

**Meeting of Full Governing Body  
14<sup>th</sup> December 2015  
Training Room  
4.30pm**

**MINUTES**

<b>Governors Present:</b>	Martyn Allen, Mick Baker, Richard Bradford, Emma Farrell, Alison Frost, Les Gunbie, Jeremy Holtom, Reg Hook, Jennifer John, Jenny Poore (from 4.55pm), Alan Sanders, Derek Swindells (Chair).
<b>Associate Members Present:</b>	Sue Middleton
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Teresa Carter (Clerk)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Richard Baker, Chris Lee, Ros Stephen

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	<b>Introduction</b> a) <b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence received from Elaine Stoner and Sarah Windsor. b) <b>Declarations of Interest</b> None	
2	<b>Last meeting Dated 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015</b> a) <b>Approval of Minutes</b> The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved four pages of minutes from the meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2015. The Chair signed the minutes after the meeting as confirmation of their accuracy. b) <b>Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Item 5a Follow Up</b>                The annual declarations register was presented to Governors with a recommendation that it be published on the school's website with other governance information in accordance with statutory guidance.</li> </ul> <b>AGREEMENT- The Full Governing Body approved the publication of the Governing Body information document including the declarations register.</b>	
3	<b>Chair's Update</b> The Chair had provided a written summary of activities on behalf of the Governing Body during autumn term highlighting the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The artificial turf pitch had been completed and was in full use. Governors attended the opening ceremony on 24<sup>th</sup> September.</li> <li>At the schools forum meeting the Chair had been followed up an issue regards capital funding for schools under a private finance initiative (PFI) contract.</li> <li>The governance strategy and partnership meetings (GSP) were held termly and Governors were encouraged to attend them along with the annual governors conference held in January.</li> <li>Several discussions and meetings had taken place regards the Executive Headship arrangements with the result that assurances had been obtained in line with the Governing Body's wishes. Further joint meetings with Longhill School Governors were planned.</li> </ul>	

4	<p><b>Headteacher Report</b></p> <p>The Headteacher's report in the agreed format had been circulated in advance of the meeting and dealt with on an assumed read basis with additional verbal reporting on how the Executive Headship arrangement was going three weeks in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The appointment of a temporary Assistant Head until the end of August had provided leadership capacity at Dorothy Stringer.</li> <li>• The Headteacher acknowledged and thanked the school team for their support.</li> </ul> <p>There was discussion following questions from Governors on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAISE online had been published and the school had been pleased with the reports that confirmed their own earlier analysis. The significant improvements within science department had been particularly pleasing. Governors asked for a copy of the RAISE online summary report and were advised that it was best to wait for the report based on validated data but in the meantime a small group were invited to scrutinise the unvalidated report with Andrea Cummings at the school.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION - Alison Frost, Les Gunbie and Jennifer John to meet with Andrea Cummings to go through the RAISE online report.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of the "pupil premium first" initiative included the ordering of books for marking and the writing of reports so that pupil premium students dealt with first to give more focus to this group. The aim was to raise the teacher awareness of the students without highlighting to students which ones were in the pupil premium group.</li> <li>• The rollout of IPADS had been put on hold for the year as it represented too much of a risk to the school's current budget.</li> </ul> <p>4.55pm - Jenny Poore arrived at the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The profile of the school was changing with a significant increase in the children diagnosed with special education needs (SEN) which was a positive endorsement of the school's SEN provision. The impact on staffing arrangements was that a number of employment contracts were on 22 months to tie in with funding arrangements for SEN students. The school had also been able to equip well for wheelchair users.</li> <li>• First choice numbers stable for the past 4 years at 480/490 (487 for 2016/7).</li> <li>• Attendance slightly dipped and following an analysis of those with poor attendance there appeared to be no correlation with students' home location. Parental influence tended to be the most significant factor on attendance.</li> <li>• A small group of younger students mostly boys had presented challenging behaviour leading to an increase in the number of exclusions. Governors requested a gender breakdown of the exclusion data in future reporting.</li> <li>• The Stringer Learning Culture was helping staff deal consistently with low level disruption and they felt well supported in dealing with the small number of more serious incidents.</li> <li>• The school's self evaluation had been revised and it was clear that the Stringer Learning Culture was having a positive impact on the learning environment.</li> <li>• The local authority had been considering a number of options for future catchment areas, which would affect the Stringer/Varndean area, which would become too small to catch all the young people in the area. A formal consultation would follow. There was concern that the proposed new school would adversely affect those schools struggling getting a full year 7 cohort.</li> <li>• There had been some turnover of staffing and all but one appointment had been made.</li> <li>• Staff absence was in line with previous years but staff were more aware of the absence management process. Non sickness absence tended to be authorised with full pay as an investment in staff.</li> <li>• Changes in legislation had led to a need to revise safeguarding procedures for hosting students from overseas students putting a responsibility on the school for carrying out enhanced checks on any person other the age of 18 residing in a host family home.</li> </ul> <p><b>School Improvement Priority - Improving the Quality of Teaching &amp; Learning</b></p> <p><b>a) Challenge Partners Review</b></p> <p>The external challenge partners review was completed between 17-18 November and a copy of the quality assurance review report had been circulated to Governors. The estimated gradings were good for the three areas being school improvement strategies, outcomes for students and quality of teaching, learning and assessment. In the written summary there</p>	<p>AF, LG JJ</p>
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	<p>was confirmation that the school appeared to be at the top of the good Ofsted grade. Chris Lee gave a PowerPoint presentation summarising the key points arising from the review.</p> <p>The school was doing well in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership of teaching and learning and how the appraisal system supported staff well.</li> <li>• How middle and senior leaders monitored the quality of teaching.</li> <li>• Improvements seen in behaviour for learning enabling more teaching time in class.</li> <li>• Book scrutiny.</li> <li>• Quality of feedback in lesson.</li> </ul> <p>The areas where it was thought that the school could do better were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stretching the more able students.</li> <li>• Teachers to ensure work set to match abilities.</li> <li>• Quality of questioning to deepen understanding.</li> </ul> <p>The school's area of excellence of caring and supporting the individual had also been reviewed and confirmed by the Challenge Partners team.</p> <p><b>b) Stringer Learning Culture</b> An update on the implementation and impact of the Stringer Learning Culture priority was provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school had been logging incidences relating to uniform, equipment and PE kit since the start of the academic year and data was provided summarising the incidents. From the information provided Governors were able to see what the most non compliance issues were and which student groups were the worst offenders.</li> <li>• Overall governors were pleased to see a reducing record of incidents since implementation. Parental feedback had generally been positive but it was planned that communication on more positive aspects would be sent home as part of the next phase.</li> <li>• Visiting Governors had also reported positively on progress made describing the atmosphere in the school as a "rigorous calm" with no disruption to lessons.</li> <li>• Governors had also met with a group of students to discuss the learning culture and whilst positive there was some confusion with the attitude for learning scheme which gave them some concern that there might be an impact on their college applications.</li> </ul>	
5	<p><b>Business Manager's Report</b> The Business Manager had provided a written report highlighting key issues arising from meetings with the finance group of governors and items requiring Full Governing Body approval. Two meetings had been held during Autumn term with discussions on projected budget outturn, schools financial value standard and voluntary funds.</p> <p>Governors asked about recycling from the canteen and were advised that biodegradable containers were being used and wooden cutlery was being introduced in January 2016.</p> <p>6.14pm- Alison Frost left the meeting</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about accessibility and safety around the school and the Chair advised that an accessibility survey had been completed. The Headteacher commented on the increased risk to health and safety posed by primary school parents driving on to Stringer's site to drop their children off following a clamp down on parking outside the primary school. This was being monitored and would be a subject for discussion with the primary Headteacher.</p> <p>The Full Governing Body reviewed a proposed terms of reference document for the finance group of governors and an attached work plan.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Finance Group terms of reference document subject to it being redesignated as a working principles document.</b></p> <p><b>Reports and Items for Approval from School</b> a) Scheme of Delegation</p>	

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	<p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the scheme of delegation for 2015/16 as presented.</b></p> <p><b>b) School Fund Audited Accounts</b> The Full Governing Body noted that the Finance Governors had received audited accounts for the school's voluntary funds.</p>	
6	<p><b>Reports and Recommendations from Governors</b></p> <p><b>a) Headteacher Performance Review &amp; Pay Panel</b> Jenny Poore confirmed that the process for the Headteacher's performance review had been completed in October and objectives set for 2015/16. The pay panel had also met to approve the Headteacher's recommendations on pay, which had since been implemented.</p> <p><b>b) Teachers Appraisal Policy</b> No changes to teachers' appraisal policy.</p> <p><b>c) Teachers Pay Policy</b> No changes to teachers' pay policy.</p> <p><b>d) Freedom of Information Publication Scheme</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme as presented.</b></p> <p><b>e) Special Educational Needs Policy</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy as presented.</b></p> <p><b>f) Homework Policy (non statutory policy)</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT- The Full Governing Body approved the Homework policy as presented.</b></p>	
7	<p><b>Governing Body Development</b></p> <p><b>a) Governor Vacancies, Recruitment and Training</b> The Chair nominated Dick Knight as a Co-opted Governor for a period of four years. A summary document was tabled to support the nomination with information on Mr Knight's background, profile and links to Dorothy Stringer School. It was noted that the most recent skills audit had highlighted that links with the local community was one of the areas where the Governing Body was not so strong and that Mr Knight's strong community links would be helpful in filling this gap. A vote was taken by a show of hands with nine governors voting in favour of appointment and two abstaining from the vote.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body agreed to the appointment of Dick Knight as a Co-opted Governor with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016.</b></p> <p><b>b) Governing Body Self Evaluation and Development Plan</b> The Chair advised that it was time for a governors self evaluation to be completed with the aim of agreeing a development plan. The last evaluation had been completed using the national governors association recommended 20 questions document and initial work had been undertaken to complete a similar review. There was a suggestion that this piece of work could be linked much more to the Ofsted framework and a document from key for governors was suggested as suitable for the purpose. Alan Sanders agreed to look at this with the leadership team in advance of the next strategy and projects meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION - Alan Sanders with Senior Leadership Team to look at the document from Key for Governors listing what Governors need to know and populate it with the information in advance of the strategy and projects meeting in January.</b></p>	AS/SLT
8	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>a) Additional Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015.</b> The Full Governing Body approved the confidential minutes from the meeting held on 13th November 2015.</p> <p><i>Meeting ended at 6.46pm - Date of next meetings strategy priorities and projects 18<sup>th</sup> January , Full Governing Body 14<sup>th</sup> March.</i></p>	

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