

Townley Primary School & Pre-School

Christchurch, Wisbech, Cambs. PE14 9NA



Email: office@townley.cambs.sch.uk

Tel/Fax: 01354 638229

Headteacher: Mrs Maria-Anne Higgins

Hybrid Meeting of the Full Governing Body Thursday 2nd February 2023 at 6:30pm

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

		Action	By whom
1. Opening formalities	1.1 <i>Those present and apologies for absence</i> Chair opened the meeting and offered apologies on behalf of PS.		

Signed by the Chair on

2021.....

	<p><i>1.2 Acceptance of apologies</i> Apologies for PS accepted by all present.</p> <p><i>1.3 Declarations of interest relating to an agenda item</i> HT is NAHT treasurer and school will receive a payment for her time. It means their logo would need to be on the school's website. Governors agreed to this.</p>		
2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising	<p><i>2.1 See action points from previous meeting dated 08.12.2022</i></p> <p>AP 1 - Clerk to find out if names/initials to be included in minutes - complete AP2 - Chair to chase up outstanding governor reports - to be completed AP3 - Governors to complete and return PI forms - 1 outstanding due to illness AP4 - SF to do a walk around visit - outstanding (to be arranged) AP5 - SB to write to Jonathan Lewis re. LA academisation - outstanding</p> <p><i>2.2 Agree the minutes</i> All present agreed to the minutes.</p> <p><i>2.3 Chair to sign the minutes</i> Chair signed the minutes post meeting</p>	<p>AP 1 - Chase up governor reports</p> <p>AP 2 - Walk around visit</p> <p>AP 3 - Request info from Jonathan Lewis regarding LA academisation</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>SF</p> <p>SB</p>
3. Headteacher's report	<p><i>Staffing and wellbeing</i> HT explained that there is a member of staff on long phased return as they were unwell prior to Christmas. There have been a few cases of chickenpox and hand, foot and mouth disease some staff have been absent for childcare.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - What are you doing about hand, foot and mouth disease? HT replied that it is a notifiable disease when there is an outbreak. Two children were diagnosed, whereas some other children with the same doctor's surgery had some symptoms but were diagnosed differently. The HT spoke to Public Health England to received advice regarding monitoring it.</p>		

Governor Challenge - Do we need a deep clean?

HT replied that our usual cleaning should be sufficient but that extra handwashing for staff and children is being encouraged.

HT explained that bereavement training has been rescheduled to 16 March at 3:15pm and that it is open to all governors if they wish to attend. There is also a mental health drop in available for staff. HT said she has signed Townley up to be the pilot for Carers Education, which is CPD for a member of staff to raise children's aspirations for the future.

Governor Challenge - Are we talking about recruiting?

HT said no, we are talking about our children's aspirations for the future.

Strikes

HT said that four of the five teaching staff participated in the strike, except one who was unable to do so because they are not in the union. EYFS was able to remain open, but that may not be the case with future strikes as the staffing will change.

Governor Challenge - I totally support teachers striking but, having just come out of a pandemic, how will this affect education?

HT asked the governor to refer to NEU guidelines. She added that teachers here would like their pay-rises to be funded by the government and they believe that if they do not take action now then funding and other issues will become worse over time. Our SENDCo does not get any time out of class to be SENDCO as we cannot afford this in our budget. Staff at times have to buy their pupils gluesticks, etc as there is not enough money left in our budget after the staffing and other costs.

Governor Challenge - If the government offered the teachers here the pay rise sought, would they say it's not just about their money and still strike to support others?

HT stated that she is unsure about what actions the NEU members would take in this situation.

Governor Comment - Different staff may be striking for different reasons.

HT explained that staff here do not get any additional pay or TLR funding but at other schools they are likely to receive additional money for additional responsibility.

Governor Challenge - Why don't we get that here?

HT said that the school cannot afford to offer it as it would come out of our budget.

AP 4 - Arrange formal thank you for Acting HT.

SR and SB

Staff secondment and support roles

HT said a staff member has been on secondment and is doing well. HT then thanked governors for the opportunity for her to support Spring Meadow and the acting HT for her hard work covering at Townley. Governors discussed arranging a more formal thank you for the acting HT.

NPQL

HT has signed up for NPQL but insists she has no intentions of leaving Townley, adding that for the school's survival we need to look at the school's management going forward. She needs to attend 90% of the face-to-face sessions and is aware that the first of two conference days, is the day of the second bout of strikes. This had been discussed with the Chair prior to the meeting. Governors agreed to the HT attending the course if there was a teacher on site.

EHCPs and SEND

HT explained that she received a direction letter from Cambridgeshire saying that we need to accept a child with an EHCP. This would be for inclusion into a class with an extremely high number of EHCPs already. However, Acting HT was concerned about the impact it would have on other children and had challenged this direction as the HT

	<p>stated that 11.5% of children on roll here have EHCPs, the highest in Cambridgeshire. The next highest percentages locally are 9.5 %, and 9.4%.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Does that include secondary? HT said yes.</p> <p>Governor Comment - We must consider the needs and safety of the children we already have in school, and particularly in that cohort.</p> <p>HT stated that she has offered support to the LA to try and help other HTs become more inclusive.</p> <p>Governor Comments - (1) When you have a lot of children with SEND you will get different statistics. (2) I'm not sure where HTs think these children will go if they simply refuse them.</p> <p>HT explained that she investigated Townley having a special needs unit or becoming a special school but she was told that we are too remote. She added that our notional SEND is £48,784 which could fund the the first £6000.00 of eight of our children but not all eleven and leaves nothing left to support children who have SEND, but not an EHCP. The school has recently received £24,637 back pay from Schools Forum.</p> <p>HT said that Norfolk have now agreed to fund staff for a nursery child with an EHCP.</p>		
4. Autumn progress data	HT said that writing interventions for 5 children begin after half-term. 2 will receive the tuition during school hours and 3 will receive it after school.		
5. SIDP & SEF	19:19 - GT now present online.		

	Some responsibilities remain unallocated. The Chair asked that NL cover personal development, GT cover maths and SF cover behaviour. All agreed. She added that some have not got a lot of governor duties within them but are still needed.		
6. Safeguarding	<p>SCR</p> <p>The Chair explained that the SCR will be complete soon as little information is missing. Looking at attendance, the school is following the three-letter system from the LA, attendance procedures are rigorous and the morning wellbeing checks are addressing absences.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - How are strike days recorded for the children?</p> <p>HT said it does not affect children that are not expected to be present as they are given a 'Y' code</p> <p>19:24 - Powercut begins. Those attending virtually are now absent.</p> <p><i>Fencing</i></p> <p>HT said she has been involved in a situation at another school which led to a query regarding fence height. The LA state fences should be 1.8m high whereas DfE stated 2m. A different H&S LA team have now also stated 2m. HT has sent this information to the school's building team as the school's fence is damaged and a dog was loose on the field. HT has sought new fence quotes in accordance with the 2m guideline. Agreed.</p> <p>19:32 - Powercut ends. Those attending virtually are now present again.</p>		
7. Finances	<p><i>7.1 Budget update and GB actions regarding SEND funding</i></p> <p>HT said that finance drafts were uploaded to Teams tonight and asked governors to review them prior to the relevant deadlines.</p> <p>HT explained that the school financial adviser cannot set a budget for three years' time. She added that at the end of this tax year the school will be carrying forward £13,904</p>		

which is not as bad as previously expected. The funding has been set for next year and the school needs £50,000 which HT says may be possible but she has not yet received all invoices.

HT said that she and our finance officer have set dates for future budget setting meetings.

The Chair and SB agreed that SB is to cover finance alongside Chair as PS is unwell.

HT said that the insurance claim regarding staff absence prior to Covid has not been successful because the school did not submit information within the correct time limit.

7.2 Sports premium

HT stated that the sports premium budget is the same as last year but that she has increased spending on external activities. Some children have been able to compete in a tag rugby competition and there is a dodgeball tournament for other children next week. The total budget allocated for next year is £562,811 which equates to £6,317 per pupil.

Governor Challenge - What is the funding per capita at secondary?

HT replied that it is different for every school and that she does not have access to the secondary school budgets.

7.3 Pupil premium

HT said there are no updates.

7.4 Energy efficiency funding

HT said the school is being considered for a new boiler grant.

Governor Challenge - Will the grant link in with the new build?

HT replied that there was a request to provide all energy statements going back to 2015.

HT added that there is some money from DfE that has got to be spent before the end of this tax year so she has requested quotes for UPVC doors and lighting.

7.5 Nursery fees

HT explained that EYFS charges £10 per session for children whose parents buy additional sessions. She proposed a price increase to £12 per session. HT said that the new rate for 2-year-olds is £6 per session and £4.63 for 3-4 year olds so it would be better to accept funded children.

Governor Challenge - Can parents realistically afford an increase?

HT replied that the new price would still be cheaper for parents than paying for a childminder.

All governors present agreed to the session price increase.

7.6 School meal contract and prices

HT said she wrote to Lunchtime UK to officially state that the school will be going to tender again for a new contract to start in September and invited them to apply. They replied that they will end the contract on 31st March because they cannot afford to supply us.

SF left the room at 19:50.

HT added that Lunchtime UK then offered for us to stay with them for £1,000 until summer term. Our contract with them now ends on 19th July.

	<p>HT said nursery children pay £2 per meal but other children are charged £2.30 even though it costs us £2.44. When with CCS the service level agreement was £10,000 and the school still had to give them the money that children paid for meals.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - We can't decide until we know what is happening with providers.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - If nursery children are getting the same portion, then they should be charged the same.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - If we are putting nursery session fees up then that is a double whammy.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - But we can't keep subsidising.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Free school meals are funded. Children in EY and PP children with us for the full day get meals free.</p> <p>HT and all governors present agreed that the nursery session fees should increase now and that we should warn parents that school meal fees are likely to rise in September.</p>		
8. Health and Safety	HT said that the preschool has been donated a new sensory shed from Crane worth £16,000. HT received a quote for the concrete base but a staff member will complete the work with a volunteer at a cost of £1,200.	AP 5 - Thank Claire, John and volunteer for work on sensory shed base	HT
9. Website information - curriculum related	The Chair explained that the audit format has now been changed so it is up to date with DfE guidelines. She added that some of the website audit is complete and the rest will be completed in Spring 2. The governance page needs to be updated.	AP 6 - Update governor page on website	Clerk

<p>10. Governor monitoring, training and CPD</p>	<p><i>10.1 Monitoring visits</i> A governor attended bedtime read, story cafe and forest schools. Feedback is positive, and there were no questions arising. The Chair said she would like to change the visit reports back to the paper file system to make checks on actions arising easier to monitor.</p> <p><i>10.2 Training and CPD</i> The Chair reminded all present of their access to governor hub and said that all Cams training is available there. A governor has signed up for Forest School leader training and the clerk will soon begin the NGA level 3 clerking course. The Chair added that she will circulate new NGA skills audits and asked all governors to complete them and return.</p>	<p>AP 7 - Circulate new NGA audits</p> <p>AP 8 - complete and return new NGA audits</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>HT and all governors</p>
<p>11. Policies and procedures</p>	<p>All policies listed below were agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Critical Incidents 12. Data Protection Policy 13. Drugs Education 24. Discretionary Leave of Absence 25. Lettings 40. SEND and Information report 51. Staff Sickness 61. DSL Support and Supervision <p>Governor Challenge - Regarding a critical incident, who is our CIR team? HT replied that it would depend on the situation, for example if she is onsite, it would be her and teaching staff, or acting HT JE or teacher NG if she is not available.</p>		
<p>12. School name</p>	<p>HT said she would like to change 'pre-school' to 'nursery' as she feels it better reflects the environment and ethos.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Do we need to inform the LA? Yes, but not to gain consent.</p>		

	<p>Governor Challenge - Is there a cost to rebrand? HT replied that if the name change is agreed the uniform supplier will update it for free and the current uniform can be phased out.</p> <p>All governors present agreed to the school's name change, from Townley School and Pre-School to Townley School and Nursery.</p>		
<p>13. Communication with stakeholders</p>	<p><i>13.1 The Heron and Welney News</i> HT said that Welney News would like to come and report on a 'live' session of Forest School.</p> <p><i>13.2 Facebook</i> No update</p> <p><i>13.3 Newsletters</i> No update</p> <p><i>13.4 Parental communications and Parentview</i> HT explained that a parent wrote to say that the school should stop story cafes and assemblies because her child gets upset when she cannot attend because of work. Other parents gave positive feedback in the online questionnaire attached to the newsletter.</p> <p>Governor comments summary (comments from all governors present) - Story cafes offer a positive environment. Some parents may never turn up but most do and feedback shows that they and the children really enjoy it. It opens conversation between parents/caregivers and their children about their learning which encourages more engagement from the children. It also provides activities for children that they may not have access to outside of school.</p>		

	HT and all governors present agreed to continue with story cafes and assemblies. <i>13.5 Staff communication</i> No update		
14. Education news and correspondence	No update.		
15. Impact of meeting and impact of Townley on other schools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The governing body and HT are now more aware of parents' views regarding story cafe and assemblies. 2. HT and Acting HT have gained a lot from their experiences in acting up at SM and in Townley 3. The staff member on secondment has had a positive impact on the other school and the children she is supporting there have settled in and adjusted well to their new school. 		
16. Any other business	A governor explained that the parish council have decided to turn approximately 3m of unused land into a village amenity with a pond, picnic benches, possible play area and a fenced area for off-lead dog walking. There is currently £5,000 to fund this project and a request was put in for 480 trees to be donated. The governor asked if the school would like to be involved and/or support this community cause. All governors present agreed as it will benefit the school, our families and the surrounding community.		
17. Future meetings	Thursday 30th March 2023, 6:30pm Thursday 4th May 2023, 6:30pm (<i>Budget setting</i>) Thursday 18th May 2023, 6:30pm Thursday 13th July 2023, 6:30pm		