

FGB Committee: MINUTES – Part 1

Wednesday 6th April 2022 at 10.00am

Dial-in via MS Teams, due to Coronavirus social distancing measures

Attendees	Initials	Category
Nikki Burroughs	NB	Executive Head
Steve Cleverly	SC	Co-opted
Rick Gaebl	RG	Foundation
Steven Finnemore	SF	Co-opted
Nicky Reynolds	NR	Co-opted
Tom Bates	TB	Staff
Laura Boyce	LB	Parent
Katy Young	KY	Clerk
Anne Davies – Finance Manager (part)	AD	Finance Manager
Marie Barrett (part)	MB	Teacher
In Attendance	Initials	Category
Absent with Apologies	Initials	Category
Deb Norman	DN	Co-opted
Kay Rosier	KR	Co-opted
Tony Johnson	TJ	Parent
Su Aves	SA	Local Authority
Absent	Initials	Category

Meeting Agenda	Led By
1. Welcome, Apologies, Housekeeping	SC
2. Staff Presentation – Finance	SC
3. Last Minutes	SC
4. Safeguarding & H&S	SC
5. Heads Update	NB
6. Monitoring	SC
7. Self-Evaluation	SC
8. Policies	SC
9. Training	SC
10. Future Meetings	SC

Governor challenge/questions are shown in bold blue font. Answers are shown in green font.

Additional Documents used/referred to at the meeting;

- Last Minutes 9th February 2022
- Budget
- FDIP – 2022-2024
- Committee Impact Statements
- Safeguarding update
- H&S / Premises update
- Social Media Policy

MINUTES

Ref	Item	Agreed/Action
1.	<p>HOUSEKEEPING</p> <p>1.1. Welcome and Apologies received: DN, KR, SA and TJ have sent apologies. DN can join the meeting at lunchtime, if needed for voting. The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.</p> <p>1.2. Register of Business Interests: Governors confirmed there are no changes.</p>	

Signed:



APPROVED AT FULL GOVERNOR'S MEETING ON 25th MAY 2022 _ Page 1 of 9

	<p>1.3. Governor vacancies (2 x Co-opted): Clerk advised the two candidates we approached, have not yet responded. Clerk to research other candidates and circulate an email update (latest CVs are HERE)</p> <p>1.4. Terms of Office: RG term was renewed on 05/3/22. KR term expires 1/6/22 and KR is happy to continue. Governors noted.</p> <p>1.5. P&P Terms of Reference: amended to quorum of 3 not 4 to allow more flexibility – approved. Noted that TJ remains unwell.</p>	<p>Clerk to progress</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>STAFF PRESENTATIONS</p> <p>2.1. Budget update – full update was given at CBT on 15th March 2022. Those Governors who were not at that meeting have gone through the Budget and are satisfied. SC highlighted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we looked at energy costs and had allocated more money towards that in light of rising fuel costs • Extra costs allowed for future increase in TAs (D Grade only) working hours (consultation with staff has started on this) • Governors challenged; regarding SALT support – how will the budget on this area be allocated? NB – we are advertising for a S&L therapist; the postholder would be working to support Teachers (rather than 1:1 with students) • More funding allocated to learning environment • Staffing budget is hard to control due to COVID costs • RG stated that all anticipated staffing changes (going forward) are included in the Budget • RG added that this year we have come in on Budget so believes that we can have confidence that it is an accurate and flexible as possible. <p>Governors approved the Budget.</p> <p>The extra-ordinary Governor’s Budget approval meeting on 26th April (after CBT) can therefore be cancelled.</p>	<p>Clerk to cancel meeting on 26/4</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</p> <p><i>Governors returned to this item, at the end of the meeting.</i></p> <p>3.1. Minutes dated 9th February 2022 PART 1: Approved PART 2: Approved. Update given by SC under Part 2 (minuted separately)</p> <p>3.2. Committee Impact statements: the Chairs of each committee ran through the key items raised at the latest committee meetings on 15th March 2022 (CBT) and 23rd March 2022 (T&L). SC stated that there is a threshold candidate and a decision will be given this week (i.e. before Easter holiday).</p>	

	<p>Agreed to move approval of Minutes to end of Agendas going forward.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING, PREMISES & H&S</p> <p>4.1. Safeguarding: see update from DSL Katy Bradley, extracted from T&L Minutes of 23rd March 2022. SW advised on 28/3 there were no further updates.</p> <p>Safeguarding Governors SC and SA continue to have regular meetings with DSLs and Governors have full confidence in the Safeguarding team.</p> <p>E-safety training for Governors: Monika is meeting with the outside provider on the 25th of April to design the course for parents – Governors training date will follow.</p> <p>4.2. Staff wellbeing: NB verbally updated Governors; things continue to be difficult with COVID. We have had “community catch-ups” for staff, Bidwell was well attended, Hollow Lane was not as well attended but perhaps indicates there are fewer issues. Staff just want us to listen which is what we are continuing to do. Staff resilience is low, at a recent meeting with Dawn Stabb it was noted that all schools are seeing a continued increase in general staff absence; staff are exhausted. Costs of living are also increasing. Wellbeing is not great, but we are working hard to improve it. NB continues to listen to staff, and be honest about what we can and cannot do. SC stated the staff meetings were useful. RG agreed it goes back to what NB says – listen, acknowledge and recognise.</p> <p>4.3. Premises / H&S: DOL has stated no issues to update Governors on.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>HEAD’S UPDATE</p> <p>5.1 Heads Report – issued to Governors by email this morning, who will read it after this meeting. NB summarised some key points;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of work on Green Paper and White Paper, around preparing students for adulthood. • Focus on going ‘back to basics’ – being explicit about what that looks like in the classroom and refocussing for fully implementing curriculum changes (key stage 4/5 focus) to be fully implemented from September 2022. • Safeguarding remains paramount and always looking at how we can improve. • Student attendance figures are good, Bidwell are not as good. We have had to have a number of class closures at Bidwell in Autumn term and continued class closures this (Spring) term. Attendance is now on the SLT Agendas as a standing item along with Safeguarding, to ensure we are proactive e.g. about any patterns of attendance with particular families. • Work with SWIFT and SEN100 continues; we have supported 113 students so we are on track to meet our KPIs. Around the SEND100 project - it is deemed to be successful. With the new SEND review proposals a lot of things will be up in the air. It has been well received, there is an identified need for sustainability and longevity we need a commissioned support from the LA. 	

Green/White Papers

NB stated that with the proposed national standards, national curriculum for SEND, and national formula, there is a lot up in the air. SC stated there is a Green Paper and a White Paper, proposing radical change, it is currently unclear where things will settle, SC stated Governors will receive training and information once this has clarified. SC has Green Paper training booked for later in April, but believes it is important that all Governors are kept up to speed.. RG asked can Governors receive the Green and White Papers. Clerk to circulate training details.

NB highlighted there is a clear steer on all schools being part of an Academy by the end of 2030. NB suggested get someone in to discuss implications of academisation.

Governor’s initial thoughts: future monitoring (Agenda) items;

- Governors to do a ‘deep dive’ next term into the FE curriculum and changes. NB stated the KS5 team are having a team day tomorrow to think about intent and implementation of KS5 curriculum. Invite FE leads (Teachers, not Deputy Heads) – Emma and Ruth. Review in summer (first half term).
- Communication – second half of summer term (Kate Preece)
- Broad and balanced curriculum – increasing arts and crafts, outdoor ed, rural skills, recently had a live music performance for the students which was very well received. Review at FGB (early in Autumn term) – invite the Enrichment team – Marie Barret.

Executive Headteacher gave Governors a verbal update on;

5.2 **COVID-19:** The Risk Assessment has provided reassurance in terms of our safeguarding approach when COVID staff shortages mean potential closures of departments. SLT have also now reviewed class lists and RAG rated our pupils, so that now if we are faced with a staff shortage and cannot pull staff from other areas then we can illustrate whether we have to close. We had one day with 65 staff off, and only 8 agency staff were available so on that occasion we could not safely staff all classes. NR asked; *is there a minimum requirement for number of staff per student?* NB stated there is not, as individual needs vary, but as a Federation we work on the basis of roughly 2 children to 1 adult. However you may have students with higher or lower staffing needs (due to personal care needs, challenging behaviour etc) hence the RAG rating was put in place to show levels of staff needed to keep each group of students safe. Governors were pleased with this Risk Assessment based approach, as a powerful tool to decide whether / illustrate why, any closures are necessary. NB stated we have collapsed classes putting departments together, to ensure continuity of education when staffing levels are low. Changes in routine can affect some students with rigid

Clerk to circulate Green Paper training details

Clerk to progress group training re academisation

Future Agenda items;
KS5 - EK and Ruth to give FE presentation @ FGB on 25/5

Communication update at the following FGB; 13/7 (Kate Preece)

Curriculum: review at FGB, early in Autumn term (Marie Barrett)

Signed: 

thinking, but we are trying to stay open, stay safe and delivery a high-quality education wherever we can.

LB queried; as well as student RAG rating, should we rate staff too, as not all staff can work with every student? LB added that all parents want their children to be safe. NB acknowledged this issue and stated we are trying our best to take into consideration all variables when making closure decisions.

NB highlighted that the Government now states that staff do not need to carry out LFT tests now. Governors queried this; we have vulnerable children and are sending in staff who may be unwell. SEN schools should be a case for tests to be made available, either by the LA or by the Federation. RG believes we should be talking to the Local Authority about this. At the least we should have LFTs available for people who suspect they may have it. SC; could we also enquire about wholesale rates. NB will investigate and report back. NB advised that the number of COVID absences have reduced; only 3 staff off at Bidwell with COVID (13 'other' absences) and 10 at Ellen Tinkham (48 'other' absences). Governors agreed numbers being reported are not reflective of the actual figures due to ceasing of testing. 'other' absence could be largely COVID or suspected COVID. NB added that overall resilience is low, to all sickness/stress.

NB to raise LFT issue with Local Authority & enquire about wholesale rates

5.3 Capacity / possible application for increased PAN (pupil allocation number)

Lengthy discussion about capacity issues. Jackie Ross is new in post at the Local Authority and has emailed SC saying she is not responsible for buildings but will make enquiries and come back early next (summer) term. SC advised Jackie that they may end up having to make out of county placements. NB has also drafted a letter to Jackie, and Governors agreed this should also be sent, and highlight it links in to SC's correspondence.

NB to send letter to Jackie Ross

NB added; Governors had asked NB to look at birth rates. NB reported she has been looking into this with colleagues from other SEN schools. Whilst there is a small % of birth rates, for SEN schools you also have to take into account the children who are not coping in mainstream and transferring across. RG stated there must be some standard formula we can use or derive. NB advised the number of children with EHCPs is 14.9% Nationally and higher at 17.9% in Devon. However mainstream schools are not able to meet needs, there are limited spaces in SEN schools, so children are going into independent schools which impacts the high needs block funding. Devon has the highest % of EHCPs in a County in the UK.

NB stated we have no spaces from September 2023. We have agreed to take 17 students in Early Years this year. Local Authority 0-25 team are still pressuring us to take more students. We have capacity at Ellen Tinkham but there would be no space to take them when they progress on to the College. If we took 17 in September 2023 we would have 123 students and the College building is designed for 80.

Governors agreed we cannot take more and need to make this clear to the Local Authority. Having said that, SC highlighted the issue that if we state we will not take any students we are vulnerable to tribunal, if the Local Authority name the school on an EHCP it is legally enforceable.

Signed: 

	<p>5.4 School Improvement Partner: Visit is being rearranged to next term, due to COVID.</p> <p>5.5 Local Authority Monitoring: Governors reminded that Diana Denman is coming in to Bidwell on 27th April.</p> <p>5.6 Home Learning Platform: Marie Barrett attended and gave Governors a 30 minute on-screen presentation on the Jotter relaunch – scheduled for Sept 2022. Governors asked; how we can monitor success? Marie stated we will ensure good, high-quality content, then once launched we will obtain feedback from parents on content and accessibility. The app will give data on engagement. Marie shared a slide on ‘impact’.</p> <p>5.7 Teacher interviews: appointed two Teachers; one will start after Easter, Sarah Godbeare, Deputy Head in Okehampton. She had previously applied for other SLT roles. Ellie from Tor View, has previously worked in SEN settings in London, her passion and specialism is PMLD children. Starting September 2022.</p> <p>5.8 Head of Site: Ellen Tinkham (backfilling NB previous role): only had internal candidates for this position but pleased to have appointed Katy Bradley (currently Deputy Head).</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>MONITORING</p> <p>6.1 Monitoring the FDIP Updated version sent to Governors by Lisa Newton on 04th April, now has RAG rating. Governors will review this alongside the Spring term Heads Report issued today.</p> <p>6.2 Monitoring Walks</p> <p>Governors discussed and agreed these aims;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RG suggested carrying out a Monitoring Walk at the College to review how the facilities dovetail with the provision, in the summer term • NR – need to focus Monitoring Walks around Ofsted requirements • NR –can Governors visualise the SLT decisions made around capacity and skeleton staffing levels on Monitoring Walks, to satisfy ourselves that this looks okay • The aim is to look at educational needs and the condition of buildings • SC – find out how confident Teachers are when explaining what they do • RG – create a planned programme of Monitoring Walks • Governors agreed it can be helpful to complete Walks as a pair where possible <p><u>Monitoring Walks were agreed for summer term as follows;</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RG and TB at the College as discussed above, first half of summer term, this would fit into the FDIP priority areas e.g. QE4 - careers programme • BA3 ‘total communication approach’ (links to our mission statement that ‘Everyone has a Voice’) – monitor this in class and playtimes. Links in with CDMT team. LB and TB will set up a date for second half of summer term. 	<p>Monitoring Walks: RG and TB FE/KS5 at College</p> <p>LB and TB to liaise and arrange date for second half of summer term</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC reminded Governors to email Learning Walk form and/or monitoring comments on the FDIP, to Clerk to record – three points in note form is fine or use pro forma. • Holding staff to account in start of autumn term – staff to prepare over summer term. See item 5.1. 	
7.	<p>SELF EVALUATION</p> <p>Following discussion at committees, Governors to finalise;</p> <p>7.1. Governance Self-Evaluation tool - link HERE. This has been reviewed and agreed, at committee meetings.</p> <p>7.2. Governance Objectives - link HERE Updated, and agreed to review at each committee meeting & feedback to FGB.</p> <p>7.3. After Easter, Governor’s meeting to revisit the Federation’s “Vision”.</p> <p><i>NR left the meeting at 1pm.</i></p>	<p>Arrange ‘Vision’ meeting, all Govs</p>
8.	<p>POLICIES</p> <p>The following policy requires FGB approval;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media Policy: (postponed from last FGB) – Governors agreed to allocate this policy to FGB, as it links to both sub-committees, and the policy was approved (quorate with 6 Governors). 	
9.	<p>TRAINING</p> <p>Discuss/feedback on any Governor training;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Safeguarding Level 3 training refresher: 27th April • SC attending Green Paper training on 22nd April (other Governors invited to attend) • Laura Boyce New Governor training: 28th April <p><i>The Governors returned to an earlier section, to approve the Last Minutes.</i></p>	<p>Clerk to circulate Green Paper training details</p>
10.	<p>FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>10.1. Impact statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decided course of action re ongoing attempts to fill Governor vacancies • Actioned renewal of terms of office • Alerted quorum for P&P which will make that committee more effective • Adopted Budget; immediate impact is that budgets are freed up so staff can start ordering early to enhance performance of the school now 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed committee Impact Statements • Reassured on Safeguarding • Updated on wellbeing • Noted and confirmed that SIP visit deferred, to remove pressure from staff at end of term • No issues in terms of Premises/H&S • Discussed Heads Report and will come back to that as working document • Received COVID update and noted/approved RAG rating of students to keep them safe • Capacity issue discussed, clear view we are now at capacity, meeting being set up with LA for very early next (Summer) term • Local Authority monitoring taking place in late April • Update and clear presentation from Marie Barrett on Home Learning Platform and Governors gave support to the update on Jotter • Received a clear plan for taking forward Monitoring Walks, to better meet our objectives which were identified through the FDIP and self-evaluation tool, we have added to those objectives in terms of capacity to take more students • Self evaluation tool finalised. New Governors will feedback to SC on suggested changes / additions to the induction process • Agreed to arrange a session on Vision, Ethos and Strategic direction to ensure Governors are up to speed • Social Media Policy adopted • Noted upcoming Governor training including SC Safeguarding L3 refresher <p>10.2. Future agenda items; Noted throughout these Minutes, additionally;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep core curriculum (phonics etc) in mind – Governors to see how it is embedded through creative curriculum offer • Review vision, both through discussion and via Monitoring Walks – arrange stand-alone session after Easter • Staff presentations as discussed above under Heads Report – first FE/KS5 (summer, first half term) communication (summer, second half term), curriculum (early in Autumn term). <p>10.3. Confirm next meeting dates; <i>CBT</i> – Tues 26th April 2022 (H&S, Premises, Finance) <i>T&L</i> – Tues 10th May 2022 <i>FOR CLARITY, THIS WAS LATER MOVED TO TUES 24/5</i> <i>FGB</i> – Weds 25th May 2022</p>	
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Clerk to note/progress Future Agenda items

Meeting ended at 1.30pm.

Actions Log – next page

ACTIONS LOG – as at 6/4/22

Meeting	Minutes item no.	Action	By	Deadline/Status
20/10/21	Pt 2 Minutes	Arrange meeting with Local Authority to discuss spurious claims / Complaints policy	ASAP	SC following up

Signed: 

09/02/22	1.4.1	Clerk to complete Form H for Laura Boyce Clerk to arrange induction docs for Laura Clerk to put SC in contact with Governor candidates	DONE	
09/02/22	2.1	Finance AD to check PI insurance cover	DONE	
09/02/22	3.1	NB to note to include a case study showing targets/ achieved, to Heads Report	DONE	
09/02/22	3.1	Govs to arrange Learning Walks	DONE	Agreed at FGB 6/4/22
09/02/22	3.1	Clerk to arrange to publish Dec Minutes (Part 1) online	DONE	
09/02/22	5.3	Staff Wellbeing - Drop-in session dates – Clerk to circulate to Govs. Ensure site photo boards up to date	DONE	
09/02/22	5.6	Add Jotter to next T&L Agenda	DONE	
09/02/22	6.1	Governors to give any feedback on FDIP to NB by 21 st Feb	DONE	None given
09/02/22	6.1	At next Committees, look at; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDIP • prep for the FGB self-evaluation • Objectives Then report to FGB on 6/4/22	DONE	Done at committee
09/02/22	8.2	Curriculum Intent Policy – confirm approval to Shane	DONE	
6/4/22		Clerk progressing Governor vacancies with SC	ONGOING	
6/4/22	5.1 Heads Update	Clerk progress group training re academisation	Clerk	
6/4/22	5.1 Heads Update	Future Agenda items/attendees (KS5 -EK/Ruth. Comms-Kate Preece. Curriculum – Enrichment Team; Marie Barrett).	Clerk	Add to next FGB Agendas
6/4/22	5.1 Heads Update	NB to raise LFT issue with Local Authority & enquire about wholesale rates	NB	
6/4/22	5.2 Heads Update	NB to send letter to Jackie Ross	NB	DONE (confirmed at CBT on 26/4)
6/4/22	6.2 Monitoring	RG and TB to attend FE/KS5 at College	RG/TB	Will be early May
6/4/22	6.2 Monitoring	LB and TB to liaise and arrange date for of summer second half term	LB/TB	
6/4/22	7 Self- Evaluation	Arrange 'Vision' meeting for all Govs	Clerk	Requested best dates from NB on 26/4
6/4/22	9 Training	Clerk to circulate Green Paper training details	Clerk	DONE 5/5/22 (National College)