

Minutes of the meeting of the
Full Governing Body of Milverton Primary School
Held on Wednesday 24th May 2017

Present

Catherine Robbins (CR)	Co-opted Governor
Susan Robson (SR)	Co-opted Governor
Emily Lim (EL)	Parent Governor
Cheryl Scott (CS)	Parent Governor
Kay Lawrie-Stiven (KLS)	Parent Governor
Alex Davidson (AD)	Parent Governor
Clare McNicholas (CM)	Co-opted Governor
Maggie Wagstaff (MW)	Co-opted Governor
Jim Mills (JM)	Co-opted Governor
Stephanie Tierney (ST)	Co-opted Governor
Jo Mainwaring (JoM)	LA Governor
Hannah Stevenson (HS)	Parent Governor
Christine Habel (CH)	Co-opted Staff Governor
Amy Crowther (AC)	Elected Staff Governor
Danielle Belmega (DB)	Deputy Headteacher
Matt Fisher (MF)	Headteacher

In attendance:

Joanna Bloomfield (C)	Clerk
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1. **Welcome and apologies**

CR welcomed those present. Apologies for absence were received from **Sophie Staniszweska (SS)** and **Tom Sidwell (TS)**. Kay Lawrie-Striven (**KLS**) had sent notification that she would join the meeting at 8.00pm.

2. **Administration**

Declaration of Interest for this meeting. There were no Declarations of Interest for this meeting.

Notification of Any Other Business.

There were notifications for two items of Any Other Business.

Minutes of last meeting.

The minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on **Thursday 29th March 2017** were approved.

Action Log.

CR went through the action log with the following comment:

All actions were closed.

Correspondence

CR had received the following electronic communication:

- Warwickshire Heads Up. This edition gives useful Pupil Premium information and includes links to useful websites, dates, etc.

3. **MPS SLT Lead – EYFS, SEND and Pupil Premium**

As **Laura Nicol**, the MPS **SENDco**, was unable to attend the meeting, **MF** delivered the Early Years/Foundation Stage, SEND and Pupil Premium presentation on her behalf. (The presentation is in the folder for this meeting).

There are four themes which inform all the EYFS guidance – A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning & Development which underpin the Characteristics of Effective Learning – Engagement (playing and exploring), Motivation (active learning) and Thinking (creating and thinking critically).

The children are assessed on three prime areas – Personal, Social & Emotional Development; Physical Development; and Communications & Language – together with Reading, Writing and Numbers. All have to be covered to reach a good level of development (GLD). The end of year prediction based on current assessment data is that MPS will achieve 80% GLD (compared to 69% nationwide and 71% for Warwickshire) which is an improvement on last year's figure.

In the current EYFS cohort, there are five children with SEND additional needs and four with English as a second language. Governors asked who makes the assessments: every child is subject to base line observation but SEND children usually come from nursery with acknowledgement of their additional needs. Governors also commented that nine children in the cohort equates to 20% of the intake. **MF**: Speech & Language Therapy has the best impact for improving SEND children's ability to access learning (although not necessarily for EAL pupils) but funding is being removed. Teaching Assistants also give 1:1 support.

2016 – 2017 has seen the trial of the Read Write Inc resource 'Speed Sounds' which provides different methods which can be applied to the teaching of phonics. MPS has taken the best bits and parents were introduced via a workshop in October. Staff are in a strong position to teach the content and this is having a real impact on the children's ability to blend sounds for reading and writing. There have been opportunities for creative writing, which the children have embraced with enthusiasm. Read Write Inc also encourages the development of language as well as gross and fine motor control with children having writing books from the autumn. Governors are aware that expectations are high with a challenging curriculum awaiting the children in KS1 but that the EYFS children are being given a good grounding including engaging in role play with eg TAs making ginger bread scented play dough. **MW** (EYFS Link Governor) has recently undertaken a Governor Visit, the report of which is in the folder for this meeting.

Following consultation with parents, September 2016 also saw a change to the induction process, which is now shorter with children attending for two morning sessions and lunch before starting full time. This helps children to settle quickly into their new routines. Governors acknowledged that this can be a challenging process for parents as well, but that the TAs are particularly approachable and parents are aware that they know the children and can answer queries

Intervention is now known as Targeted Support. Pupils are identified by teachers when reviewing progress and support is incorporated into the timetable with set objectives and success criteria. After a whole school mapping of provision identified that a large amount of intervention took place outside the classroom, there has been a rethink with more TA time being utilised in the classroom, which supports Stage 1 in providing quality whole class teaching, which governors acknowledged as the basis of all education. Stage 2 gives targeted support either EAL focused or 1:1 tuition and Stage 3 is SEN/specific needs support offered with specialist help from the LA Specialist Teacher Service, who attend every two weeks. Governors asked why this has changed from Round Oak School who used to provide the expert support. **MF**: consultation with teachers and parents and discussion with the LA led to the change and teachers, particularly, report a better quality of information.

Termly Pupil Progress meetings review whether the Targeted Support is needed, useful and if it should continue. Governors asked whether parents still receive letters: yes. The SEND Code of Practice incorporates the cycle of Assess/ Plan/ Do/ Review and the support needs to be carefully measured and evidenced. The My IEP is written in a child friendly way and includes information about the child's likes. Counselling is provided through Snowford Grange, who this year have provided a new counsellor who attends once a week. She has instigated a new approach with tangible outcomes. The children are identified by parents, teachers or pupils themselves.

There are thirty-two pupils on the FSM 6 list, nineteen of whom are currently in receipt of free school meals. 22% of the thirty-two are identified as SEND pupils: SEND pupils make up 10% of the whole school population. The Pupil Premium which the FSM6 list attracts is spent in a number of ways: TA time; outside agencies; management; subsidising trips, visits and other enrichment activities; responding to families in need; training; 1:1 tuition; teacher time; school counsellor; resources and extra-curricular activities. Some interventions are specifically targeted at Pupil Premium children but also at the larger SEND group. **Lisa Merrell** provides 1:1 tuition one hour a week for eight to ten weeks working on specific needs, which is the biggest spend across the whole school. **Laura Nicol** had included comments from children and parents which show how they appreciate the intervention.

Governors asked what 'responding to families in need' meant: **Amy Crowther** has been doing this role of offering support and guidance to parents this year, with **Rachel Green** due to return shortly.

CR confirmed that there will be a full Pupil Premium report to FGBM in September, which will cover the previous year. All Governors will need to look at the report and send any questions to the Finance & Personnel Committee. Looking forward to the Ofsted inspection, all governors will need to know about the Pupil Premium and how it is spent.

Actions

FGBM2016-17/19: **ALL** governors to familiarise themselves with the Pupil Premium Funding and expenditure.

4. **Governor Training**

As **KLS** (Training Governor) had notified the meeting that she would be late attending, it was decided to postpone Governor Training until she had arrived.

5. **Committee Reports**

including outcomes and impact on SDP priorities

Chairs' Committee

CR reported that the Chairs had discussed:

- the role of Link Governors and Phase Link Governors. They had concluded that they were still important and gave Governors a broader sense of what the school does. **CR** will be updating terms of reference for Link and Phase Link Governors for September and **MF** has agreed work the Link and Phase Link Governors into the SDP monitoring for next year.
- how reading, particularly articles on The Key, could be recorded as training and have asked **KLS** to create a way of evidencing this in the training record. It was also agreed that the committee chairs should alert their committee members to any articles or training particularly relevant to the committee Terms of Reference, and the best way would be for this to be a standing agenda item.
- with Ofsted due to undertake a short inspection in the next year, Chairs discussed how Governors can get ready and agreed to create a folder on the Governor Space to take all required documentation. In September, **CR** will ask for volunteer governors to create a group to prepare for the inspection and meet with the inspectors.
- that the review of some policies has resulted in significant changes, and it was agreed that these should be highlighted in the report to the FGBM.
- the new dfe Governance Handbook which was published in February. This has been divided between the Chairs for review.
- that there has been no progress in the Academisation process at the LA level.
- that succession planning is required as the chairs of Premises and Finance & Personnel Committees are looking to step down this year. They agreed to speak to their committees to ask for volunteers to step up. **CR** also needs an active vice-chair for the coming year to understudy with the idea of taking over the chairmanship in 2018.

Premises

(minutes previously uploaded to The Governor Space)

EL reported that:

- the Premises Committee had reviewed the Accident reports, which they do termly, looking for patterns in injuries. Record keeping has improved immensely over the last few years. The Committee also looked at the monitoring of First Aid kits at school, particularly who was responsible for keeping them full and updated. It has been agreed to add this to the Site Inspection. The number of trained First Aiders was also questioned, as there have been changes to the dfe policy: MPS always had more pediatric trained First Aiders than required and are within the new guidelines.
- the Committee has been looking at a new policy to cover transporting children to off-site events. In the past the school has taken responsibility for this but parents need to make the necessary arrangements, with the school acting only as broker when required. This has become a larger piece of work than originally thought but will be signed-off at the next meeting.
- the Letting Charges Policy has also been reviewed. MPS charges low fees for local communities and, until now, has not charged private providers of after-school activities. In the light of the current financial imperatives, a nominal fee to cover wear and tear will be introduced from September. The F&P Committee are looking separately at the rent paid by Puddleducks.
- Puddleducks have been granted planning permission to extend their kitchen. **MF** will liaise with the management at Puddleducks to make sure that the site is safe and that there is no disruption to the school.
- as part of the SDP, the committee is monitoring Food Champions and **CH** and **AD** have volunteered to do this. The committee discussed what happens to the left-over fruit delivered free to reception classes, and it was agreed that if there was any fruit left over, it could be placed in the playground at the end of the day.
- a small budget has been granted to the Three Ks to purchase more plants for the beds, although since then, the original planting is now growing and looking good.
- the Bish Bash Bosh Bosses have been appointed.

Performance & Standards

(minutes previously uploaded to the Governor Space).

CS reported that:

- as **MF** was not at the meeting, **DB** had presented the data which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The final Attainment data for the autumn term 2016 (compared with national data for 2015) and the headline Attainment data for the spring term 2017 (compared with national data for 2015 & 2016) had been colour coded (green = on track, blue = 10% above, yellow = 10% below) and included explanatory notes. The committee felt that this simplified form of data was more accessible and that they were 'tipping over the edge of understanding' the data. They had discussed how best to further interrogate the data and it was decided that they would look into having a pro forma for questioning, into which committee members could

make their own notes. This would also act as evidence of questioning by governors, particularly of the yellow bands, which may not appear in the minutes.

CS suggested that all Governors should look at the data, which is also included in the Headteachers report. **CR** agreed that all Governors should have an overview of the data and the finance. Slides prepared by **MF** as part of the F&P Committee's monitoring of the SDP have been uploaded to the Governor Space folder for this meeting and Governors should experiment as to whether they help their understanding.

- the committee had looked at a number of policies, including:
 - Safeguarding** – this had been postponed until the next meeting so **MF** could be present.
 - Relationships & Sex Education** - **CH** is updating the policy and it will be signed-off at the next meeting.
 - Home School Agreement** – there are no major changes but **MF** is emphasizing the parental role of supporting the school when dealing with some behaviour choices.
 - Attendance** - the committee will discuss this in more detail at the next meeting.
 - Marking and Feedback** - **DB** has reviewed and updated the policy. Not much has changed but it is now more specific on feedback, particularly giving younger children more verbal feedback. Using Re-think In Pink for this group had been creating a lot of work without necessarily increasing the children's understanding. Governors asked whether this was being communicated to parents: **DB** agreed a slide should be included at the Induction Meetings for each year. A committee member had also suggested the committee should read a paper entitled 'A Marked Improvement – a review of the evidence on written marking' by the Education Endowment Foundation.
 - SEND Policy** – **Laura Nicol** (SENDco) is writing a new SEND policy and **MW** (SEND Link Governor) will review this for the next meeting.
 - Assessment Policy** – due to changes in assessments, MPS has stopped using Classroom Monitor and **DB** is working on creating a MPS unique assessment tool, therefore the Policy will be updated in September.
- **SDP** – monitoring visits had been agreed for this session.

Finance & Personnel

(minutes previously uploaded to the Governor Space)

SR reported that:

- the committee has been monitoring the SDP in line with the action plans, although the School Learning Improvement Officer had advised that a number of the later, smaller actions were not required. Instead **MF** will produce slides which explain terminology, eg 'Super Learning Skills', with what it looks like in action for the next meeting.
- **MF** is revising job specifications for the Subject Leadership roles during the next half-term.
- the committee had reviewed three policies:
 - Governors Allowance Policy** – which was agreed as it was, with a slight increase in the pence per mile reimbursement, for the next year.

Whistleblowing Policy – this is an LA policy which has had no significant changes. Although a dull draft, it has been agreed with the Unions and therefore the committee agreed to adopt the policy. At the September FGB meeting, Governors need to be made aware of the whistleblowing procedural steps and teachers are informed as part of their Safeguarding induction.

Complaints Policy – this has been completely re-written in line with current guidelines.

- the committee had discussed the appointment of an NQT teacher **Katie Wall**, to replace **Bethan Hockley**, who had been on a one year contract and is now moving on to another school. Governors asked when parents will know about **Bethan**, as she had proved a popular teacher:
- that the budget has been submitted to the LA showing a deficit of £51K, but, notwithstanding this, the LA Finance Officer had declined a request for a meeting.

Since the last FGBM, a number of Governors had questioned why it had become necessary to set the budget showing a £20,000 increase in the deficit in year two since the figures were first shown to the FGB at the February meeting.

MF explained that a number of factors have affected the budget, some of which have reduced income and increased costs for this year and others of which will impact next year.

This year the main contributors this year are:

- the cost of Teaching Assistants
- two children requiring 1:1 support which were not known about when the budget was being set last year
- census of only 309 pupils rather than 314. Four of the vacancies are in year six and therefore difficult to fill.

Next year additional known costs are:

- another child requiring 1:1 support
- the Apprenticeship Levy
- LA top slicing the amount given to schools to help balance their own budget.

The main cost to the school is obviously the cost of staff. Experienced teachers who leave can be replaced by NQTs which would reduce the outgoings over time, but this will not affect the budget next year.

MF in consultation with the SLT and the F&P Committee has been considering what can be done about the current financial situation, concluding that MPS needs to look at increasing its income substantively, rather than adding a few hundred pounds here and there. He recommended looking at the numbers in school as there is no limit to class sizes in Key Stage 2. If each year has three extra pupils, two extra pupils per class, this would increase MPSs income by £32,000. This takes the form of saying yes to the LA if they seek a place and two children have already joined the school in this manner: one in year 3 and one in year 5. Although they are already in school, funding will not be available until the census in October.

Regardless of the budget situation and pupil numbers, the school still has to function. Staffing costs are usually expected to take 80% of income although MPS has always been below average. *(A useful tool for Governors is the dfe School Consistent Financial*

Reporting Benchmarking website which gives information in chart form comparing schools of a similar size nationwide (<https://www.education.gov.uk/sfb/ComparisonCharts.aspx> - LA code 937, school code 2026)). The next step will be to look to a substantive reduction in costs and this will mean looking at the staffing structure, to develop a time line of action so that MPS can know what any reduction in staffing levels or employment of teachers on lower pay scales will look like.

The F&P Committee acknowledge that neither of the options is particularly brilliant but starting by increasing pupil numbers is the least worst case. So many things cannot be forecast that the school needs to be reactive, which is not ideal. The committee is aware that the school needs to present a balanced budget and although difficult decisions need to be taken, the school is not 'dodging the bullet'. The FGB needs to be aware that the situation is not not being discussed.

Governors agreed that the report had been helpful and clear. They discussed a number of issues:

- that the Governing Board and the school have to be realistic, including understanding that the way education looks will change. All political parties are heavily involved in discussing education funding.
- the MPS budget has always been well managed, and the staffing and organization a good set up, it but now finds itself in this unpleasant situation. Schools are allowed a 5% tolerance in the budget before the LA will intervene. MPS is already at that limit but the LA Financial Officer has refused a requested meeting to discuss the situation. Governors acknowledged that this probably is because other schools are in a worse situation. The LA has intervened in the sense that **MF**, **CR** and **Emma Bish** were asked to attend budget setting training (documents from the training have been uploaded to this meeting folder). The LA, which has been running a deficit budget for a number of years, has reduced its deficit from £3m to £500,000 by passing on cuts, including to schools.
- the staffing structure will need to be interrogated. TAs may need to be challenged into being even more multi-skilled. Governors suggested that the parent body be more engaged, taking on the role of unpaid TAs: many parents come into the school already, the work they do is very useful but will not help the budget in the long term.
- Governors agreed that the message to parents should be that it is not all doom and gloom and regardless of the budget situation, the school will keep running. Governors acknowledged that the Chair's letter to parents was good in recognizing the concern and accepting that there is no magic wand. Parents need to know it is a political position – not mismanagement.
- that the PAN number for MPS is 45, which means that the school is down 15 pupils in every year group. With a statutory ratio of one teacher to every thirty pupils in reception, this means that two full time teachers are required for the two classes of 22 and 23. This year there were one hundred and forty nine applications for those places. The LA approached MPS four years ago suggesting an increase in numbers and it took two years of discussion to dismiss the idea as unfeasible.
- Governors wondered what effect hiring only NQTs would have on the mentoring of those new teachers, and on the wider teaching profession. No

parent will want to send their child to a school with mainly NQTs and TAs. The MPS SLT needs to take a pragmatic, as well as a financial, view.

Governors also raised the issue of parents asking questions, particularly when TAs are covering for sick teachers: MPS needs to communicate with parents when this is happening.

CR confirmed that the FGB would look at the financial situation again, possibly at every meeting going forward. **MF** will forward the slides to the Clerk for uploading to this meeting folder.

Actions

FGBM2016-17/20: **ALL** Governors to view slides on Attainment and Progress prepared by **MF** as part of the F&P Committee's monitoring of the SDP (in the folder for this meeting) and experiment as to whether they help their understanding.

FGBM2016-17/21: **MF** to forward slides to **Clerk** for uploading to the Governor Space.

7. **Patch Meeting reports**

As the discussion on the financial situation took a large part of the meeting and time was required for the discussion of the Aims and Vision, the **Chair** decided to postpone the Compliance Audit and the Academies/TSA reports until the next FGBM.

CR did, however, report that at a recent Cluster Chairs' Meeting, every school indicated that they were in the same financial difficulties.

8. **Link Governors reports:**

Link Governor reports for Computing (**JM**) and EYFS (**MW**) have been uploaded to this meeting folder on the Governor Space. All Governors should read them and if they have any questions, please circulate by email.

Action

FGBM2016-17/22: **ALL** Governors to read Link Governor reports and circulate any queries.

9. **Aims & Visions**

MF had shared with the Governors the wording that he has been working on since previously consulting with staff, pupils, parents and governors. This begins with the statement 'Milverton Primary School, where the journey begins ...' and gives a series of strap lines, for example '... through a memorable curriculum to develop confident, creative and curious minds'

Governors discussed where the vision would be published and therefore how it would appear in different settings, such as on the website, on emails and on pictures and presentations around the school. They also discussed that the vision should make clear what is different about MPS from other schools: in marketing speak, its USP (unique selling position) or DNA. Particularly this was seen as treating pupils as individuals.

Governors raised the issue of keeping the website visually fresh, as part of presenting the school to potential parents.

CR asked that Governors send their thoughts about the vision to **MF** by the first Monday after the half term break.

Action

FGBM2016-17/23: **ALL** Governors to review vision and send response to **MF** by Monday 5th June.

10. **AOB**

1. **Capital Grants bid – MF**

Warwickshire County Council Communities Group are inviting bids for the improvement of county assets which can improve community involvement and create an income stream for schools. The school needs to come up with an idea and the LA will write the bid. This was discussed at the Premises meeting and three areas were identified:

- Schools field – building
- Dining hall
- 4g all weather pitch

2. **Approving Inset days – MF**

The five dates for 2017 – 2018 are September 1st and 4th, January 5th and 8th and 20th July. Two of the dates are days in lieu, two are training days and one is an in-school day for performance management without the need to buy in supply teachers. All were approved.

Items for exclusion

There were no items for exclusion.

Date of next FGBM

The next Full Governing Body Meeting will be held on Wednesday 12th July 2017 at 7.00pm in the school library.

Signed:

Dated:

FGBM2017-05-24		
FGBM2016-17/19	ALL governors to familiarise themselves with the Pupil Premium Funding and expenditure.	
FGBM2016-17/20	ALL Governors to view slides on Attainment and Progress prepared by MF as part of the F&P Committee's monitoring of the SDP (in the folder for this meeting) and experiment as to whether they help their understanding.	
FGBM2016-17/21	MF to forward Financial Situation slides to Clerk for uploading to the Governor Space.	
FGBM2016-17/22	ALL Governors to read Link Governor reports and circulate any queries.	
FGBM2016-17/23	ALL Governors to review vision and send response to MF by Monday 5 th June.	