

MINUTES
of the General Meeting of the Local Governing Body for Starcross Primary School
held on 26 April 2023 at 5.30 pm at Starcross Primary School

Present:		
Name	Title/Role	Initials
Sarah Bartholomew	Parent Governor	SB
Emma Lewry	Headteacher	EL
Martin Veasey (virtually)	Co-Opted Governor, Chair	MV
Annette Wade	Co-Opted Governor	AW
Rachel Hill	Local Governance Officer	LGO
Tish Broome	Staff Governor	TB
Louise McLellan (Guest)	Potential new governor	LM
Gemma Posey (Guest)	Potential new governor	GP
Apologies:		
None		
Absent:		
None		

Key to acronyms

LGB	Local Governing Board	CFO	Chief Financial Officer
IET	Ivy Education Trust	SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLT	Senior Leadership Team	TCSML	Teignmouth Community School, Mill Lane
SENDCo	Special Education Needs Coordinator	SEND	Special Education Needs and Disabilities
STA	Starcross Primary School & Nursery	PP	Pupil Premium
SLP	Speech-Language Pathologist		

Item	Content	Action
23/4/1.1	Welcome and apologies: MV opened the meeting at 5.35 pm and welcomed all present.	
23/4/1.2	Declarations of Interest: None received.	
23/4/1.3	<p>Proposed new co-opted governors: Louise McLellan and Gemma Posey. Redacted application forms had been circulated on Governor Hub in advance. LM was invited to explain motivations for joining the LGB and aims for being a Governor. LM has worked in childcare for 20 years at Exeter University. Now working for Devon and Somerset Fire Service as a Safeguarding officer. LM is keen to support the community and is supported by her employer for this role. GP has been a Y1 primary school teacher for 15 years. She became the SENDCo and is on the SLT. GP has a passion for continuous provision.</p> <p>LM and GP left the meeting for Governors to discuss the nominations and vote.</p> <p>MV proposed appointments of LM and GP. Unanimously in favour and duly APPOINTED. LM and GP re-joined the meeting and MV confirmed that the 2 recommendations will go to Trust Board on 16 May 2023 for formal appointment.</p> <p>LM and GP were invited to stay for the remainder of the meeting as guests. Action: LGO to forward DES Induction training opportunities to GP and LM Action: MV to follow up application from Viktoria Bak.</p>	LGO MV
23/4/1.4	<p>Review progress against Governance Improvement Plan:</p> <p>(i) Governor Training: The Starcross governor training log had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. MV requested all governors ensure they are compliant with the level 2 safeguarding training. Action: LGO to email IET training requirements.</p> <p>(ii) Cycle of Governor visits: MV advised that he had spoken with the Chair of TCSML for advice. Action: MV/EL to work together to devise a cycle. The Chair at TCSML had recommended that all link governors have a direct counterpart with a member of STA staff and to generate a culture pick topic area. This would involve inviting the staff lead into an LGB meeting for a 10 minute presentation with the link governor. Action: MV/EL to work together on this.</p> <p>(iii) Recruitment of new Governors: This has been covered in 23/4/1.3 above.</p>	LGO MV/EL MV/EL

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	(iv) Link Role for TB: MV advised that he had had an email conversation with TB. TB has advised she would consider taking on a personal development role within the LGB. Action: MV/TB to have a further catch up to think about specifics and evolve the role further.	MV/TB
23/4/2.1	<p>Matters Arising from meeting held on 08.02.23:</p> <p>(i) 23/3/4.3. Safeguarding meeting with Lara Stead on 03.04.23. This will be dealt with under agenda item 8 below.</p> <p>(ii) 23/4/4.3. Protocol for suspension notifications. Action: LGO to contact TGO for advice and forward to EL/MV.</p> <p>(iii) 23/3/4.4. Curriculum and Early Reading rolling plan. SB/EL to report. This matter is dealt with under agenda item 23/4/4.1 below.</p> <p>(iv) 23/3/4.5 EL to review data in part B of the PP report. Actioned.</p> <p>(v) 23/3/5. EL to update SIP regarding plans in place to achieve knowledge transfer. Actioned.</p> <p>(vi) 23/3/5 Parent forum to be set up to talk about SEND and improve perception. MV reported. A parent forum will be held on 30th June.</p> <p>(vii) 23/3/6. EL to email Starcross Spring Term monitoring schedule overview. Actioned. Action: EL to resend schedule to all governors together with the summer term monitoring schedule overview.</p> <p>(viii) 23/3/8.1 MV to enquire if Zoe Briant-Evans could lead a Visioning workshop. MV reported ZBE has confirmed she can facilitate this. ZBE had advised that governors should have a clear understanding of the Trust vision and how STA fits into this prior to taking part in the workshop. A late June date was discussed for the session. Whether the session should include the new HT and EL was discussed. Action: MV to forward strategic planning material for the LGO to post on Governor Hub for all governors to read and feedback.</p>	<p>LGO</p> <p>EL</p> <p>MV/LGO</p>
23/4/2/2	<p>Agree as a true and accurate record:</p> <p>It was AGREED by those who were in attendance that the minutes of the 08.02.23 are a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
23/4/3.1	<p>Chair's Report:</p> <p>MV reported.</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>Jon Newman, CFO of IET had presented to Starcross governors at the February LGB meeting. This had been 3 weeks ahead of budget. The Chairs' meeting, held following budget, had exposed financial concerns for Starcross. Staff costs are high. A budget deficit can only be approved if there is a clear budget recovery plan. Class sizes may need to be reviewed.</p> <p>EL advised that since the Chairs' meeting it is apparent that the projected deficit for this year is hoped to be less than anticipated. The teaching pay awards have been announced for next year and there will also be support staff pay awards. These pay awards have caused a significant change to the projected deficit for the next academic year and have started a conversation around how Starcross Primary School & Nursery can reduce the deficit and what the school is aiming for. EL is meeting with KQ, IET CEO to discuss logistics.</p> <p>Q: Are classes full? No. If we were full it could be workable. We are looking at how we can take more children in locally as well as from outside our catchment. The challenge now is curriculum expectations and planning. The school needs to think carefully about how children are taught and class sizes. STA is the only one Form-entry primary school in the area.</p> <p>Q: Is there any more that can be done to market the school? AW suggested that the school needs to promote open days, the abundance of school facilities and clubs. A further positive is how closely the pre-school works with the school. The school swimming pool is a great facility and selling point as is the Forest School. Starcross has also done much and worked hard to support SEND. Family Time was effective at promoting the school.</p> <p>Q: Are there 23 new starters? Yes. What are the reasons for this? Some are because of the catchment, or that we are a quieter school. There is a second entry round in May.</p>	
23/4/4.1	<p>Link Governor Updates:</p> <p>SEND</p> <p>MV's SEND Visit report was circulated in advance on Governor Hub. The acting SENDCo for STA, Tamsin Vanderford (TV), has been allocated time up to July to focus on SEND provision which is a SIP priority. TV is being supported by the SEND lead from the Riviera Trust and the TCS Safeguarding lead. Greater monitoring of progress is required and also a need to improve</p>	

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	<p>perception of SEND provision through a communication strategy. This has been addressed through the parent survey which has indicated knowledge gaps. A SEND Forum will be held on 30th June.</p> <p>Curriculum SB's Curriculum Visit report was circulated in advance on Governor Hub. Year 5 had been visited and pupil feedback from Years 1, 2, 3 and 5 observed. The specific objectives were to observe the SIP priority to create curriculum term plans which show planned progression and knowledge of skills; Milestone 2 (Spring Term): to explore and share good practice for supporting children knowing and remembering more with focus subjects and to ensure key vocabulary for subject knowledge is well chosen and enables children to access the subject at more depth.</p> <p>Science: SB had observed and spoken to children and reviewed the curriculum on the website. The use of Floor books is working well and children have access to them during reading for pleasure. This document needs to incorporate Preschool and Reception steps documents and SB will meet with TB about this. Action: EL to review the website and update the science curriculum plan for Reception and Preschool.</p> <p>Q: Are Floor books new and what are they? EL responded that the school has been using Floor books for approximately two years. They are to primarily record practical learning and objectives in science. An external visit had taken place last week from Sarah Ryder who had praised Years 1, 3 and 5 use of science books and Floor books to talk about their learning.</p> <p>Early Reading. SB had met with the staff member to talk about work and creating reading spines. They had talked about changing the phonics programme and moving to Read Write Inc. A report is to be circulated about this.</p> <p>Q: Will the SIP priority on writing that has been delayed take place in September? Yes, we had an SLT meeting this week to talk through capacity. Work on reading and reading spines has been prioritised. A couple of actions will take place in Summer 2 but most will take place in September.</p> <p>Q: Is the school moving from Floppy's Phonics to Read Write Inc? Yes, we have been exploring the impact of the current programme and looking at how we can move forward. Floppy's phonics is not having impact we want. IET have paid for the cost of releveling the books and training in Read Write Inc which is more structured.</p> <p>Reading spines will be introduced for each year group with the emphasis on a broader exposure to different genres and one book chosen for the whole school. Grids and images will be produced to enable parents to see what children will have exposure to. Years 4, 5 and 6 will have a read aloud book and a poem a day.</p> <p>Q: As highlighted in red on the SIP for the older children, can we push phonics this term? Yes, specifically handwriting, free writing and perseverance. Staff capacity is currently stretched and the bigger projects will begin in September. Staff are passionate about the work they are doing.</p> <p>PP & Vulnerable Children AW reported. She has not carried out a PP visit since the last LGB in February. She has watched an NGA talk on disadvantage which has provided more clarity around the school's approach and how the school can address and break down barriers to learning. AW has also talked to pupils who attended the recent Trust-wide music event which had a positive impact on social and emotional confidence for the children involved.</p> <p>Health & Safety AW's Curriculum Visit report was circulated in advance on Governor Hub. The Fire bid has been successful and work will take place during the summer holidays. Action: EL to check visitors sign in process works for a fire alarm.</p>	<p>EL</p> <p>EL</p>

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	<p>Action: EL to seek clarification from the IET Health & Safety Officer if the STA Maintenance Technician can be one of the school H&S co-ordinators. If he can't could one of the administrators become a co-ordinator?</p> <p>Q: How often does a fire drill take place? Termly, but we have talked about half termly and also about a lock in.</p> <p>Q: Will a gate be put in place to stop children going onto the road? EL replied this is something we can ask for.</p> <p>Q: Will there be a padlock on the gate going into the walkway? Yes, EL to action.</p> <p>Q: From a safeguarding point of view the school is very open for the public to look in, could artwork be used as a block? Yes, this is something we could look at doing.</p>	<p>EL</p> <p>EL</p>
23/4/5	<p>Headteacher's Report: EL was thanked for her report, circulated in advance on Governor Hub, which was taken as read. Questions were invited.</p> <p>Q: How do we know whether children are behaving in line with the school behaviour policy at breaktimes? Are the playtime assistants adequately trained to monitor this, and intervene with any inappropriate behaviour? Are incidents recorded by playtime assistants as well as by staff? Have any recent incidents of bullying and inappropriate behaviour at playtimes reduced, and have any lessons been learnt? The Behaviour policy has been in transit since September. The HT (EL) and Acting SENDCo (TV) are always available. If an incident occurs in the playground all children are sent inside and EL/TV are called who deal with any incident above a certain level. TV has been trained on how to respond to children. All significant incidents are recorded. CPOMS is used. Parents are contacted. EL reports to the Trust on different incidents that occur. Work will continue around this area of provision.</p> <p>Q: With regards to cyber-bullying, has the Year 5 cyber-bullying outside of school time ceased, and has cyber-bullying now been added to the school policy, as previously requested? This forms part of a process that needs to be re-agreed within the Behaviour policy. Children are encouraged to be good citizens outside of school.</p> <p>Q: Is there a need for key stage 2 children and parents to have more support with online safety and more regular reminders? Gathering feedback what would be useful. Agreed brief bite sized online safety information within the newsletter would be helpful. Action: EL</p>	<p>EL</p>
23/4/6	<p>Finance & Resources: Review of School Risk Register. This was included within the HT's report. There were no questions.</p> <p>Summary of Management Accounts received from CFO. This matter has been covered in agenda item 3.1 above. IET were thanked for supporting the school with Read Write Inc and conversations around staffing.</p> <p>Review and monitor Health & Safety site specific arrangements as detailed in the IET Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy. Q: Is there a process in place that ensures or monitors that risk assessments are undertaken and reviewed annually, and significant changes followed up? Action: EL to seek clarification from the Trust.</p> <p>Review staffing provision and wellbeing including staff absence rates. Q: Is there anything to report back on staff wellbeing in respect of the HT leaving? On top of the financial situation and lack of staff this is a challenging time. Q: Does the school have a wellbeing champion – someone who is open and approachable? This is something we need to look at. As the school enters further uncertainty we have asked for further support from the Trust. A Wellbeing education support package is in place and it would be beneficial to remind staff of this. Q: Could we ask staff what can we do to make the summer term better in terms of workload? Yes. We need to make sure everyone feels valued. Q: I have noticed that the children and staff have lost confidence since Covid, how do we build that back up? The message needs to be spread that we have people coming in to help. Q: Could there be more contact between governors and staff? We are here to support. This is where the Employee Assistance Programme works. All can sign up to this opportunity and should be encouraged to use it.</p>	<p>EL</p>

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	<p>Attendance was raised at the Chairs' meeting. It is a general challenge for schools and a national picture.</p> <p>Starcross has only had four days since the start of September when every member of staff has been on site. But there has been no striking.</p> <p>Q: As part of a Trust, how are we going to respond to the challenges around staff absence? Action: MV to raise at Chairs' meeting.</p> <p>Q: What strategies are used to support staff with managing pupil behaviour, and do some staff need additional support with this? The Behaviour policy been upgraded and will be reviewed at the next LGB meeting.</p> <p>Q: Do staff have a respect and dignity refresher course at least annually? This lies within the staff Code of Conduct. We don't have a specific Respect policy. Action: EL to remind staff of Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Agenda Item next meeting: Have planned actions to support staff been effective and have staff raised any actions that could help balance their work load.</p> <p>Q: Can we follow up on how the Trust respond to the support required, especially regarding staffing levels? The conversation is that the Trust does understand the current picture. We have given TA's opportunities to describe what is working for them or not. Conversations with staff will be around the culture of expectation built through the preceding years. The HT has requested IET support with this. TB added it made a difference when staff were notified about the financial position of the school. EL continued, we need to change within reason the expectation of what can be achieved.</p> <p>Q: Is there any progress with parent volunteers? We have only had two people complete the application form. It could be that the request for references is putting them off.</p> <p>Q: Can we follow it up again in the next Newsletter? Yes. We can't hold the relevant training until numbers are achieved.</p> <p>Q: Are there any outcomes from Sarah Ryder's visit that you can share? There has been positive feedback on science Floor books and art and history as focii subjects this year. Positive behaviour in engagement for learning was noted. We wanted to look at adaptive teaching and talked about building staff confidence so they can talk to visitors and share the positives more widely. We will be showcasing SEND and producing clear pointers on curriculum planning. This will be the same for Preschool.</p> <p>Q: Who is Sarah Ryder? Sarah is the SLP for the Connect Academy Trust and has completed visits to all schools. Sarah has Ofsted experience to bring to the table.</p>	<p>MV</p> <p>EL</p> <p>LGO</p>
23/4/8	<p>Update on Safeguarding Audit: This has been updated page 4 of the HT report.</p>	
23/4/9.1	<p>Policies and Procedures: Policy for supporting pupils at school and pre-school with medical conditions and for the administration of medicines and Medical Conditions Guidance Template Action: EL/TB to review the policy to ensure it is meets Pre-School requirements. Action: Policy to be placed on Governor Hub for approval following the meeting.</p>	<p>EL/TB All</p>
23/4/9.2	<p>Agree policies for update at next LGB meeting and update on creation of policy review cycle: Policies Next meeting: Behaviour and Attendance. Policy Review Cycle. Distributed.</p>	
23/4/10.1	<p>Governor visits and training: Feedback from any governor visits and training: A list detailing governor training to date had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. AW had found the H&S training very useful. This had been funded by the Trust. Triangulation between community, staff and children following training would be beneficial. Governors being visible to parents is important. A suggestion put forward was for photos of governors to be put up around school.</p>	
23/4/10.2	<p>Any visits not already covered in the agenda. There were none.</p>	
23/3/9	<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 June.</p>	
23/4/7	<p>Pay & Performance:</p>	

Item	Content	Action
	TB, LM and GP left the meeting. The meeting moved to PART II minutes The meeting returned to Part I minutes	