



# COXHEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE 2023/2024 MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024

*Governors present at the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 approved these minutes as a true and accurate record, and signed on Governor Hub electronically*

### PRESENT

Clare Nursey (CN) (Co-opted Governor) <b>CHAIR</b>	Darren Flisher (DF) (Staff Governor)
Claire Webb (CW) (Co-Opted Governor)	Caroline Jacques (CJ) (Parent Governor)
Jade Sheppard (JS) (Parent Governor)	Sam Sanders (SS) (Co-Opted Governor)
Giacomo Mazza (GM) (Governor and Headteacher of Coxheath Primary School)	

### IN ATTENDANCE

Bev Evenden (BE) (Associate Governor and Deputy Headteacher of Coxheath Primary School)	Mark Chatley (MC) (Trust Leader)
Liz Webber (LW) (Assistant Headteacher) - part	Andy Lacey (AL) (Governance Professional)

Yellow highlighted text demonstrates challenge by the governors

### PART A – PUBLIC MINUTES

#### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 **Welcome:** CN welcomed all parties to the meeting.
- 1.2 **Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Katherine Tunnicliffe (KT). Simon Malone (SM) was not in attendance.
- 1.3 **Quorum:** The meeting was confirmed as quorate throughout

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REMINDER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

- 2.1 All were reminded that discussions tonight should remain confidential.
- 2.2 CN gave all parties the opportunity to declare any additional declarations of interest against the agenda to which none were declared.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACTIONS OUTSTANDING

- 3.1 **Approval of Minutes:** Governors approved the minutes presented as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting that took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024  
**ACTION:** AL to mark minutes as signed on Governor Hub and arrange for publication
- 3.2 **Matter arising from the minutes and review of actions**
  - 3.2.1 The actions table was updated to reflect the latest position. Key matters arising:
  - 3.2.2 **Subject Leads attending LGB meetings:** Thought would be given to which, if any, subject lead might attend the T5 meeting. School Council would attend in T6 as would Writing Lead provide an update on progress.  
**ACTION:** GM to consider whether Subject Leads should attend T5 LGB

#### 4. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

4.1 CN informed governors that should the need arise, their primary aged children can attend the Trust's extended services e.g. After School Club free of charge when attending governance related meetings or events.

#### 5. TRUST MATTERS

5.1 **Last TB minutes:** *See Confidential minutes.*

CW asked if teachers were able to highlight pupils who they thought should be on the SEND register? GM confirmed that they were able to log such matters.

5.2 **Trust Newsletter:** The newsletter reported the Ofsted outcome at St Kath's and it was great to know children there were now receiving a good education. It was also good news that all three schools were considered 'good' as this strengthened the trust. CN said that St Kath's now appeared to be the strongest school in the Trust in Ofsted terms, which was due the amount of support it has received, and queried whether this had been to the detriment of the other two schools? MC advised that the Ofsted outcome was a great reflection on St Kath's and the Trust. Quality of Education was the only element of an Ofsted inspection where the trust was not outstanding in any school and provided focus for moving forward. All three schools were now in a position to provide support, making the Trust a more attractive proposition for others to join.

CW added that the schools are stronger together.

GM said that the experience had provided a development opportunity for leaders across the trust, and specifically to CPS as staff had gone over to support improvement at St Kath's.

Both CN and MC said that the schools / trust have the opportunity to embed and consolidate as it will be 3 years before Ofsted return. GM added that what we do is for the pupils and not Ofsted. MC commented that the 'deep dives' carried out by Ofsted were on the same subject areas for all three schools with CPS being first, then LPS followed by St Kath's so the state of readiness and being prepared for inspection were likely to be better at St Kath's having learnt from the earlier visits.

#### 6. TRUST POLICIES

6.1 LGB noted the Trust policies that were approved in T3. DF and GM confirmed there were no significant changes to the SEND policy.

6.2 **Risk Register** –AL informed governors that the risk register although updated to include mitigations and show pre and post scoring, was still subject to review by Trustees. Once signed off, risk management will be rolled out to School who would be required to establish an operational risk register. The updated version had one change following St Kath's Ofsted inspection.

#### 7. SCHOOL STRATEGIC MATTERS

7.1 **Headteacher's Report:**

GM provided governors with a summary of his report highlighting the key points. The school Strategic Document would be updated in Terms 1, 3 and 5, which was available to all on TEAMS.

- **Data:** There would be more accurate predictions for Year 6 at the end of T4 once trust-wide moderation had been completed.
- **Writing** remained the focus of attention and it was recognised how big a task it was to develop the curriculum for roll out in September 2024. MC said that whilst the writing leads from all three schools are involved, HM (CPS) took the 'controlling interest' and due to expertise was the natural lead.
- **Attendance:** GM reported that pupil attendance was generally good but this week was at 93.9% was just below national (94.3%), which was generally due to cases of chicken pox. The Attendance Officer regularly carried out focused follow up to pupil attendance, which reflected the reason for absence, and other relevant circumstances. *See Confidential minutes for remainder.*
- **Behaviour:** GM advised governors that two parents had raised concerns about behaviour in Year 5 and that he had intervened resulting in an action plan being put in place to address the matter.

CJ mentioned a programme that she had seen about behaviour in schools, and what a school could do if it was not being supported by action at home / by parents. GM said that there are various toolkits available in order to try different approaches to challenging behaviour. GM advised governors that he had recently attended training on the use of therapeutic approaches to provide further strategies those few children who struggle with managing behaviour when they become dysregulated. This would work alongside the work already being carried out by the nurture lead.

**CN asked if bad behaviour was having an impact on other pupils?** GM advised that it was not as pupils were quickly excluded from class before it started having an impact on others teaching and learning.

**7.1.5 SEND:** *See Confidential minutes.*

#### **7.1.4 Premises matters:**

- H&S and Compliance – GM informed governors that the site team had completed the H&S and compliance training. One had to complete their GDPR training but was currently on long term sick absence.
- The school had recently carried out a fire evacuation drill and there were lessons learnt particularly in respect of the registers.
- GM advised governors that the adaptations to the main reception would be carried out irrespective as to whether the Safeguarding and Security CiF bid was approved. **CN asked if there was a plan that governors could receive?** GM said there was not a formal plan and gave an outline of the proposed works.

**7.2 New build / Expansion proposal:** GM informed governors that the first of the 4-weekly meetings to discuss the project had been held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024. Whilst the LA are expected to make a formal decision on the project late May / early June 2024, it is being progressed as though the full expansion build is going ahead in respect of design and planning. The plan was for the work to commence in January 2025 and be completed by August 2025.

**CN asked what would happen if the building was not complete by September 2025.** GM advised that the LA would need to provide a second temporary classroom for 2025/26.

GM said that the temporary classroom to meet the needs for the September 2024 intake would not be on site until early summer, and therefore would require staff to come in over the holiday period to implement the classroom moves. He was hoping that the temporary classroom would remain on site at the end of the project to provide an additional space.

**CN asked what were the September 2024 admission numbers?** GM advised that there were 157 in total of which, 84 were 1<sup>st</sup> choices and therefore, there would be 90 pupils admitted.

*See Confidential minutes for remainder.*

**7.3 Accessibility Plan:** Approved without amendment.

## **8. FINANCE**

**8.1** *See Confidential minutes*

**8.2** GM advised governors that the next finance meeting was being held on 19<sup>th</sup> March, and would include a discussion about the next three financial years and the planning assumptions. CN said that she would be attending the meeting.

**CN asked about the reserves and proposals for using such?** GM said there had been a discussion with the Trust Office to agree the best way forward that delivers school improvement, and any request for spending reserves should follow the Trust finance policy.

## **9. SAFEGUARDING AND ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS**

**9.1 Parental Safeguarding and self-assessment:** BE referred governors to the self-assessment action plan produced following the self-assessment, which this year had followed the NSPCC format instead of the KCC one used previously.

The main area for improvement was to ensure volunteers complete the necessary safeguarding training, understood school policies and procedures and how recognise and respond in the appropriate way. BE was providing training for volunteers.

Other key issues:

- CL and CN both commented that parents found it difficult to find relevant school policies on the website. GM said that he has reviewed the school website and reviewed what and how information is provided but acknowledged that it can be difficult to navigate the website. MC added that some of the difficulty arose from the school websites having been cloned, with too much information dragged over from the previous website, but there was a search tool to help navigation.
- BE advised that whilst visitors to the school were provided the safeguarding leaflet, a concern related to those attending to provide presentations and workshops in who, if anyone checked the content of what was being delivered?

BE advised that there was a second action plan produced following the external review by Catherine Irvine, which identified several key issues:

- Need for DSL's to complete statutory refresher training within the required timescale – this has been completed.
- To continually check on staff knowledge and to remind staff of key points, which is being done through the weekly newsletter and staff quiz.
- Need to demonstrate that contracted staff such as the cleaners working for the newly appointed contractor have received appropriate training. BE asked MC how the Trust ensured contractors staff such as the cleaners / catering received safeguarding training. MC agreed to check the arrangements and confirm.

**ACTION: MC to check arrangements for ensuring contracted staff such as cleaners complete safeguarding training.**

In addition, BE informed governors that she and the FLO had regular weekly meetings to review the matters recorded on MyConcern and decide on the necessary actions to be taken.

**9.2 E-Safety:** LW informed governors that it had taken a year to complete the LGfL e-safety audit, adding that as soon as it had been completed, the earlier parts would probably already be out of date.

The school as had the trust, recently moved to SMOOTHWALL for digital monitoring and reporting, and this was still in the process of being rolled out and subject to fine tuning. The system was providing weekly reports and alerts to any matters that appeared to breach the parameters set for safeguarding. The move to SMOOTHWALL was necessary as the previous filtering system did not provide an adequate breakdown of the issues raised which is a new requirement of KCSIE.

The digital monitoring looks for key words and phrases that are used in searches, emails etc and where deemed serious, takes a screen shot of the incident. The alert including screenshot is sent to the responsible person in school who decides whether the matter requires investigation. There are 4 levels of alert: 1 where the matter is noted, levels 2 and 3 result in an email and level 4 results in a phone call to raise an immediate alert. The office staff know to call a DSL in the event the school receives a level 4 phone call alert.

**CW asked if the monitoring applied to mobile phones?** LW confirmed it was but only when they are linked to the school wi-fi network. MC added that the system was device-based monitoring so it also applied when it was being used off site such as working from home.

LW explained that the challenge was dealing with and setting up the portable devices such as ipads especially as these are shared between pupils, and therefore it was not clear who was using the ipad and when. GM said that pupils could have their own log in but that this presented issues for Year 1 & 2 in terms of pupils using the devices. MC added that the instant use of an ipad currently out-weighed the need for having individual logins.

**JS asked what had been the feedback from staff?** LW said the only concern was if the system captured screenshots of passwords but this only happened if they happened to contain offending words. CW added

that the system lends itself more to secondary schools, but there was the added complexity where younger siblings might pick up things from older brothers and sisters.

**9.3 On-line safety:** BE referred to the Kent document, which categorised both the type and level of the incident and provided governors with a summary sheet showing the frequency each had occurred. There were four levels: green, yellow, orange and red where the more serious were referred to others outside of the school – orange (level 3) to Early Help and red (level 4) to social services.

*See confidential numbers for number of cases*

CW asked if there were any concerns regarding staff reporting of incidents? BE said that there were no concerns and it was better to 'over report', all staff take responsibility for safeguarding and the DSL triage approach worked well.

CN questioned whether governors were happy that they currently received enough information to assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements at school were sound. Governors agreed they were satisfied.

## 10. ANY OTHER SCHOOL MATTERS

10.1 There were no matters raised.

## 11. GOVERNOR MONITORING

**11.1 Citizenship:** CW confirmed she had met the subject lead for an initial discussion and had provided the lead with some resources. She did not think it necessary to complete a written report on this visit but would revisit next year and complete a report then.

**11.2 Parental engagement:** This would be considered over some time, AL to forward a relevant document to KT and CJ.

**11.3 Loose LGB monitoring arrangements:** MC informed governors that LPS LGB had been trialling a different approach to monitoring, which was based on:

- An LGB meeting cycle where Terms 1, 3 and 5 focused on SIP / SEF and procedural matters, and Terms 2, 4 and 6 were set aside for reporting on and discussing governor monitoring.
- LPS chose a topic or theme that was to be the subject of Governor monitoring e.g. SEND and all three monitoring teams would look at this from their own perspective e.g. Quality of Education, Behaviour & Attitudes and Leadership.

CN said that CPS monitoring focused very closely on the SIP priorities, but acknowledged that the timetable for monitoring had sometimes slipped this year. GM added that the School Strategic document should be the focus, which when reviewed should identify the issues and challenges that governors needed to look at. GM did like the idea of governor monitoring taking place alternative terms rather than every term, but not the format of the LPS monitoring report, which seemed to focus too heavily on operational matters.

CN added that all three schools were in different positions with their own priorities and one size did not fit all. CW expressed a view that she thought a more formal format would be helpful in organising and carrying out monitoring visits, and would lead to better outcomes.

MC agreed saying the challenge is in balancing governor feedback but the single focus and joined up approach adopted by LPS has led to governors feeling more involved with the whole school, and was more governor led rather than feeling monitoring is guided by SLT. The approach adopted by LPS, which takes a little longer is aligned to the Ofsted headings and framework.

CN suggested it might be worth re-examining the role of the LGB now the Ofsted pressure was off. MC said that in an Academy / MAT the Trust Board was the equivalent of the LGB in a maintained school, but it represented the 'eyes and ears' of the Trust Board.

CN questioned whether plans to undertake the CST governance self-assurance project further had progressed? MC advised this would not now be pursued as documents had been redrafted in light of the DfE 5 pillars.

**11.4 Governors confirmed that visits on RE and DT would take place this week, with the Music visit planned for next week.**

## 12. ANY OTHER GOVERNOR MATTERS

**12.1 Governor training:** It was noted that the Trust (CH / AL) were developing an induction / training plan for trustees and governors to include ongoing personal development. However, governors would still be expected to organise their own training as required (role or situation specific). CN suggested the plan include regularly recurring training, eg safeguarding, as well as one off courses.

**12.2 Succession Planning:** CN reminded governors that her term of office comes to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 when she will step down as a governor and therefore also, Chair of Governors. The LGB therefore needed to think about a successor who would ultimately be appointed by the TB. MC advised that both LPS and St Kath's were also looking at succession planning to replace their existing Chairs who were also Trustees, which ideally should not be the case.

AL informed governors that the National College provided training for Chairs to Governors (COG) and that this is something those interested might want to look at. He also suggested that there would be an opportunity, with all 3 schools having new CoGs, for some support network to be established. CN suggested that the TB clarify the role of the CoG to help governors decide whether or not to step forward.

**12.3 GDPR and Cyber security training:** It was noted that SM was still to complete the GDPR refresher training as required to do so every two years.

**ACTION:** SM to complete GDPR training.

## 13. MATTERS TO REPORT TO THE TRUST BOARD

The matters to be raised at the Board meeting are recorded under Item 5 as relate to the Board.

## 14. MEETING CLOSE

**14.1 Confidentiality:** Governors confirmed that 5.1, 7.1 (part), 7.1.5, 7.2 (part) , 8.1 and 9.3 (part) would be recorded as confidential.

**14.2. Next meeting dates:** All to be held at Coxheath Primary School commencing at 1700 on:

- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024

Governance calendar on Governor Hub

**14.3. Meeting close:** CN thanked all attendees for their contribution to the meeting. The meeting closed at 1915.