

CROSBY RAVENSWORTH C of E (Aided) SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Crosby Ravensworth, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3JJ

School telephone: 01931 715265

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FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING Wednesday 18 October 2023 at 4.00pm CRVH

Present:

Barbara Wallis	(Chair)	(BW)	Foundation Governor
George Griffiths	(Vice-Chair)	(GG)	Foundation Governor
Duncan Priestley	-	(DP)	Headteacher, ex officio
Susan Pattinson	-	(SP)	Staff Governor
Tom Cripps	-	(TC)	Foundation Governor
Stephen Tudway	-	(ST)	Foundation Governor, ex officio
Karen Winder	-	(KW)	Parent Governor
Naomi Callaghan	-	(NC)	Parent Governor
Neil Hughes	-	(SE)	Local Authority Governor

Others attending:

Andrew Clement	(Clerk)	(AC)	
Christena Pelmore		(CP)	Associate Member

Apologies:

Sylvia Evans	-	(SE)	Foundation Governor
Anna Lea	-	(AL)	Foundation Governor

1. PRAYERS

1.1 Prayer

ST offered a prayer.

2. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Apologies:

Sylvia Evans and Anna Lea both sent their apologies and they were accepted.

2.2 Minutes of meetings:

Governors accepted the minutes from:
Full Governing Board 5 July 2023.

2.3 Declarations of interests:

Distributed Declaration of Interest Forms to all those who had not sent an updated form for 2023. Forms will be sent to those absent for updated declarations. The forms were returned, completed, to AC.

2.4 Matters arising (not included elsewhere on the agenda):

Creating a new link governor role was added to 4.4

2.4.1 Welcome to new members:

BW offered a warm welcome to Christena.

2.5 Committee Reports:

2.5.1 Resources Committee – 29 September 2023:

TC confirmed that the minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting of 16 June 2023 had been agreed by the Committee but that they had not yet been distributed to all Governors. He confirmed that several Local Authority Policies had been due for renewal but no updated versions were currently available. TC noted that the Resources Committee had taken action on an important Health and Safety issue and arranged for all door wedges in school to be removed. The resulting discussions have led to the problem being addressed and new door guards had been ordered. These door guards hold the door open but allow the door to close automatically in the event of a fire. DP confirmed that these items had been ordered and would be installed once received.

KW reported that she and DP had gone through a 224 point termly Health and Safety Checklist. KW reported that no major issues had been identified and that all points had been checked and she was currently working through the actions required.

TP reported that, due to an arithmetic error by the Local Authority, the School's income for next year would be reduced. He said PC was currently completing the budget and any difficulties highlighted would be discussed in due course.

BW confirmed that she had completed a table top review of the Governor's Allowances Policy. She also reminded all those present that Governors could claim for travel expenses (fuel), child care, paper and printing costs.

DP confirmed that, when no up to date LA policy was available, the School automatically defaulted to the latest version available.

2.5.2 Pupil Progress Committee – 4 October 2023:

In SE's absence, BW confirmed that the Pupil Progress Minutes had been distributed but not yet been agreed.

BW asked DP if any intervention was required to improve writing. This had been identified as an area in which the students had not progressed as well. DP confirmed that it was common for the progress in the different areas, Reading, Writing and Maths, to vary from year to year. He did feel that the disruption caused by Covid had had a particular impact on writing. He also confirmed that strategies to improve writing would be added to the School Development Plan. He stated Mighty Writer, a tactile teaching and learning resource that is designed to transform the way that children learn to write, had been introduced to help Class 1. BW asked if there was any significant differences in the writing abilities of the pupils in Class 1 and Class 2. GG and DP both confirmed that it was very difficult to make comparison between the two classes.

TC asked if writing involved just the physical process of holding a pen or if it involved knowing what to write too. He also asked if writing could be completed by typing. DP confirmed that writing included all aspects including spelling, structure and grammar. He also confirmed that it could be typed if required.

It was confirmed that the Pupil Progress Committee had ratified the Child Protection Policy.

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2.6 Full Board:

Policies to ratify:

Online Safety Policy

TC questioned how the system worked for logging in and out of computers. DP reported that the Class computer would require a teacher to log out and then the next user to log in. This was used as several teachers may need to access the same computer when teaching in that room. He confirmed that there was no Guest Login. It was agreed that DP would check the time lapse before an automatic log-out activated.

BW reported that she had noted in the policy that since 2011, Headteachers could take action in relation to behaviour issues outside of school. DP said that he would always be happy to offer to help but he felt it was not his responsibility to intervene unless actions outside of school were having an influence inside school. GG agreed that if behavioural issues were not affecting behaviour in school, intervention should be avoided.

BW questioned if Online Safety, being so important, should be a Standing Item at the FGB Meeting. It was felt that SE, Link Governor responsible for Online Safety, would bring to the Governor's Attention any problems and the fact that Online Safety was a Standing Item on the PP Agenda, was sufficient to ensure all Online Safety issues were discussed and dealt with.

It was noted that Neil McCall is the School Data Protection Officer. The General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR, sets out regulations as to how data can be handled. It was noted by DP that it was vital the School complied with these regulations. As DPO NMCC is required to read Keeping Children Safe in Education and have up to date knowledge of Filtering and Monitoring regulations. DP agreed to check NMCC was up to date.

BW asked if the Educate Against Hate resources had been considered as a means to protect children from extremism and radicalisation. BW felt that the resources available were amazing and SP confirmed she would look at this website. SP noted the School used ProjectEVOLVE resources to support Internet Safety teaching. She confirmed their resources were very good.

A Prevent Training session has been arranged for staff at 3.45pm on Wednesday 29 November and all governors were invited. A new Risk Assessment document was available and DP proposed to go through the changes with all staff.

SP detailed procedures within the Online Safety Policy that required staff to log off when they had finished using a computer and then the new user could log on. This was part of the User Agreement and she felt this answered TC's original enquiry.

All Governors present agreed to ratify the Online Safety Policy.

3. MAIN BUSINESS

3.1 Questions arising from Head Teacher's Report:

'Will it make the boat go faster?'

DP told those present that during the pre-amble to an RE training session in September, a reference was made to a mantra belonging to members of the British Olympic Rowing team. It struck a chord with regards to the running of a small school. The rowers were obsessed with turning fourth place into gold position at the next Olympics, but which of the seemingly infinite possible changes to training, technique and technology should they adopt to make the difference? 'Will it make the boat go faster?' was the blindingly obvious philosophy that followed.

DP continued saying that a government taskforce is currently working with the teaching profession in an attempt to achieve a five-hour workload reduction per week in the next three years. DP felt it was inescapable that in a very small school such as Crosby, staff are spread ever-thinner, taking multi-tasking to ridiculous and counter-productive levels. He said that there had been a universal acceptance in the staffroom this year that summer term was among the toughest ever worked. He said this is simply not sustainable and change must come.

DP has become increasingly inclined this term to ask of all demands and opportunities: 'will they make **our** boat go faster?' If not, then unless statutory, why engage? More than ever, it may be time to restrict the focus to doing the essential things better, while ditching 'anchors' that may interfere with the School's ambitions. In this way, he felt it could be possible to prioritise the welfare of the children and the staff, each of whom lie at the heart of the School's Christian Vision.

BW asked if DP had any ideas where to target any reductions in workload. DP replied that he was taking part in NHS research into this and that he would be in a better position to feedback to Governors when he has more information. He reiterated that the idea was to do less but better. He mentioned that some more training had been offered in helping children read, by the Orgill Phonics Hub, but he had declined this offer because while it was a desirable idea, he felt the staff were already more than competent in this area. BW said the ideas chimed with those of therapist John Bowlby, who described the 'good enough mother', ie individuals should recognise that perfection is not always possible.

ST challenged whether other areas could be identified that would make a meaningful impact. DP replied that PC had been offered the opportunity to work from home as, when in school, she faces regular interruptions. This had worked well and DP was looking to implement a more permanent arrangement for PC to work from home at times. DP said that 'how we've always done it' needed to be questioned and that this was an opportunity for the School to develop.

TC questioned if processes could be reviewed to ensure that they were more efficient and that care to look to ensure processes were not duplicated could reduce workload. BW suggested that the ideas around the "Will it make the boat go faster?" should be cascaded down to staff for them to apply to their own work decisions and that DP should report back to Governors at a later date.

Online safety:

DP's report showed that one of the major updates to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' is the requirement on schools to have effective filtering & monitoring in place to restrict pupils from viewing inappropriate and potentially harmful material on websites in school.

The report highlighted actions taken including ensuring that the web host filters the content to the required standard, that the web host can provide details of all web activity of each filtered device, pupils are assigned number-specific devices so their activity can be monitored and checked if required, an 'exception book' has been set up for teachers to record any instances of pupils using alternative devices and DP has made weekly checks on 3 different devices to ensure that filtering is working.

DP reported that a Link Governor should be appointed with responsibility of filtering and monitoring. GG volunteered for the role and was unanimously accepted in the position.

3.2 SEF:

DP reported that the SEF had been updated. It was recommended that all Governors should read the updated SEF, in particular the new elements that are highlighted in cyan.

3.3 SDP

It was reported that DP, BW and GG were planning to meet in early November to review the SDP, discuss how to link elements from the SEF into the SDP and involve individual governors with each area. BW confirmed that they would report back to Governors after their meeting.

3.4 Policies review by Headteacher for Governing Body to adopt:

Well-Being Management Procedure.

DP confirmed that a new version, Version 6 from KAHSC, was ready to adopt. Section 4.2 had been completed with the School's Occupational Health details and Insurance Policy. Governors present all agreed to adopt this procedure.

3.5 Policy Review Schedule Update.

AC confirmed that the Policy Review Schedule was updated termly. The old version was amended to reflect changes and updates to policies and a new version added to the website when all updates had been completed.

3.6 SIAMS Inspection:

DP confirmed that a meeting to discuss a SIAMS Inspection had been arranged for 3.45 on 30 October 2023. All Governors were asked to attend and remote access could be arranged for those unable to attend in person. ST confirmed that he has agreed to write a summary of the SIAM's Church Inspection Audit (already completed by DP and on the website) after the meeting. DP said that the intention of the meeting was for staff and Governors to agree a new Vision Statement for the School, to look through the SIAM's audit and to keep everyone informed to ensure all Governors were aware of how the School dealt with areas that would be inspected. DP and ST would arrange for typical questions to be produced to give Governors an opportunity to be prepared to answer possible questions.

3.7 Blue Sky Meeting

BW reported that a Blue Sky Meeting would be arranged for a Tuesday in the second half of the Spring Term. The feedback from last year's meeting indicated that those who attended had found the meeting very valuable. She proposed that some Ofsted preparation would be useful to discuss and also proposed using the NGA's recommended Review of Governance procedure, to see how effective our governance is and identify any gaps.

3.8 Staff Wellbeing, Standards and Morale:

It was agreed that responsibility for this item should be with SP and ST in the future.

ST reported that he had been working on a four part Draft Staff Wellbeing Survey. The initial part of the survey had been taken from a Warwick-Edinburgh survey but amended to be suitable for those working in an educational setting. Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales have been developed to enable measuring of the mental wellbeing in the general population. The items are all worded positively and the responses are scored and then summed to provide a single score. A further part of the survey was a questionnaire taken from the Anna Freud Trust, who provide Health and Wellbeing support, and was intended to help improve the quality of working life. Typical questions relating to the factors that influence wellbeing, often asked during an Ofsted Inspection, would also be included.

ST confirmed that the survey needed to be streamlined but he would work on it and pass a proposal survey to BW and GG to check during half-term. He said the results would be quantifiable and that it would be a good idea to use the same survey every year to monitor any changes in Staff wellbeing.

TC suggested that this survey could be completed electronically. It was agreed that this was a good idea for analysis and BW would investigate how to transfer the survey to online. ST noted that confidentiality was essential for this survey, however it was completed. (Since the meeting BW has prepared an online version via Office 365 Forms, which she believes preserves confidentiality, and ST and GG have approved it. BW will email the link to all staff on 30 Oct.)

3.9 Staffing Issues

An application for a member of staff to progress to the Upper Pay Scale has been received and discussed at the Resources Meeting. Governors were required to agree to this pay progression. All Governors present were very happy to agree to this.

3.10 SEND in a Nutshell

Governors had been given the opportunity to examine the information provided in a SEND in a Nutshell Report from the SENCo, which was available online. It was agreed that the report should be reviewed to remove any names from the information given; DP will do this.

There are pupils in the school that have been identified as having Moderate Learning Difficulties, MLD, but the Educational Psychologist had acknowledged that these were at the lower end of the MLD scale. It was accepted that pupils at the School were given support when, in a larger school, they might not be deemed to qualify. The Ed Psych has also recommended more specific available codes are used by staff, rather than MLD, and this has been implemented. DP confirmed that support was made available when it was required and that it was always recognised that Quality First Teaching, a style of teaching that emphasises high quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class, is the best way to promote learning for all. He noted that lessons were adapted to ensure all pupils could learn at their own level.

GG asked if there was a report on non-SEN Support. DP confirmed that a Matrix, with all pupils listed, was used to show all support given.

BW confirmed that our SENCo, HL, was taking part this term in a SEND Nutshell Triad, where three schools got together to review SEND provisions. The outcomes from this process would be added to the Nutshell Report and this report would be reviewed at the February meeting. DP confirmed that a link to this document had been added to the SEF.

3.11 Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, a cooperative agreement between The Eden Rural Alliance Cluster of primary schools, had been made available for the Governors to look at on the School website. DP confirmed that he felt that this supportive alliance between the cluster of primary schools was ideal for small schools. He could share ideas and schools could come together to arrange school trips together for example.

BW confirmed that she had attended an initial meeting of Chairs of the same cluster of schools and this had been deemed a success. A further meeting, with Chairs taking turns to host the meeting, had been arranged for the second half of this term, with the aim of termly meetings in the future.

All present were happy with this MOU.

4. STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOVERNING BODY MATTERS:

4.1 Status of the Governing Body and Governor Vacancies:

BW confirmed that 11 of the 12 Governor positions are filled at present and that an Associate Member had been appointed for the Resources Committee. She felt there was no requirement for any new Governors at present.

4.2 Governors' Action Plan

BW reported that the Governors' Action Plan would be revised for the next FGB, in February.

4.3 Governor Skills Audit

An updated version of the Governors Skills Audit was now available on the School's Website. This included all Governors and the recently appointed Associate Member's information.

4.4 Link Governor Updates:

Emotional Resilience:

BW explained that after some recent Suicide Awareness Training, she had noted that it was very important that the School was a "listening school". Although we believe this is the case, it is another question as to how evidence of this can be shown. As a result, BW felt it may be a good idea to have a Link Governor responsible for overseeing Emotional Resilience in the School.

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BW had approached NC and she was pleased to confirm that NC had agreed to take on this link governor role. NC explained that she had a deep interest in providing emotional support for young people. She explained that this could be linked to the current Oracy initiative, where pupils are taught how to be effective communicators through storytelling, debating and presenting and that she felt it was important for children to be able to speak up for themselves. NC explained that she recognised the importance for children to understand their own feelings and, importantly, to know the names of these feelings. BW pointed out that building emotional resilience could contribute to greater online safety for the children.

It was agreed that initially a meeting would be arranged between DP, BW, NC and TH to audit current provision. TH had this term undergone ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training and would be in a position to feedback. In particular, Change Talk and Ready Talk, programmes that help people verbalise how they feel, were seen as important. SP asked if she could be a part of this initiative as she had a personal interest in helping build confidence in young people and would welcome the opportunity to improve her knowledge.

Church:

ST confirmed that he had taken a service in the church celebrating 60 Year Anniversary of the school being at the current site. There were examples of the pupils work in the church and that he had made visits to the School.

Health & Safety:

KW is working through a 224 point action plan.

Safeguarding:

Extensive discussions about Safeguarding had already taken place as part of the Questions arising from Head Teacher's Report.

EYFS:

GG confirmed that she was liaising with SP about the Action Plan and they planned to meet at the end of November.

4.5 Governors' newsletter:

BW confirmed that she would write a Newsletter for Christmas.

4.6 Monitoring Visits:

BW had completed Art and Design visits. SE had observed English and Geography. ST agreed to observe History in the second half of this term. GG had intended to observe Phonics today but this had not been possible. As a result, she proposed to observe both Phonics and Maths when she met SP on 29 November.

BW agreed to review visits before the next meeting to see what visits would be required and to ensure duplication was avoided.

4.8 Terms of Reference:

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Bolton Primary School had kindly shared their recently reviewed Terms of Reference document with BW. CP confirmed that she had copies of the Terms of References for other schools equivalent Resources Committees and Pupil Progress Committees and she would share these with BW, who proposed working on a new ToR document to circulate to governors before the next FGB.

4.9 Associate members Voting Rights for Resources Committee:

All Governors present agreed to allow voting rights for CP on the Resources Committee

5.1 AOB:

There were no AOB items.

Dates for next meetings:

The following dates were agreed:

Spring Term 2023-2024

Resources Committee	Friday 19 January 2024 at 1.15pm
Pupil Progress Committee	Tuesday 23 January 2024 at 3.45pm
Full Governing Board	Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 4.00pm

The meeting closed at 6.06pm.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:



Barbara Wallis

7 February 2024