

**Hopton Primary Academy**  
**Full Meeting of Local Governing Body**  
**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, 18.00**  
**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	Present
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	Apologies
Justine Petersen	JP	Clerk	Present

<p><b>1. Opening formalities</b></p> <p><b>Opening Prayer</b>  EP welcomed all present and thanked them for attending.  She opened the meeting with the school prayer.  She drew governors attention to the key questions listed on the agenda. They should use this as an opportunity to consider what information they would like from staff in school, and the 5key points should be a basis for discussion.</p> <p><b>Receive Apologies for Absence</b>  Apologies were submitted by Chelsea Burton. She was attending a CPD opportunity.</p> <p><b>Consent/Non-consent to absence</b>  Governors gave consent to the apologies noted above.</p> <p><b>Declaration of Pecuniary and Personal Interests with regards to items on the agenda</b>  None.</p>
<p><b>2. Minutes and Actions</b></p> <p><b>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021</b>  The minutes were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p><b>To review actions from previous meetings</b>  All governors with the exception of WO have watched the video on monitoring remote learning.  <b>AP – WO to watch video on monitoring remote learning.</b>  All other actions were marked as complete.</p> <p><b>To discuss matters arising from the minutes</b>  None.</p>
<p><b>3. Conversations/Reports from Senior/Middle Leader</b></p> <p><b>Report from or verbal discussion with SENCo</b>  HT provided an update. She did not ask the SENCo to attend the meeting because staff are exhausted.  37 children are currently on the SEND register, and 5 children have EHCPs. The SENCo is completing paperwork for another 4.  The percentage of both SEND and EHCP in school is much higher than national. The national average for any child with SEND is 12.6% compared to Hopton’s 17.2%. Nationally 1.6% of children have an EHCP compared to Hopton’s 2.7%.  <b>Gov: What is an EHCP?</b></p>

HT explained. These take into account health and physical/emotional wellbeing as well as academic wellbeing and barriers to learning. The needs involved must be significant.

**Gov: What impact does this have on the school?**

The impact is huge. Of the five children with EHCPs, three have a very high level of need. The school only has three key workers, and this is not enough. Two children joined Hopton without EHCPs, and staff needed to apply for these despite the children having those needs in their previous school.

**Gov: How will this be resolved?**

It is a matter of finance and funding. The school is not in a position to employ additional members of staff.

The needs of children on the SEND register very significantly. Miss Jo supports with social and emotional interventions. The Speech and Language Service is not coming into school at this time, so teachers are doing what they can in the classroom.

**Gov: No virtual support is being offered?**

There is limited support being offered virtually for one very high need child in EYFS.

The County Inclusion Team is working with the school to support children with high levels of need, but there are barriers around ensuring there are the right people in the classrooms to run the interventions. Teaching assistants are working one between two classes.

*Confidential discussion.*

**Gov: Do you know when you will receive this funding so that you can plan ahead?**

Work on the budget is currently ongoing. The school was aware that it would not have the right amount of funding this year to support the number of staff in school. HT applied to County for top up funding to support those children with high levels of need. Each child with an EHCP receives additional funding, but the situation has been exacerbated because teaching assistants have moved into key worker positions.

**Gov: What is the impact of using teaching assistants in key worker roles?**

Not every class will have a teaching assistant every day, and there is no consistency.

**Gov: Is there a way to source additional funding?**

The school applies at every opportunity. The financial position should be better next year because there will be more children on roll.

EP stressed her concerns during the last AIR meeting. She made it clear to DNEAT that if the staffing situation continues, there is no way that standards can continue as they are. DNEAT is aware of the situation but they do not have money they can allocate to provide support.

Some children with SEND are on the same level as their peers, but they need the learning differentiated. Others are several year groups behind. Some have emotional barriers such as anxiety, and they cannot access learning unless they have one-to-one support. The impact on the class is significant. Two teaching assistants are covering key children, so they are unable to support the rest of the class. Interventions cannot take place and teachers are not getting the support they need. This has been discussed by the Resources Committee, and the minutes have been circulated.

**Gov: Assuming those four children receive an EHCP, how quickly will the funding come through?**

This is dependent on how long it takes to get the EHCPs. The school has been chasing an EHCP for one child for over a year. The paperwork involved is huge.

**Gov: Who completes that paperwork?**

The SENCo. HT was unable to complete any applications during the autumn term, but she did go back to County to request additional funding for the children who already have EHCPs in place.

**Gov: What is the impact of applying for 4 additional EHCPs on the workload of the SENCo?**

She is currently only allocated one day per week for this, and the impact is huge. One document can take the majority of a day to complete. She has completed one application out of the four. She has a teaching commitment for three days and her workload is high because she does not have a job share partner. There is also an impact on the Yr3 teacher because the class has a high level of need and she is sharing a teaching assistant.

#### **Receive Safeguarding Report from Designated Safeguarding Lead**

HT provided an update.

*Confidential discussion.*

CURA is used in school. Some staff need refresher training.

Encrypted records are sent when a child moves to a new school. Any paper documents are sent by recorded delivery. There will be 4 Designated Safeguarding Leads in school when the Deputy Headteacher returns. Safeguarding meetings continued during lockdown.

**Gov: How easy was it to access other agencies during the lockdown?**

It was made easy with Just One Norfolk. Several parents used this.

**Gov: Have any families looked to the school to support with financial difficulties?**

No, conversations have taken place but it is very difficult because families do not always want the school to know the extent of their financial position. The school is good at keeping up with free school meals. Staff did everything they could around Christmas and they will do so again Easter. Miss Jo is very good at checking in with parents.

**Gov: Have any children left the school since the 1st January?**

Yes.

*Confidential discussion.*

**Gov: Are there any children who have not returned to school because of the situation with COVID-19?**

No.

*Confidential discussion.*

#### **4. Headteacher's Report**

##### **Self-evaluation on remote learning**

Remote learning went very well. Some lessons were live and somewhere pre-recorded. All staff were available to support individually or via small groups.

HT gave an update on the results of the parent questionnaire.

**Gov: How many parents responded?**

81, which is much higher than in many previous surveys.

Only two parents disagreed that they were happy with the remote learning offer. A small number answered 'don't know', but it is likely that their children were in school.

Almost all agreed that communication from the school was regular, clear and effective.

Most parents knew who to go to for help if the teacher was not available.

Almost all agreed that they were well informed about the school's response to different stages of the pandemic.

None disagreed that their concerns were responded to satisfactorily and in a timely manner.

The vast majority agree that the school demonstrated an awareness of their child's mental health and wellbeing. Four disagreed, but HT does not know what more the school could have done. Wellbeing and mental health was a real focus during both lockdowns.

**Gov: It would be useful to know what those parents expected.**

Another survey could be done at the end of the year to ask what else could have been done.

The risk assessment is on the school website.

Governors considered the comments to be very positive. Every member of staff was acknowledged in some way for their hard work and commitment. One parent felt there had not been enough live lessons, but HT disputes this. A live lesson took place every day, but pre-recorded lessons were also available. Children and parents were able to message the class teacher for more support if they needed it.

HT apologised that some of the questions on the survey were not showing fully on the document. She will print off the list of questions and upload these to Governorhub.

**AP – HT to print off list of questions from parents survey and upload to Governorhub.**

Overall the responses were very positive. The school is proud of what it achieved.

**Gov: What could have been better?**

There could possibly have been more live lessons to cover both maths and English.

Governor stressed that this was only one opinion.

HT would like to see more of Google Classrooms being used so that the children can submit answers at the time.

DM commented that anything additional would be suitable for some year groups but not for others. All children in school were accounted for and were covered.

**Gov:** The 'don't know' response could possibly have been worded differently. This implies that the parent cannot decide, when in fact it was probably that their children were in school and they had not experienced this aspect.

HT advised that she used the language used by Ofsted. It is possible that more comments should have been allowed so parents could articulate more about what they did not know.

The school offered a very full and supportive curriculum. All the necessary learning was provided, and parents could request additional challenges. There was differentiation for the different age groups.

HT stressed that it was hard to balance recordings and live lessons for those parents with children in multiple year groups who all need to access these at the same time. Parents could not divide themselves.

Governors were mindful that all schools face different circumstances. Schools with multiple form entry would have more staff, and they are more likely to be able to do live lessons.

**Gov:** Is there still provision in place for a bubble going down or for a child self-isolating?

Yes, this is all part of the remote learning policy. Any child who is isolating will need access to remote learning. The school has a list of those children who will need a Chromebook if they are off school, and there is enough to cover a whole class if required.

**Gov:** Have all the devices that were lent to families being returned?

Yes, and they have been checked by RM. HT is keen to use them for in class learning.

### **How children are adapting to return to school – issues, challenges, first feel for impact of the lockdown on pupil progress**

The children have done remarkably well. Those who struggled with the return after the first lockdown have been fine.

Two children are on reduced timetables and this is working well.

**Gov:** How have the teachers found it to, having all the children back in school?

It is unfortunate that staff cannot get together to talk and share news, but everyone is happy to have their whole class back. Staff are tired and they are looking forward to the Easter break. They will be ready to go again in the summer term.

HT has met with most teachers for performance management, and she has been very concerned about staff wellbeing. Teaching assistant performance management will take place after Easter.

Staff are back in school, but they are still not connected. A socially distanced staff meeting will take place in the hall tomorrow.

Staff are tired. The wellbeing team gave them Flowers and cards on Friday.

**Gov:** Has the staff team discussed any positives of the lockdown that you may want to keep?

No, this would be a good question for the staff meeting.

MSAs have said they prefer how they are now managing one class. This had enabled them to build relationships with the children. There have been no issues with friendships.

Governors would like to hear about any positives arising from the lockdown that the staff would wish to keep.

**Gov:** Are there any restrictions on gifts that can be bought in for staff?

Anything bought in must be from a supermarket and fully sealed so that the outside can be wiped down.

## **5. Reports from Committees and Designated/Link Governors**

### **Ethos & Community – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

EP invited questions on the minutes that were circulated in advance of the meeting.

**Gov:** What is the main concern in terms of SIAMS at this time?

The children could not interact as much as they usually would. RB is confident that they were receiving the information and the work returned to teachers was marked. The vision is there in everything Governors have heard in this meeting and in everything that the school is doing. The weekly RE lesson was carrying on as before but without the Godly Play and class discussions.

**Gov:** What about collective worship?

RB observed an collective worship session, and it worked well. Children enjoy it, and it can be tailored towards individual year groups. Collective worship takes place on Mondays, with class worship for the rest of the week. There is a Superstars assembly on Fridays.

Miss Jo has put friendship groups together. This shows that the Christian ethos is supporting all children, including those without siblings. 'No device Fridays' is an excellent idea.

**Gov:** Is this still being done?

No, because the children are all back in school.

Staff wellbeing is a serious concern. The pressures on all school staff have been tremendous and the reduction in support staff has exacerbated this.

Governors are concerned about the morale of staff in education generally, and not just at Hopton.

## Resources – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021

EP invited questions on the minutes that were circulated in advance of the meeting.

### Gov: How can the school source additional funding?

CG advised the roll is currently 186 against a capacity of 210. Each child in school receives £3500 per year in funding. YrR is likely to be full next year and more houses are being built in the village, but there is no immediate answer. CG is supporting HT in looking at the budget and the staffing structure, but there are real financial constraints and there is a limit to what can be done. The in-year budget is in surplus, although time variances are included.

IT investment needs serious consideration. There is money in the devolved capital fund, but some will need to be retained in case of emergencies. The school needs to continue to make sensible financial decisions.

### Gov: The Committee felt some risks were scored higher than they should be on the risk rating?

Yes, certain risks are becoming more prevalent. The last year has been particularly difficult and the school has been lucky with its staff. They have been its greatest asset.

Governors noted that staff wellbeing is a continuous theme. Lack of resources is having a severe impact.

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

RB attended a very informative course on RHSE. This will be statutory from the summer and she has a list of suggested questions for the subject lead. LGBT should be part of the integrated curriculum. She will meet with the RHSE Lead when appropriate.

HT felt it might be useful for all governors to hear how RHSE is being taught in school. She would like to do another parent consultation because more has been added into the curriculum since the last one took place. Governors requested the RE Lead attend the next meeting. RB will meet with her in advance.

AP – RE Lead to be invited to attend next meeting. Clerk to add to agenda.

EP has monitored the website. Some aspects are now out of date and she will discuss this with HT or CB outside of the meeting.

## 6. Governor Monitoring

### Review Remote Monitoring plan and update as required with any activities undertaken by governors

EP invited feedback on the remote monitoring video.

Gov: It talked about using parent governors to report on learning with their children. This is a valid point, and it would be easy for parent governors to write some feedback.

AP - Those governors with children in the school to write feedback on the remote learning they witnessed during the lockdown.

RB watched online lessons via the school website and completed a monitoring form.

The recorded lessons are still on the website. Governors could look at these at their own convenience.

The school took part in special days, such as World Book Day and Unique Week. RB will write a monitoring form based on the story she presented for World Book Day.

AP – RB to complete monitoring form based on her World Book Day story.

EP monitored the website for compliance, but the video also highlighted the need to look at this in terms of how it sells the school, such as to prospective staff or parents. It was agreed that RB would look at this before the next meeting.

AP – RB to look at website in terms of how well it sells the school and how intuitive it is.

The video talked about Governors seeing examples of childrens work. SC commented that one class teacher uploaded photos of the learning last week, such as an outdoor maths lesson, Red Nose Day and making bug hotels. She will complete a monitoring form. This is all evidence of the plans in place for COVID-19, the recovery curriculum and getting the children back together, and it is not intrusive on any members of staff.

AP – SC to complete monitoring form based on uploaded examples of class learning.

### Discuss monitoring requirements for Spring 2

During the last meeting EP asked all Governors to consider a piece of monitoring to which they would commit this term.

EP will monitor the Single Central Record and meet with HT before the next meeting.

RB will monitor RHSE as discussed above.

CG will monitor Pupil Premium and Sports Premium during the summer term.

<p>SC will meet with the SENCo as soon as is reasonably possible, but she is aware that the SENCo is under extreme pressure this term. HT will discuss with the SENCo and ask her to contact SC. She felt the meeting could be supportive.  <b>AP – HT to discuss governor monitoring with the SENCo and ask her to contact SC.</b></p> <p>JW will complete health and safety monitoring of the outside areas after the Easter break.  WO and SS will seek pupil voice during the first part of the summer term. CB will be asked to support, and HT will be in touch to arrange. RB will forward her list of questions from the previous pupil voice session.  <b>AP – RB to forward questions from previous pupil voice to WO and SS. HT to arrange pupil voice session for WO and SS.</b></p>
<p><b>7. Continuous Professional Development for Governors</b>  <b>Discuss training requirements for whole LGB and individual governors, particularly for those with designated responsibilities</b></p> <p>RB Attended the virtual governance update session on 11th February. The session was worthwhile although a lot of what was suggested is already happening at Hopton.  EP and HT Will discuss a 360-degree review of online safety.  EP needs to capture the online safety day in terms of monitoring. She completed all activities with her child.  RB Will attend global neighbours training this week.</p>
<p><b>8. Policies</b>  The following policies were unanimously adopted without amendment:  Admissions Policy 2022-2023  Financial Probity Policy  Charging &amp; Remissions Policy  Offensive Weapons Policy  Smoke Free Policy</p> <p><b>Gov: The offensive weapons policy is unusual, particularly regarding the wording around matches and lighters on the premises.</b></p> <p>HT will go through the smoking policy with staff and discuss the implications.</p> <p><b>Adopt the following Academy Policies</b>  N/A.</p>
<p><b>9. Any Other Business</b>  The spring AIR meeting will take place tomorrow. EP will provide feedback at the next meeting.  JW advised that a new Priest has been appointed to cover Hopton, Corton and Gunton.  EP attended a DNEAT Chairs meeting. The Trust is aware of the difficulties in recruiting clergy to LGBs. Clergy in Norfolk are very stretched.</p>
<p><b>10. Closing Formalities</b>  <b>Date, time, venue of next meeting – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 18.00</b></p> <p><b>Closing prayer/reflection</b>  The meeting closed with a moment of quiet reflection.</p>

Meeting closed at 20.10.