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# Freeland CE Primary School

*Aspiring and achieving together*

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## Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting held at the School on Wednesday 29 June 2016

**Attendance:** Julian Soanes **(JS)** (Parent) (Chair), Sarah Nickelson **(SN)** (Headteacher), Jade Ward **(JW)** (Staff), Tedd Pinkney **(TP)** (Parent), Alice Harden **(AH)** (Foundation), Catrin Moore **(CM)** (Parent), Jane Lench **(JL)** (Staff), Caroline Taylor **(CT)** (Director Appointed), Hilary Caldicott **(HC)** (Director Appointed) and Toby O’Neil **(TO)** (Parent) (Vice Chair).

**In attendance:** Jon Jeffries **(JJ)** (Deputy Head/Associate), Kate Gilbert **(KG)\*** and Gemma Peace **(GP)** (Clerk).

The meeting was quorate and was opened at 6.30pm by the Chair.

57.16 **Welcome and Apologies:** There were no apologies. Peter Ball, who had been a foundation governor at the school for many years, had recently passed away and Governors held a moment’s silence in his memory. Peter’s contribution to the work of the governing body and the Christian ethos of the school was also noted.

58.16 **Declarations of Interest and Update of Register of Pecuniary Interests:** There were no declarations of interest. Governors updated the register of pecuniary interests for the school website.  
**Action:** GP to update the pecuniary interests document and send to the school office, so the website can be updated. **Completed.**

59.16 **Budget:** CT, JS, SN and KG had considered the budget at a meeting at the end of the previous week. KG distributed a 5 year projection to Governors, along with a comparison between last year’s and this year’s budget.

JS explained that a surplus is being carried forward. JS also pointed out that the projected figures are based on a certain amount of guesswork, in that the school would not know exact funding figures until closer to the time. JS confirmed that the EPA would not claw money back if the school does not spend it.

Governors also spoke about the numbers for the EYFS September intake, which are lower than they have previously been. However, SN said that there have been several enquiries about places recently, so she expects the number of pupils in the intake to increase.

KG guided Governors through the most significant points to note in the budget:

- KG detailed the levy that would apply to the school over the coming year, and stated that it would possibly rise for the following year.
- There has been an increase in funds required for overtime payments for staff, as temporary TA contracts have been issued this year. TAs who do PPA cover are paid at a higher rate, which is classed as overtime. The rationale behind the temporary contracts was explained and discussed. The effect is that more money has been

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allocated for TAs this year than was allocated last year. KG said that, as a partnership, TA hours will probably decrease in the long term due to budgetary constraints.

- DBS charges have increased due to the requirement that all Governors are DBS checked, and the cost for new staff members.
- The training budget has decreased, but more in house training and training with other EPA schools is available.
- £10,000 has been allocated to the Governors' site and buildings wish list, following a request from Governors to increase the amount originally allocated.
- There has been a saving for cleaning costs, as the school has employed someone who on a permanent basis.
- KG explained that, last year, the school contributed approximately £1800 towards the pool hire/swimming lessons. Swimming costs are £11,956 per year at the school. Parental contributions should result in approximately £10,000. It was confirmed that swimming costs for parents would not increase.
- KG said that £1,000 has been set aside for pupil premium and £1,500 as a subsidy for parents who don't pay for school trips.
- The music service must be funded.
- £5,000 has been allocated to ICT equipment to replace white boards, a server and iPads.
- An additional £1,000 must be spent on the new standardised tests.
- There has also been money set aside for new classroom furniture.
- Buildings insurance is £2,900. KG is waiting for another (reduced) quote for staffing insurance (that does not include TAs), which is likely to be around £4,000.
- There has also been a saving on Carillion's charge for use of the school kitchen.
- KG also said that £28,827 needs to be paid to the Academy as the %5 top slice levy. KG explained how this works in practice. This amount is necessary in order for the Academy to survive financially. JS pointed out that the EPA contribution is worthwhile, as the EPA is relatively stable financially unlike some other academies, so ensuring that the EPA has sufficient resources is very important.

Governors thanked KG for attending the meeting to explain the budget. JS said that KG has carried out a great deal of important work relating to pricing for various items in the budget, and all Governors thanked KG for her hard work.

TP proposed that the budget is adopted and CT seconded the motion. The Governors voted unanimously in favour of adopting the budget that had been presented. The budget was signed off.

*\*KG left the meeting at 7.00pm.*

60.16 **Book Trawl Training:** At the last LGB meeting, SN had agreed to give the Governors advice and guidance regarding book trawls. She distributed the form/framework that is used for book trawls along with the Marking Policy. Governors commented that the framework was very helpful.

SN explained how she carries out book trawls. SN confirmed that she and JJ had discussed the importance of working as a staff team on book trawls, so that conversations can be initiated and ideas shared. Once a book trawl has been completed, strengths and action plans are examined. Individual staff feedback from book trawls is collated, and feeds into a common themes document. This ensures that good practice is publicised and shared. Governors suggested that the outcomes of book trawls could be shared with parents at the next parents' meeting.

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**Q.** Governors asked whether the same form would be used if a book trawl relates to a different topic rather than marking?

**A.** SN said that the same form would be used, but considered and completed from the alternative perspective.

61.16 **Urgent items to be discussed since the compilation of the agenda:** None to report.

62.16 **Minutes of the FGB meeting held on 17 May 2016, matters arising and action points:** The minutes were taken as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. SN retained them to file.

**Action:** GP to send pdf version of May minutes to SN and the school office for the school website. **Completed.**

**Outstanding actions:**

**Action:** All Governors that have not already been DBS checked must begin the process. Kate is going to send JS the link to the relevant website. **Outstanding – SN** to chase this.

**Action:** All Governors to attend safeguarding training. **Outstanding – JS** has an EPA Chairs' meeting shortly, so will ask about this.

**Action:** SN to check whether the Accessibility Plan has been added to the website. **Completed** – she confirmed that the Plan is on the website.

**Action:** AH and Donna Keeber will meet to discuss SIAMS. **Completed.**

AH reported that they had visited Cassington Primary School, which had obtained the highest rating in a recent SIAMS inspection. AH said that the visit was very helpful. She informed Governors that there would be a SIAMS inspection some time next term at the school AH said that the Headteacher at Cassington is the lead for SIAMS, as well as Collective Worship, whereas Donna is the SIAMS lead and SN is the Collective Worship lead at Freeland, so they would need to work together closely. AH described some of the ways in which values are displayed at Cassington.

AH said that she also needs to look for some old governing body minutes, in which Christian Values were discussed. SN confirmed that the staff had discussed those values at a recent staff meeting. AH had spoken to David Tyler, a former Governor, who had mentioned the discussions the governing body had had in the past. GP did not have electronic versions of those minutes as they pre-date her time as clerk, but SN confirmed that the minutes should be in the relevant files in the school office and AH could look through them.

**Action:** AH and Donna Keeber to take this matter forward, so that all staff and Governors are fully aware of the school's Christian values.

63.16 **Headteacher's Report (including safeguarding/health and safety update):**

The report had been distributed to Governors before the meeting and was available to view at the meeting. SN reported the following to Governors:

- Attendance is 96.25%, which is above national average. However, SN had observed that unauthorised absence figures have increased. This is likely in part to the new rules that had been introduced regarding absences. SN and HC had also discussed making the Attendance Policy more robust, including the safeguarding aspect. This will be added to the website once it is drafted and approved.

**Action: SN** to ensure that the Attendance Policy is on the school website once it has been updated.

- Four parents had attended the recent parents' meeting. SN said that it was a very beneficial meeting, despite the low turnout. Big Talk and Big Write were discussed. The new website was also shown to parents. There has also been a SEND meeting for parents, hosted by Angela Brame.
- Two teachers have been recruited – an NQT for Year 1 and experienced teacher for years 4/5. SN said that she and JJ were very impressed with the new staff members.
- SN shared highlights from learning walks. Deployment of TAs in relation to SEND pupils was a focus and showed that the majority of SEND pupils were on task and contributing to lessons. Developing the use of rich questioning was identified as a focus going forward, along with encouraging independence for SEND pupils. Deployment and training of TAs to provide timely intervention was also considered.
- Lesson observations had been completed – high expectations and innovative teaching methods were highlights, along with good self-assessment and lesson differentiation. Pupils are able to talk about their learning experience and learn from each other. Challenge of pupils was also discussed, as well as assessment throughout the lessons.
- Certain Governors had been made aware of children being taken out of the school and queried why this was not included in the report. SN explained that the matter had been discussed with parents and the Chair. SN agreed that the governing body should monitor this and agreed to include this in future reports.

**Action: SN** to include the number of children who have left the school, as well as the number of pupils who have joined, in future reports.

- Chris Warner (an EYFS consultant/Ofsted inspector) had spent a couple of days with Donna in EYFS. Feedback was provided and he concluded that the school offered good provision, along with suggestions for improvement.

**Action: SN** to distribute Chris Warner's report to all Governors. **Completed.**

- The recent book trawl was very positive. Presentation is very good across the school. There is good self-assessment and ambitious vocabulary in use, as pupils' writing improves. More work on marking needs to be done along with ensuring that next steps are actually challenging pupils. Extra handwriting practice is also needed in some cases.

Governors commented that SN and JJ have overseen a great deal of work over a short period of time since they joined the leadership team, and thanked them for their hard work. Governors reiterated that SEND and gifted and able pupils had been identified previously as areas to improve, and those should continue to be a focus going forward.

**64.16 Assessment Point 3 update:**

The assessment data will be available at the end of the week and would be considered at the next Performance and Standards Committee meeting. SN said that she believes the data would be positive.

**65.16 SEF/SDP 2016-17 update:**

JS said that a small group of Governors had met with SN and JJ in relation to this. Progress has been made, but there would probably not be a draft plan for Governors to see until the new school year.

JS said that there should be a 3-5 year plan, which details the vision for the school and pupils' achievement over that period. JS said that he would like to set up a workshop style session with Governors and staff to establish a 3 year plan. The final SDP would be the first step in this

plan. The physical appearance of the school and how that can be improved would also be considered. The Parish Council will also be consulted about this.

JS suggested that Governors contribute to the SDP with questions that they have in relation to the different areas of the plan. The Governors' questions could also be the focus of leaders' reports.

**Action: All Governors** to consider the questions they wish to ask regarding actions and expected outcomes in relation to all areas of the SDP, once it is available.

SN said that she would complete the self-evaluation once all of the data is available. There is a proforma available for all EPA schools to use. The self-evaluation should be available by the end of term.

**66.16 Subject Leader End of Year Reports:**

These had been distributed before the meeting. SN also brought an evidence file to the meeting so that Governors could examine it, should they wish to.

**Q.** Governors queried whether all leads have seen the other reports?

**A.** SN said that they had not, but the reports would be shared at the next staff meeting.

Governors agreed that it was very useful to receive all of the reports together.

**Action: GP** to add Subject Leader End of Year Reports to the agenda for the first LGB for October, so that Governors have an opportunity to read the reports and formulate questions, should they wish to.

**67.16 Committee Reports:**

- i. Resources Committee: The Committee met on 7 June. The minutes had been sent to all Governors. The following matters had been discussed:
  - The buildings wish list.
  - Condition Improvement Fund works.
  - Staffing.
  - Health and safety matters.
- ii. Performance and Standards Committee: The Committee will meet on the 12 July to discuss the Assessment Point 3 data and SATs results.

**Action: All Governors** to consider positions on Committees and let JS know if they would like to swap.

**68.16 School Website Review**

SN informed Governors that the roll out of the new website was going ahead and a photographer is to attend the school later this week to take photos.

**69.16 Policies for approval and review**

- i. Behaviour Policy – SN said that this policy should be available to review at the next Performance and Standards Committee meeting.

**70.16 EPA Update**

The EPA had issued a paper on Communications, following the meeting held in May, which TO and GP had attended. The paper had been sent to all Governors with the agenda. This was also available to view at the meeting. Standardisation of communication across EPA schools was detailed, along with the use of GovernorHub and better communication between Directors and

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EPA LGB Governors. SN said that the EPA has increased support for member schools. Sarah Kerswell is the Primary Link Director and James Bird now works three days a week for the EPA. HR provision has also been improved at academy level.

SN reported that there had been a Heads' away day in early June, and a lot of time was spent discussing the SEF format, amongst other things.

**71.16 Foundation Governors' Update**

AH had detailed this earlier in the meeting (see minute 62.16).

**72.16 Items from Staff and School Council:**

School Council: Nothing to report.

Staff: JW is leaving the school and Governors thanked her for her efforts and contribution to the school and governing body during her time at Freeland.

**73.16 Governor visit reports and Governor training:**

Visits: AH's visit report had been distributed before the meeting. It related to EYFS and their sharing assembly.

AH said that the sharing assembly was very impressive and was a fantastic opportunity for pupils to display their work. However, she queried whether collective worship is also taking place during that time, or whether there would be another opportunity for pupils to take part in collective worship on days on which a sharing assembly is held. The Collective Worship Policy states that collective worship would take place every day at the school.

SN stated that sharing assemblies only take place six times per year, per class. Time constraints would not always allow collective worship to take place separately from the sharing assembly. Governors discussed how this could be accommodated. SN assured Governors that there is usually a class prayer at the end of a sharing assembly, linked to what is relevant to the pupils involved, although that had not happened at the EYFS assembly that AH had observed.

AH has also sent another visit report to SN for approval and that would be sent out as soon as it is available.

Training: JS attended a school improvement training course at Eynsham Primary School.

AH had attended a SIAMS process and preparation training course.

It was confirmed that a sufficient number of Governors had completed safer recruitment training.

**Action: GP** to add Governor Training Plan to the October LGB meeting agenda.

**74.16 Governor vacancies:** There are three director appointed governor vacancies, one foundation governor vacancy and one parent governor vacancy.

JL's term of office ends at the end of August and, as JW is leaving the school at the end of term, there will be two staff governor vacancies.

JS reported that, as far as he is aware, the position relating to appointment of parent governors would not alter at EPA schools.

AH had been approached by someone who wishes to be a Director Appointed governor and JS agreed to contact that person. Another person who was very keen to be a governor had also approached JS and he agreed to follow that up.

**75.16 Items for discussion at the next meeting:**

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair.
2. Review of Committee terms of reference, membership and standing orders.
3. Annual Safeguarding Report.
4. SEND Report.
5. Pupil Premium Report.
6. Subject Leaders' Reports.
7. SDP/SEF 2016-17.
8. Governor Training Plan.

**76.16 Date of the 2016-17 meetings:** The proposed dates of the LGB meetings for the next school year (all Wednesdays at 6.30pm at the school), which are in line with other academy schools, are:

- 5 October 2016
- 30 November 2016
- 1 February 2017
- 22 March 2017
- 24 May 2017, and
- 28 June 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.10p.m.  
(GP290616)

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