



West Hill Primary School
 (a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
 Beech Park, West Hill, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1UQ
01404 812599
admin@west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk
Headteacher: Cheryl Boulton



Minutes – Full Governing Board

13th December 2023

Attending				Declaration of pecuniary interest	Office Terminates
CB	Cheryl Boulton	Headteacher	Y	Nothing to declare	
EF	Elaine Fanson	Staff	Y	Nothing to declare	02.09.2027
MC	Matt Carpenter	Parent	N		17.04.2027
SM	Steve Meredith	Parent	Y	Nothing to declare	07.09.2025
LH	Lisa Heard	LA	Y	Nothing to declare	07.12.2025
LJ	Lee Jordan	Foundation	Y	Nothing to declare	27.09.2026
BM	Bob Maskell	Foundation	Y	Nothing to declare	01.02.2026
GH	Graham Harry	Co-opted	Y	Nothing to declare	02.02.2025
SL	Sara Lees	Co-opted	Y	Nothing to declare	08.11.2026
	VACANCY	Co-opted			
Others					
BD	Bec Davey	Clerk	Y	Nothing to declare	
LS	Lucy Samson	Associate Member			

All governors have agreed to abide by the Code of Practice as approved by the FGB and understand the level of confidentiality required for the meeting.

Question Action/Decision

ITEM	
2023.153	Apologies: MC – work. Approved.
2023.154	Declaration of Interests: None declared.
2023.155	Confirmation of Minutes of 08.12.2023 & 27.11.2023 (Part I): The minutes were agreed as a true record and will be signed electronically by the chair.
2023.156	Matters arising from minutes: No matters arising – all complete.
2023.157	Financial Monitoring: a Finance/Budget update following the Finance Committee meeting: Following the update given to governors from DCC at the last FGB, the Finance Committee have met to discuss possible solutions to reduce costs/increase funding. Following this, a revised budget including the recommendations was prepared and has been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors questioned why it was only £10k difference. LH explained that this is the saving for the rest of the current financial year. Any additional pupils will not make the difference until the Census in April 2025. The only saving this financial year is the TA leaving. Governors agreed the budget looked better, but it still has a long way to go. The biggest issue is there are seven spaces in the current year 1 class. Predictions are that nationally pupil numbers will continue to decrease over the next few years due to low birth rates. Governors questioned whether capable children could be moved up a year to fill those gaps but this is not possible as they would still be included in the relevant PAN.

	Governors noted that the changes involve removing two days of support, and questioned if this will mean a drop in results. CB advised that although the intervention supply teacher will end, there are still TAs at the school who will be there to help, the children are not losing their support. The deficit will now come into effect in 2025/26. Governors mentioned the suggestion of contacting parents for a monthly donation. CB has contacted Feniton and Payhembury schools who ask parents for items rather than donations. It is done through the PTFA who create a Wishlist on Amazon which parents then use to purchase items. Would this be done through the PTFA? Governors felt it would be better if it was controlled by one person. Some governors felt the standing order would be more used. Parental contributions is a last resort and has to be a voluntary, anonymous donation. CB recommended this be reassessed by April (end of financial year) by which time the teachers will know what they will need from September onwards. CB is aware of some schools are not balancing this year and are having to make redundancies. If the school did not have its reserves, they would be in an even worse state. There is an election coming up and people are aware that education is in a state and something needs to be done. The governors have been right to be prudent. CB has spoken with the intervention teacher and she understands. Funding received for children with EHCP is £47,815 but 1:1 costs are £63,664 meaning a difference of £15,849. This funding is not just towards the cost of the TA. There are five children with EHCPs, three have 1:1s. Some schools only use the funding they are given, no more. They expect schools to use £6k of their own budget on each child before an EHCP can be applied for. It is doing a disservice to the child; they need to learn to become more independent. Cannot keep affording the 1:1 TAs. Governors questioned if EHCP funding levels are wrong. CB agreed but advised governors that the DCC High Needs Block is in significant deficit so they do not have the funding to give. Governors wondered what the 0-25 team expect schools to do. They just have to manage. They have no money so cannot give the funding. Governors believe that if there has to be cuts, they have to do it in a way that everyone suffers a little rather than a small group suffering a lot. TAs are a luxury. Governors questioned what is driving the increase in EHCPs. More recognised diagnoses, parents, Covid. It is a national problem although WHPS are fortunate and are protected within their demographic. SMILE is no longer done through Amazon. There are other options that still happen which is used by many charities. It would have to be through the PTFA. b Consider increasing the pupil numbers to 32 per KS2 class: One of the suggestions given at the Finance meeting was to increase the pupil numbers to 32 per KS2 class. Governors wanted to know what happens if it is increased to 32. CB explained there is a waiting list in which families are ranked according to the admissions policy. CB will check how this affects fair access requests. The PAN is not changing so fair access should not be permitted, although there could still be EHCP or CiC applications. The financial impact outweighs any risks. Governors would rather do this than make any TAs redundant. Governors approved. c Health & Safety/Premises update: SM has spoken to AK about the pond and what can be done to resurrect it without spending any money. CB explained that the PTFA funded a resurrection of the pond several years ago but no-one uses it. SM will ask AK to carry out a survey to see if staff have used it and if so, how many times and if not, why not. The roof is holding. Governors agreed that it would be possible to consider asking parents to use their skills sets and offer their time to help with projects for the school rather than give funds. d Spending/Project Approvals & update: No projects for approval. It was agreed that this item no longer be a standing item on the agenda. Clerk to remove from future agendas.
2023.158	Policies, Statements & Provisions for review: a SEND Policy: This is a model DCC policy that is reviewed and updated to be WHPS specific by the SENDCo. Governors approved the policy. Clerk to update the website and advise LD. Policies that have been approved by Lead Governors/Headteacher (For information only): b Appraisal (Model DCC). This was approved by the P&P committee. It is a model DCC policy and has not been updated since 2013. c Sickness Absence (Model DCC). This has been approved by the Personnel Lead Governor but the FGB need to agree delegated responsibilities in section 34. Governors agreed the following delegated responsibilities: Hearings will be delegated to The First Committee of Governors. Appeal Hearings will be heard by the Appeal Committee regardless of the delegation above.

		If delegation is given to the Headteacher, the First Committee will hear the matter if the Headteacher has carried out the role of manager. d Maternity (Model DCC). e Adoption (Model DCC). f Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-site Activities (two policies, one model from DCC and Torbay, one School). Governors wondered why there was a need for the two policies. CB advised that LD had been on the annual training regarding this and was advised that schools need them both, the smaller one is school specific and shows more of the operational side. g Data Protection It is a model policy written by Firebird. Governors ratified the above policies. Clerk to update website where necessary and advise LD.
2023.159	a Admissions requests update: SM advised that since the last meeting there had been three, all of which were denied. The closing date for requests to join the reception is in January and in April the school find out how many children will be joining them in September 2024. b HT report including Health & Wellbeing of staff and pupils: CB had prepared a report which had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors had no questions. CB is pleased with the small numbers of teacher absences, although the number for TAs is high. Governors questioned is there was a common thread. CB advised the majority are sickness and D&V. There are also times when they are needed for childcare, which is unpaid. CB confirmed that staff members are using EAP (Employee Assistance Programme). c Update from P&P: <i>The governors went to part II for this section of the meeting</i> d IDSR (Inspection Data Summary Report): The report had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. The data is the same but it is displayed in a different format. Governors asked about why there was different years data included. CB explained that the data from different sections is collated at different times. Governors are frustrated that this means that some of the data is out of date. Governors commented on the attendance figures. The school is not meeting the schools target of 97.5% but they are within the top 20% nationally. e Pupil Premium report: The report had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. No questions were raised. Governors wondered if the data will be affected by the removal of the intervention supply member. CB does not believe it will. Clerk to add the report to the website. f Governor Strategic Plan (GSP) – Behaviour & Attitude: This section of the GSP had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. BM produced a draft GSP that was adopted by governors in July 2022 and was based on the SDP at the time. The intended outcome from this section of the GSP is that behaviour will improve. Some of the actions outlined in the GSP have been completed; Governors are attending assemblies (the next parent assembly is year 2 on 23.01.24) they have increased class visits, there was an offer to speak to parents at parents evening although no parents took the offer up, following an FGB meeting governors write a section in the school newsletter and BM has attended a school council meeting. Governors asked if there has been any positive feedback from these actions. This is not yet known, but hopefully the results from the parental questionnaire being sent out in the Spring will reflect these actions. Governors agree they need to meet with the staff more. BM asked governors if they felt the plan needed adding to or modifying. BM will add updates in the evaluation and impact/process column. How do the governors get to meet the staff more? Non-pupil days always have a busy agenda but governors could come and join the staff at the end of the day. There are also regular staff meetings which again, have large agendas. CB will suggest to staff the possibility of holding a twilight meeting which would allow more governors to attend. Governors wondered if, as it is connected with the SDP, should the titles be in sync with the SDP. BM confirmed they are. BM will update the plan following the meeting. Clerk to add the next section (Personal Development) to the next meeting. GH, BM and SM can attend the meeting on 02.01.24 at 3pm for half an hour. g School Development Plan (SDP) 2023/24: The revised SDP had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Data has been added within the impact and progress column. It is a working, ever changing, document. The quiet club is working well. It was agreed to focus on the same section of the SDP at each meeting like the GDP. Clerk to add to the next agenda. h To agree email & Parental Questionnaire wording: BM had prepared the wording for the section at the start of the questionnaire as well as an email to go out to parents along with the questionnaire. These had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. Governors	

		approved the wording and asked that a sentence be included about hoping that the children are settling back in to the term. Governors approved the wording and agreed that the questionnaire would be sent to parents in the Spring. Governors agreed to send this survey annually so a comparison can be made. The survey will go out on 22.01.24 to be returned by the end of the half term. Governors discussed carrying out a staff survey, to come from governors, in the Spring. Clerk to add this to the next agenda. i Parental Feedback & agree template/process for future meetings: A proposed template had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. The purpose of which is to allow governors who had been contacted by parents to complete the form prior to the meeting for the Clerk to collate them all into one form for the governors to discuss, if necessary, at the next meeting. If a parent comes to governors about an operational subject, governors will advise them to contact the staff member and the governor will contact the office to advise them of this. Governors can advise them that their question is logged, but it will not necessarily be discussed at an FGB meeting. Governors agreed to trial this.
2023.160		Safeguarding and Child Protection: Safeguarding Update: SL & CB have met and completed the S174 audit. The resultant data report will be brought to the next FGB meeting in February. Online safety training is happening at the school on 2nd January 24 which governors are invited to attend (BM hopes to attend). The office staff have scanned in all of the chronology on CPOMS so the data will be skewed in the next report. Thanks to the office staff for their help. SL & EF are meeting in January to check the SCR.
2023.161	a b c	GDPR Update (Fol, SAR, Breaches): Update (Fol, SAR, Breaches): An FOI request has been received and dealt with. Compliance Report: The report had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. The actions have been updated. The audit took place on 07.12.23. Governors questioned how an action can be completed and ongoing. CB explained that the action has happened but it is an ongoing one as well so it is considered to be on track for RAG rating purposes but also needs to continue. Training and Quiz: The governors had been asked to undertake some GDPR training and complete a quiz following the training. Those who had done so were thanked, and those who had not were reminded to do so.
2023.162		Lead Governor/Classroom visit Reports: Any questions? Maths LH EYFS BM, DT BM, School Council BM English inc. Assessment GH The above reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. No questions were raised. If governors are concerned about a member of staff's wellbeing, they are to contact CB. BM reminded governors about the DT competition and if anyone knows anyone with an engineering background, to let BM know. Governors enjoyed the School Council report.
2023.163		Governor Training: The link to the details of training for the next term from DES are on the agenda. Governors to contact the Clerk should they wish to book on a course. SL has attended online training for Visiting Your School and Parental Engagement, the slides from which are on GHub. During the Parental engagement session, it was discussed about how governors could be more visible to parents and what would the impact be. Ideas were considered, such as having a blank board with the opportunity for questions for governors to be added (on post-its) or there could be a question added to the newsletter with the answers being posted (anonymously if preferred) in a box in reception. It is also ideal to have a form to analyse the type and frequency of questions (see 159i). SL also mentioned the See-Saw app which is similar to Tapestry which is used by the school. It was agreed that the governor who is writing the section in the newsletter will introduce the question to parents and that the first question will be 'How would the parents like the governors to communicate and how often'.
2023.164		Matters brought forward at the Chair's discretion: None.

2023.165	Part II: Minutes of the meetings June, July & November 2023 were on GHub and were approved as a true record and will be signed electronically by the chair.
2023.166	Impact of meeting & agree governor to write in newsletter: It was agreed that SM will write in the school newsletter next. Governors had a productive meeting including: Pleased that the GSP is moving forward. Lots to think about following the finance discussions and will be interesting to see how all of the little changes add up. Parental feedback and will aim to streamline the questions. Interesting to see the feedback from the governors visiting the school. Assurance given regarding the cost effectiveness of the spending of the PP funding. Parental questionnaire. Pleased another governor is lined up to write in the newsletter and also improving the parental involvement. Good to see that more visits are taking place and the forms are being even more populated. Good to hear that additional visits have taken place.

Meeting closed: 20:59

ITEM	ACTION	WHO	DUE BY
157a	Review budget and discuss possible donations/wish list ready for September - Add to finance meeting.	BD	Feb/Mar 24
157b	Find out how the increase to 32 pupils affects fair access requests	CB	31.01.24
157c	Ask EK to carry out a survey to see if staff have used the pool and if so, how many times and if not, why not	SM	31.01.24
157d	Remove 'Spending/Project Approvals & update' from future agendas	BD	31.12.23
158	Add policies to website where necessary and advise LD of those approved	BD	31.12.23
159e	Add PP report to the website	BD	31.12.23
159f	Suggest to staff the possibility of holding a twilight meeting which would allow more governors to attend	CB	31.01.24
159f	Update the GSP and put on GHub	BM	31.01.24
159f	Add GSP – Personal Development - to the next agenda	BD	31.01.24
159g	Add SDP – Personal Development - to the next agenda	BD	31.01.24
159h	Send out the parental questionnaire	EF	22.01.24
162	Let BM know if know anyone with engineering knowledge	ALL	07.02.24
163	Add the question to the newsletter	SM	07.02.24

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____