



STICKLAND'S C.E. V.A. PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Aspire, Believe, Belong and Achieve.**

**Let Your Light Shine Matthew 5:16**

Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Monday 25 March 2024

<b>Governors</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Present</b>
Ruth Adler	Headteacher	RA	Y
Nicky Bower	Parent Governor	NB	Y
Jax Comyn	Foundation Governor	JC	Y
Daniel Ingles	Foundation Governor	DI	AA
June Jach	Clerk to the Governors	JJ	Y
Gay Lewis	Foundation Governor	GL	Y
Andy McAney	Local Authority Governor	AM	Y
Suzie Mutch	Foundation Governor (Chair)	SM	Y
Anna Low	Staff Governor	AL	Y
Emma Hodgkinson	Parent Governor	EH	N
AnneMarie Henham	Pending Governor	AH	AA
Elizabeth Rendell	Pending Governor	ER	Y

No	Item	Action
1	Meeting started at 1.10 p.m with an opening prayer from Suzie Mutch	
2	Present See register above. Apologies were received from Anne-Marie Henham	
3	<p><b><u>Organisational items</u></b></p> <p>There were no changes to pecuniary interests.</p> <p>Due to governor absences, the February meeting was postponed. As a result, the most recent meeting took place on 25 November 2024. Attendance and notification of absences were discussed, with an emphasis on the importance of informing the Chair or Clerk in advance regarding attendance.</p> <p>Governors now have access to the school calendar, which includes scheduled Full Governing Body meetings as well as details of school events they may wish to attend. Governors were reminded to accept or decline invitations sent via Google Calendar to ensure accurate attendance records.</p> <p>The draft minutes from the November meeting were distributed and formally accepted, with no matters arising.</p>	
4.	<p><b><u>Standing matters</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Safeguarding</u></b></p> <p>The Safeguarding Report, prepared by Gay Lewis, was uploaded to the Governors' folder prior to the meeting. GL noted that a discussion would be required with RA regarding a specific incident. The school will continue to monitor the situation.</p> <p>A general discussion took place regarding allergies. A governor inquired about access to and the administration of EpiPens. RA explained that EpiPens can only be used with proper authorization or when prescribed for a specific child. However, even in cases where an EpiPen has been prescribed, its use must still be authorized by Emergency Services.</p> <p>A governor also asked whether parents are routinely asked about their child's allergies. RA confirmed that this is standard practice. The school is</p>	

<p>permitted to store and administer antihistamines such as Piriton as an alternative. Additionally, RA confirmed that the school maintains a record of all medications administered during school hours.</p> <p>FGB members engaged in a detailed discussion about the challenges of managing allergic reactions, particularly as some incidents may represent a child's first allergic response.</p> <p>RA agreed to explore the possibility of adding an allergy-related section to Arbor for parents to provide relevant information. Additionally, Liz Rendell will investigate the process for obtaining an EpiPen for school use.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing</u> See item 9.</p> <p><u>Maths - external visit</u> There has been one visit and RA said that school is reviewing whether anything further to be done at this time. The maths external visitor from ECL was impressed with the provision of the school. There was confirmation the funding is now available for phonics and that was due, in part, to a phonics review and that was a good result. It was noted that parents aren't all as involved as they could be in terms of supporting children at home. The school regularly holds events to which parents are invited as well as frequent communication.</p> <p><u>Governor visits</u> AM provided a summary of his Maths visit, including suggestions for future improvements. The governors engaged in a general discussion on the best approaches to teaching the subject. AMc emphasized the importance of delivering a balanced curriculum, acknowledging that not all children find Maths easy. The Chair noted that the visit section of the report was somewhat brief this time and suggested a review of the Governor visit schedule. She also reminded Governors of the importance of training. JJ had circulated details of various training courses offered by Dorset Council, and SM encouraged Governors to enroll in any relevant sessions.</p>	<p>RA LR</p>
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5	<p><b><u>Headteacher's report</u></b></p> <p>The relevant documents were made available to Governors in advance of the meeting via the Governors' folder.</p> <p>RA provided an update on attendance, highlighting the challenges faced by Stickland's as a small school, where even a single absence can significantly impact attendance data. She invited discussion on potential strategies to improve attendance and confirmed that most absences were due to illness or holidays. Regarding holidays, Governors acknowledged that, despite the use of fines—though not ideal—the high cost of travel during official school holidays continues to contribute to term-time absences.</p> <p>RA also explained how pupil data is managed when children leave the school. She noted that leavers remain part of Stickland's statistics until they are registered at another school or officially home-schooled, meaning any gap in registration is recorded as an absence. Governors agreed that this system is unfair.</p> <p>A Governor suggested exploring incentive schemes to encourage better attendance. While there was discussion on this, concerns were raised about potential drawbacks, such as children returning to school too soon after illness. However, one Governor felt that an incentive scheme could demonstrate the school's commitment to improving attendance. RA proposed trialing the issuance of attendance certificates from September. SM acknowledged the challenges RA and the school face in addressing attendance issues.</p> <p>Additionally, an email had been received from a parent regarding diversity in the school library's book selection. Governors engaged in a thoughtful discussion on the importance of diverse reading choices. The Chair will respond to the parent's email. This led to a broader discussion on diversity within the school, during which RA provided a comprehensive explanation of how inclusion is actively promoted across all aspects of school life.</p>	SM

<p>6</p>	<p><u>Chairs report</u></p> <p>The Chair’s report was made available in the Governors' folder prior to the meeting.</p> <p>SM noted that the Collaboration meetings have been highly supportive. The Collaboration has requested that an additional Governor attend the next meeting, and SM invited volunteers for the session on 23 May, which will be held at Stickland’s.</p> <p>The Collaboration is also exploring the possibility of bulk purchasing to cover services and commodities, aiming to improve cost efficiency.</p> <p>RA recently completed her mid-term review, and SM confirmed that she had successfully met all her objectives.</p> <p>A <b>Governor</b> had previously inquired about the school’s emergency plan. SM confirmed that a plan is in place; however, for reasons of safety, security, and confidentiality, it is not published on the school website or stored in the Governors' folder. A paper copy was circulated during the meeting for Governors to review, after which it was returned to a secure location.</p>	<p>AM</p>
<p>7</p>	<p><u>Feedback from extra curricular clubs</u></p> <p>Seven children came to talk to the Governors about school clubs, most of which are held after school. The children represented years 3 &amp; 4 and from running, rugby, sports, ECO and drama. The children did a very good presentation and were happy to share their experiences with the Governors. A <b>Governor</b> asked the children if they enjoyed their clubs and all answered yes. They enjoy the clubs for many reasons including being able to try new things. A <b>Governor</b> asked whether the clubs happened during the school day or after school and were told that some are during lunch breaks and some after school and that none affected class time.</p> <p>Club involvement by staff is purely voluntary. For most clubs, children pay a small amount.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p><u>SDP - School Development plan</u></p> <p>The SDP report will be updated at the end of term. A <b>Governor</b> asked whether there are opportunities for parents to meet with Governors. RA and SM said that if a parent requested to meet with a Governor then this could be arranged.</p> <p>RA offered to do a small feature for The Chimes and that she could make a frequent contribution for it. It was suggested that Governors could also contribute something for Chimes. There will be Governor vacancies later</p>	

	<p>in the year and a feature could include information relating to recruiting new Governors. JC agreed to write a piece on “being a governor” for the next edition</p> <p>There is one Governor profile on the website which needs to be completed.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>AMH</p>
9	<p><u>Staff wellbeing survey</u></p> <p>SM confirmed that an anonymous online staff wellbeing survey had been conducted, followed by one-on-one interviews. Overall, the responses were positive, with all staff expressing their enjoyment of teaching. There was strong appreciation for the school’s sense of community, with staff describing it as a supportive "family." Additionally, all staff recognized RA as a strong and supportive leader.</p> <p>The only concern raised in the survey was the excessive amount of paperwork, which staff found time-consuming. RA acknowledged this challenge, noting that many administrative tasks are unavoidable, particularly following external visits. She cited a recent phone survey conducted by the Department for Education (DfE), which alone required 45 minutes of her time. In general, staff accept that their workload extends significantly beyond their contracted hours.</p>	
10.	<p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>Financial report, budget and various financial data had been made available to Governors before the meeting. Chris George, showed details on the screen and talked through, answering questions raised. SM advised that there are finance training sessions available, specifically for Governors. SM will be attending and she encouraged other Governors to consider also joining.</p> <p>A <b>Governor</b> asked if school had a finance committee and CG confirmed that in order to be more streamlined the Governing Body only one committee i.e the FGB</p> <p>RA reported that once Mrs Symington leaves in May, those hours will not be replaced until the new term. In the short term her duties will be absorbed by other members of staff. From September those hours will be replaced but most likely this will be on a fixed term basis of one or two years, subject to review.</p>	

	<p>CG talked through the ICT costs, On school funding, he explained pupil numbers. This year, school will lose 19 children to secondary school with 11 children joining. In future the numbers may balance out.</p> <p>Budgetary increase from County is only 1.5%. However the teaching staff pay increase is more than that and so no improvement in real terms.</p> <p>CG advised that there is a carry forward amount but apart from a small percentage, this amount needs to be used by October.</p> <p>Governors had submitted some questions before the meeting and Chris answered all of those satisfactorily.</p> <p>The board thanked Chris for all the work that he's done towards finances and generally in his relatively new role.</p>	
11	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p>Financial Procedures policy - this was approved</p> <p>Manual handling and risk assessment - this was approved.</p> <p>A <b>Governor</b> asked about driving at work and whether it related to Governors when driving on school business e.g to training courses.</p> <p>Governors discussed the use of their private vehicles, for instance if travelling to training sessions.</p>	
12	<p><u>School maintenance county council contract arrangements and compliance</u></p> <p>CG and JJ shared their concerns about performance and charges by County approved contractors with, in some cases, high charges and poor service delivery. They both believed that Governors needed to be aware of the issues, particularly in relation to statutory requirements and health and safety.</p> <p><u>Electrical vehicle charging for schools</u></p> <p>A quote had been obtained for the installation of electrical charging points at school. The quote was high due, in part, to the distance that power would have to travel from the building to the car park area and the fact that the oil tank is on the direct route. The board agreed that it was not viable.</p>	
	<p>The meeting ended at 3.15.</p> <p>Next meeting Monday 19 May , 2024 at 13.00</p>	