT to promote staff wellbeing. This was used to purchase a coffee machine for the staffroom.

14. Closing Formalities

Date, time, venue of next meeting – Monday 8th February 2021, 18.00

Closing prayer/reflection

RB and SC will take pupil voice on this matter later this week.

Meeting closed at 19.41