



# John Blandy Primary School

**Meeting:** Local Governing Committee

**Where:** In person – JBL School

**Date:** Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**Time:** 19.00

Name	Initials	Governor Type	Attended
Hannah Boon	HB	Community/Chair	Yes
Christina Holleywood	CH	Community/Vice-Chair	Yes
Lorna Butler	LB	Parent	No
Nina Davis	ND	Parent	No
Tamzin Einon	TE	Community	yes
Gareth Sheer	GS	Community	yes
Suzanne Elliot	SE	Headteacher	yes
Rachel Skeet	RS	Staff	yes
Rebecca Wilson	RW	Other/Deputy Headteacher	yes
Rosie Phillips, Clerk to Governors	RP	N/A	yes

## Minutes

Item	Subject	Lead
1	<p><b>Welcome, Quoracy, Declarations of Pecuniary Interest, Apologies</b></p> <p>HB opened the meeting at 19:09, welcoming the committee.</p> <p>RP informed the committee that she had received apologies from ND. It was noted that LB was absent without apologies.</p> <p>RP confirmed that the meeting was quorate.</p> <p>Governors were invited to share any declarations of pecuniary interest pertinent to the agenda. SE declared that she was now interim Chair of Governors at Ashbury school and would be so until the end of the academic year.</p>	Chair
2	<p><b>Urgent matters (as previously notified to the Chair)</b></p> <p>HB confirmed that she had received no urgent matters for discussion.</p>	Chair
3	<b>Minutes of last meeting:</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)	Chair/Clerk



# John Blandy Primary School

- a) Approval of minutes of last meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 & arrange for Chair to sign previous minutes
- b) Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 – ensure all items are completed and note any that require carrying over

HB invited the LGC to approve the minutes of the last meeting, on 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. Governors had no comments or amendments, and both the main and confidential minutes were approved as accurate reflections of proceedings. As HB was absent for the previous meeting it was agreed that CH would sign both sets of minutes as approved on GovHub. – **Action CH**

RP confirmed that she would upload the approved main meeting minutes from November to the school website. – **Action RP**

RP ran through the actions arising document, noting that most actions were now complete. Governors were thanked for discharging their actions promptly.

SE informed Governors that her action to contact Governors to schedule their monitoring visits was partially completed and that she would contact all Governors over the coming weeks. – **Action SE**

HB extended thanks to CH for writing the statement to parents on behalf of the Governors.

Regarding the updated Scheme of Delegation from the Trust, RP informed the committee it was still not available; however, it was itemised for approval at the next Board meeting and therefore she hoped to be able to share it with them soon.

As she was not present to confirm that she had completed the training, ND's action to complete cyber security training was carried over to the March LGC meeting.

Lastly, SE informed the committee that she had raised the need for a collective way of reporting behaviour incidences on the Leadership report with the Trust Inclusion Lead and the Director of Education and it would be discussed during the next Heads' meeting. SE to update on this at the March LGC. – **Action SE**



# John Blandy Primary School

4	<p><b>Governing Body:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Note upcoming Governor walk-throughs / visits</li> <li>b) Look at Governor training and development – Hot Topic Briefing Sessions – Governors to confirm which they have signed up to / have they attended any so far.</li> <li>c) Confirm statement to parents has been issued on website</li> </ul> <p>SE informed the committee that CH had attended the school during a science assembly, in her role as STEM link Governor, and that she would be attending again soon for further monitoring of computing and maths. She added that CH would also be a judge at the science fair.</p> <p>She continued by noting that she had moved LB’s reading monitoring visit from the following week, due to planned staff absence that day, as she wanted her to attend at a time where she could better observe reading fluency and so had postponed the visit until after their peer review from the Trust.</p> <p>It was noted that TE would be attending the following week for music observation and monitoring.</p> <p>Governors were reminded to submit their visit reports to RP to upload to GovHub. – <b>Action All Governors</b></p> <p>Regarding the Hot Topic Briefing sessions, CH noted that she had attended the first, which she explained had been a general update and introductory session.</p> <p>Governors were reminded to sign up to the upcoming sessions where possible, and to add any training attended to their personal GovernorHub training record. – <b>Action All Governors</b></p> <p>RP confirmed that the statement to parents had been published on the website.</p>	<p><b>Chair/Head/ Clerk</b></p>
5	<p><b>Chair’s Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Chair to provide update / briefing from LGC Chairs’ forum on 15<sup>th</sup> October at KAs</li> </ul> <p>HB informed the committee that the LGC Chairs’ forum on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October at King Alfred’s had been structured similarly to a ‘hot topic’ session, with the main focus of the sessions being the vision and values for</p>	<p><b>Chair</b></p>



# John Blandy Primary School

	<p>the new Trust. HB commented that there had been some good input from participants on this subject.</p> <p>HB added that CEO Richard Evans (RE), had updated the Chairs on the merger, explaining that the Trusts were functionally merged but were not legally merged due to a small barrier in legalities which they were trying to overcome.</p> <p>HB continued by noting that she felt, from discussion at the forum, that the cultures of Governance between CLT and the VAT were different, and that the movement within the Trust was for Governance to fall more in line with how it had been at the VAT. HB added that there would be further sharing of skillset across the Trust with Governors supporting one another and sharing knowledge and experience.</p> <p>The committee extended thanks to HB for attending the forum on behalf of JBL, and for her update.</p>	
6	<p><b>Headteacher's Report (standing item)</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) HT to share updated report with the LGC</p> <p>HB extended thanks to SE for her reporting, noting that they had received several questions in advance, which were mostly focused on behaviour of pupils and whether there had been notable improvements, themes or trends.</p> <p>SE explained that she had taken some time over the Christmas break to edit the layout of the report so that it was clear when the incidents occurred, allowing Governors to see that there had been clear progress in some areas since the last meeting, which she hoped indicated that their responses to concerning behaviours were proving effective.</p> <p><i>How was the PCSO visit, and did you receive feedback from parents afterwards?</i></p> <p>SE noted that the PCSO visit had been positive, and the pupils listened and engaged with the officer. She added that she did not receive any feedback from parents.</p> <p><i>Arranging the PCSO visit was an important, proactive decision. Do you feel that you have seen the results that you wanted from that visit?</i></p> <p>SE commented that she was cautious to be too optimistic, however noted</p>	Head



# John Blandy Primary School

she felt positive as they had had fewer incidents since the visit and had been less involved with certain year groups where the behaviour had been most challenging.

SE added that they had changed the way in which they dealt with some incidents, which she felt had also contributed to the improvement in behaviour. She explained that they had implemented consequences whereby pupils would not be allowed to participate in certain activities with their peers, which seemed to have had the desired effect. As well as consequences for poor behaviour, SE explained that they had also implemented positive consequences for good behaviour, and that they had been ensuring they made phone calls home to parents to acknowledge the improved behaviour of the children.

### *Will the PCSO visit again?*

SE commented that they hoped so, noting that the PCSO had asked the school to submit feedback which they could use to support a bid for funding to be able to further their support for schools. SE informed the committee that all staff had submitted their feedback.

### *What is 'together we thrive'?*

SE explained that, at the Leadership and Management review, she was asked to discuss the school and their vision and what they wished to achieve and then to create a strapline that demonstrated this. She noted that SLT had decided upon 'together we thrive', feeling that it fit nicely with 'Belong, Believe, Brilliant'. SE informed the Governors that she was seeking their feedback on the strapline and, if they approved it, she would contact Sarah Nichols from marketing to create an image incorporating the phrase.

Governors responded positively to the strapline. SE extended thanks, noting that she would contact marketing to proceed. – **Action SE**

SE shared with Governors that GS had enquired as to whether the school had a 'Separated Parents Policy', noting that they did not. She commented that it could be useful to have one to clarify for parents what was the responsibility of the school and what was their own, noting that they had had issues in the past with communication amongst separated families. She also added that some separated parents had requested separate parents' evenings which had to be managed on a case-by-case basis, therefore it would be good to have a policy to rely upon to support her decisions.



# John Blandy Primary School

	<p><i>It is unreasonable to expect the school to have to duplicate all their communication. Communication from the school is made via Parent Pay which all parents can access if they register, therefore duplication by the school would be unnecessary.</i></p> <p>GS noted that he had a policy at his school and would share it with SE to support her in writing her own. – <b>Action SE</b></p> <p><i>If you create a policy, you will need scope to include exceptions in the case of domestic violence, restraining orders, or similar instances where it would not be in the parents nor child's best interest.</i></p> <p>SE concurred, extending thanks to GS for agreeing to share the policy.</p> <p>Governors thanked SE for her report.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding (standing item)</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Update on safeguarding monitoring within school / safeguarding link governor visit</p> <p>TE informed the committee that she had visited earlier in the week to discuss safeguarding with SE, and that they had spoken in depth about safeguarding at the school. She informed the committee that everything she and SE had discussed had already been covered by the questions on the Headteacher's report and therefore there was nothing further that she could add at this stage.</p> <p>TE extended thanks to SE for her work in ensuring safeguarding was at the forefront of all the work done at the school.</p>	<b>Head / Safeguarding Link Gov</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Attendance</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>Ensuring close focus / discussion on attendance.</p> <p>a) Review attendance of pupils: Break down attendance data to show SEND, PP, and year group attendance</p> <p>b) Review staff attendance</p> <p>SE highlighted that the data showed a positive trend from term one to term two, with persistent absenteeism decreasing, and absences for PP, SEND and pupils with EHCPs also decreasing. She added that there had been a noticeable increase in absences towards the end of term two for illnesses such as sickness and temperatures.</p>	<b>Head</b>



# John Blandy Primary School

SE informed the Governors that, during a recent Headteachers' meeting, it had been highlighted that if a pupil had a total of 19 days absence in a school year, this equated to persistent absence, regardless of when in the year the absence occurred. She noted that she wanted to share that with parents at the start of the next academic year, to help encourage attendance. Further to that, she was considering a shared idea of other pupils taking on the role of 'attendance officers', helping to bring in pupils from the gate who struggled to come in in the mornings, seeing a friendly peer to help.

SE added that it was important that they remained curious as to why pupils were absent or late, and that they continued to have relational conversations with families and to fully understand the challenges faced that were contributing to absences.

*You noted in the report that you had an issue with punctuality as well as attendance. What is the impact of that and how are you tackling it?*

SE noted that there were a number of pupils who were frequently late for school and coming in via the office, and that there had recently been a tendency for those pupils to be coming in alone, however she wanted the parents to be coming in too to explain the lateness, not leaving it to the child to do so. SE informed the Governors that she had shared this with parents via the newsletter. She explained that when pupils were late it impacted on their work, with younger pupils missing out on phonics practice and the older ones missing their morning learning task. She added that she was aware that there were pupils with additional needs or genuine reasons why they struggled to get to school on time and that she and the staff were fully supportive of those families and understood their difficulties, however her messaging was focused on those families who were just regularly late.

*Would it make sense to move phonics to a different time if pupils are missing it?*

RW explained that it was a very useful time to have their phonics practice as it set the pupils up for their reading for the day.

*In that case, perhaps we should be telling parents that their child missed phonics when they were late. That may help parents understand the gravity of their lateness and the specific impact it could have on their child, and be a*



# John Blandy Primary School

	<p><i>greater incentive to be on time.</i></p> <p>SE concurred that this could be a useful approach to encourage punctuality.</p> <p>SE impressed upon the committee the importance of noting that it was never the child who was late for school; the responsibility lay with the parent or carer.</p> <p>Regarding staff absence, SE informed the committee that they followed their sickness and absence policy for prolonged absences, noting that the first action taken was an initial discussion with the member of staff to deem whether they were fit to return to work. Following that, if they reached the threshold noted in the absence policy, then the school would look at how they could be supported further, such as with an occupational health referral.</p> <p><i>Are you satisfied with the support in place for managing staff absence?</i></p> <p>SE confirmed that she was.</p> <p>Governors thanked SE for her update.</p>	
9	<p><b>Admission &amp; Prospectus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) School must determine its admission arrangements for entry in September 2026 by the end of February 2025 and publish on the website by the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.</li> <li>b) Review and update the prospectus information on the website.</li> </ul> <p>SE informed the Governors that the closing date for admission applications for 2025 had been midnight the previous night, and they would know in due course what their admission numbers would be for this year.</p> <p>Regarding admission arrangements for 2026, SE noted that Head of Governance and Policy, Vicky Roberts (VR), had updated Headteachers on the process and all Headteachers would be issued with a template soon.</p> <p>Regarding the prospectus information on the website, SE confirmed that this was up to date. She added that RW had updated the curriculum information and that the staff were tasked with keeping their class pages up to date. She added that their feedback from the Trust was that the website was a stylistically outdated and that the Trust were looking into making all the websites consistent across the schools</p>	Head



# John Blandy Primary School

<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety (standing item)</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Update on any items not included in HT report.</li> <li>b) H&amp;S link Governor to update on any visits conducted</li> </ul> <p>SE informed the committee that she had received a Health and Safety monitoring visit from the Trust, who had noted that health and safety at John Blandy was generally very good.</p> <p>SE noted that she needed to remind the cleaning company about their expectations in terms of storage and ensuring compliance with COSHH. –</p> <p><b>Action SE</b></p> <p>Further to that, they had discussed during the monitoring the need to replace the toilets in the original building, as well as one of the classrooms having inefficient heating. She informed the committee that they would look to have the heating upgraded as soon as possible.</p> <p>Lastly, SE noted that they were awaiting feedback on their application for a grant to improve the staff car park.</p> <p><i>Other than levelling it, does the car park require any further work?</i> SE confirmed that it did not.</p>	<p><b>Head /H&amp;S Gov</b></p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Risk Register</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Discussion of items on the risk register and current grading.</li> <li>b) Look at whether risks need increasing, decreasing or discharging</li> </ul> <p>HB invited the Governors to comment on the risk register.</p> <p><i>Cyber security and GDPR are placed into the same category. These should be two separate risks on the register, as they are measured differently and have a different impact.</i></p> <p>SE agreed, noting that she would make the change. – <b>Action SE</b></p> <p>HB agreed to sign off the risk register. – <b>Action HB</b></p>	<p><b>Head</b></p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Finance &amp; Budget Update (standing item)</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review and discuss latest management accounts</li> <li>b) Update on budget monitoring</li> </ul>	<p><b>Head/ Finance Gov</b></p>



# John Blandy Primary School

	<p>SE updated the Governors on her latest finance meeting with the Trust, informing the LGC that the Trust had stated that, as the School were in a healthy financial position, they could use some of the emergency reserves for projects in the school. SE commented on the school's aesthetic, noting that it had not been painted in many years and so she may look to use some of their reserves on that, or on improvements to flooring. She noted that the Trust would be looking to improve toilet facilities across their schools.</p> <p>Though she was keen to make improvements to the school, SE added that she was cautious to spend too much out of their reserves as she was yet to find out what their admissions numbers would be for the following year and therefore what the impact would be on their budget. To protect their budget further, she informed the Governors that she had been advertising for TA roles on temporary contracts, due to uncertainties with the budget for the following financial year.</p> <p><i>Is offering the role on a temporary contract impacting recruitment? Have you seen a reduction in interest compared to permanent positions?</i></p> <p>SE noted that they had not and that they had recruited for the role the previous week and were looking forward to the new TA joining the school.</p> <p>SE noted that they needed to remain conscious of their budget, particularly with pupil numbers expected to be in decline over the coming years, due to a decrease in birth rate.</p> <p>Governors extended thanks to SE for her update. CH informed the committee that she would be attending the next finance meeting in her role as finance link Governor and therefore would be able to contribute to the next update too.</p>	
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Pupil Premium</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) SE to confirm that PP strategy was published ahead of the deadline.</p> <p>SE confirmed that the pupil premium strategy was published ahead of the deadline in December.</p> <p>Governors thanked SE for her work on this.</p>	<p><b>Head / Finance Gov</b></p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>Surveys &amp; Responses</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p>	<p><b>Head</b></p>



# John Blandy Primary School

	<p>a) SE to share update on any survey responses.</p> <p>SE confirmed that she had received the survey results from the parent and carer survey and had uploaded them to GovernorHub, however was keen to share the results with staff too before any in depth discussions from Governors were shared in a public forum.</p>	
<b>13</b>	<p><b>Governor Reports &amp; Visits to School (standing item)</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Update on any Governor reports / visits to the school since the last meeting</p> <p>CH informed her fellow Governors that she had attended an assembly to kick off the Trust science fair, noting that all pupils were put into pairs and would be working to come up with a topic. She explained that the winners from the school would be entered into the semi-final, which would be held at one of the Trust schools, and then the final would be at RAL Harwell.</p> <p>SE extended thanks to CH for her involvement and support.</p>	<b>Head/ Link Govs</b>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>a) Chair to share any correspondence with the LGC</p> <p>HB informed the committee that she had no correspondence to share.</p>	<b>Chair</b>
<b>15</b>	<p><b>CLT News Update</b></p> <p>a) Update on the merger between the VAT and CLT b) Any other updates from CLT</p> <p>SE informed the committee that, having been updated on the matter at the Headteacher's meeting, the merger between the VAT and CLT was due to happen on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February.</p> <p>No further updates were noted.</p>	<b>Head/Chair</b>
<b>16</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>There was no further business noted for discussion.</p> <p>HB extended thanks to SE on behalf of the LGC, and SE thanked Governors for their support.</p>	<b>Chair / Clerk</b>



# John Blandy Primary School

	The meeting was closed at 20:56.	
	<p><b>Next Meeting Dates 2024/25</b></p> <p><b>Term 4 –</b> LGC Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 7pm in person at John Blandy</p> <p><b>Term 5 –</b> LGC Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 7pm in person at John Blandy</p> <p><b>Term 6 –</b> LGC Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 7pm in person at John Blandy</p>	