

By Brook Valley Academy Trust
(Company Registration Number 8020467)
Academy Board Meeting
Thursday 14th March 2024



Minutes

Present: Rosemary Jago (“**RJ**”), Deborah Henshall (Head teacher) (“**DH**”), David New (“**DN**”), Jaclyn Cross (“**JC**”), Merope Sylvester (“**MS**”), Craig Parrott (“**CP**”) and (joining virtually from 6.20pm) Elizabeth Gilbertson (“**EG**”)

In Attendance: Michelle Hocking (Clerk/Company Secretary) (“**MH**”)

Apologies: Natasha Nicholas (“**NN**”), Martin Lowe (“**ML**”), Lisa Nicolson (“**LN**”) and Sarah Wren (“**SW**”)

Item	Minute	Action
	Opening Prayer JC led the opening prayer	
1.	Welcome and Apologies RJ took the chair and opened the meeting at 6.05pm. Apologies were noted and accepted from NN, ML, LN and SW. RJ declared that a quorum was present and 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. ¹	
3.	Minutes of last meeting – 18 January 2024: BBV Academy Board Minutes 18.01.24 ChairHTApproved Matters arising not covered elsewhere) FGB Actions Log 2023 24.docx	
4.	Headteacher Report Termly Monitoring Report and HT Report circulated. DH highlighted: Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Officer left. New Finance Officer (Karen) has just started and is settling in really well – it is her first week • The school is fully-staffed at present • The office team has been really flexible, hardworking and supportive 	

¹ EG also confirmed this upon her arrival

	<p>– particular thanks to Jo and Lisa for helping ease the transition period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We reached out to the local hub for finance help but they do not use the same accounting software as By Brook and the software-specific training is really expensive • We were hoping to take on a Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) cover teacher – but this fell through the week they were due to start. • We will shortly readvertise for a Teaching Assistant (TA) to increase flexibility <p>Behaviour Behaviour support is assisting with an ongoing situation in school. School Improvement Action Plan (SIAP) and Self Evaluation Form (SEF) Each of the SIAP and the SEF were unanimously approved in the form circulated. The board discussed the need to continually focus on the strategic direction of the school and look at what goes behind the high-level strategic plan to achieve the targets. It was noted that the current SIAP did lack some specific actions to achieve in order to clearly reference and demonstrate impact and further tightening of this would help governors more effectively monitor what should have been done and when. <u>ACTION: DH to further tighten SIAP upon next senior leadership review</u></p> <p>EG joined the meeting at 6.20pm</p> <p>It was also noted that subject leader monitoring sits behind the SIAP and includes how to improve results and give enough information to support the headteacher and the wider team.</p>	DH
5.	<p>Policies:</p> <p>(a) Recommended by F&P:</p> <p>(i) Fraud Anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policies The Key Leaders</p> <p>(ii) HR policies:</p> <p>a. Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy .docx</p> <p>b. DBS DBS Policy .docx</p> <p>c. Responsible Use Responsible Use Policy .docx</p> <p>(iii) Risk Management – note of October update Risk Management Policy .docx</p> <p>(iv) Critical Incidents Critical Incident Policy .docx</p> <p>(v) Lettings Lettings Policy.docx</p> <p>(vi) Staff Governor Expenses Allowances Staff,Governor, Allowances Policy Approved March 2023 Review March 2024.docx</p> <p>Deferred pending rescheduling of F&P meeting. <u>ACTION: Clerk to (i) incorporate MS’s email comments and (ii) add Fraud, HR policies (DBS and Responsible Use), Risk Management, Critical Incidents, Lettings and Staff Governor Expenses Allowances to the next agenda.</u></p>	Clerk

	<p>(b) Recommended by F&E:</p> <p>(i) <u>Accessibility Policy and plan for review</u> JC reported that she had emailed other committee chairs because F&E considered this policy to be wider than their remit. It was acknowledged that an overarching policy with a plan sitting behind it (and with the plan being reviewed more frequently) was appropriate. It was unanimously agreed that (i) the Accessibility Policy is approved in the form circulated on an interim basis and (ii) the Accessibility Plan to be drafted by F&E and reviewed by and receive input from each of the committees before being brought back to the FGB for approval. <u>ACTIONS:</u> (i) Clerk to arrange for filing and publication on the school website of the Accessibility Policy as an approved policy and (ii) JC to lead F&E's drafting of Accessibility Plan (including key elements of the equalities policies documents where feasible to allow the current Equality Policy to be dispensed with) (iii) all committees to review the Accessibility Plan at their next meeting and feed comments in to the committees' chairs/the Clerk and (iv) the Clerk to add Accessibility Plan to the next agenda.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy .docx</u> It was acknowledged that the contents of the Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy were now encompassed in the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (p.8 and p.9). It was unanimously agreed that the Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers be dispensed with as separate document and removed from the policies review schedules. <u>ACTION:</u> Clerk to remove Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers Policy from the policies review schedule.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Attendance Policy .docx</u> The Attendance Policy was unanimously approved in the form circulated. <u>ACTION:</u> Clerk to file and arrange for publication on the school website of the Attendance Policy as an approved policy.</p> <p>(iv) <u>Complaints Procedure .docx</u> The Complaints Procedure was unanimously approved in the form circulated. <u>ACTION:</u> Clerk to file and arrange for publication on the school website of the Complaints Procedure as an approved policy.</p> <p>(v) <u>RSHE Policy.docx</u> The RSHE Policy was unanimously approved in the form circulated. <u>ACTION:</u> Clerk to file and arrange for publication on the school website of the RSHE Policy as an approved policy.</p> <p>(c) Recommended by C,T&L: None</p>	<p>JC/F&E</p> <p>Committees</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
6.	<p>Safeguarding/Single Central Record Update Including Safeguarding Training Session</p> <p>DH presented to the PowerPoint (which had been circulated prior to the meeting), highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes people can forget that it happens in all schools – we must all be mindful and recognise that it is and we all have a duty to be aware • All have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2023 and so are aware of different kinds and signs of abuse • Governors are encouraged to report anything they seen of concern 	

	<p>when visiting the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filtering & Monitoring (enhanced KCSiE requirements): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DH receives weekly reports from the IT provider ○ DH personally checks through these weekly reports and files them under Oakford IT folder ○ The reports show staff usage and what the children are looking up <p>Q1: Have you seen anything of note on any of the filtering and monitoring reports so far?</p> <p>A: No, if I did see anything I would share with the safeguarding governor.</p> <p>Q2: Have there been any complaints from staff or children about blocking of sites which are legitimately used for research?</p> <p>A: No. Although we did have a time when staff were struggling to get on to YouTube, this seems to be ok at the moment.</p> <p>DH continued to highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be particularly alert to those with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) – who may not always be able to communicate, share or understand • Note that it could happen here – be really mindful irrespective of longstanding knowledge of family, etc (DN observed that every serious case review seems to have an element of that and all concerns should be shared). <p>JC commented that, earlier this week, she spoke to a teacher, a TA and a member of the office staff and all had a real awareness of reporting concerns and observing/reporting tiny changes in behaviour – it was really heartening to realise the awareness.</p> <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school uses CPOMS² more than previously: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is really positive use of CPOMS ○ This provides easily accessible, holistic and clear records for each child ○ The headteacher’s mentor is helping DH to fine tune to ensure the system is used even more effectively • The safeguarding leads (DH, NN and BS) talk regularly and refer as appropriate (integrated front door, etc)³ • The LA conducted a safeguarding review of By Brook recently – discussed with safeguarding governor – JC noted that there were some recommendations made but no concerns raised • The annual LA safeguarding audit responses are expected to auto- 	
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² [CPOMS Safeguarding and Wellbeing Solution for Schools](#)

³ [Child protection - Wiltshire Council](#)

	<p>generate an action plan – particular foci identified by the school are filtering & monitoring and children looked after – JC will also be double-checking the Single Central record (SCR) tomorrow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding is discussed at every staff meeting and is a regular part of conversations generally <p><u>ACTION:</u> Clerk to provide to the office team a copy of these minutes and the slides presented to for SCR records.</p>	Clerk
8.	<p>Link Governors Update: Visit Reports</p> <p>Plea for more visits to be conducted and visit reports completed/uploaded.</p>	
9.	<p>Curriculum, Teaching & Learning (CT&L) Committee Report/Minutes (matters arising)</p> <p>20 November 2023 22 January 2024</p> <p>RJ chaired data-focused meeting in January in DN's absence (minutes will be uploaded as soon as available) <u>ACTION:</u> RJ to upload January <u>CT&L minutes as soon as feasible.</u></p> <p>DN reported that the meeting scheduled for 18/03/24 would be deferred until next term.</p>	RJ
10.	<p>Foundation & Ethos (F&E) Committee Report/Minutes/Action Plan (matters arising)</p> <p>It was noted that the minutes and associated documents have been circulated: Term 4 Meeting - 5 March 2024</p> <p>JC highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously meeting's actions were noted – including attendance at parents' linger and learn and parents' evenings sessions (governor visibility was good – particularly useful at the end of a challenging term – and governors found the sessions interesting and enjoyable) • SW was standing down – so quorate only if all governors present: - thanks extended to SW for her input • Policies were discussed <p>Questions were invited – there were none.</p>	
11.	<p>Finance, Premises, Staffing & HR (F&P) Committee Report/Minutes/Finance Report/Budget Approval and Risk Register Update</p> <p>Term 3 - meeting 12.01.24 Term 4 Meeting - 08.03.24 2024 Tender Documents</p> <p>EG reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following postponement of meeting, urgent items were being reviewed and approved via email 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usual monthly budget monitoring reports (management accounts) are not yet available due to staff changes • Ex-committee report would be provided post- rescheduled meeting • All contracts are being tracked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extension emails for come contracts ○ Building up clear/consistent contracts picture ○ Tender documents being finalised for the four key (highest value) contracts held by the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audit ▪ Catering ▪ Cleaning ▪ HR/Payroll • Consideration – in the medium term – as to whether elements of ongoing repairs and maintenance, including grounds maintenance, might be better brought together under the responsibility of a new part-time caretaker (this will be considered in greater detail following appointment to the role of permanent headteacher and settlement of operational leadership structure) 	
12.	<p>Governor Training and Participation</p> <p>(a) Priority/Annual:</p> <p>(i) Cyber awareness all: Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK</p> <p>(ii) Safer Recruitment (every 3 years): RJ, JC and DN all up to date</p> <p>DH reported that the senior teacher currently on maternity leave is also doing safer recruitment training as part of her keeping in touch days.</p> <p>(b) Brochure on Teams + Cascaded training materials: Training <u>ACTION:</u> All to book LA training via the Clerk.</p> <p>(c) Ofsted Preparedness: Ofsted Preparedness Ofsted Preparedness folder and its contents noted. DN reported that, at a conference he attended last week there was a big focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health awareness • Attendance (national absence rates are increasing and persistent absenteeism is increasing, particularly amongst vulnerable pupils) <p>It was noted that, based on the data circulated for this meeting, By Brook’s attendance rates are much better/higher than national averages.</p> <p>DH reported that when she’d recently met with the LA’s Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and they were not concerned – the school has knowledge of challenges and proactively approaches with some evidence of impact.</p>	All
13.	<p>Chair’s Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Wigley, Regional Lead, School Effectiveness Team, Wiltshire Council has agreed to provide Ofsted training and preparation to governors – details to follow • On behalf of the school and FGB, thanks to SW for all her work as a 	

	<p>governor – she will be much missed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor recruitment ongoing – parent governors needed and some former, experienced governors are being approached individually • Everyone’s continued support is much appreciated 	
	<p>AOB Allergies DH reported that, after Easter, a child with a sever nut allergy (EpiPen) is starting at the school – the team are considering becoming a nut-free school (liaising with another local school which has become wholly nut free to understand processes and potential barriers).</p> <p>Q3: Do staff need training on EpiPen use? A: All staff have just updated their Health & Safety training – of which this is a part. We will, of course, ensure specific training where necessary and information about where spare EpiPen is kept as part of risk assessment and medical care plan – both of which are being worked upon. <u>ACTION: DH/F&P to ensure that the catering contract contains appropriate provisions to cater for this child’s allergies.</u></p> <p>Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) DH reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child currently at the school is being given an EHCP • the EHCP states the child requires full time one-to-one support (including during break and lunch) with £5K specific funding • the school is already in a deficit position and, even taking into account notional funding of £6K (bringing the total available to support this EHCP to £11K), there is insufficient funding to meet this child’s needs • the child is a potential danger to themselves and disruptive to others • the Health & Safety issues provide additional rationale to support the contention that the level of funding is inadequate <p>The board unanimously supported DH’s challenge to the LA that By Brook is unable to meet this child’s needs on the bases outlined above</p> <p>FOBBVS Donations The PTA have offered funds raised to purchase additional resources/fund experiences, etc. The MDSAs are considering what would be the most useful additional outside resources/equipment and also appropriate enrichment activities (such as theatre trips)</p> <p>DH left the meeting at 7.20pm</p> <p>Ratification of HT Recruitment Working Party (& confidential update on progress) The board unanimously (save for RJ, JC, EG and DN abstaining in respect of their own appointments respectively):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> approved the composition of the headteacher recruitment working party approved the composition of the interview day panel as RJ, JC, EG, LN and DN (with Steve Wigley from the LA advising and Owen Upton observing for the Diocese; and delegated responsibility to administer interview day tasks, 	<p>DH/F&P</p>

	<p>interview and select candidates and recommend appointment of a candidate to the board at a special meeting at 8pm on Tuesday 19th March 2024.</p> <p>The update on progress of the headteacher selection and recruitment process is recorded in a confidential appendix to these minutes.</p>	
14	<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"> • Received comprehensive headteacher report and approved SIAP and SEF • Approved key policies • Participation: active and robust participation in headteacher appointment process 	
15	<p>Date of next meeting: Thursday 14th March 2024 at 6.00pm</p>	Note

Next meetings:

9th May 2024
18th July 2024

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.40pm



Signed.....

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Date.....