



# HORRABRIDGE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

## Full Governing Board

Meeting 164 Minutes				Part I
19 <sup>th</sup> February 2024, 18:00			Location: Year 6 classroom	
Attendees	Initials	Governor type	Term	Responsibilities
Emiko Adjene	EA	Co-opted	18/11/20 - 17/11/24	Curriculum School Imp. Deputy
John Clarke	JC	Headteacher	01/01/09 – ongoing	Headteacher
Tom Cooper	TC	Partnership	20/09/23 - 19/09/27	Vice Chair of Governors P&P Committee Chair Safeguarding Deputy
Caroline Daniel	CD	Parent	18/11/20 – 17/11/24	Chair of Governors Behaviour & Attendance Premises, H&S, Maintenance
Christine James	CJ	Parent	06/02/22 – 05/02/26	Children in Care
Pam Law	PL	Co-opted	15/01/24 – 14/01/28	
Tracy Lear	TL	Co-opted	20/11/23 – 19/11/27	SEND Deputy Pupil Premium
Caroline Morgan	CM	Co-opted	15/01/23 – 14/001/28	Safeguarding Lead
Katrina Shipp (virtual)	KS	Parent	19/02/24 - 18/02/28	Finance Committe Chair
Alison Smith	AS	Staff	08/09/23 - 07/09/27	
Carol Waterman- Smith	CW	Partnership	20/11/23 – 19/11/27	School Improvement Lead

Absent	Apology/ non-apology	Governor Type	Term	Responsibilities
Nicola Beeching	Apology - personal	Co-opted	17/04/23 – 16/04/27	Community, Staff, Wellbeing Personnel Nursery
Hannah Downing	Apology - personal	Associate	20/09/23 - 19/09/27	SENDCo @ HPNS
Sam Sykes	SS	Parent	13/11/23 - 12/11/27	SEND Lead

In Attendance	Initials	
Sam Brown	SB	Clerk
-		

Minutes to:
Attendees and Apologies
School Website



# HORRBRIDGE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

## Full Governing Board

### Minutes

Ref, time 164. #	Action or Decision	Owner/ Decision	Date Due	Progress /Date actioned
	The meeting started at 1804.			
1	<u>Starting the meeting</u> a) The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. b) <b>Apologies received from NB, HD, &amp; SS were sanctioned by the board.</b> c) The meeting was quorate. d) Consideration was given towards identifying Part II items – none were identified.	<b>Agreed</b>		
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no conflicts of interest to declare. Those present undertook to declare immediately any additional conflicts of interest that became apparent as the meeting progressed.			
3	<u>Previous meeting</u> a) <u>Previous Minutes</u> The Part 1 minutes of the FGB Meeting 163, 15/01/24, <b>were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.</b> b) <u>Actions arising from previous FGBs</u> All actions were either complete, in progress, or covered within this meeting's agenda.	<b>Agreed</b>		
4	<u>Business brought forward by the Chair</u> a) Finance Committee (FC) membership: The FC currently consisted of KS, JC, CW, EA. <b>AS was appointed onto the FC Committee.</b> b) Vice-Chair election: TC had nominated himself for the Vice Chair role. <b>Governors appointed TC as Vice Chair until the first FGB of 24/25.</b> 1806: CJ arrived c) Performance & Pay (P&P) Committee Chair election: TC had nominated himself for the P&P Committee Chair. <b>TC was appointed P&amp;P Chair until the first P&amp;P meeting of 24/25.</b> d) The school had sought nominations for a Parent Governor but none had been forthcoming. Therefore, the board had approached KS, already an Associate Member and Chair of the Finance Committee, to be a Parent Governor. KS had re-confirmed her eligibility to stand. KS was appointed as a Parent Governor for a 4-year Term. <b>KS was</b>	<b>Agreed</b>  <b>Agreed</b>  <b>Agreed</b>  <b>Agreed</b>		

Ref, time 164. #	Action or Decision	Owner/ Decision	Date Due	Progress /Date actioned
	<b>appointed onto the 1<sup>st</sup> Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee, Admissions Committee, Finance Committee, and retained the Chair of the Finance Committee.</b>			
5	<p><u>Clerk's update</u>  Correspondence sent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Devon Education Services (DES) weekly updates</li> <li>- National Governance Association (NGA) weekly updates (via email direct to governors who opted-in)</li> </ul> <p>See doc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website Audit action plan Feb 24</li> </ul> <p>a) Having received its annual audit, the Clerk confirmed that the website was compliant. Some observations and suggestions for improvement had been made to JC which JC had actioned.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Whilst the website was evidently compliant with government requirements for maintained schools and should be congratulated for this, why was the section on 'Talented, Able and Gifted Pupils' located at the bottom of the SEND page rather than having a separate page? A: Talented and able pupils should not have been within this section and did not come under the SEND umbrella. JC would make the necessary changes to the website.</p> <p>b) The Clerk had attended DES' Spring Term Clerk's Briefing. This mirrored much of the content of the Governance Briefing which TC had attended, SB directed governors to TC's training feedback at agenda item 15. The main points for governor information/consideration were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes from the government's <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/workload-reduction-taskforce">Workload reduction taskforce: initial recommendations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Removal of Performance Related Pay for teaching staff as of September 2024. Guidance was anticipated by the "end of Spring" which County would then use to update their Model Pay and Appraisal policies. The subsequent consultation period with Trade Unions was at least 30 days. It was hoped that revised Pay and Appraisal policies would be ready for Governor Adoption in the Autumn Term.</li> <li>- A DfE ambition to reduce teachers' and leaders' workload by 5hrs a week, over the next 3 years.</li> <li>- The publication of proposed administrative tasks not to be carried out by teachers/leaders for inclusion in future School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (STPCD).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
6 1812	<p><u>Headteacher's written report</u>  See docs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Headteacher report Feb 2024</li> <li>- Parents evening feedback (tabled at the meeting)</li> </ul>			

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	<p><b>QUESTION:</b> Reference the 5 internal exclusions to date, what were the reasons (were there trends in the reasons for the exclusions)? These were generally 15minute, out of the room, exclusions mainly to do with low-level disturbance in the class.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> The 26 children registered as first choices for Reception in September was extremely encouraging and reflected positively the good reputation of HPNS and the welcome and overall impression that prospective parents receive on visiting the school. However, given that demographic forecasts show a 16% decrease in primary school numbers in Devon between 2016 and 2032, what can be done to continue to encourage families to choose HPNS? The school did as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting the school through its Facebook page (highlighting exciting/additional opportunities) which worked well and was well received;</li> <li>- Retained its individual ethos and curriculum/extra curriculum activities which JC was confident were well received by parents;</li> <li>- Offered individual tours of the school to prospective parents;</li> <li>- Was continuing to strengthen its Nursery provision by broadening the impact of the excellent practice in Reception;</li> <li>- Hosted a local baby/toddler group and continued to develop its links with HPNS' Nursery.</li> </ul> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Was it possible to predict admission numbers into reception for future years? The school could make a rough estimate based on its knowledge of the local community and those who had older siblings already in the school.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Was there more that the school could be doing to attract new families? JC believed that word-of-mouth was most effective in gaining new families to the school rather than Ofsted reports since the recent report hadn't impacted intake numbers. JC was confident, from parental feedback, that HPNS was an attractive school for the curriculum that it offered to children.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> It was noted that, for community members who didn't have children in the school, it was challenging to find out about school events (upcoming fayre dates etc.). Had the school considered re-introducing a newsletter to meet this need? Parents were well communicated with via ParentMail and Facebook. The school had intended to produce a termly Newsletter during the Autumn Term, but this was missed due to staff workload. <b>The intention was for a Spring Term Newsletter to be published.</b></p> <p>CD and TL had attended parents evening on behalf of the Board, seeking feedback from the parent community. JC took note of the feedback for future consideration, noting that the feedback about increasing Nursery outdoor provision would be key to increasing Nursery numbers and that having good outdoor provision was attractive to prospective families. Taking children off site for Forest School Provision presented challenges for HPNS (e.g. increased adult to child ratios and transport). Development of Nursery Provision remained a key focus for the school.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> How had the school dealt with the reported racist/homophobic language incidents? Through direct communication with families, the child and/or class. The families had been supportive of the school's approach to targeting this behaviour.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> How many families did the 23 occurrences of persistently late equate to? Approximately 15 – 18.</p>	JC	Easter	On agenda 165



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	<p><b>directly about planned monitoring activities so that JC can advise if a staff member can be made available for a meeting.</b> JC anticipated a return to normal staffing levels after the Easter Holidays.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> What else might the school consider postponing to take the pressure off staff? Staff meetings had been reduced, the Eco Council had been paused initially, and JC was considering further options e.g. possible delay to the starting of the planned Social Skills Group.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Were staff members' PPA sessions being covered? Not all. Some had been covered internally through staff deployment.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> What were the budget implications? Due to the level of Insurance that the school bought into, some but not all of the absences would be covered by the existing policy. The level of cover provided by the policy had been sufficient historically, but HPNS was currently experiencing a very unusual period of high staff absence, often unrelated to work issues.</p> <p><b>The Finance Committee would be considering Insurances at its next meeting.</b></p> <p><b>As per the Governor Action Plan, governors were asked to feedback to CD about the format/content of the HT report.</b> Did it provide the information that the governors needed? Did the report need tweaking, whilst ensuring not to duplicate the information it held with other reports received to governors throughout the year?</p>	<p><b>Finance Committee</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p>	<p><b>18/03/24</b></p> <p><b>FGB165</b></p>	<p>On agenda 25/01/24</p> <p>On agenda 165</p>
7 1900	<p><u>School Development Plan review of priority #4</u> <i>See doc: SDP 2023-2024 Feb 24</i></p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Concerning the low-level disruption in certain classes, is the SLT confident that measures are being taken, and continuously monitored, so that this does not impact the learning for the rest of the class? Pupils who might have greater impact are directed to leave the room to safeguard others' learning. In some cases, this is already part of a child's planned provision. Low level disruption, when it occurs, centres mainly around children chatting when there is no need for them to do so. We use the red/green cups to signal to children when it is good/not good to talk. A key focus in school at present is ensuring that lessons are as engaging as possible and maintain accountability of the children's participation. This was referenced in the recent Ofsted report where it was noted that in some lessons the children were too passive. The SLT certainly acknowledge that there have been some notable improvements since the last academic year. Staffing absences had impacted recently on the consistency of approaches within two classes in particular - one of these has been improved through a change in staffing and the other has been well supported through different approaches for identified individuals.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Had the School meal survey been completed? Yes. The data analysis was a work in progress.</p>			
8	<p><u>Board skills audit and self-evaluation</u></p> <p><u>Skills audit</u> <b>The following governors were requested to submit their completed audits to the clerk: PL, EA, SS, CW.</b></p> <p><b>The evaluation of the audit was anticipated for FGB165.</b></p>	<p><b>PL/SS/EA/ CW</b></p> <p><b>SB</b></p>	<p>23<sup>rd</sup> Feb</p> <p>FGB165</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>

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	<u>Self-evaluation</u> Consideration was given towards conducting a full board self-evaluation of effectiveness. The board had received an external evaluation in May 2023 and had since undergone many governor changes. <b>The board agreed to wait until the Autumn Term before conducting an evaluation to allow newer governors to become more comfortable with their new roles.</b>	Agreed	Aut 24	On agenda Sept 2024
9 1905	<u>Governor Portfolio and/or Terms of Reference (ToR) reports</u> See docs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor visit form Nursery Feb24</li> <li>• External Advisor proposal</li> <li>• Maths Autumn Term 2023 TC</li> <li>• Reading 12<sup>th</sup> Dec 23</li> </ul> <p>a) Curriculum ToR: It had been agreed, at agenda item 6, that due to staffing challenges in school only reading/writing/maths monitoring would be conducted during the remainder of the Spring Term. Since the document pack for this meeting had been issued, CW had submitted a reading/phonics report. EA would review this, along with the other curriculum reports received, and present an overall picture at the next meeting.</p> <p>b) Nursery ToR: The report had been received by governors, there were no further questions.</p> <p>c) Personnel ToR:  <b>Governors agreed to the appointment of D.Chaplin as the school's External Advisor for 2024/25.</b></p>	EA          Agreed	FGB165	On agenda 165
10 1910	<u>Finance Committee update</u> See doc: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minutes FC Meeting 28 220124 Part 1</li> <li>- SFVS Checklist 2023-24</li> </ul> <p>a) At its meeting of 22.01.24 the committee had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completed benchmarking the school's spending against schools suggested by the DfE to be similar in context.</li> <li>- Received updates on pupil numbers and considered how these would impact the budget</li> <li>- Committed to undertake a Finance Committee skills audit.</li> <li>- Started Spring Term Budget monitoring and anticipated completion of this activity at its March Meeting once responses to questions, asked by governors, had been received from Devon's Finance Officer.</li> </ul> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Had the NPS report been received? No.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Had the school/committee made any further progress, since its meeting, in identifying reasons for the catering overspend? KS had met, on 5<sup>th</sup> Feb with the Finance Officer and identified that monies received for children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) was being included within another income stream. If included as a catering income the catering</p>			

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	<p>overspend became a surplus of approx. £1600. KS had written a visit report in readiness for the next FC meeting of 18.03.24 detailing this further.</p> <p>b) The Finance Committee recommended the SFVS Checklist to the Full Board for final approval. <b>Governors agreed the SFVS Checklist 2023-2024 for submission to County. CD would work with M.Parkes to arrange signature and submission.</b></p>	<b>Agreed CD/M.Parkes</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March	complete
11	<p><u>Policies &amp; Procedures</u></p> <p>a) Policies approved by ToR holders, committees, or individuals in line with delegations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Charging and Remissions Policy (Finance Committee)</li> <li>- Governors' Expenses Policy (Finance Committee)</li> <li>- Intimate Care Policy (reviewed by the school)</li> </ul> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> were procedures in place to protect pupils and staff whilst intimate care was being provided? <b>JC to investigate and report back at the next meeting.</b></p> <p>Policy reviews to carry forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NB: Freedom of Information Policy</li> <li>- NB: Freedom of Information request handling procedure</li> </ul> <p><b>b) Policies reviewed and approved by the Full Governing Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Admissions Policy 2025/26 – school</li> <li>- Admission Policy January 2024 to August 2025 - Nursery</li> </ul>	<b>JC</b>          <b>Agreed</b>	FGB 165	On agenda 165
12 1917	<p><u>Working Party Feedback – Partnerships</u></p> <p>JC had met with a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) to make initial investigations into their offer to schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schools could retain a local governing board with lesser responsibilities as some roles were retained centrally by the Trust Board (e.g. Finance).</li> <li>- HPNS staff would not be expected to cover for other school staff absences at short notice, but there were increased progression opportunities for staff working as part of a Trust.</li> <li>- Support was offered to schools with schools earning autonomy over time. Greater support was given where there were identified areas of concern.</li> <li>- Some MAT schools were local to HPNS</li> <li>- The MAT had achieved 6 positive Ofsted reports in the last year</li> </ul>			



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	<p>See doc: - Safeguarding Action Plan 2023.24</p> <p>Progress had made against the Action Plan; some actions were a work in progress. <b>The Action Plan was carried forward as an agenda item until all actions were complete.</b></p> <p><b>CJ had initiated a “filtering and monitoring” survey with M.Harris and would report back on findings.</b></p> <p>TL confirmed that she had read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.</p>	JC	FG165	Carry f.wd
		CJ	FGB165	On agenda 165
15	<p><u>Training</u> See docs: - Governance Update feedback to FGB Jan 24 TC</p> <p>a) Confirmation of training attended (with feedback as appropriate): - AS: Governor induction. - PL: Safeguarding for governors - CW: Budget planning and monitoring – good. - TC: Governors’ briefing. TC was thanked by the board for his thorough report.</p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> Had HPNS considered altering the length of its summer holidays? Maintained School Term Times were set by County, HPNS was unable to alter these. Trusts had more autonomy in setting their term times. <b>QUESTION:</b> Had the school planned for supporting children who were questioning their gender? The school would consult government guidance when it was released.</p> <p>b) Identified training needs: - <b>TL, SS, CM, PL were asked to access their email from the Clerk of 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb to identify their induction and training next steps for completion.</b> - <b>CM: Headteacher Appraisal training via the NGA.</b></p>	TL/SS?CM/ PL CM	FGB165 FGB165	On agenda 165
16	<p>What have we done today that has positively impacted the quality of our children’s education?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Received and questioned an in-depth Headteacher report.</li> <li>- Governor challenge was evidently developing.</li> <li>- Understood the school to be experience a challenging staffing period and agreed revised governor monitoring activities to relieve staff workload.</li> <li>- Identified next steps to consider future partnership working</li> </ul> <p>1955: The meeting ended.</p>			
<b>Next Meetings:</b>				

Ref, time 164. #	Action or Decision	Owner/ Decision	Date Due	Progress /Date actioned
FGB: 18/03/24 @ 6pm – Yr.6 classroom FC: 18/03/24 @ 1pm – JC's Office P&P: 11/03/4 @ 6pm - virtual				

Signed as a true and accurate record:

Signed	Date