



Thaxted Primary School
Minutes of Full Governing Body Meeting
Wednesday 21st April 2022, 5.45pm
Held at the school

Name	Ref	Type	Present	Role	Term
Peter Boorman	PB	Parent	Not present		05.11.24
Justine Brooks	JB	Acting Headteacher	Present		
Emma Dymond	ED	Staff	Present		26.09.25
Hazel Gotfraind	HG	Co-opted	Present (Z)		19.11.23
Maggi Griffiths	MG	Co-opted	Present		24.01.26
Jamie Henderson	JH	Parent	Present		26.09.25
Anne Hopkins	AH	Partnership	Present	Chair of Governors	14.09.22
Colin Howell	CH	Co-opted	Apologies	Vice Chair	30.06.24
Debra Legge	DL	Partnership	Apologies		29.04.25
Jenny Reilly	JR	Parent	Present (Z)		13.11.22
Jon Spencer	JSp	Local Authority	Present		20.03.26
Charlotte Tillbrook	CT	Co-opted	Present	Vice Chair	27.06.25
Saroj Velamakanni	SV	Parent	Present		25.06.25
Attendees					
Jackie Sweeting	JSw		Present	Clerk and SBM	

HG and JR joined the meeting by Zoom

Item	Detail	Action
1.	<u>ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Received and accepted from DL and CH.	
2.	<u>DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST</u> There were no new interests or conflicts relating to any items on the agenda.	
3.	<u>AOB</u> None	
4.	<u>2022/23 BUDGET</u> A draft budget had been available with the meeting papers together with a commentary from JSw, a breakdown of professional fees for 21/22 and the 2021/22 final outturn. AH had sent a set of questions relating to the budget, which had been answered in advance of the meeting (document attached). A governor queried why there had appeared to be loss on the residential trip when, being outside of school hours, it was a requirement for parents to pay for their children. JSw explained that a child had injured himself shortly before the trip took place and the school had chosen to reimburse the parent so that the child did not attend. The residential provider had considered it possible for the child to attend so was not prepared to reimburse the school.	

APPROVED

FGB Meeting 21.04.22

	<p>A query was raised regarding trips in general; income was lower than expenditure for 21/22 because some parents did not pay. JB explained that the school could only ask for voluntary contributions if the trip took place during the school day. Consequently, some parents chose not to pay. The governors asked whether this was an argument for bringing more trips in-house in the form of workshops, productions etc. JB stated that the school was running fewer external trips, but that it was important to consider the cultural capital of taking children away from the school. Examples of this were the KS2 trip to a pantomime – some children had not been in a theatre before, and a recent trip to Mountfitchet Castle – some children had not been on a coach.</p> <p>The governors discussed the viability of the Breakfast and After-school clubs. They wondered whether income would ever exceed expenditure in the current climate and asked what the school’s options would be if this were not the case. JB reminded the governors that the school was expected to be able to signpost parents to before and after-school provision, and there were no other providers in the area. The school was doing a lot to promote both clubs and it was hoped that income would gradually increase over the course of this financial year. A governor suggested the club could be opened up to local children who did not attend Thaxted Primary School. JB queried whether this would be practical as the children would need to be transported from their school to the club. However, it could be considered in more detail in the future if the clubs continued to operate at a loss.</p> <p>The governors approved the 22/23 budget unanimously.</p>	
5.	<p><u>MEMBERSHIP</u></p> <p>5.1 JS and MG were welcomed on to the board.</p> <p>5.2 Parent Governor Vacancy The governors agreed to advertise for a parent governor for a second time as it was thought that it was likely to result in more nominations since the headteacher appointment. AH stated that she wished to speak to all potential candidates, prior to them submitting a nomination form in order to ensure that they had a firm grasp of the role and the commitment needed to it</p> <p>5.3 Chair As advised at the start of the academic year, AH planned to step down at the end of the summer term; her term expired on the 14.09.22 so it made sense for a new Chair to begin at the start of the new academic year. She said it was disappointing that the board’s succession planning had fallen apart, but stressed that it would need to nominate a chair in order to be compliant. The possibility of advertising externally for a Partnership Governor who would replace AH and become chair was touched upon. JSp said that he would be prepared to consider becoming chair despite only just joining the board. It was agreed that he would discuss this with AH and decide in time for the next meeting.</p>	AH/JS
6.	<p><u>RESULTS OF THE STAFF WELLBEING SURVEY</u></p> <p>The governors had received copies of all of the completed surveys, including those filled in as hard copies. It was noted that there were fewer responses than received on previous occasions, and that several staff had expressed discontent with the governors regarding the decision to appoint Caroline Crompton as headteacher. Some of the governors had found the comments relating to the criticism of the board offensive. AH highlighted some of the positives such as the high scores for teamwork.</p>	

	<p>JB reported on the whole-staff resilience training that had taken place on the non-pupil day on the 19/4/22. A high number of staff had attended from teachers, LSAs and admin. It had been useful to be reminded of the different techniques that could be used to cope with stress.</p> <p>The governors agreed that the timing of the survey had been unfortunate; it had been scheduled for the week before the end of term, but this had coincided with the headteacher interviews, so emotions were still very raw when it was issued.</p>	
7.	<p><u>GOVERNOR BUSINESS</u></p> <p>7.1 The board’s focus for this term and moving into the 2022/23 Year</p> <p>The governors agreed that communication between the board and staff had broken down and asked ED and JB how best to proceed in the short term. They suggested that people needed some time to digest the changes, but that in the meantime the governors should continue with their main objective of monitoring the SIP and any other monitoring responsibilities.</p> <p>AH referred to class link governors and said that she had hoped that this would enable governors to get to know the classroom-based staff on a more informal basis. JB maintained that the class links could still work, but that governors should consider visiting classes on a more informal basis, for example to assist with events/trips, or help to hear readers. The governors expressed concern about visiting classrooms; they had been warned in the past that teachers were nervous of visits that could be regarded as a lesson observation, and felt that this would be detrimental to the already poor relationship between governors and staff at the current time. JB agreed that this should be avoided but felt that a short visit to the classroom would work.</p> <p>In addition to monitoring visits JB felt that the School Improvement Evening would offer a good opportunity for governors to talk informally with staff. The date for this would be confirmed over the following week and AH would meet with JB to agree on a format.</p> <p>AH asked whether there was any more that the governors could do to support the SLT in what was clearly a difficult set of circumstances. ED took the opportunity to express the disappointment that she felt on behalf of the whole SLT regarding the governor’s decision to appoint a headteacher externally. She felt this would have a domino-effect as it left several staff members having to make a backwards step. However, she thought the SLT were resilient; they would pick themselves back up and battle on for the remainder of the year. AH said that JB and ED’s attitude since the decision had been admirable.</p> <p>AH reiterated the need for governors to continue with their monitoring as stated in the SIP. She had concerns regarding the level of commitment shown by some of the governors as it fell short of the participation that they had agreed to at the beginning of the year. They were not visiting school as much as expected and monitoring reports had been slow to materialise. She hoped that things would improve before CC was on board in September.</p> <p>The governors discussed the best way to introduce CC to the school community. AH had met with her and made her aware of the upset caused by her appointment; she was</p>	

	<p>confident that CC would treat the situation with the sensitivity that it required. It was agreed that CC would not visit the school until after half term. She would initially arrange to meet with JB to agree a plan for introducing her to other staff and the remainder of the school community.</p> <p>The governors also debated how they could improve links with the parents. AH reported that she had received three lengthy letters from parents expressing their concern at the decision to appoint CC. It was necessary to improve relations and ensure that governors were more accessible. The possibility of a parents' forum was discussed. Many governors felt that it would be poorly attended, but a decision was made to schedule an event to see whether this would be the case. It was agreed that one would take place just before the afternoon pick-up and the other later in the day, so that working parents could attend. Dates tbc</p> <p>In addition to this the governors would continue to provide short articles about the work of the governing board for the newsletter, which could also then feature on the school's Facebook page and Class Dojo. It was agreed that JH would provide the next article, which would coincide with the parent election.</p> <p>7.2 RAG rating against the SIP for the Spring term This was completed (attached)</p> <p>7.3 Clerking arrangements AH had received a lead via the DEEP headteachers, for the clerk at Rodings. However, once contacted, it became clear that she did not have the capacity to take on another school. Since then she had heard that a retired business manager in Bishops Stortford had taken a clerking qualification and was now working for the local governing board at Joyce Frankland. This would be followed up. JSp said that his wife might also have some contacts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JH</p>
8.	<p><u>MEETING REVIEW</u></p> <p>8.1 Confidential sections to be agreed None</p> <p>8.2 Responsibilities for review for the next meeting</p> <p>Curriculum/Teaching and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated assessment data – AH, SV • Updated SIP - AH, JR • Annual report from the Inclusion Manager and SEND Governor, CT, JH <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/22 trading accounts and business plans for 22/23, CH, JH • 21/22 cashflow CH, JH <p>Personnel Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staff pay (all governors) • Proposed staffing structure for 22/23 (all governors) 	

9.	<p><u>AOB</u> None</p>	
10.	<p><u>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETINGS</u></p> <p>Wednesday 25th May 2022, 5.45pm Wednesday 13th July 2022, 5.45pm</p>	
	<p>The minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting</p> <p>_____ Date_____</p> <p>Chair</p>	