

Townley Primary School & Nursery

Christchurch, Wisbech, Cambs. PE14 9NA



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Headteacher: Mrs Maria-Anne Higgins

Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes, Thursday 18th May 2023, 6:30pm

| Name | Initials | Role | Present / Absent / Apologies |
|-----------------|----------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Sarah Bayliss | SB | Vice Chair (VC) | Present |
| Simon Freeland | SF | | Present |
| Maria Higgins | MH | Headteacher (HT) | Present |
| Nathan Lansdell | NL | LA Governor | Absent |
| Sophie Pheasant | SP | Clerk | Present |
| Sue Rudge | SR | Chair | Present |
| Paul Simpson | PS | | Present |
| Shelley Steer | SS | Staff Governor | Present |
| Giles Thorlby | GT | Parent Governor | From 7:24pm |

| # | Action Point | Initials | Completed |
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| 1 | Walk around visit | SF | |
| 2 | Fix exposed cable | HT / SF | |
| 3 | Complete staff governor induction | Clerk | |
| 4 | Policy 21. Change 'pre-school' to 'nursery' | Clerk | |
| 5 | Move visit report to correct folder | Clerk | |
| 6 | Brief profile for Governor Corner | Chair & SB | c/f |
| 7 | Source new plumber following retirement of BB | HT | |

Signed by on 2023

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| <p>1. Opening Formalities & Welcome</p> | <p><i>1.1 Those present and apologies for absence</i> The Chair welcomed all and introduced SS to all present.</p> <p><i>1.2 Acceptance of apologies</i> GT is to arrive late by prior agreement. No apologies offered by NL so cannot be accepted.</p> <p><i>1.3 Governor resignation/election</i> The Chair explained that our staff governor has resigned. HT advertised the vacancy amongst staff and one staff member, SS, expressed an interest and self nominated, no election was required. All present agreed to SS's election as staff governor. The Chair asked the clerk to complete SS's induction and advise/guide SS accordingly.</p> <p>HT confirmed that she has advertised for SF's replacement and explained that two people have expressed interest. One is a first aid instructor with previous experience as a childminder and the other is a music teacher and SENDCO. With the permission of governors, HT has invited both to the next governor's meeting in July so that the election proceedings can take place and, if successful, they can then begin as elected members in September. All present agreed.</p> <p><i>1.4 Declarations of interest relating to an Agenda item</i> SB declared that she is currently employed as short-term bank staff. HT explained that she had checked the Governance Handbook which states that a parent governor can undertake up to 500 hours of paid employment at the school in a rolling twelve month period before they would need to resign from the governing body..</p> <p>The Chair declared that she is still a governor for another school.</p> <p><i>1.5 Chair's Action - anything needing an urgent decision between meetings, falling within the financial remit of the Chair</i> The Chair explained that the HT at Kinderley School has resigned so our HT will be assisting them for the rest of the summer term. HT will attend Kinderley School two days a week, remaining at Townley for the other three. Of the two days HT is at Kinderley School, Kinderley School will fund one and the LA will fund the other, meaning there is no financial implication for Townley. The financial benefit created will cover the cost of a supply teacher in EYFS for one day a week, allowing our EYFS teacher to come out of class. The HT will then ensure Townley work is covered on the remaining day.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Where's your breathing space?</p> |
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| | <p>HT replied that the arrangement is just until the end of term so it is manageable but acknowledged that it should not become long term due to implications for herself and potentially the school, without an acting HT in place at Townley. HT discussed the option of federating with Kinderley and there were positives and negatives, for example we may be able to develop staff further but that the distance between the schools is too great to share resources. Also, if Kinderley's next Ofsted inspection were to be 'inadequate' they may be forced to become an academy, meaning that Townley would have to become an academy as well.</p> <p>All governors present approved the decision but expressed that opinion that it should not be long term for the sake of HT's wellbeing.</p> |
| <p>2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising</p> | <p><i>2.1 See Action Points from previous meeting</i></p> <p>AP1 - SF to do walk around visit - to be arranged AP2 - HT to thank volunteer for work on sensory shed base - done AP3 - Clerk to put Action Points at the top of the minutes - done AP4 - Chair to thank staff member that is leaving - done AP5 - HT/Chair to update SCR with Prevent training - done AP6 - HT/SF to fix exposed cable - to be arranged AP7 - HT to decide on website format – agreed to use the most up to date version on School Bus AP8 - All - Monitoring visits, at least 1 per term - done AP9 - HT to formally thank FOTS - done</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Can we have an update on the 52-week contract for the caretaker? HT replied that the property manager is happy to move to a 52-week contract, and is happy to take a maximum of two weeks of his annual leave during the summer holidays. HT is waiting for support with the contract from EPM.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Is there any update on ELSA? HT explained that she has completed the expression of interest for ELSA training and the money has been set aside for two members of staff to be trained. Two members of staff are interested; one expressed interest during their performance appraisal prior to the resignation of our previous ELSA staff member so HT will offer them the opportunity to train. To be fair to all staff, HT will advertise the second training opportunity to all staff.</p> |

Governor Challenge - Are we pushing children too hard noting the press comments about the Y6 reading paper?
 A governor who had observed Year 6 SATs commented that the Year 6 children she spoke to seemed to take it in their stride and were mostly unphased and relaxed about their SATs.

HT added that a scribe for a Year 6 child stated that the test was not as difficult as the CUSP curriculum we have been using so CUSP has prepared children well for tackling challenging texts.

2.2 Agree the minutes
 All present agreed to the minutes.

2.3 Chair to sign the minutes
 The Chair signed the minutes.

3. Headteacher's Verbal Report

Proposal to lengthen school day
 HT explained that the government requires schools to provide 32 and a half hours per week of education by September 2023. The HT is proposed adding 10 minutes to the end of the school day, beginning September 2023. She added that there will be financial implications to cover staffing costs. All present agreed to the proposed change.

Spring Meadow
 HT stated that she has now finished working at Spring Meadow and thanked governors for the opportunity.

Staff wellbeing and absence
 HT explained that there has been some staff absence and that one staff member is off long-term with medical certification

Governor Challenge - Is the long term absence stress related or connected to any job-related pressure?
 HT replied that the absence is not stress or job-related and is purely because of an existing medical condition.

HT added that she is hoping to employ an apprentice teaching assistant for a 2 year apprenticeship, beginning in September. She hopes that when the apprenticeship ends, the TA may have other opportunities, such as moving up to secondary school with the cohort.

Persistent absence

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| | <p>HT has issued a family with their second penalty notice and the attendance team is keen to pursue the matter. However, guidance on attendance support changed the day after the penalty was issued that sets out that schools must explicitly offer an Early Help Assessment. The HT was advised to do a home visit to ascertain the wellbeing and whereabouts of the child.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Would you always do home visits with another member of staff?</p> <p>HT replied that in limited circumstances it may not require the presence of another member of staff, for example if it is a planned visit and there are no known risks to lone working. An example was given that if a member of staff is running a planned intervention in the home, or completing paperwork. However, in other circumstances, or where there are known risks staff will always take another member of staff with them.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Are there any major changes to pupil numbers?</p> <p>HT replied that we will be losing 13 children in July but will be gaining 11 in September. She added that one child will be leaving in-year.</p> |
| 4. SIDP and SEF | Documents provided. Please also read section 6 'Health and Safety' where building works were discussed. |
| 5. Safeguarding Updates | <p><i>5.1 First Aid and vulnerable children</i></p> <p>Governor Challenge - Are there links between children saying they need first aid and those that may be vulnerable or seeking adult attention?</p> <p>HT replied that in general children are comfortable going to any adult for first aid and adults are able to assess the child's needs and motivations.</p> <p><u>Burn incidents</u></p> <p>HT explained that a child was recently burnt by gravy at lunchtime. She contacted Lunchtime UK and they said they would provide training to staff. A similar incident soon occurred so HT spoke directly to the cook and the cook has agreed to use a plastic gravy jug instead of sitting the metal jug on the bain Marie. HT stated that, with the first incident, staff were quick to provide the child with first aid but did not stop service. HT informed staff that in such circumstances service should be stopped. With the second incident, staff immediately stopped service to reassess health and safety and provided first aid to the child. HT is confident that staff will continue to follow all the correct procedures.</p> <p><u>Secondary schools</u></p> |

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| | <p>HT explained that Year 6 children will be going to two secondary schools and that both secondary schools sent HT a one-page safeguarding profile for each child. HT discussed a child without a place for secondary school in September.</p> |
| <p>6. Health and Safety</p> | <p><u>Swimming pool</u> HT explained that the swimming pool has a burst water main. Our normal plumber has now retired due to health concerns and has provided details for another plumber. However, HT has another plumber that has been recommended and is waiting for a reply from him.</p> <p><u>Building works</u> HT said that AMR will visit during May half-term. She explained that the DfE will not fund a new IT cabinet that is raised so the IT Cabinet must be moved to ground level and will be moved into her office. The new IT equipment is arriving on Monday. HT added that her office doors will be removed in August and that some classroom works will begin 25th September.</p> <p><u>Dog on field</u> HT said there was a dog loose on the field again. The 2m fencing is essential. There will be a site security review with the LA on 2nd June.</p> <p><u>Mobile Unit</u> HT explained that Andrew Sparrow has visit the site on another matter, and he explained that there is concrete and hardcore under the wet/pour surface that needs replacing, so he would advise against trying to turf this area, but replacing the wet/pour in situ and that under the mobile is tarmac. He is happy to help with advice if he can.</p> |
| <p>7. Finance Updates</p> | <p><i>7.1 Budget 2023-2024</i> All present agreed to the minutes for the budget setting meeting dated 4th May 2023. The Chair signed the minutes.</p> <p>HT explained that TC cannot run any finance reports for the next few months because we are changing over to a new system which is not yet compatible with FMS. HT and TC have begun training for the new system and have asked about future compatibility with FMS but are awaiting a response. HT believes it is likely that the system will become compatible with FMS as all schools use FMS and the new system provider will find it difficult to retain contracts if they do not link the systems.</p> <p>Governor Challenge - Why have we changed our system? It was an LA decision.</p> |

English Hub

HT explained that the English Hub has given us £6,000 so she has signed the school up for the Little Wandle (LW) phonics program. The invoice from Collins was £5,834 and the school received a small school discount of £300. Our English lead will need to do weekly tutoring of TAs and teachers so HT will need to arrange interim cover to allow for release time. HT is confident that she and the English lead will be ready for whole staff phonics training on 3rd July.

Governor Challenge - The 45 minutes of reading for Years 1 and 2 - is that per day?

HT replied that the 45 minutes of reading is per day but does not need to be completed as one block session.

Governor Challenge - What's happening to the Storytime Phonics (STP) books?

HT replied that the school still has STP books and story sacks and that they are still beautiful books. She explained that LW uses the Collins Clever Cat books which are lettered instead of colour banded so the children can choose and take home a book with the letter level. HT said that adults will have to integrate the new actions.

7.2 Sports Premium and evidence of impact

HT said she has finally bought an outdoor table tennis table. HT has a meeting with Ian Roberts next week to discuss use of sports premium.

7.3 Pupil Premium and evidence of impact

HT said she will provide an update when she receives the SATs results.

7.4 Energy efficiency updates

HT said she has obtained a grant to replace the current heating system with air pump source heating and that the aim is for the new heating system to be in place by 2025. HT said an advisor for the LA said the grant functions as a loan and he thinks the school can pay back the loan over 20 years. The grant includes solar panels. SSE stated that they will arrange a survey and that the thermostat temperature range will be written into the contract. SSE said the temperature range should be 21 - 23 degrees celsius in classrooms. HT added that the LA and SSE may come out to discuss the grant directly with governors.

HT explained that SSE met onsite with an electrician and they checked the amperage used at the school. It has been advised that the board be upgraded so that the school can receive just one bill in future.

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| | <p>Governor Challenge - Is upgrading the board and using just one board likely to cause problems locally? HT stated that UK Power Networks said the local capacity has been upgraded due to new properties being built locally. HT added that SSE are hoping to utilise the currently unused area where a tree was removed to put the air source heat pumps.</p> |
| 8. Policies and Procedures | <p>21. Home School Agreement 2023</p> <p>This document was approved, on the condition that the two references to 'pre-school' be changed to 'nursery'.</p> |
| 9. Governor Updates | <p><i>9.1 Monitoring visits</i> The Chair reminded all present to complete any outstanding visit reports, and stated that she would like at least one visit report completed each term. The Chair explained that one governor had completed a visit report but had saved it to the wrong term and asked the Clerk to move the report to the correct folder.</p> <p><i>9.2 Training and CPD updates</i> The Chair explained that GT, SB and herself had completed NGA Equality and Diversity training, parts 1 and 2. Part 3 is now available. The Chair stated that she would accept Andrew Halls' safeguarding emails as CPD on the training log if read regularly as they are very informative. The Chair confirmed that PS has completed finance training. HT suggested that governors do safeguarding training via NGA to update knowledge.</p> <p><i>9.3 Issues arising from governor visits</i> No issues arising from governor visits.</p> |
| 10. Communication with Stakeholders | <p><i>10.1 The Heron and Welney News</i> HT said that both The Heron and Welney News have written positive articles and provided positive feedback regarding recent visits to the school.</p> <p><i>10.2 Facebook</i> HT stated that parents offer a considered approach to the school's Facebook page and are mindful of their words and reactions. FOTS are great at sharing the school's Facebook updates.</p> <p><i>10.3 Newsletters</i></p> |

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| | <p>The Chair noted that the newsletter’s ‘governor corner’ section has not been used recently. The Chair and SB agreed to write a brief profile for the newsletter.</p> <p><i>10.4 Parental communications and ParentView</i> No updates.</p> <p><i>10.5 Staff Communication</i> No updates.</p> |
| 11. Education News and Correspondence | <p><i>11.1 Teacher strike action/updates</i> HT said that there is another ballot in regards to headteacher and teacher strikes. She explained that the major unions are keen to coordinate the headteacher and teacher strikes so that the strikes occur on the same dates. HT added that if she and her teachers strike simultaneously the school will close.</p> <p><u>Houses of Parliament</u> HT said she has received an invitation from Stephen Barclay to take Year 5 and 6 children to the Houses of Parliament. Travel will be paid for by the constituents. All present agreed to the benefits of the trip.</p> |
| 12. Impact of Meeting | <p><i>12.1 Impact of meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New staff governor elected ● Improved minutes with the new placement of Action Points ● Greater understanding of the positive impact of Forest School ● Reassuring to hear of Year 6’s SATs resilience ● Greater knowledge of proposed building works <p><i>12.2 Impact of Townley on other schools</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued capacity to support Kinderley School |
| 13. Any Other Business | <p>As Forest School leader, SB said that she would like to offer Forest School as an after school club and that she is willing to lead the club on a voluntary basis. She hopes to initially target PP and vulnerable children. All present agreed. HT said she has added a section on to school reports for Forest School.</p> |

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| | Meeting ended 8:35pm |
| 14. Future Meetings | Thursday 13th July 2023, 6:30pm |