

By Brook Valley Academy Trust
(Company Registration Number 8020467)
Academy Board Meeting
Thursday 11th March 2021
Virtual Meeting in Accordance with
Covid 19 Guidance
and
Article 123 of the Articles of Association

LN
19th May



Minutes

Present: Graham Pike (Head teacher) ("GP"), Lisa Nicolson (Chair and Member) ("LN"), Carrie Davies ("CB"), Deborah Henshall ("DH"), Jacyn Cross ("JC"), Rosemary Jago ("RJ") and Anjali Kanagaratnam ("AK")

In Attendance: Michelle Hocking (Clerk) ("Clerk")

Apologies: David New ("DN"), Lakmini Harkus ("LH"), Beth Borthwick ("BeB") and Martin Lowe ("ML")

Item	Minute	Action
	Opening Prayer AK led the opening prayer	
1	Welcome and Apologies LN took the chair and opened the meeting at 6.30pm. Apologies were noted and accepted from DN, LH, BeB and ML. It was noted that a quorum was only present if ML is disregarded due to his ongoing sabbatical ¹ – so it was proposed that all decisions are subsequently ratified by email following the meeting. LN formally welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	Pecuniary and Business Interests Register It was noted that all present had completed the annual Related Parties Declaration of Interests forms and no interests were declared in the business of this meeting.	
3	Note/ratification of: (a) Scheme of Delegation/Terms of Reference RJ explained that the latest changes had been to remove cumbersome schedules, improve consistency, reflect policies, and incorporate latest regulatory updates. The Scheme of Delegation was unanimously approved by board members present. (b) Minutes of last meeting (+ matters arising not covered elsewhere) It was unanimously agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting on 11 th March 2021 and LN	Clerk to circulate the Scheme of Delegation for approval by email after the meeting – particularly from absentees LN to sign the last minutes and return them to the Clerk for

¹ Quorum = 2/3rds of governors rounded up to the nearest whole number. 11 governors (including ML), quorum = 8

	<p>agreed to initial them by way of confirmation and, following the departure of the previous Chair of Governors (who chaired that meeting) sign them and return them to the Clerk for filing.</p> <p>All matters complete, covered by this evening's agenda or superseded.</p>	<p>filing. Clerk to publish the last minutes on the school website.</p>
5	<p>Headteacher Update (Monitoring & SIAP) It was noted that GP's Headteacher Report, Termly Monitoring Report, latest School Improvement Action Plan (SIAP) and 'Principle of Teaching at By Brook Valley' had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was presumed all present had reviewed them.</p> <p>GP highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest government guidance on Covid-security is that wearing of masks is no longer mandatory in school – although By Brook proposes to retain requirement for parents to wear masks when dropping off and collecting children until further notice • Long term teacher absentee commencing phased return will not return to the classroom this academic year – in line with HR wellbeing recommendations and to minimise disruption to the children the current teacher will remain in that class until the end of the year • Enrichment continues with a broad and balanced curriculum continuing to be delivered despite pandemic restrictions – it is a pleasure to hear the children outside being active and GP stressed how proud he is of the staff's continuing dedication to providing a well-rounded education • SIAP actions have progressed well during Term 5 – a full evaluation and impact assessment will be presented to final committee and board meetings next term 	<p>SIAP review to be added to the next agenda and the next agendas of F&E, C,T&L and F&P</p>
7	<p>Safeguarding Governor Update LN reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This term's meeting between her and GP scheduled for next week – will report back to the next FGB meeting • Met with Office Manager last week – Single Central Record is up to date and process of moving leavers onto a separate tab as appropriate is underway • Discussed 'Data Walk' with Office Manager – this is best practice to audit data on display around the school and, whilst it is regularly conducted by the office team, oversight by governors (as external reviewers) is desirable – volunteers requested • Wiltshire Council has recently updated its DBS guidance to recommend that, in addition to conducted DBS checks when staff first join/governors and others first volunteer, checks be repeated every three years. The new Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) is due to be published 	<p>Safeguarding Governor Update to be added to the next agenda</p>

	<p>and it is unclear whether it will require this. The school currently conducts rigorous pre-appointment checks for both staff and governors/other volunteers, it is acknowledged that DBS checks provide a snapshot only (technically applicable only on the day certificate issued) and there are financial and time implications with such regular repeating of the checks.</p> <p>Both JC and RJ volunteered to conduct Data Walk and it was agreed this should be completed on a rota basis for a trial period.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that, pending any updated guidance via KCSiE, the school continue with its current DBS processes and defer any decision to repeat them more regularly.</p>	<p>LN to send Data Walk checklist to JC and RJ</p> <p>JC and RJ to liaise to arrange Data Walks as appropriate</p>
8	<p>Link Governors Update</p> <p>LN reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with risk assessments and Covid security measures the school is open for governor visits • All governors are requested to liaise directly with GP to ensure even/appropriate distribution of times and foci of visits <p>GP added that governor visits were key to raising governors' profiles with children and staff and most beneficial if linked with monitoring School Improvement Action Plan (SIAP) and strands cascaded to sub-committee Action Plans – accordingly he would share with governors next term's SIAP Calendar as part of scheduling focused visits appropriately.</p> <p>Staff present also highlighted that it was particularly important for new members of staff – following the unprecedented nature of operations during the pandemic – to see governors and understand the process prior to September (so all can 'hit the ground running' in September).</p>	<p>Clerk to email confirmation, SIAP Calendar and forms to all non-staff governors by way of reminder</p>
9	<p>Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Committee Update</p> <p>In DN's absence, RJ reported that in Monday's meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional guidance was given on link governor role: book looks and activities supporting monitoring with key subjects' leads and how monitoring ties into governor reviews • Policies are still being reviewed • The Action Plan was approved • Fantastic Subject Leader presentations on Geography and PE • Considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How able to see/evidence progression going forward ○ Links to school values – how lessons delivered ○ How the above tie into governor reports ○ Pending reintroduction of more formal assessments, how robust evidence can be gathered • Discussed Knowledge Organisers: used in Science, RE, 	


	<p>History and Geography – include key facts, vocabulary and snippets of information and provide accessible reference point to support children's learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed Developmental Drop Ins: These support 'principles of teaching' referenced in GP's Headteacher Report and involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) ○ Pairs of colleagues dropping in to observe implementation in the classroom of principles of better practice, adaptive teaching, etc ○ Strengths and actionable development steps are identified and tracked • Discussed NELLIE Reports: Early language intervention to support with speech and language development following benchmarking in Early Years – information is shared with relevant parents and via Knowledge Organisers, governors are referred to the school website class pages (which include Knowledge Organisers information): <u>By Brook Valley C of E Primary School - Classes (bybrookvalleyschool.co.uk)</u> 	
10	<p>Foundation & Ethos Committee Update</p> <p>It was noted that the F&E minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was presumed all present had reviewed them.</p> <p>JC highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team fed back on website review (conducted using SIAMS template) – it was agreed that this detail be collated as part of overall website review and that more use of photographs/images gives a better flavour of the school • Foundation Governor vacancy is being advertised • Collective Worship Evaluation Form considered – for collecting feedback from participants and children for evaluation in a uniform way • Policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) suggested further changes to the Attendance Policy relating to early on monitoring and intervention and so a revised policy has been recommended to the board accordingly ○ having checked latest government guidance GP has revised the Exclusion Policy to add further information on governors' involvement and to highlight the school's ethos of forgiveness – the amended policy has been recommended to the board ○ the committee was due to review Behaviour Policy, but this has been deferred until the next meeting <p>There were no comments or queries on the F&E report.</p>	<p>Clerk to add Behaviour Policy to the next agenda</p>
11	<p>Finance, Premises, Staffing & HR Committee Update</p> <p>The minutes had been circulated prior to this meeting and it</p>	

	<p>was presumed that all present had reviewed them. RJ highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Finance Officer joined the meeting for the first time • Time of transition following personnel changes/pandemic and so there is a natural catch-up period during which a clear understanding is gained and assurance that all is captured correctly • Budgetary monitoring: Finance Officer is taking stock – currently forecasting £49K in-year deficit (which is obviously higher than desired) • Majority of costs are, as with all schools, staffing – exacerbated by alternative staffing arrangements due to Covid – the committee is urging caution over spending/future plans at present • In the interests of total transparency, the meeting was long but very valuable to ensure clarity on component parts of the budget and careful tracking of contracts of all values • Reviewing reserves policy and debtor payments/tracking policies and procedures (GP and office team are reviewing in detail – likely to require re-emphasis of Terms & Conditions and clearer procedures around wraparound care payment plans and withdrawal of provision for non-payment of fees) • DBS approach mentioned above was discussed and recommended to the board • RAG-rated maintenance programme as part of Estates Management strategy being developed and exciting plans for outside space development – for which lots of funding has been pledged but which may need to be scaled back if further funding is not available (as the school cannot afford to supplement) • Positive staffing update and budgetary discussions – ongoing attendance by both Finance Officer and Office Manager will help provide links between day-to-day operations/project planning and budget/financial limitations to give governors clear oversight. <p>There were no comments or queries on the F&P report.</p>	
12	<p>Policies approval/ratification</p> <p>a) Home Learning It was noted that this policy would be circulated for email approval after the meeting (to be ratified at the next meeting).</p> <p>b) Assessment To be deferred until September whilst staff worked on substantial updates.</p> <p>c) Sickness Absence Management</p> <p>d) Attendance</p> <p>e) Exclusions</p> <p>f) Finance Manual It was noted that each of the policies listed in (c) – (f) (inclusive) above had been circulated prior to the meeting in a form recommended by the relevant committee.</p>	<p>GP/DN to circulate Home Learning Policy via the Clerk Clerk to add Ratification of Home Learning Policy to the next agenda Clerk to add Assessment Policy to the September agenda Clerk to circulate the Sickness Absence Management Policy, Attendance Policy, Exclusions Policy and Finance Manual to all governors after the meeting for approval by email as soon as possible.</p>

	<p>Each of the Sickness Absence Management Policy, Attendance Policy, Exclusions Policy and Finance Manual were unanimously approved in the form circulated prior to and produced at the meeting. Given that the meeting was of dubious quoracy, it was agreed that each of these policies be circulated for ratification by all governors after the meeting.</p> <p>g) Medical Conditions It was noted that this policy would be circulated for email approval after the meeting (to be ratified at the next meeting).</p>	<p>Following email approval, Clerk to publish the policies as approved policies. GP/DN to circulate Medical Conditions Policy via the Clerk Clerk to add Ratification of Sickness Absence Management Policy, Attendance Policy, Exclusions Policy, Finance Manual and Medical Conditions Policy to the next agenda</p>
13	<p>National Context/Collaborative Opportunities GP emphasised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Secretary of State for Education has indicated a focus on Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), and this has been picked up in discussions on south west and local level as well as nationally Headteachers, School Business Managers and Governors (Chairs and Vice Chairs) have all met to discuss this locally Several standalone academies are keen to maintain current autonomous status but develop collaboration The Regional School Commissioner (RSC) has indicated a desire for a strong family of schools but insists schools will not be forced to join MATs The Diocese is supportive of collaborative ideas – part of church schools' moral purpose is to support Requires Improvement (RI) schools too (all schools within our local collaborative group are rated Good or Outstanding) It is prudent to develop purposeful collaboration through local clusters and others and to remain alert to the political landscape <p>It was noted that National Context/Collaborative Opportunities was now a standing agenda item so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborative opportunities are monitored at governor level as well as by Headteachers, Teachers, School Business Managers, and other in-school staff opportunities are reported back collaboration is clearly captured <p>It was further noted that the current pandemic had provided some excellent collaborative opportunities – including hub arrangements (such as that provided by a standalone academy in Malmesbury).</p>	
14	<p>Governor Training and Participation No update at present.</p>	
15	<p>AOB (a) Governor Recruitment Update (Foundation, Co-opted + Parent vacancies) It was provisionally agreed (to be agreed by all via email after</p>	Subject to email approval:

	<p>the meeting and ratified at the next meeting):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That advertising/formal processes be commenced to appoint a new Foundation Governor (given BeB's imminent departure) • Processes to fill the two parent governor vacancies be commenced (preferably at least one with a strong financial background) • That delegation is made to LN and RJ to replace one of the current Members who F&P are keen to recruit as a governor given her substantial finance experience. <p>(c) Website/Governor Input Following F&E's and GP's review of the website – which has identified that the class pages and blog sell the school's story, but the rest is a little bland/inaccessible and there is a need for more pictures and less text - governor volunteers are sought to conduct full audit of the website and ongoing periodic review.</p> <p>(d) Staff/Governor Social As mentioned in F&P minutes, LN stressed commitment to post-Covid catch-up event for staff and governors.</p> <p>(e) Format of Meetings As Covid restrictions are eased, LN suggested the next meeting (on 8th July) might take place face to face and suggested all confirm by email whether they would be comfortable to change the format of meetings from then.</p>	<p>Foundation Governor, Parent Governor, and new Member recruitment to be commenced</p> <p>Data Protection documents for the website to be circulated for approval by email after the meeting (via the Clerk)</p> <p>All to consider volunteering to conduct website audit (to confirm via the Clerk)</p> <p>Clerk to obtain email confirmation from all as to whether they are comfortable to meet face to face from July onwards</p>
16	<p>How have we contributed to the vision of By Brook Valley C of E Primary School today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned for recommencement of visits to school – to support and better understand • Celebrated broad and balanced curriculum provision – now and throughout the pandemic • Considered collaborative opportunities with other academies – implementing commitment to keep abreast of potential developments regarding MATs • Considered succession planning/extension of the skills set of the governing body 	N/A
17	<p>Date of next meeting: Thursday 8th July 2021 - via virtual conference facilities unless guidance advises otherwise.</p>	Note

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.00pm

Signed.....

Date.....08-07-21