



LOOSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE 2022/2023 MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18TH OF MAY 2023

PRESENT

John Edgar, Trustee and LGB Chair (JE)	Katherine Atkinson, Co-opted Governor (KA)
Richard Benjamin, Parent Governor (RB)	Tetyana Bennett, Parent Governor (TB)
Trevor North, Headteacher for Loose Primary School (TN)	Sean Johnson, Associate Governor and Deputy Headteacher for Loose Primary School (SJ)
Sam McMahon, Associate Governor (SM)	

IN ATTENDANCE

Stuart Thompson, Observer (ST)	Stacey Marsh, Governance Clerk (Clerk)
--------------------------------	--

PART A – PUBLIC MINUTES

Yellow highlighted text demonstrates challenge / questions to the Trust representatives

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 JE welcomed all parties to the meeting, and introductions were made to Stuart Thompson as an observer. The Trust Board are due to ratify ST's term of office on the 24th of May 2023.

1.2 No apologies were given

1.2.1 Elizabeth Harris was noted as absent.

Chair action; Check if Elizabeth Harris is continuing in role as Staff Governor.

The meeting was quorate throughout

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 All parties were given the opportunity to declare any additional interests against the agenda to which none were declared.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 The minutes presented were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place on the 22nd of March 2023.

Clerk action; JE to sign mark the minutes as approved on Governor Hub

4. ACTIONS OUTSTANDING

4.1 *Action point 1 (JE and TN to arrange to meet with the central Finance team to explore specifics within the budget);* Following the term 4 LGB meeting, TN met with the central finance team to discuss the schools' budget and financial position. Looking ahead to this year, the initial budget highlighted that with the current structure, there would be circa £111,000 deficit which is both not affordable and concerning.

4.1.1 Throughout the discussions with the central finance team, supply expenditure of £40,000 this year has been excessive and needs to be significantly reduced.

Since the start of term 5, staff within the school have been redeployed to cover absence and this has reduced the use of external supply cover. Going forward the school will be looking to use external supply cover when the absences cannot be covered in-house, and this will reduce the supply cover expenditure.

4.1.2 Within the budget there are staffing gaps, and these are being explored with a further meeting scheduled for this week to look at cost savings.

4.1.3 Photocopying costs have been highlighted as excessive; since January 2023, the school has spent circa £7,000 on photocopying costs. In addition to this there has been considerable spending on glue sticks where work is being photocopied and stuck into pupils' books for completion. This needs to change going forward and alternative options are being explored. In addition to that, TN has requested for the photocopiers to be set to print in black and white as standard with staff needing to choose to print in colour but only where absolutely necessary. Teachers are being (teachers will be) encouraged to use the visualiser board in the classroom to present work, with adjustments being considered for those who cannot work from the board at the front of the class.

Governors challenged if the school has considered the photocopying contract costs; This has not been explored by the school yet although it is believed that this is being looked at by the central team for all schools.

Action point 1; JE to liaise with Andy Lacey, Trust Business Manager, regarding the photocopier contracts.

In addition to the teachers being asked to reduce work that is photocopied and stuck into books, TN has asked for them to think creatively about how they deliver the curriculum to pupils. Work has started within history lessons and there is evidence to suggest it is being taught in a more meaningful, exciting, and engaging way for both the teachers and pupils.

4.1.4 JE has previously commented to the central finance team that the reports provided around the school's budget and expenditure are too long, and they have now been tasked with re-formatting the reports so that they are easier to read and show the different areas of income and expenditure more clearly.

4.1.5 During the last LGB meeting, TN raised concerns around the areas of overspend across the school and has since been advised the areas of concern are related to the building works that were completed and the time delay between of the funding coming in.

4.1.6 A significant amount of work has been undertaken around the school's financial position by both the central finance team and the Headteachers.

4.2 Action point 2 (Governors to contact SH and TN with availability for SATS week to attend school); JE attended during SATS week and highlighted that the instructions that pupils receive ahead of the SATS test are excessive and cover a whole A4 sheet. Throughout the time JE was present, pupils were well behaved and focussed on the task they had been asked to complete. There was no evidence of pupils being upset in the way that has been highlighted in the media. JE acknowledged that the way in which SATS were completed were a credit to the year 6 team, particularly how the children were prepared for the tests.

5. SCHOOL STRATEGIC REPORT

5.1 Since TN has joined the school, he has spent time getting to know the school, pupils, staff and the processes that are in place. He has highlighted some key priorities to focus on and these were shared with Governors.

5.1.1 Priority 1 – developing a knowledge rich curriculum; TN has spoken with DHT for leading curriculum, literacy lead and maths lead, looked at books and observed classrooms and has seen evidence of strong sequences being taught. Some subjects need refinement and development, particularly RE, PSHE and computing with the expectation that this will happen over time.

Work with teachers has been explored around delivery. TN has spent time with the pupils during lunch times and they have commented that their lessons are not exciting and therefore this needs addressing.

TN has since tasked teachers with being more creative in their teaching styles and to deliver the curriculum in a way that excites the pupils.

Governors questioned if teachers have been given a framework to work within for their creative teaching;

Teachers are still required to cover the knowledge within the programmes of study however ultimately it is down to them to deliver it in a way that will be inspiring and memorable for the pupils.

Governors challenged how this instruction is going to be monitored; Monitoring will be ongoing, and a formal plan will be in place for the start of September 2023.

TN commented that the team have taken his feedback on board well and have made a good start at changing the way they approach the curriculum. Some staff have commented that they have requested to teach freely in this way previously, however they have been advised that this is not in-line with the expectations of the central team. TN has challenged this with the central team who have commented that this is not the case. Branwen Taylor has been invited to attend staff briefings with the literacy lead and staff are excited at what is now being asked of them. Looking at assessment, there has previously been two checkpoints; one at the start of the term, and one at the end. TN has challenged this process and mid-point checkpoints are now being explored.

5.1.2 Priority 2 – Writing; TN has highlighted that the quality of writing across the school is poor. The writing curriculum is heavily focused around SPAG (spelling, punctuation, and grammar) and not on creative writing. There are pockets of good writing evidenced particularly in year 1 and year 6. TN has been in discussion with the literacy lead who commented that this is the way that the central team have asked for the writing curriculum to be, however upon speaking with the central team, this is not the case. TN has invited Branwen Taylor to meetings throughout the term to talk about the trust vision and the writing lead now feels empowered to look at how best to approach writing.

The writing lead held a staff training session this week and presented the writing vision to the staff which was well received.

TN has invited Branwen Taylor to attend the school vision setting day as part of building a relationship with the central team.

Governors questioned if the trust are more visible in the school than others; TN suggested that the central team are less visible currently as Mark Chatley is currently based at St Katherine's School, however by asking Branwen Taylor to be present during curriculum session, this has ensured that staff have received a clear message and the "anti-trust" of the central team is being addressed.

Going forward, the school is in a stronger position as the teachers now know that they will have the freedom to be creative with the curriculum if the content is covered.

5.1.3 Priority 3 – Instructional Coaching; Where instructional coaching has been taking place and improvements being made, staff have been given the opportunity to celebrate their successes at staff meetings. Initially staff were reluctant to share what is working well, however as further meetings have taken place they have engaged more. There have been comments made around the lack of time that teachers must undertake instructional coaching and there have been conversations to address this.

Governors challenged if the instructional coaching strategy is school, or trust based; Instructional coaching is a strategy developed by the school with the trust providing support where needed. Leaders supporting absence within the school has limited the instructional coaching opportunities.

5.1.4 Priority 4 – Maths; Maths is taught well through the White Rose Hub, however there is a distinct lack of manipulatives used in the classroom. A new maths lead has been appointed with experience and they have shared their vision for the curriculum. They have also shared concern around how the units within the curriculum are delivered with some teachers reporting that if they feel they need to spend more time on a particular topic then they will do so. This does, however, eat into the time allocated for the next unit and this puts the sequential curriculum at risk. TN has requested the maths lead advise teachers that they need to complete the units within the time allocated, and if there are pupils that need additional support, this can be explored through interventions, or adjusting the timetable where appropriate.

The maths lead is currently trialing the use of White Rose workbooks within their class that match the modules within the scheme. This will also support the strategy to reduce the amount of photocopying, however, does come at a cost of £170 per class per term.

TN has also raised as to why maths manipulatives are not stored in the classroom for pupils to use with ease during their lessons and this is being addressed.

6. FINANCE REPORT

6.1 Governors acknowledged the March management accounts.

7. SAFEGUARDING

7.1 TN raised concerns around the "My Concern" system that is used for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns. Staff have also reported that they receive an excessive number of emails from My Concern that make it difficult to understand who is dealing with a particular concern.

TN has met with the safeguarding team and shared his concerns, and this is being explored further to ensure that the system is fit for purpose and effective for managing safeguarding across the school.

7.1.1 TN has previously used CPOMS as a safeguarding management tool which has an efficient way to delegating concerns to people and separating safeguarding concerns from behaviour and so on.

Governors questioned if My Concern is a tool that the trust have recommended to be used;

Action point 2; JE to speak with Andy Lacy about My Concern contract.

8. OTHER SCHOOL MATTERS

8.1 Recruitment has taken place for four members of staff; two of which were staff resignations, one was the result of a promotion, and one was due to retirement.

8.1.1 An ECT (Early Career Teacher) will be joining Loose in September from Coxheath Primary School.

8.1.2 One vacancy is yet to be filled for September, and recruitment is ongoing.

8.1.2 *Governors questioned if the Teaching Assistant structure has been finalised for September;* Teaching Assistants have not yet been finalised for September and members of the senior leadership team are keen for the structure not to impact negatively on teacher workload and wellbeing, however this needs to be considered carefully and in-line with affordability.

8.1.3 There are several support staff vacancies being covered by internal casual staff and these will be advertised as appropriate.

8.1.4 *Governors questioned if the school has considered the employment of Apprentices;* This has been discussed previously and further consideration could be made, considering that the school pays into the Apprenticeship Levy Fund and could lead to cost savings for the school.

Action point 3; TN to explore the use of Apprentices within the school with the central HR manager.

9. GOVERNOR MATTERS

9.1 Governors were reminded that they are required to complete GDPR training. In addition to that, they were advised that an email has been sent today by Andy Lacey, Trust Business Manager informing Governors of the requirement to complete Cyber Security training.

Action point 4; Governors to complete GDPR and Cyber Security training.

9.2 Following the monitoring presentation strategy JE and TN have been in discussion about the way in which monitoring reports are presented to the LGB. For the next monitoring session that is scheduled to take place on the 16th of June focussed on the quality of education, it was suggested for Governors to look at the same priority but from the angle of their area of responsibility. In addition to this, rather than drafting a report to be submitted, Governors will be tasked with discussing their monitoring visit in detail at the term 6 LGB meeting. If this approach is well received, TN would like to propose that the format of meetings in 2023/24 be changed so that meetings in terms 1, 3, and 5 will be procedural, and those meetings in terms 2, 4 and 6 will be based entirely around the monitoring that Governors have undertaken.

Governors were in full agreement to support the change to monitoring reports, and the meeting format for term 6.

Clerk action; Send monitoring strategy presentation to ST.

9.3 Monitoring pairs remain unchanged except for ST who will be responsible for Leadership and Finance. *Clerk action: Liaise with JE and TN to confirm the agenda format for term 6.*

10. TRUST MATTERS

10.1 Mark Chatley has moved across to support St Katherine's School in the absence of the Headteacher. A new Headteacher has been appointed and will start in September 2023.

11. POLICIES

11.1 Governors noted the Academy Risk Register and made no comments

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

12.1 Governors confirmed that a separate set of confidential minutes will be stored for this meeting.

13. ITEMS TO REPORT TO TRUST BOARD

13.1 Concerns relating to My Concern.

14. NEXT MEETING DATE

14.1 The term 6 meeting date was confirmed as Wednesday 5th July at 5.00pm

15. MEETING CLOSE

15.1 All parties were thanked for their attendance and contribution at the meeting.

The meeting concluded.

Item	Action	Owner	Update
------	--------	-------	--------

Matters arising from this meeting			
1.	JE to liaise with Andy Lacey regarding the photocopier contracts.	JE	
2.	JE to speak with Andy Lacy about My Concern contract.	JE	
3.	TN to explore the use of Apprentices within the school with the central HR manager.	TN	
4.	Governors to complete GDPR and Cyber Security training.	All Governors	
Chair's Actions			
	<i>Check if Elizabeth Harris is continuing in role as Staff Governor.</i>	JE	
Clerk Actions			
	<i>JE to sign mark the minutes as approved on Governor Hub</i>	JE / Clerk	
	Send monitoring strategy presentation to ST.	Clerk	Complete
	Liaise with JE and TN to confirm the agenda format for term 6.	Clerk	
	Circulate suspension and permanent exclusion guidance to Governors.	Clerk	Complete DfE document
	Check requirements for Governors to receive training on panels for suspensions and exclusions.	Clerk	Complete <i>Governors only require statutory training at an Independent Review Panel Stage; however it is still a recommendation for Governors to have panel training for suspensions and exclusions before they sit on a panel.</i>