

**Hemingford Grey Primary School  
Governing Body  
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting  
Held in person at Hemingford Grey Primary School on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at  
6.30pm**

**Present:** Vanessa Allen (Chair, VA)  
Danielle Gaynor (Soon to be Co-Head, DG)  
Danielle Jermy (DJ)  
Helen Peat (HP)  
Amelia Beeley (AB)  
James Reid (JR)  
Danielle Saunders (DS)  
Kristi Johnson (KJ)  
Jasmin Ash (JA)  
Carlie Huddleston (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Kirsten Marriott (Head, KM)  
Danielle Lewell (DL)

**Guest:** Jo Guest (JG, Business Manager)

Clerk took minutes for this meeting

Item No.	Subject	Who	By When
1.	<b>Welcome, apologies and absence</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Governors accepted apologies from KM and DL. Meeting was Quorate.		
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b> None		
3.	<b>Any other business – 2 confidential items</b>		
4.	<b>Approval of meeting minutes</b> <b>4.1:</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 - <b>Approved</b> <b>4.2:</b> Actions from the previous meeting and progress are recorded at the end of the minutes. <a href="#">JA joined the meeting.</a>		
5.	<b>Headteacher report</b> In KM's absence DJ had completed the Headteachers report and answered Governors questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 'Friends of Hemingford Grey School' is active and growing, generating funds for the school, positive PR and stakeholder engagement with numerous adult and child events held this term.</li></ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy uptake of attendance at school tours for perspective Sept 2024 new starters, both catchment and out of catchment in preparation for choices deadline in January.</li> <li>• Trips, Visits, Events: Year 6 visit to local secondary school for Ivolution show to promote links with feeder school, some Year 5/6 pupils visited Abbots Solar Farm and took part in a workshop back in school with Earth Energy Education. They were learning about renewable energy, biodiversity and climate change, Shakespear 5/6 visit, Y3/4 Victorian Life Day, Y1/2 visit to Nene Valley Railway, St James' church visits for Yr1-6 as part of RE curriculum.</li> <li>• Advisor reviews and visits with the LA which help us identify next steps and develop action plans – , LA EYFS Business Support with Pre-school and Early Years Advisor support for Pre-school, English Hub visit 1 providing funding for further improving Early Reading and phonics, Primary Advisor visit to work on SEF.</li> <li>• Governor visits: SCR, Safeguarding, Governor StDP Monitoring day, H&amp;S, Cog/H/T</li> <li>• Staff presentation to governors on Reading at HGPS supported the understanding of strategic plan.</li> </ul> <p>Various staffing updates were shared with Governors. Including the existing vacancy for a teacher 3 days a week.</p> <p>Question: Is there a maximum time a HLTA can cover throughout the week?</p> <p>Answer: Temporary cover is allowed while recruiting but in the long term a qualified teacher will be needed.</p> <p>School challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing - catering for the complexity of SEND need which impacts on workload and wellbeing of staff.</li> <li>• Ongoing - financial challenges impacting on all aspects of school running.</li> <li>• Recruitment crisis now affecting HGPS</li> <li>• Catering finances and quality of service (Sep/Oct – now much improved) – tender for April 2024 now in process.</li> </ul> <p>Question: The new behaviour management policy was introduced in October 2023, do we know what impact this is having yet?</p> <p>Answer: The policy is still being implemented. Staff have now been briefed and a recorded session is being made for parents ready for January. The policy is not yet in use.</p> <p>Question: I note that there are 4 parent concerns raised – what is the definition of a 'parent concern' here, is this in relation to behaviour? Bullying?</p>		
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	<p>Answer: These concerns were bullying related, but they are not always. Parents were invited in for a meeting to discuss concerns.</p> <p>Question: Were the parents happy after the meetings?</p> <p>Answer: we have good lines of communication in place for future concerns and will have follow up meetings. Parents have not yet been made aware of the new policy, but we were able to discuss it with these parents.</p> <p>Jo Guest joined the meeting.</p>		
6.	<p><b>Budget monitoring report (month 8)</b></p> <p>JG gave the Governors an update on the schools finances.</p> <p>AK-tivities payments are now correctly shown in the financial reports; this change has been made following a governor question raised at the recent meeting with the Schools Financial Advisor.</p> <p>The expected lettings income from Ak-tivities using Pre-school has been reduced due to due to revision of actual income. The overall income from AK-tivities is apportioned between school and pre-school, accounting for the children attending preschool.</p> <p>Preschool is in a very good financial position with an in-year surplus of £21k. This is a massive achievement following a £39k deficit at the end of last year. There are increasing numbers of children joining preschool with some sessions full for the spring term.</p> <p>School currently have a £68k deficit in-year but have a carry-forward balance from last year to offset against to leave a £17k deficit.</p> <p>Finances are looking better than last month and could possibly break even at year end. However, it was noted that there have been extra TA hours that have not been included so the TA budget may need to increase.</p> <p>Question: Are the extra TA hours covering children awaiting EHCP? Or just extra hours?</p> <p>Answer: They are covering for staff illness.</p> <p>Question: Does staff and student welfare get considered when running at a deficit?</p>		

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	<p>Answer: Once we are running in a deficit, we must be able to justify why decisions are made. For example, Year 6 tutoring funding, the school must fund half the cost this year, while in deficit we cannot get the funding as we cannot pay the schools half.</p> <p>Question: Could parents be asked for contributions to allow it to go ahead?</p> <p>Answer: They could be, but we are cautious as it is £18 an hour.</p> <p>Rising staff costs are having the biggest impact on the school budgets as it is the biggest expense. Support staff and teachers had pay awards but only the teachers one was funded. Rising food prices and utilities have never seen a funding increase.</p> <p>Question: Other schools must all be in the same position, do you know how they feel about the tradeoffs having to be made?</p> <p>Answer: Other business managers are just as stressed with the decisions, but we cannot share details.</p> <p>Question: Do we have any remaining ringfenced funds?</p> <p>Answer: There is not much left now as it has been used for what it was marked for. Sports premium used on swimming for example.</p> <p>Question: What can you use the funds raised by FoHGS?</p> <p>Answer: As they are PTA raised, we have to pitch projects to spend them on. We didn't include projects this year as we had no budget surplus. Last year funds raised from the Christmas fair have just been spent on a new shed for lunchtime equipment.</p> <p>Question: Are tight budgets making children miss out and affecting their outcomes? We need to preserve outcomes while keeping costs down. Running at deficit with good reason for running at a deficit.</p> <p>Answer: We must justify why we have gone into deficit. Temporary deficit for good reason is not such a problem, but we cannot be in deficit long term. We have just asked for parent contributions in year 3 &amp; 4 toward the coach costs for swimming lessons to help keep swimming within the budget. Pay awards to staff have had a massive impact as the support staff were unfunded and it has happened again this year. This will be a national issue facing all schools. Utilities going up has added £17k to the budget with no additional funding to reflect this.</p>		
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	Jo Guest left the meeting.		
8.	<p><b>Catering tender</b></p> <p>JG led the discussion as she is using the catering tender as a project for her course. At least one Governor is requested to join the review panel for the catering tender. A Parent Governor ideally as they are best place to know the requirements and will help with a positive stakeholder message.</p> <p>The tender is currently out to local companies and so far one has an appointment to view the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadline – 12<sup>th</sup> January</li> <li>• Shortlisting – 15<sup>th</sup> January</li> <li>• Interviews – 22<sup>nd</sup> January</li> </ul> <p>Current provider has had issues this term with their chef being off and lots of agency staff. Chef has now returned and there has been improvements.</p> <p><b>DS and JR (both Parent Governors) will join the panel. AB a co-opted Governor but also now a school parent will join if work commitments allow.</b></p> <p>Question: What about a pupil voice included?</p> <p>Answer: that would be a great idea for the Champions of Change.</p> <p>Question: Are you confident you have reached all the potentials? Where does it get advertised?</p> <p>Answer: I think we have, the company we were interested in is visiting school. (JR shared an online link with JG)</p>		
7.	<p><b>Report from H&amp;S committee</b></p> <p>JR has attended school and carried out an outside review (see school inspection form included with the agenda). Two lights in the car park were not working but the repair will need equipment to reach the bulbs as they are high. This is in progress though. Resurfacing the car park is being covered with an external grant.</p> <p>Question: were you happy that everything was covered at the H&amp;S meeting?</p>		

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	<p>Answer: Yes, however I had not done my H&amp;S training at that point, so I was very new to the process. Training is now completed ready for the next meeting.</p> <p>JR informed the Governors that the site manger does the yearly FRA (Fire Risk Assessment) review and every 3 years an outside business is paid to come and do the full FRA. He did not feel it was fair for the site manager to have the responsibility to sign the yearly document. He felt this should be done by a specialist company every year. JR has a Fire Safety business and has kindly offered their services to carry out the check annually.</p>		
9.	<p><b>Policies – For Approval</b></p> <p>9.1 - Critical Incident - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>9.2 - Governor Visits (for review and approval) - previous version <a href="#">here</a> for reference. - inc. In item 12. Needs further consideration.</p> <p>9.3 - Children not collected at the end of the day - <b>Approved</b></p> <p><i>Clerk will update policy schedule, Teams and school website.</i></p>		
10.	<p><b>Governing Body Self Evaluation</b></p> <p>Bring back in January as responses not yet complete.</p>		
11.	<p><b>Governing Body Membership and recruitment-</b></p> <p>11.1 - Review Co-opted Governor nomination received – LA Governor prospect - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>11.2 - Review Co-opted Governor nomination received – advise to apply for upcoming Parent Governor vacancy.</p> <p>11.3 - Vanessa Allen resign as Parent Governor to take up Co-opted Governor role - <b>Approved</b></p>		
12.	<p><b>Governing monitoring visits -</b></p> <p>12.1 - Safeguarding - DS</p> <p>12.2 - Governor monitoring day:</p> <p>    12.2.1 - Early Reading and Phonics (SEND) – KJ and HP (draft)</p> <p>    12.2.2 - Well Schools and PE – JR (draft)</p> <p>    12.2.3 - EDIB – AB</p> <p>    12.2.4 - Behaviour and Safeguarding – DS and VA (draft)</p> <p>12.3 - Pupil Progress meetings:</p> <p>    12.3.1 - Foundation Stage – KJ (<b>not attended</b>)</p> <p>    12.3.2 - Year 1&amp;2 - VA</p> <p>    12.3.3 - Year 3&amp;4 – AB</p> <p>    12.3.4 - Year 5&amp;6 – DS (<b>not attended</b>)</p> <p>12.4 - Early Years – JA</p>	DJ	Jan 24

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	DJ to review all visit reports once completed.		
13.	<b>Governor training booked / undertaken –</b>  None		
14.	<b>Evaluation of governance impact</b>  Governors had a strategic overview of finances and the catering tender. Discussion around balancing a budget deficit with pupil outcomes. Support in place for the co-head transition. Organisation of the Governing body to maintain current members while recruiting.		
18.	<b>Next meeting – 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024</b>		
	<b>Meeting Closed 9.05pm</b>		

	<b>Actions from previous meeting</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>A</b>	Draft newsletter with summary of Governors and outline of the role.	<b>Clerk</b>	<a href="#">Governor newsletter November 2023.pptx</a>  Complete
<b>B</b>	All Governors to attend the monitoring day on 30 <sup>th</sup> November.	<b>All</b>	Complete
<b>C</b>	<i>5 Confidential actions</i>	<b>All</b>	
<b>D</b>	<i>Finance options need further discussion in the new year. Meeting needs to be scheduled.</i>	<b>VA, KJ, HP</b>	To be arranged in the New Year.
<b>E</b>	<i>Governors to input their responses on to the Self Evaluation. VA will circulate individual forms.</i>	<b>All</b>	5 responses rec'd, 4 still to be returned.
<b>F</b>	<i>DJ to create a list of existing stakeholder engagement</i>	<b>DJ</b>	On-going

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<b>G</b>	<i>The school have EDI basic training being provided by the LA on 5<sup>th</sup> January 9.30-11.30 at school – Governor's welcome to attend.</i>	<b>All</b>	Noted, Governors to advise if planning to attend.
<b>H</b>	Question raised in advance of the meeting: How does our 95.2% attendance compare to expectations/other schools?	<b>KM</b>	

	<b>Actions going forward</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>A</b>	<i>6 Confidential actions</i>	<b>All</b>	
<b>B</b>	<i>Finance options need further discussion in the new year. Meeting needs to be scheduled.</i>	<b>VA, KJ, HP</b>	To be arranged in the New Year.
<b>C</b>	<i>Governors to input their responses on to the Self Evaluation. VA will circulate individual forms.</i>	<b>All</b>	5 responses rec'd, 4 still to be returned.
<b>D</b>	<i>DJ to create a list of existing stakeholder engagement</i>	<b>DJ</b>	On-going
<b>E</b>	<i>The school have EDI basic training being provided by the LA on 5<sup>th</sup> January 9.30-11.30 at school – Governor's welcome to attend.</i>	<b>All</b>	Noted, Governors to advise if planning to attend.
<b>F</b>	Question raised in advance of the meeting: How does our 95.2% attendance compare to expectations/other schools?	<b>KM</b>	
<b>G</b>	DJ to review all visit reports once completed.	<b>DJ/All</b>	

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