

**Minutes of the meeting of the full governing body of Offwell C of E Primary School held on 2nd February 2023**



		<b>Present: Mrs J Dimond (JDi), Ms E Jordan (EJ), Mrs V Kyberd (VK), Mrs L Legg (LL), Mrs S Holohan (SH), Mrs Kastner (SK), Rev J Putnam (JP), (Mr C Thomas (CT), Mr J Tristram, (JT) &amp; Mrs J Davey (JD) (clerk)</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Time scale</b>
		JDi welcomed JP on to the Governing Board as our new Ex-Officio governor.  JDi reminded governors of the Governors' Code of Conduct. She asked governors to remember why they are governors and why they are at the meeting. To challenge is good but it must be made in an appropriate manner. She did not feel that this was always done at the last meeting. LL mentioned equality training – date to be arranged.	LL/JDi	03/23
<b>1</b>		<b>Apologies for absence</b> - None received - all present		
<b>2</b>		<b>Prayer</b> - JP began the meeting with a prayer		
<b>3</b>		<b>Pecuniary Interest:</b> Governors were invited to declare any relevant Pecuniary Interest at that point or if it became apparent that there was one later in the meeting. JP was asked to sign the register		
<b>4</b>		<b>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising - 17th November 2022</b>		
<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	The minutes had previously been distributed and governors agreed they were an accurate record and JDi signed them off.		
<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>		
<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Teams/Telephones in Beech/Ash/Willow</b> As discussed at the last meeting and suggested by IW and VK, JD has investigated the possibility of putting handsets in the classrooms using Teams. Microsoft have quoted an installation charge of over £3000. JD, therefore, went back to XLN who have quoted £15 per month for a brand new phone line (x 2) and £50 installation fee. The engineer is due to visit school on 3rd February but there is a cooling off period of 10 days. Governors gave approval to go ahead with this contract.  JD will forward the quote from Teams to VK.	<b>JD</b>	<b>02/23</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>IT Devices</b> CT has carried out an audit of IT requirements and informed governors that 2 laptops for teachers were top of the priority list. Governors agreed that these could be purchased. Discussion took place about the figure that has to be approved by governors, which is £2500. It was acknowledged that these computers could be ordered without the approval of governors and CT will arrange this.	<b>CT</b>	<b>02/23</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Pay Committee</b> JDi reported that the Pay Committee had met in December and all recommended pay increments had been approved and passed to payroll. Salary statements to teachers had been issued.		

5		<b>Governor Membership Update</b>		
5	1	<p><b>Future/present Parent Governor Vacancies</b> - There are still 2 parent governor vacancies and LL will include this in this week's newsletter. JDi suggested asking for parents with financial skills but governors commented that this could put a parent off who does not have these skills.</p> <p>LL asked VK, as Parent Governor, for suggestions as to how more parents could be attracted to the GB.</p>	LL	02/23
5	2	<p><b>NGA Skills Matrix</b></p> <p>This has been sent to governors on several occasions and some have been returned. Those governors who had not returned theirs were asked to complete it as soon as possible.</p>	Govs	02/23
5	3	<p><b>Governor Responsibilities</b></p> <p>LL and CT have gone through the list of governors' curriculum responsibilities and produced a suggested list, linking particular governors to a member of the staff responsible for a curriculum area.</p> <p>After discussion, governors approved the suggestions. LL asked governors to make contact with their link staff member before the next Governing Board meeting. Governors need to get to know their linked subjects by becoming familiar in the first instance.</p> <p>It was suggested that the staff subject leader, or link governor with the subject Action Plans, reports to governors to inform how governor monitoring is going.</p>	Govs	03/23
6		<b>Finance</b>		
6	1	<p><b>School Budget Share</b> - The carryforward remains at about £52,000 which is very similar to what was showing in the 3 year budget accepted by governors and submitted to Devon County Council previously.</p> <p>Governors were referred to the notes showing on the spreadsheet. Pay increments from 1st September 2022 are included although if there is a further increment for teachers, following the present industrial action, this is not included and will obviously have a substantial impact on the budget.</p> <p><i>Governor question - JT - There seems to be a large amount left on the caretaking and cleaning budget. Does this mean there will be a credit balance at the end of the financial year.</i></p> <p>It was explained that there are still 3 months' commitments to come out of that budget line and there will not be a significant balance, either credit or debit, once the financial year has ended.</p> <p>Discussion took place around publicity for school and advertising as we have vacancies throughout the school. LL said we have some nice magnetic signs that could be displayed in the right location as for All Saints (similar school and location). Governors agreed it would be good to have a presence leading from the main A35. It was acknowledged we had to be careful where any signage is placed so as not to cause an accident. The A35 is an accident black spot anyway. Highways England will need to be approached. One of the children's grandparents owns a plot adjacent to the main road and they will be approached asking permission to erect a sign.</p> <p><b>Foundation Stage Unit</b> - Shows a carryforward of £12,846</p> <p><b>After School Provision</b> - £ 6,021 - which is slightly less than the carryforward brought into the 21/22 year which means expenditure is slightly more than the income due to staff covering of absences.</p>		

		Governors were reminded that a balance had to be retained on the ASP and FSU budgets in order to cover possible redundancies. Governors are responsible for covering redundancy payments for ASP staff and also FSU staff.		
6	2	<b>Unofficial School Funds</b> - Balances are shown as over £2,800. Books are available for inspection in the school office. The auditor has previously been agreed as Mrs S Paveley and she has agreed to collect the accounts in order to audit them.		
6	3	<p><b>5 Year Budget - 2023/24 2024/25 2025/26</b></p> <p>Two different scenarios were presented to governors; The first shows figures assuming pupil numbers as they are. This shows: Carryforward at end of 23/24 - £28,184 credit Carryforward at end of 24/25 - £7,167 deficit Carryforward at end of 25/25 - £55,155 deficit Carryforward at end of 26/27 - £106,841 deficit</p> <p>The second scenario assumes an increase of 7 children before the census date in October 2023 which given the 'Good' Ofsted report and other factors, governors did not consider unrealistic.</p> <p>Carryforward at end of 23/24 - £28,184 credit Carryforward at end of 24/25 - £19,487 credit Carryforward at end of 25/25 - £5,655 deficit Carryforward at end of 26/27 - £38,303 deficit</p> <p>Governors were asked to take the following factors into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2% staff increases have been factored in - this could be significantly more.</li> <li>● This is not the final budget and historically, the final budget figures are better than the projected ones at this stage of the year.</li> <li>● The LA Finance Officer will be visiting school to work on the figures in march, once the final figures are issued.</li> <li>● There has been a reduction in Pupil Premium numbers and this is reflected in both scenarios.</li> <li>● The teacher recently appointed at 0.4 has a temporary contract ending in August 2023. Commitment is not showing in either scenario beyond that.</li> <li>● Fuel costs have increased dramatically and this is reflected in the figures.</li> </ul>		
6	4	<p><b>Formula Capital Update</b></p> <p>Balance presently at about £2,500. About £5,000 expected April 2023. Gas heater in Willow Class needs repairing at a cost of over £500. Carpets need renewing in Oak and Beech classes. The Formula Capital account pays for IT equipment as well as furniture and premises expenses. Some IT equipment could be purchased from the Unofficial School fund as this presently has a balance of £2,800.</p>		
6	5	<p><b>Benchmarking Report Card</b></p> <p>The annual benchmarking report card, produced by the DfE, was sent to governors in advance. Governors were asked to make comparisons with the schools set out on the card and pick out any anomalies of note. Governors noted that the teacher spend is high compared to other schools but acknowledged we have experienced teachers who cost more than average teachers. The pupil:teacher ratio is low in that we have fewer pupils per teacher and governors considered this to be a good thing for the children's education and</p>		

		welfare.  It was noted that the administrative cost also includes the salary of the Local Learning Community staff member so distorting that figure.		
6	6	<b>Schools' Financial Value Standard</b> - This is a governor document and must be returned to the Local Authority before 31st March 2023. SH and JD have begun work on it and will share with other governors before the next meeting.		
7		<b>Curriculum</b>		
7	1	<p><b>School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self Evaluation Form (SEF)</b> The SEF previously shared with governors and this has been updated.</p> <p>The SIP for 2021-2023 was sent to governors in advance of the meeting. This sets out clearly areas for whole school improvement focus. This was written using the focus from Ofsted.</p> <p>Each member of staff with a curriculum responsibility to leading a staff meeting. This has been ongoing since the start of the year.</p> <p>SEND was discussed as an area for development and the staff meetings are to ensure that SEND approaches are embedded within the curriculum.</p> <p><i>Governor question - JP - What are the plans to improve phonics and writing as these have been highlighted as areas needing improvement?</i> LL informed governors that they are receiving additional phonics support although this has been difficult as staff, in place for autumn support, have had to be reallocated to another part of school. Plans are in place to take on another staff member to pick up on the phonics interventions. LL said that as shared with Ofsted, the children who had 'failed' their phonics last time had made good progress, on the whole. Out of 6 children, 2 had left, 2 had now passed and the other 2 had made significant progress. CT did point out that we have had 3 new children join year 2 who have not taken the phonics test in year 1. Two are English as an Additional Language children and the other has SEND.</p> <p>Two staff members in Willow Class and one in Beech are now undertaking the Sounds Write Phonics training. Four staff members are trained in Sounds Write Phonics although one has left. 3 other members are now part way through.</p> <p><i>JP - Writing in Year 2 KS1 assessment in 2022 seems low, is this because it is a small number of children distorting the figures?</i> CT said that writing was assessed in a different way to other subjects and there are a small number of children. This is an area that is listed as an area for whole school improvement within the SIP. It should be noted that Writing is lower than other subjects nationally which was reflected in Yr 2 data last year, but not Yr 6, where it was in line with National.</p>		

7	2	<p><b>Data</b></p> <p>CT tabled a sheet showing progress for all year groups in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) and Maths. CT advised governors that teachers have their own data for their own classes in a different format (that shows individual progress) but this is what he has collated from information given by them.</p> <p>CT pointed out to governors that the data on the sheet was done at the end of last term, so ½ way through the year and data will inevitably have improved since then.</p> <p>CT asked for governor comments and/or questions.</p> <p>CT highlighted to governors that Writing in year 3/4 needs to be improved and he will talk to the teacher about this. It could be that the method of assessing does not quite match that of other teachers, or that children struggle in the transition from KS1 to 2.</p> <p>Similarly CT will talk to the Year 6 teacher as that cohort is doing particularly well in SPAG.</p> <p>LL said that interestingly, Ofsted were not interested in any internal data when they recently inspected school. but that it is helpful for us to have an overview, so we can carry out our monitoring role.</p> <p><i>Governor question - JT - Are the same children needing support in all areas or are they different children.</i></p> <p>CT confirmed that they are often different children needing support in different areas.</p>		
7	3	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>LL had sent the Headteacher's Report in advance of the meeting. LL went through the main points that had changed since the last report to governors and invited questions.</p> <p>LL held a meeting for parents/carers of SEND children after school on Monday but unfortunately no parents/carers attended. It was acknowledged that at least they were given the opportunity and may not have felt the need to attend. LL said she felt it may have been different if an expert had come into talk about a particular subject eg anxiety. When the bladder and bowel nurse held a workshop, this was better attended. LL feels it is important to try and build up two way communication. Next time a SEND meeting is held, it was agreed to offer for children to attend After School Provision.</p> <p>Governors commented on attendance data which stands at 92.6% against the school's target of 95%. A lot of children have been off school with winter ailments including Strep A (see 9.2)</p> <p>JP took the opportunity of thanking everyone in school for making him feel welcome and for giving him the opportunity of serving on the Governing Board. He thanked Bishop Oliver for stepping down and handing over in such a helpful way. LL will thank Bishop Oliver on behalf of the GB for his commitment of about 4 years.</p> <p><b>Industrial Action</b></p> <p>CT &amp; EJ declared a potential pecuniary interest.</p> <p>The first day of industrial action planned by teaching unions was 1st February and, after consultation with JDi, LL decided to close the school as the potential for disruption and not being able to safely care for the children was high. All 4 substantive teachers belong to the union that had chosen to strike and the</p>		

		<p>teachers did not have to say whether they were striking until the day itself. After talking to a few parents, LL decided that it was better to give them advance warning rather than leave them to have a problem on the morning. There are 3 other possible strike days and governors agreed that it was better to take the same approach again unless agreements had been reached before that. LL will tell parents in this week's newsletter that we are likely to be closed for the other 3 planned days of industrial action unless circumstances changed. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity of obtaining a free school meal in the event of the school being closed.</p> <p><i>Governor question - Did you provide any provision for vulnerable children?</i> LL said that on this occasion we provided suggested work for all the children. The DfE guidance on this was non statutory and LL knows of another school who initially offered to open for vulnerable children and key worker children and were inundated with requests and they were unable to accept all requests. We did provide for vulnerable children over the extended partial closures of Covid. No school provides for Vulnerable Children over weekends or bank holidays.</p> <p>Discussion took place about honouring contracts for personnel who did not come into school on the strike day. LL said that if a teacher member of the union has chosen to strike then they would not have been paid. LL took the decision to pay all staff on a contract but not those claiming under a casual basis. It was acknowledged that other staff members had problems with childcare as their children's school was closed so their contracted pay was honoured. LL had given all staff members the opportunity to work at home or in school.</p>		
<b>8</b>		<b>Leadership</b>		
<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> - LL is in the process of completing the annual safeguarding report. She will share this with SK in due course.</p> <p>LL updated governors on 2 cases of which both sets of parents had not been happy with the outcome. One had sent a formal complaint to the Chair of Governors which JDi had responded to. LL is still corresponding with the other family. She wanted governors to be aware there is a general rise in complaints nationally, and we are not immune.</p>	<b>LL</b>	<b>02/23</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<p><b>Christian Distinctiveness</b> <b>Ethos Group</b> - CT recently met with the children. The children discussed raising funds for our charity, Urafiki. We are behind with the donations which provides money to enable 2 children to attend school. JP has joined the group. VK suggested a sponsored read working with the PTFA.</p> <p><b>Walk Through the Bible</b> - This has begun in Oak Class. It is a 5 week programme and compliments the RE teaching very well. They will return in 2 years time as it is only suitable for year 5 and 6 children. Our thanks to Christine.</p>	<b>JD</b>	<b>02/23</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<p><b>Governor visits</b> JDi met with LL and JD as part of JDi's investigation into 2 official complaints made during last term. JDi has written to both sets of parents sharing her findings and, to date, has not heard back from either complainant. The outcome of each complaint was that they were largely unfounded. One complaint dates back 18 months and this is past the period that complaints must be investigated.</p> <p>SK visits regularly to hear readers in Oak Class.</p>		

8	4	<p><b>Governor Training</b> SK recently attended Complaints and Prevention Management training and the paperwork was sent to governors following this training. (This relates to 8.1).</p> <p>SK attended the Developing Governor Skills training and SK passed interesting paperwork on to governors.</p> <p>JD was asked to share the proformas for governor training and governor visits to all governors to give them an idea of the focus, particularly for visits. (This relates to 5.3).</p> <p>All governors should undergo annual training delivered by the headteacher regarding safeguarding and equality training. This will be arranged. VK is booked on Governor Service new governor training.</p>	JD	02/23
9		<b>Policies and Paperwork</b>		
9	1	<p><b>Staff Code of Conduct</b> Whilst completing the safeguarding audit, LL sent out the Staff Code of Conduct to all staff members as a reminder. Since Offwell School adopted the model, the model has changed and rather than send out the out of date document, the new one was shared with all staff. It is a model and there is little that governors should change anyway. The new document includes a section about social media. JD will send the new model to governors and unless governors respond the new policy will be adopted.</p>	JD	02/23
9	2	<p><b>Devon Education Attendance Charter</b> This was sent to governors by Devon Governor Services and VK asked that it be adopted by governors and included on the school website. Whilst it was acknowledged that 97% attendance is challenging, governors thought it was something to work for and agreed to have it put on the website.</p>	JD	02/23
9	3	<p><b>Finance Policy</b> - this policy must be reviewed annually. It has been updated to reflect change in personnel but otherwise remains unchanged. Governors approved to re-adopt.</p>		
9	4	<p><b>Parental Complaints and Concerns</b> Following the formal complaint made during the summer holidays, governors agreed to adopt the updated Devon Education Services model. At the last meeting LL said she would like to share the NAHT procedures with a view to possibly adopting them. JDi and SK talked about personalising the policy and procedures and looking at the NAHT ones with LL. SK's training information will also be helpful. This will come back to the next GB meeting.</p>	JDi/SK	03/23
9	5	<p><b>Charging and Remissions</b> - This is due for annual review. It has been updated with change of personnel only. Governors adopted the revised policy.</p>		
9	6	<p><b>Governor Expenses</b> - This policy is unchanged and governors agreed to re-adopt.</p>		
9	7	<p><b>Transport</b> - The Transport Policy is not a policy that Offwell School writes and it is not an essential policy to either put on the website or, indeed, to have at all. It was therefore decided to cease using the policy. Devon County Council has their own policy which can be viewed by anyone.</p>		
10		<b>What have we achieved for the children?</b>		
10	1	<p>Governors have been allocated their subject areas and will work with the subject leaders which will ensure the subject meets the requirements of the children. Discussions surrounding the children will help to keep them safe.</p>		
11		<b>Dates of Meetings:</b>		
10	1	<p>Dates for next meetings - <b>Thursday, 23rd March 2023 - 4.30pm - in person</b></p>		

		<b>The meeting finished at 7.15pm</b>		
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