



MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Meeting of the Full Governing Body

Monday 6th November 2023 at 6.00pm

Attendance

Sarah Stepney (Head)	LE	Ann Nicholls	✓
Anna Chaudhri (Chair)	✓	Andrew Monteath	✓
Stephen Atkinson	✓	Serin Dabb	✓
Alison Cox	LE	Eugene Krasnikov	✓
Jessica Rowson	✓	Solma Erfan	AA
Patrick Gosling	✓	Rehana Kousar	LE
Ciara Murray	--	Will Taylor	✓
Louise O’Gorman (Clerk)	✓	Guilherme Zulke-O’Connor	✓

Actions are highlighted in **RED**.

This meeting was postponed from the 1st November.

1	<p><u>APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u></p> <p>Solma sent her apologies which were accepted.</p> <p>Sarah, Alison and Rehana had asked to leave the meeting early due to previous commitments.</p> <p>There were no interests to declare.</p>	Action
2	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <p>The minutes from the last meeting on the 11th September were circulated with the agenda for the GBs approval.</p> <p>Actions – Sarah is to follow up on the safeguarding job description.</p> <p>Goverors were encouraged to read through the policies on My Concern, and mark that they have read them.</p> <p>Patrick has completed a website compliance check and emailed Kate and Louise with some questions or areas that needed checking. There had not been enough time for Kate or Louise to respond to the email and follow up on the matters, but there were no areas of deep concern.</p>	Sarah

	<p>All other actions had been completed or were being covered in the meeting. The Minutes were approved and a hard copy will be signed off by Anna.</p>	
3	<p><u>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</u></p> <p>Sarah had completed a reported which will be distributed to the FGB following the meeting. She reported on the 4 key areas (Ofsted criteria).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen and Sarah have started lesson observations. There are 22 to complete altogether; a larger number than usual because of the number of job shares in the school. • Lisa Valla, the school improvement advisor, visited the school during the first week of November. The focus of the visit was Aim 1 on the School Development Plan - Low level behaviour concerns. No concerns were raised from the observations undertaken, and Lisa was impressed by the children's behaviour overall. • A handwriting scheme is being introduced, focusing on spelling and grammar, as well as handwriting. This should help Mayfield improve results in the area of Writing. So far the scheme is going well; it is very specific as to what is required to meet standards. • Lisa will be returning to the school in a couple of weeks, when she will meet with the English leads for a discussion on the writing curriculum. • There are some concerns in Reception regarding the number of children not achieving a good level of development. This is due to 16 pupils in the cohort having issues with communication; these are either language barriers or social difficulties. The outcome for the year is forecast to be lower in standard. Lisa Valla has recommended an intervention called NELLY, but it is an expensive provision. Intervention options are being looked into. • Spirals week has taken place. This term it was completed differently from previous occasions due to staffing. Premier Sports were brought in to cover some of the time teachers had out of class to speak to the children individually. This was a success and all teachers have completed their conversations with the children. • Christmas is organised, with concerts and plays scheduled to take place in the last few weeks of term. There is not a strong religious theme this year, and the Reception/ Year 1 play will have a winter theme. The nativity is performed in alternate years. • Leadership and management – data is taking a lot of time to complete. Stephen is teaching the equivalent of 1 day a week in class. The school would prefer him to have more time out of class to concentrate on behaviour management and strategic work with Sarah. • Lisa has asked Sarah to mentor a new headteacher in the area who has become a co-head. <p>Currently there are 404 pupils on roll.</p> <p>Q. Why do the 16 pupils have communication difficulties in Reception. Is it due to Covid and lockdown? A. Not specifically. It could be the amount of screen time they have at home, which is not encouraging the children to interact with others.</p> <p>(Sarah left the meeting)</p>	

4	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING</u></p> <p>There were no safeguarding matters to bring to the meeting. Alison commented on the large amount of time that is spent doing safeguarding checks on new pupils and ensuring all information is passed on from one school to another securely. Lis Stow is now DSL trained and on the safeguarding team.</p> <p>A full report will be given at the next GB meeting, when Alison has visited the Safeguarding team.</p>	Alison
5	<p><u>SEND UPDATE</u></p> <p>Liz and Ann produced a report for the SEND across the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently across the school there are 33 children with EHCPs in place. • The school has been directed to take a further 2 children and we are waiting for their start dates. 1 of the children will be going into Year 2 where there are currently 7 EHCPs and several pupils with Learning Plans. <p>Q. What is the typical level of children with EHCPs in other schools in the area? A. It is thought that Mayfield is taking a higher proportion than others. Sarah has spoken to County about this, however as we have the DSC, our numbers do look higher. The funding for the children attending the DSC is separately managed. We are not yet at the threshold to be able to decline offers. We advise County of the difficulties we have in taking children in some year groups, however until we are at the threshold we will still be directed to take children.</p> <p>Q. Why do so many children get directed to us? A. EHCP parents are able to choose the school they wish their child to attend and they are first priority when school places are allocated. If a case goes to appeal because there are no spaces in a year group, they will most likely win the appeal as they have chosen us as their preferred school. We have a good reputation for looking after children with special needs, but we are a mainstream school.</p> <p><u>Acronyms</u> LSP – Learning Support plan IRMP – Individual Risk Management Plan DSC – Deaf Support Centre</p> <p>Our main concern is the increasing number of children being directed to us.</p> <p>Q. Does the number of children with EHCPs affect those without and what is the parents view? A. Parents do express behaviour concerns directed to those with EHCPs, and the school is working hard to get the balance right. We are a diverse school.</p> <p>Q. Are other schools in the area as diverse? A. We do not know. We have tried to access published data unsuccessfully.</p>	

	<p>Q. Do we have the data on how diverse other schools are? A. No, but it must be available as it is entered into the census. Often the data is a year out of date. On the GIAS (Get Information About Schools) part of the DfE website, the column for EHCP data is empty. There may be a possibility we can request this information.</p> <p>Milton Rd would be the next closest school in size to us and it would be interesting to compare their numbers with ours.</p> <p>As well as the number of children with EHCPs there are also areas where behaviour is an issue, which also requires support. Some classes are more difficult to manage than others because of behaviour issues. The greatest demand is in Years 2 and 5. Also we are getting a higher number of children with complex medical needs. These can prove very difficult for support staff to manage.</p> <p>Q. Can those children who take up a high proportion of teacher time due to behaviour, take part in alternative activity? A. Funding is the main factor preventing this. The school is stretched now and uses the funding it has to the best of its ability. When a child has an EHCP in place, County provides funds to the school to support their needs, however the school has to fund the first £6000. Therefore every time an EHCP is granted it is costing the school money and most of this goes on staffing resources.</p> <p>Q. Were the Pupils in Year 2 and 5 here last year and has their behaviour improved? A. Yes. In general it has improved, but as they get older their behaviour changes.</p> <p>There is also a lot of medical support in the school, and we are fortunate to have staff that will step up and take on more than their job role. Some of the medical needs can become a matter of life and death and staff are trained to care to the needs of the child.</p>	
6	<p><u>PUPIL ATTENDANCE UPDATE</u></p> <p>Stephen reported on the latest attendance figures in school.</p> <p>Attendance letters were sent home on Thursday 2nd November to pupils with an attendance percentage of 90 and below for the first half term. County target is for attendance is 95%</p> <p>36 letters were sent to families at their home address in total. 1 letter was not sent as the child was off school at the beginning of term due to a medical reason and the family were liaising with the school.</p> <p>105 children were below 95%. 78 children below 94%</p> <p>Most absences were due to a few days illness. An example was given of a child having 89.23% attendance as the result of 3.5 days off. There were cases of a sickness bug in school during the half a term, so 3.5 days off would not have been unusual.</p> <p>Children with a particularly low attendance or where no reason for absence is given to the school, are being monitored, and Sarah is liaising with families. The office calls and/or emails go to families daily when a child is not in school and there</p>	

	<p>has been no communication with a reason for the absence. The school has made home visits on occasions.</p> <p>Class teachers have been given a copy of their class' individual attendance so that it can be discussed with parents at the parent teacher consultations.</p> <p>The whole school attendance figure is currently at 96.6%.</p> <p>Q. Are there any concerns for children other than illness. A. Not as such. There are one or two who are refusing school and they are being monitored.</p> <p>Q. Is there a way of checking children's absence patterns? A. Not as a whole school but individually yes. The office and class teachers are aware of children who have regular days off.</p> <p>Q. Can we send attendance letters to everyone, not depending on their attendance? A. This would be extremely costly, and wasteful. Teachers have the individual attendance figures to inform parents at the parent teacher consultations.</p> <p>Q. Is there a way of parents seeing what their child's attendance is? A. We do not have this type of platform but there are apps available. The problem is that children who have the lowest attendance are usually from families that will not access the platform.</p> <p>The letter that was sent home is a gentle reminder and states at the top the 'letter was for information and no action is required.'</p>	
7	<p><u>REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES</u></p> <p>Resources The Committee met last month, and were satisfied with the figures Kate presented to them. There was discussion on lettings which are doing well. Rates will be looked into in the new year.</p> <p>An issue was raised at the meeting regarding After School Club, and the lack of spaces available. Andrew spoke to Ben who informed him that the problem is that the same days of the week are popular, and there is not the space or staff in the room to accommodate more at those times. The school is not responsible for providing after school childcare but it clearly is a valuable service to working parents. Using another space is not an option because of safeguarding, the access to facilities and the knock-on effect on other clubs. The current provider has been at the school for 25 years.</p> <p>There was an after-school club at St. Lukes Primary where there was an adult collecting the children and escorting. It is uncertain if the club still exists.</p> <p>The Best Value Statement and Statement of Internal Control were reviewed by the resources committee and approved for signature by the FGB.</p> <p>PWL Alison was not present to report. The committee met in September, and the minutes have been distributed to the FGB.</p>	

	<p>Personnel A lot of policies were reviewed at the meeting and the Committee spoke about Link Visits which will be discussed at the next item.</p>	
8	<p><u>LINK VISITS PLANNED FOR THIS YEAR</u></p> <p>The Governors link list was updated and has been given an additional column of when the last visit was completed. Some of the last visit dates were missing which Louise will update. A new link for benchmarking has been added; Serin is Link Governor.</p> <p>Visits to each area should normally be completed every two years, unless more specific monitoring is required.</p> <p>Committee Link Visits Personnel will complete a link visit on Staff Welfare in the Spring term and Graeme and Anna are going to do a financial controls audit with Kate.</p> <p>Patrick is visiting SEND and DSC this week, and will complete a report on the area.</p> <p>A discussion was held on what duties the H&S committee and representatives have, and what a Link Governor should be looking into. Anna has sent some guidance to Jack by email.</p> <p>Anna thanked governors for completing link visits and producing reports. They are very valuable to the school.</p>	<p>Louise</p> <p>Graeme, Anna</p> <p>Patrick</p>
9	<p><u>REPORT FROM THE ACADEMISATION RESEARCH GROUP</u></p> <p>Anna completed a report, which was sent to the research group for approval before issuing to the FGB. It will follow with the Minutes.</p> <p>The research group have been looking into the geography of academies. More than 50% of pupils nationwide are educated at academies, most of which are secondary schools.</p> <p>The group looked into 4 Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) in the Cambridgeshire area.</p> <p>Most statistical information was available on the school websites, but what was not clear were what the benefits to local primary schools of belonging to a MAT. This would be difficult to find out and gain impartial information.</p> <p>The conclusions from the research made were that there are still other MATs to look at, and there is lots of time to consider the option of academisation. Currently Mayfield has a strong position as it is with healthy pupil numbers and a steady growth, so there is no immediate need to academise. We are also encouraged by the LA to remain under their jurisdiction.</p> <p>If we opt to research more into academisation it was suggested we seek information from other schools in a MAT. Approaches to doing this need to be considered.</p>	

	<p>The school did look into becoming creating a MAT with 3 other primary schools in the area a number of years ago but it was not feasible to proceed due to funding. For the present Mayfield is in a relatively strong position, rated Good by Ofsted and maintaining healthy pupil numbers, but in a changing world, it is as well to keep options open.</p> <p>Anna asked the GB what their opinions were and the governing body responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The finances do not add up for primary schools in the same way as they do for secondary schools. • There is a loss of control for schools individually when they become part of a MAT. This is not necessarily a bad thing but much depends on the direction set by the lead school in the MAT and its leadership. • The most sensible thing would be to chat informally and make visits to other schools in local MATs. • The options would be to join a MAT or create your own with other schools. • Benefits – able to resource staff better but this can mean sharing certain staff across schools; better staff development opportunities. • Cons – staff may get shuffled around between schools. This is not desirable or an option for most employees. Staff like to have stability. • You will not get the answers from looking at the figures. You need to speak to the staff at these academies. How this can be done is not clear. <p>The decision was made that the Academy Research Group should continue to keep itself abreast of local developments and report further to the GB.</p>	
10	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p>The Support Staff Cost of Living Pay Rise Unions had agreed on a rise for support staff in line with the cost of living. Though the rise has already been agreed and will go ahead it requires the approval of the GB. All governors approved.</p> <p>The pay rise has been budgeted for. This was clarified by looking at the notes from the last Resources meeting.</p> <p>Salary Committee The GB approved the proposal that the Head is taken up one point on the pay scale.</p> <p>The Salaries Committee met recently to approve the proposed salary changes for teaching staff. The difficulties they found were that the committee were unsure what their place was in deciding whether the rises were viable, and enquiries will be made with Sarah.</p> <p>They would like some evidence on where in the appraisal process the decision is made to give the member of staff a pay rise, especially now there is only one Headteacher.</p>	

The meeting closed at **8.15pm**

The next meeting of the Full GB will be on **Tuesday 9th January 2023 at 6pm.**