

Townley Primary School & Pre-School

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Headteacher: Mrs Maria-Anne Higgins

Hybrid Meeting of the Full Governing Body Thursday 30th March 2023 at 6:30pm

Name	Initials	Role	Present / Absent / Apologies
Sarah Bayliss	SB	Vice Chair (VC)	Present
Yvonne Chenery	YC		Apologies
Simon Freeland	SF		From 18.45
Maria Higgins	MH	Headteacher (HT)	Present
Nathan Lansdell	NL		Present
Sophie Pheasant	SP	Clerk	Present
Sue Rudge	SR	Chair	Present
Paul Simpson	PS		Present
Giles Thorlby	GT		From 19:17

#	Action Point	Initials	Complete by
1	Walk around visit	SF	
2	Thank volunteer for work on sensory shed base	HT	
3	Put 'Action Points' at the top of the minutes	Clerk	
4	Thank staff member that is leaving	Chair	30.3.23
5	Update SCR with Prevent training	HT	
6	Fix exposed cable	HT / SF	
7	Decide on website form	HT	
8	Monitoring visits - at least 1 per term	All/any	
9	Formal thank you for FOTS	HT	

Signed by on 2023

10	Inform parents that absence due to strike action does not affect their child's attendance rate	HT	
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<p>1. Opening Formalities</p>	<p><i>1.1 Those present and apologies for absence</i> The Chair issued apologies on behalf of YC.</p> <p><i>1.2 Acceptance of apologies</i> Apologies accepted by all present.</p> <p><i>1.3 Governor election/resignation</i> SF's governor term ended in March. It was agreed that he will continue his role until the end of July. HT will place ads in Welney News and The Heron seeking a suitable new governor.</p> <p><i>1.4 Declarations of interest relating to an agenda item</i> No declarations were made.</p>
<p>2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising</p>	<p><i>2.1 See Action Points from previous meeting</i> AP1 - Chair to chase up governor reports - done AP2 - SF to do walk around visit - to be arranged AP3 - SB to request info from Jonathan Lewis regarding LA academisation - no longer needed AP4 - Chair or HT to arrange formal thank you for Acting HT - done AP5 - Chair or HT to thank Claire, John and volunteer for work on sensory shed base - partially done AP6 - Clerk to update governor page on website - done AP7 - Chair to circulate new NGA audits - done AP8 - All to complete and return new NGA audits - done</p>

The Chair asked if 'Action Points' could be placed at the top of the minutes to make them more accessible. Clerk agreed.

2.2 Agree the minutes

All present agreed to the minutes.

2.3 Chair to sign the minutes

Chair signed the minutes post-meeting.

3. Headteacher's report

3.1 Staffing

HT explained that there have been some staff bereavements but that the school remains calm. She added that a TA has resigned so, following notice period, will not return after the Easter break, as they have a new role with better terms and conditions. The TA leaving does ELSA and is PP Champion. The Chair stated that she will thank the TA that is leaving.

Governor Challenge - We know ELSA is proving effective for some of our more vulnerable children, so what will HT do to continue this?

HT replied that the school can afford to train two members of staff for ELSA, which will reduce pressure on those trained. TA had expressed an interest in ELSA training, as part of their PM this month. The school has completed an expression of interest for ELSA training, but this will not run until the next academic year. The TA leaving has had in-depth discussions with another TA about the children's' needs and the TA will, in the meantime, provide an alternative to ELSA known as 'Special Time with...'

Governor Challenge - We understand you would like a 52-week contract for a caretaker?

HT replied that she would like to employ a caretaker for 52 weeks a year. The building needs to be safe and secure all year, including school holidays. The building work planned will require HT or a caretaker to be present, which would otherwise mean that the HT could not take a break during school holiday times.

Governor Challenge - My neighbour has a caretaker role at the community centre. I could ask if he would be interested in caretaking/grounds maintenance?

HT explained there was already someone in post who would need to be considered first. The HT explained that the school's groundsmen are effective but someone needs to be present to lock and unlock gates and doors.

After some discussion regarding impact on budget, all present agreed that the HT should explore offering a 52-week contract.

3.2 Pupil numbers

HT explained that there are currently 12 pupils on the list for September intake. However, of these 12, there are 3 who are unlikely to join as we are not their first choice. There are two pupils who we are expecting, but are not currently on the list. There are 14 Year 6 pupils leaving at the end of the academic year. There will be two new in year pupils after Easter, but we have two pupil leavers. HT also explained that there is another Year 3 child hoping to join, but the space has now been taken and we cannot therefore meet needs. Governors agreed with HT's decision on this

3.3 Attendance

HT said that attendance is nearly 95% and is good. It has been lowered as two children have moved but have not yet started at another school. Due to vulnerabilities the HT has not taken them off roll, but has completed a CME referral. The HT discussed with governors what Amanda Spielman had said today about attendance. The HT informed governors that a penalty notice to parents last October was withdrawn by the legal panel because the LA attendance officer had not completed their paperwork in time (this was not the fault of the school).

Governor Challenge - How much does attendance need to drop for a penalty to be given?

HT replied that this is typically 90%. but the first step is to have a parenting contract meeting with the parents. If there is more absence following the parenting contract then the parent is issued a penalty. HT explained that she devoted the last day of February term to meetings with families for parent contract meetings. Of 10 families invited to attend these meetings not one turned up. HT used eSchools which shows the families had read the messages about the scheduled meetings. She is therefore pursuing this through the legal route, which Governors supported.

3.4 Bagels

HT said she knows providing bagels is an expense as school has to contribute to the cost of the bagels and provide butter but some children come to school without having breakfast. The HT asked governors what they think about continuing the provision given the costs involved.

Governor Challenge - Can we ask children who would like a bagel and just do them for those on the day?

HT replied the school has enough toasters for each classroom. She added that the school may have a new catering contract in September and wonders if the new cook will do the bagels for the children that want one. Governors agreed that we continue to fund costing to ensure that all children have food available at the start of the day.

3.5 Burwell House

HT asked all present for permission to take the Year 5 and 6 Year 6 pupils on a residential trip to Burwell House next year (current Y4 and 5 children). All present agreed.

4. Spring progress data and updated predictions on statutory testing

4.1 Data

Data chart available before the meeting.

HT shared data chart for the whole school and said predicted Year 6 reading data looks very good, only 3 children did not achieve the age related score when they took the 2022 Reading test last week. Of these three their scaled score was in the high 90s. The HT explained that writing and maths were not as strong, but the HT assured governors that added that she has not lost sight of issues with writing and that the children are receiving additional teaching and tuition as necessary.

Governor Challenge - What were the issues with writing?

HT explained that children did not do a lot of extended writing during Covid when working from home, so handwriting and stamina is generally poorer.

HT said the CUSP reading curriculum has made a big difference, because guided reading lessons are whole class, all children are benefitting from high quality teaching from the teacher. It is taught frequently (daily in KS2) and it has demonstrated many benefits in reading, comprehension and writing across the curriculum.

HT discussed GAPS results(grammar, punctuation and spelling).

Governor Challenge - Do you think we're pushing children too hard in education?

HT commented that she thinks the government are very concerned with teaching knowledge, but that many of children come to school without the skills they need to learn/ access the knowledge so it is important we teach the skills too. It can be particularly hard for those with SEND who have working memory difficulties or weak vocabulary to remember the knowledge by heart.

HT asked all present if they would be able to assist during SATS week. On Wednesday 10th (Reading) she needs someone to invigilate and the rest of the week she needs test readers.

Governor Challenge - If SEND children sit these SATS and can't do the questions do they just fail?

	<p>HT said that, unfortunately, yes, unless they are working so far below the expected and therefore are not entered for the tests. She explained that a parent was upset when their child in KS2, with specific literacy difficulties , received a 0 in a spelling test, however the teacher handled it sensitively and the children do need to know their scores. As soon as they move to secondary school they will know these results, so best to begin to understand this here with staff and peers they trust.</p> <p>HT said the writing tutoring is now in week 5 and the DfE is paying 40%. School must fund the rest.</p>
5. SIDP RAG rated	<p><i>5.1 SIDP updates</i> SIDP and SEF available before the meeting. HT said there are no updates regarding the SIDP but she intends to update the SEF in line with the changing situation in school.</p>
6. Safeguarding updates	<p><i>6.1 First Aid and vulnerable children</i> All present agreed to reschedule this to the next meeting as the Attendance governor was absent.</p> <p><i>6.2 Prevent CPD update</i> Chair, in her role as Safeguarding Governor, presented a ‘Prevent’ training quiz, all worked as a group, discussing the options and sharing knowledge in the process to update knowledge of Prevent processes. Chair to list this as CPD on training log for those present.</p>
7. Finance updates	<p><i>7.1 Budget position to include end of year accruals</i> HT said that the budget for the next financial year is likely a deficit of approximately £75,000, with an estimated £90,000 in the following year and £94,000 - or perhaps more realistically £124,000 - in the third year. She added that she can’t set an in-year balanced budget due to staffing costs, particularly in relation to support for our most vulnerable children. English Hub have agreed to do a phonics audit on 15th May, due to TTS pulling StoryTime phonics. The English Hub may be able to might give us money toward replacing our scheme and individual reading books linked to graphemes.</p> <p><i>7.2 SFVS</i> HT had shared this in the previous meeting documents for Governors to raise any possible questions prior to this meeting. No issues raised. All present agreed the SFVS, Chair to sign and return to LA.</p> <p><i>7.3 Sports premium and evidence of impact</i> HT informed governors the SP will continue next year with some changes to conditions, as it cannot be used to cover curriculum PE any longer. Premier Sports have agreed to continue providing the P.E/sports curriculum</p>

7.4 Pupil premium and evidence of impact

HT said that Start Active costs £7,000 to run for a year and now has a £3,000 deficit. There are 16 children on the register but they don't all attend at the same time. 6 of those are Year 6 so will be leaving at the end of the academic year. It is £1.50 for a regular attendee per session, paid for the term upfront. Those that are not regulars can attend for £2 per session. HT expressed concerns that this is running at a significant loss at a time when budgets are tight. The HT would like governors to consider how they would like to proceed given that it is a very small minority of pupils who currently access the provision for childcare.

Governor Challenge - Are there families with siblings?

HT said yes.

Governor Challenge - We've put up nursery fees, meals are going up in September, can we really put this up as well?

HT replied that there are currently only 2 children for whom it is essential for childcare.

Governor Challenge - How many children on that list would be late for school or fail to attend if not for Start Active?

HT replied that she thinks 2 children would be late or absent.

Governor Challenge - If you must increase it, what do you think the footfall would be?

It would cost about £180 per child and many would drop out.

Governor Challenge - If it does go self-funding, would you lose a lot of families?

HT is unsure, especially if it could prove more expensive per child.

All expressed concerns about the impact on our most vulnerable families, especially with other costs increasing. All present agreed to defer the decision until the next FGB meeting. Clerk to add to agenda

7.5 Energy efficiency funding, planned spend

The school has replaced the lighting in Hawker classroom to more energy efficient LED lights as part of this funding stream.

	<p><i>7.6 School meals contract and tendering process</i></p> <p>All present agreed to delegate the final decision to the Chair/HT on behalf of the governing body at the cluster catering contract meeting in June.</p>
8. Health and safety	<p><i>8.1 Premises and maintenance, including planned building works</i></p> <p>HT explained the school site is not secure because of problems with the fences/railings, in addition not all fencing is the 2m height the DFE stipulate – the LA recommendation was 1.8m, but they have recently updated their advice to bring it in line with the DFE. The HT has asked the LA to consider this as part of the new build, Jo German has arranged for Phil Hill to carry out a site security assessment as soon as possible. The HT has sought a quote (at the request of the LA) from the LA contractor to replace/install 2m high fencing. The LA have not yet made a decision in respect of this.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Is it just disrepair?</p> <p>HT replied that some of it is due to disrepair but some of it is because the owners of bordering gardens have cleared their land of old trees, shrubs and fencing and it has highlighted or exposed weaknesses.</p> <p>A governor said they saw an exposed cable; HT said she was not aware of it, thanked them for bringing it to her attention and has agreed to fix it.</p>
9. Website compliance	<p><i>9.1 Audit outcomes</i></p> <p>GT stated that there have been acceptable updates throughout the website and statutory elements are compliant. He has asked HT to decide on which available audit format she prefers so that it can be added to Teams for the next meeting.</p>
10. Governor monitoring, training and CPD	<p><i>10.1 Monitoring visits - completed/scheduled for Spring term</i></p> <p>The Chair has asked that there be at least one report per term as we are now a Good school and want to keep it that way.</p> <p><i>10.2 Analysis of NGA skills audit</i></p> <p>The Chair thanked all present for completing and returning the NGA skills audits. She noted that the results overall were very pleasing and that there are only two areas which marked lower than desirable - strategic and succession planning - and asked that those who scored below 3 for these areas to read the documentation suggested by the NGA. Chair to share the documents with all GB.</p> <p><i>10.3 Training and CPD - completed/schedule for Spring term</i></p>

	<p>The Chair led all present through a PREVENT refresher quiz to recall and update our knowledge and training.</p> <p><i>10.4 Issues arising from governor visits</i> No issues raised.</p> <p><i>10.5 Clerk NGA training</i> The Clerk explained that she has begun an NGA Level 3 in clerking course. It is expected to take 9 - 12 months to complete.</p>
<p>11. Policies and procedures</p>	<p>All policies below agreed to by all governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acceptable Use of IT 5. Attendance 38. Safer Employment 42. Staff Induction 49. Grievance <p>School Data Protection Policy Privacy Notices - Governors, Job Applicants, Parents/Carers, Pupils, School Workforce, Visitors</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Regarding the attendance policy, where it says if someone arrives after 9am they will be marked as such - is that marked as a late arrival or as absent? HT replied that they would be marked absent, but the code would depend on the reason. E.g. if a child was late due to a medical appointment it would be coded with an M.</p>
<p>12. Communication with stakeholders</p>	<p><i>12.1 The Heron and Welney News</i> HT explained that Annie, the Editor from The Heron attended a school assembly and judged the school's Easter bonnet competition at our Easter fair. The Chair said that Karen from Welney News observed a Forest School session; she took plenty of photographs and enjoyed interacting with the children and learning about the benefits of Forest School.</p> <p><i>12.2 Facebook</i> HT said that the school's Facebook page is still receiving a positive reaction. She added that FOTS use their official Facebook page to post general reminders to parents.</p>

	<p><i>12.3 Newsletter</i> HT asked if any Governors would like to submit a 'blog' or 'profile' for the school's newsletter. Governors to contact HT.</p> <p><i>12.4 Parental communications and Parentview</i> HT stated that there's been no negative parental communications and no comments added to Parentview.</p> <p><i>12.5 Staff communication</i> Chair said that Clerk had raised a concern expressed by a Governor that having communications sent by email and/or Teams was confusing. Both CoG and HT said they only use email for communication and that no one had raised any concerns with either of them. Clerk then asked if governors are happy to continue receiving correspondence by email and using Teams for documents to be uploaded. All present agreed to continue with the current set up and that any Governors experiencing problems to raise them with HT.</p>
<p>13. Education news and correspondence</p>	<p><i>13.1 Teacher strike action/update</i> HT said there are likely to be more strikes as the NEU are advising members to reject the new offer and she believes NAHT are also likely to reject the offer. HT added that following her NAHT meeting today both unions are working together to coordinate future strikes.</p> <p>Governor challenge - Can we make parents aware that if absence is due to strike action that it does not affect their child's attendance rate as it is coded differently? HT replied she had put this on the school's newsletter.</p>
<p>14. Impact</p>	<p><i>14.1 Impact of meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊄ Governors underwent Prevent refresher training in-meeting ⊄ Concerns expressed about funding, especially for SEND going forward ⊄ Our position as a community school reinforced by visits from both the Welney News and The Heron ⊄ SB is training to be a Forest School Leader <p><i>14.2 Impact of Townley on other schools</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HT continues to support a local school ● Chair is also Chair for another school

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A teacher is supporting another school and advising them on curriculum matters
15. Any other business	<p><i>15.1 Change of summer INSET date and term dates 23 23</i></p> <p>HT asked that the 17th April 2023 inset be moved to 3rd July 2023 due to changes in the phonics curriculum. She added that she has authorised 6 absences for children whose families had pre-booked holidays. HT requested changing the original 23 24 term dates as there was an error on the last sheet approved by governors (27th October 23 is in the half term!) All present agreed to the date changes.</p> <p>Meeting ended 20:56</p>
16. Future meetings	<p>Thursday 4th May 2023, 4pm (<i>Budget setting</i>)</p> <p>Thursday 18th May 2023, 6:30pm</p> <p>Thursday 13th July 2023, 6:30pm</p>