



COXHEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE 2023/2024 MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2024

Governors present at the meeting held on 4th February 2025 approved these minutes as a true and accurate record, and signed on Governor Hub electronically

PRESENT

Caroline Jacques (CJ) (Parent Governor) CHAIR	Jade Sheppard (JS) (Parent Governor)
Simon Malone (SM) (Co-Opted Governor)	Giacomo Mazza (GM) (Governor / Headteacher)
Bev Evenden (BE) (Associate Governor / Deputy Headteacher)	Katherine Tunnicliffe (Associate Governor)
Helen Moore (Writing Lead) – part of the meeting	

IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Lacey (AL) (Governance Professional)	
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Yellow highlighted text demonstrates challenge by the governors

PART A – PUBLIC MINUTES
1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 1.1 Welcome: CJ welcomed all parties to the meeting. 1.2 Apologies: Apologies were received from Claire Webb (CW) and Darren Flisher (DF). Ben Hulme (BH) 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 CJ 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 15 th October 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 discussed that were not included on the agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none">PE & Sports Grant: CJ asked if the management and administrative arrangements had been implemented for the 'hire' of the bikes? GM advised that this was outstanding but will be completed by the end of T3 (21st Feb 25), so the bikes can be used from T4. ACTION: DF to ensure management and admin arrangements are in place by the end of T3

- **School Roll / pupils numbers:** CJ asked GM for an update on pupil numbers. GM advised that there were three spaces in EYFS and there is space in Year 3. GM said that the aim was to have up to 64 pupils in the KS2 Year Groups (3-6) but these were not full. However, the current plan is to hold fire as waiting to get clarity on additional needs. This had been discussed with MC. There is a concern that increasing the Year Group size to 64 pupils might impact disadvantaged pupils due to larger teaching groups. The situation was going to be reviewed in January 2025.

ACTION: GM to provide an update to Governors in T3.

4. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

4.1 There were no items raised.

5. SCHOOL STRATEGIC MATTERS

5.1 **Writing Update:** HM provided governors with an update on the new writing curriculum. In summary, the key points were:

- An overview of the writing curriculum has been provided to each year group, which includes planning information, SPAG such as what is to be taught and when, including the book genre throughout the year.
- SPAG outline also provides the vocabulary content for each Year Group, which provided a more structured approach and enable better assessment of pupil progress.
- T1 focused on revising the previous years' learning to ensure base knowledge but also identifies any gaps. T2 builds on T1 as learning is progressive supported by pre-planned resources for pupils to ensure consistency of what is delivered and when.
- An example of T2 learning would be where the teacher provides an outline or model text and the pupils are challenged to both follow such but also suggest what changes they might make.
- HM said that she was seeking feedback from teachers as to what they like and dislike and take their comments on board to modify the curriculum and approach to T&L as necessary. This will be supplemented by carrying out book reviews with teachers to help identify any issues. HM added that teachers can make suggested changes to the writing curriculum, which they have to get signed off to ensure it is in line with approach and there is consistency in that it is applied to all.
- **CJ asked if teachers had expressed a view on the clear and defined approach?** HM said that the 'strict approach' was to ensure there is structure and consistency, and that all elements of SPAG are covered. Whilst the structure – content, what and when is prescribed in the planning, it is for teachers to decide 'how' based on the needs of their pupils and any adaptations that are required.
- GM said that teachers had previously not had guidance for teaching writing, which is recognised as being a difficult subject to teach adding that they had welcomed the structure and support. HM added that teachers liked having something to use, and that was provided to them.
- **SM asked why HM was asking staff to complete a questionnaire and face to face book reviews?** HM said that some staff prefer to make anonymous comments whereas others are happy to discuss. The face to face will also included discussions about planning and sequencing of the T&L.
- **SM asked what had been the feedback so far?** HM said that there were comments regarding ordering and sequencing of learning but nothing significant. One Year Group had fed back that the standard was not right for the group, which has been rectified.
- **CJ asked if teachers thought the writing curriculum was well planned and it enabled them to teach the subject?** HM said the approach had been trialled by some Year Groups the previous year and therefore the approach had been tested before being rolled out. GM said there were positive outcomes from the new writing curriculum, which governors will review and see for themselves in T4 when writing is subject to monitoring.
- GM said it would be interesting to compare feedback from staff and progress in pupil's writing across the Trust as all three schools are implementing a new writing curriculum albeit in their own ways.

5.2 Headteacher's Report

- **Reading:** GM informed governors that reading had been a focus of school improvement following the 2023/24 data outcomes. HT's had recently met with Trustees to discuss the outcomes and plans for improvement.
 - CPS plans for improvement included a review of the teaching timetable resulting in an increase in the number of days that reading is taught from 3 to 5 days per week. Where this was not possible due to timetabling restrictions, four longer sessions will be implemented.
 - A new reading curriculum using 'Ready, Steady, Comprehension' is being trialled in Year 2 and 6. The impact of such will be reviewed and if successful rolled out across the rest of the school.
 - Instructional coaching will help identify areas for improvement and STEPLAB has been chosen to support the changes that are needed, and deliver improvements to T&L.

- **Phonics:** GM provided governors with a summary of the phonics in his HT report. The plan for T3 is to hold phonics workshops for Year R parents to enable them to work with pupils at home to supplement class-based learning.

SM asked if there was anything to track phonics progress? GM said that they use 'Sounds Write', which helps with gap analysis. There was also plans in place to train TA's in Sounds Write so they are better able to deliver interventions. Year R are trialling phonics tracker as to monitor phonics.

CJ asked what the other schools had in place? GM said they had different ways of delivering interventions for phonics. BE added that catch-up sessions were provided to improve fluency and comprehension, which would help pupils better understand what they were reading.

GM said that teaching of phonics was good, and with parental support, appropriate resources in the form of 'reading plus' and with positive student attitude to learning then good progress will be made.

- **Attendance:** BE referred governors to the School Attendance document attached to the agenda aimed at improving attendance, which follows the recently published DfE guidelines. BE informed governors that there is a requirement to appoint a Link Governor for attendance. GM added that it was good practice to have a nominated governor and not having one would likely be challenged by Ofsted.

Governors agreed that SM would be the Link Governor for Attendance.

BE circulated the DfE attendance checklist to SM, CJ and AL.

GM provided governors with an overview of the latest figures – attendance year to date is 94.9% compared to national target of 95%. BE as the senior leader in school for attendance attends review meetings with KCC. There are presently 2 persistent absentees, though one is classed as 'severe absence' (less than 50%).

BE advised governors that in addition to providing the DfE with attendance data that she is no expected to provide such to KCC. KCC however, have appointed a new attendance officer who is both supportive and proactive and, has also provided guidance and documents.

BE said that the aim of the process for dealing with attendance is to help and support parents to improve a child's attendance and ensure that they are in school. Attendance data has been linked to the tracking system which is visible to teachers, which increases awareness but also enables them to input and respond when a child is not in school. Improving attendance not only supports the safeguarding of children by ensuring they are in school but also, improved attendance should lead to better attainment.

- **Behaviour:** GM informed governors that in addition to the one suspension in T1 there had been considerable discussions concerning 4/5 other pupils who were presenting very challenging behaviour, which had been taking up a lot of SLT time. GM added that they had tried working with the parents but had probably not been clear enough regarding the consequences should their behaviour continue.

CJ asked what was considered to be 'bad' or unacceptable behaviour? GM said that different strategies and interventions were used depending on the child and their needs but the school cannot tolerate

where their behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning for others. Good behaviour has been considered a strength at Coxheath but there was a need to refocus.

CJ said that she understood there was a need to set an example to ensure others are clear as to what is expected of them and the consequences for bad behaviour.

GM said that a '2-strike' system had been introduced for Year 6, which is also aimed at supporting their transition to secondary school. The next step might be to introduce a form of detention, which will be implemented at lunch times.

KT asked if parents of Year 6 pupils were aware of the '2-strike' system? GM said they were not and will communicate such to parents.

JS asked what support was available for those with needs? GM said this was provided by external agencies such as early help and referrals but there was a long waiting list.

- **SEND:** GM advised that following a review of the register, the percentage of SEND has increased from 11% to 14.1% although he felt it should be nearer 17%. JS suggested that SEND should be an area for future governor monitoring, which would align with the actions agreed at ECG.
- **Finances:** GM informed governors that the 2024/25 finances were being impacted as a result of covering long-term sickness and the AHT returning to 5 days a week, which was not included in the budget. The Trust have agreed to overstaff by one day in KS1 when teacher who has been on maternity is due back at the end of January. The additional day will be used to support the teaching of phonics and reading within KS1.

GM informed governors that the current 3-year forecast shows that the budget will be in a cumulative deficit in year 3.

- **Health & Safety:** GM informed governors that a new training plan for site staff was being introduced in January 2025, which will cover more than the usual compliance (fire safety, water management and asbestos awareness, working at height etc) and include risk management, contractor management.

In addition, in response to the RPA insurance review, a new accident reporting and investigation process has been introduced.

Recording of and progressing of maintenance items is better managed through the use of I-Auditor, and outstanding jobs are being progressed.

GM advised that there had been a recent unplanned evacuation of the school as the alarm had been set off due to a faulty smoke detector. The smoke detector has been replaced but the unplanned evacuation highlighted some training needs for site staff in the use of the alarm panel.

5.3 Governor Monitoring Reports

5.3.1 Reading: CJ and JS provided governors with a summary of their monitoring visits to look at reading. Key points were:

- CJ said that the focus was to see if the school was doing what it had planned to do to improve T&L for reading. In their view, RL was doing a great job in that there is a clear plan to raise the standard of reading, and a new curriculum based on the DfE framework.
- They had carried out book reviews and lesson observations and were impressed with what they saw.
- There were four recommendations in their report:
 - Sharing knowledge and best practice across the Trust
 - Prepare a detailed delivery plan to clarify each success requirements and a target date for achieving such
 - Clarify how the success criteria 'pupils talk positively about reading will be measured'
 - Confirm when teachers in the remaining Year Groups 3-5 will be teaching in line with the new guidelines.
- It was agreed that GM would share the report with RL and then meet with her to discuss and set the task to write a Strategic Action Plan for T3, which will come to governors.

- CJ said that some teachers did not appear to have fully adopted the reading scheme. GM advised that this had since been addressed saying that writing had previously been seen as the priority.
- *SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*
- JS said that saw pupils were highly engaged and pro-active in lessons, and wanting to answer questions. GM said that they need to organise more peer to peer lesson observations for reading as already in place for Maths.
- CJ said that RL should be commended for delivery the improvements in reading combining this with her own teaching responsibilities.
- **CJ asked if there was a risk associated with SATS results?** GM said that there is always a risk when the judgement is based on one test on one day. Like many adults, children can have bad days and test pressure can impact on how the children perform. We avoid narrowing the curriculum and teaching to the test but are confident they have been taught the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful. GM added that he welcome governor monitoring and the challenge associated with such.

5.3.2 Phonics: SM informed governors that he had provided his monitoring report on phonics once it had been cleared by all involved. This had been uploaded to Gov Hub for governors to read.

5.4 School Specific Policies and Reports

- **Attendance** – This was discussed and agreed within the HT’s report (see 5.2)
- **School Accessibility Plan** – Governors noted that this was due for review in T2 2024 and publication on the school website. GM said that the document would be provided to governors and asked if they could review such providing comments to him so that the updated Plan can be published for the start of T3.
ACTION: GM to upload the document to Gov Hub for governors to review and publish for start of T3.
- **Pupil Premium Report** – BE will complete and upload by 31st December 2024 deadline.

6. SAFEGUARDING AND ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

6.1 GM informed governors that there were no safeguarding concerns to report.

7. ANY OTHER SCHOOL MATTERS

7.1 School Expansion Project: GM provided governors with an update following the latest project. In summary:

- The mobile unit that should have been provided during the October break had been pushed back to November 2024 but that this had now been postponed to February 2025 school holiday. The delay was not ideal as space in the school was at a premium as the meeting room had been re-purposed for teaching.
- *SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

ACTIONS: GM to forward the KCC communication when received, and to ask MC regarding availability of other funding such as developer contributions.

8. TRUST MATTERS

8.1 Trust Board minutes: Governors noted the minutes from the T1 meeting. There were no matters to refer to Trustees.

8.2 Risk Policy and Risk Management: Governors noted the Trust Strategic Risk Register attached to the papers. AL informed governors that the implementation and roll out of a Trust-wide approach including establishing School specific risk registers would be rolled out in T3.

8.3 Feedback from CoG meeting: *SEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES*

CJ said that the next catch-up meeting was on Monday 9th December.

9. TRUST POLICIES

9.1 Trust Policies - Governors noted the Trust policies that had been approved in T1.

9.2 Risk Policy and Risk Management: Governors noted the Trust Risk Policy and Strategic Risk Register attached to the papers. AL informed governors that the implementation and roll out of a Trust-wide

approach including establishing School specific risk registers would be discussed as part of the Trust Governance Event.

10. GOVERNOR MONITORING

10.1 Future governor monitoring:

- T4 – EYFS and writing
- T6 – Data outcomes vs predictions, and follow up on actions and observations arising from T2 and 4.

10.2 Allocation of governors to the remaining areas for monitoring to be agreed.

10.3 Arrangements for future monitoring visits: It was agreed that GM would provide governors with a list of the subject leads and their emails who would liaise direct to organise dates / times for the monitoring visits. GM would inform staff of the arrangements.

10.4 GM invited governors to join him for a school learning walk.

11. ANY OTHER GOVERNOR MATTERS

11.1 Appointment of Roles and Responsibilities: Governors appointed SM as the link governor for attendance.

ACTION: AL to update schedule.

11.2 Compliance and Training: It was noted that two governors had completed the cyber security training. All remaining governor to complete by 13th December 2024.

SM highlighted an issue he was experiencing with his training account and therefore unable to complete the training.

ACTION: AL to liaise with School Pro and resolve.

ACTION: Remaining governors to complete the SchoolPRO cyber security training or provide AL with evidence of prior learning.

11.3 Communication: CJ explained to governors that she would like to create a WhatsApp group for the LGB to aid communication especially for arranging meetings such as monitoring visits. CJ was aware that some governors don't necessarily regularly check school emails and that a Whatsapp group might be more effective, and asked for governors to share their mobile phone numbers.

CJ asked if parents knew who were the governors? It was concluded that their pictures should be included on the board displaying staff names / photos in reception.

ACTION: GM to chase up the governor photos and arrange for these to be added to the staff 'who's who'.

11.4 School Christmas Dinner: GM said that governors were more than welcome to come in for the school dinner on 16th December as would provide an opportunity to informally interact with both pupils and staff.

ACTION: Governors to inform GM / School Office if they are attending to ensure catered for.

12. MEETING CLOSE

12.1 Confidentiality: Governors confirmed that 5.3.1 (part), 7.1 and 8.3 would be recorded as confidential.

12.2. Next meeting date: All to be held at Coxheath Primary School commencing at 1700 on:

- Tuesday 4th February 2025
- Tuesday 18th March 2025
- Tuesday 13th May 2025
- Tuesday 8th July 2025

Governance calendar on Governor Hub

12.3 Meeting close: CJ thanked all attendees for their contribution to the meeting. The meeting closed at 1920.