



John Blandy Primary School

Meeting: Local Governing Committee

Where: In person – JBL School

Date: Thursday 23rd May 2024

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	Yes
Nina Davis	ND	Parent	Yes
Tamzin Einon	TE	Community	Yes
Gareth Sheer	GS	Community	Yes
Suzanne Elliot	SE	Headteacher	Yes
Rachel Skeet	RS	Staff	Yes
Rebecca Wilson	RB	Other/Deputy Headteacher	Yes
Rosie Phillips, Clerk to Governors	RP	N/A	Yes

FINAL MINUTES

Item	Subject	Lead
1	<p>Welcome, Quoracy, Declarations of Pecuniary Interest, Apologies</p> <p>HB opened the meeting at 19:02, welcoming the committee. She noted that meeting was quorate and that no apologies had been received.</p> <p>HB invited the committee to share any new declarations of pecuniary interest relevant to the agenda, of which there were none.</p>	Chair
2	<p>Urgent matters (as previously notified to the Chair)</p> <p>No urgent matters were noted.</p>	Chair
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting: (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Approval of minutes of last meeting on 19th March 2024</p> <p>b) Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 19th March 2024: HB to run through actions arising document to ensure all tasks completed by Governors.</p>	Chair/Clerk



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	<p>The committee approved the minutes from the last meeting, on 19th March 2024.</p> <p>RP confirmed she would upload the minutes to the website. – Action RP</p> <p>HB ran through the matters arising document with the committee, extending thanks to Governors for completing their actions. She confirmed there would be safeguarding training soon.</p>	
4	<p>Governing Body:</p> <p>a) LGC Vacancies: 2 Community - Update from SE / HB on the progress of community Governors</p> <p>SE informed the committee that there had been an expression of interest in the community Governor role, however unfortunately they were not sufficiently independent of the school. SE explained that, though the skillset of the applicant was suitable, links to the school meant that they cannot fulfil some roles such as safeguarding.</p> <p>SE noted that the candidate was a strong candidate and therefore she had contacted FLT COO Anne Lynn (AL) and Vice-Chair of Trustees Liz Holmes (LH) who could look into them being a Governor at other schools in the Trust.</p>	Chair/Head/ Clerk
5	<p>Governors SWOT Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors to conduct SWOT analysis. - Governors' 5-year vision <p>Due to time constraints of the meeting, it was decided that the SWOT analysis would be conducted at the final meeting of the year, in July.</p> <p>RP noted she would add it to the next agenda. – Action RP</p>	Head / Chair
6.	<p>SEND (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note Trust SEND Policy and consider required school actions <p>SE noted that JBL was compliant with the Trust SEND policy, and this was reflected in the results of the SEND review.</p>	Head



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<p>7.</p>	<p>Safeguarding / Pupil welfare (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive a Safeguarding report - Inclusion <p>SE informed the committee that TE had recently visited JBL in her role as safeguarding link Governor, and invited SE to share her feedback with Governors.</p> <p>TE noted that one aspect she and SE had discussed on her visit was the increased numbers of staff who were DSLs and whether that would help to reduce SE's workload. She noted that it would not decrease SE's workload generally however would help over holiday periods to have more members of staff available to be on call. TE informed the committee that SE would maintain responsibility for the key pupils and families with the greatest safeguarding needs, however, would benefit from the support of more DSLs daily, and in supporting attendance and managing TAFs.</p> <p>SE commented that the extra support was helpful, noting that that RW had attended a high-profile meeting alongside her which was great experience.</p> <p>TE continued by noting that she had discussed attendance with SE on her visit as well as conducting a general review of the efficacy of their safeguarding. TE added that SE had commented that the general support from OCC was adequate however their communication was less so, and she found herself having to chase cases for response.</p> <p>Regarding attendance, TE informed the committee that JBL's figures sat just above their target, at 96.1%, which was a marked improvement on previous years. TE noted that persistent absence of some pupils was still a concern, however added that it was closely monitored with support from both OCC and the Trust.</p> <p>SE added that, for pupils with very low attendance, there were reintegration timetables in place.</p>	<p>Head / Safeguarding Governor</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Staff wellbeing</p> <p>Receive a report on staff wellbeing including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance - Retention and recruitment - Incidents of work-related stress and violence against staff 	<p>Head</p>



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	<p>SE commented that staff attendance was always included in the Headteacher's report and that the Autumn term had been very difficult, however it was notably improving, noting that she was following the Managing Sickness and Absence Policy closely.</p> <p>In terms of recruitment, SE informed the committee that they had recruited Miss Marshall who had been working in Rowan already and would be covering Miss Owen's maternity leave for the summer term, before starting with the school full time from September. She added that they had advertised for maternity leave cover via a rolling advert and would conduct interviews when suitable candidates applied.</p> <p><i>GS – Is having a rolling advert due to difficulty in recruiting?</i> SE confirmed that it was, commenting on how it was a very difficult time of year to appoint. She added that recruitment was moving rapidly at present, though noted that there was an interview happening the following day and so they were hopeful they would find someone soon.</p> <p><i>GS – Is there anything the Trust can do to support you with recruitment? Do they offer incentives to candidates such as support with relocation that could draw interest from further afield?</i> SE noted that it was dependent on the role and that at times they would offer more incentivising factors for leadership roles, but not for general teaching positions.</p> <p>SE noted that there had been no work-related staff absences to report and there had been no violence against staff recently. She noted there had been a couple of near misses which would be on the next report.</p> <p><i>HB – How do you judge if something is a near miss?</i> SE confirmed if staff felt at all threatened then it was a near miss.</p> <p>HB extended thanks to SE.</p>	
9.	<p>P&S</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - update by the Chair of the P&S meeting that was held on 2nd May - Receive a report on midyear progress checks for non-assessment or exam years (primary years 3, 4 and 5) - Receive a report on how well the culture and ethos of the school is being promoted and sustained 	<p>Chair of P & S / Head</p>



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HB informed the committee that P&S had met and discussed the progression, noting that the progress reports were often data heavy and relied on trend spotting, therefore it was useful to discuss it in depth too. HB commended how SE understood each pupil's data points thoroughly.

HB noted that from the meeting she would confidently say the pre-requisites for outstanding academic achievement were in place at the school. Further to that, the actions around attendance were having an impact on learning as hoped. She added that the feedback was that the pupils were happy, and their needs met, which provided an excellent base for academic success.

HB informed the committee that the Trust had congratulated JBL on their curriculum and how it had been developed and that all teaching at the school was of at least a good quality, often better. HB noted that this was not simply her opinion, but was rather the result of data collection, data review and external collaboration.

HB impressed upon the Governors that their closest focus must remain on writing as the data remains still low, though recognising that it was a difficult skill to teach.

SE added that for writing they had requested that the teachers provide predictions for each pupil, but also show where they are currently, so there were no surprises if the predictions did not materialise. SE commented that their writing was progressing, however they were still a way off their target.

HB continued by noting that they had discussed reading in depth, as well as how to develop the way in which reading is taught at JBL. HB noted there was recognition that their standards of reading right now were not as hoped or predicted they would be six years ago, and neither was the teaching of reading as effective. Recognising this, HB commented that, due to the work being put in, she was hopeful to see reading becoming more vibrant and effective across the school the following year.

SE elaborated on HB's comments, noting that in 2019 they were working towards becoming an outstanding reading school, however once Covid hit in 2020 the pupil's writing abilities plummeted and so the focus



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shifted to that. SE commented that their focus needed to remain on both reading and writing.

SE informed the Board that newer research on reading focused on the fluency, as children cannot comprehend what is in front of them unless they can read fluently. Due to this, SE informed Governors that they had provided staff with training on teaching fluency, and that all of KS1 also now ended each day with story time to encourage their love of reading.

GS – How much of that data is used at the start of the academic year for the staff to understand their cohort? Do the teachers look at last year’s data to understand each pupil or do they begin teaching and allow that data to reveal itself through the pupil’s work?

SE noted that she provided all the data for each class to each teacher on the September start of year inset day, so they were aware of their new class’s abilities.

GS questioned whether the September inset day was too late to be providing that information, to which RW explained it was also shared between teachers at their pre-summer handover.

HB – Does the handover between class teachers happen before or after the parents are invited in to meet their child’s new teacher?

SE commented that it was variable, depending on time constraints and what suited the teachers. She invited the Governors to share any input they had on the timing.

HB commented that it could be sensible for the handover to occur before the parent meeting so that both the teacher and parent could get the most out of the meeting.

HB – Is the parent meeting at the end of the year beneficial for the school and teachers or is it mostly for the benefit of the parents?

SE noted that it was twofold, as they were obliged to offer parents an opportunity to speak to teachers after final reports came in, but also allowed both the parents and the teacher to get to know one another and for parents to see where their children would physically be.

GS – In terms of driving standards, could the new teacher discuss briefly with the pupil their strengths? Perhaps set them reading tasks for the summer holidays?

RW explained that there was not the time to do that with every pupil,



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	<p>noting they would need five minutes with every parent and that was not feasible the way in which the open afternoon was structured. RW noted that the pupil's reports did identify next steps, though recognised the next steps the teacher of the class they were leaving suggested may not align to those of the teacher of the class they were moving up to.</p> <p><i>GS – If the issue is that they would benefit from that but have a lack of time then that is a logistical issue and could be changed.</i></p> <p>HB agreed with GS that five minutes with pupil and their parents before the summer seemed a valuable investment of time.</p> <p>SE recognised GS's suggestion, though added that at times the families who would most benefit from attending were not always able to attend. SE continued by stating that the benefit of those conversations was variable from pupil to pupil, though added reading during the summer holidays was a key aspect. She noted that the previous English Curriculum lead would send out summer holiday reading prompts when she worked at the school, though the uptake was not always carried out.</p> <p><i>GS – Returning to Ofsted, we are working towards being an outstanding school and everything we know about the school shows how great it is. We are in a very positive place, but if we want to make that step from good to outstanding, we need some things to be done differently. Would you say this is one of them?</i></p> <p>SE agreed that the school's progress was positive and that they were moving in the right direction, and the Trust were supporting them in driving that progression. She explained that improving reading was definitely one of the aspects to progress to strive towards being Ofsted outstanding, noting that the DFE had stated that schools could no longer expect parents to be doing work at home, therefore they were relying on teachers to drive curriculums and to be checking phonics delivery and data regularly.</p> <p>HB extended thanks to SE for her ongoing work and to GS for his pertinent questions.</p>	
10.	<p>Health and Safety (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety Audit Actions Update - Termly audit actions update 	<p>Head/ H&S Gov</p>



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HB noted that the H & S meeting had been postponed therefore there was minimal news to share. She informed the committee that there was an upcoming visit from OCC and Kier to measure for improvements to the school field. HB asked SE whether the parameter fencing would be covered by this, and SE confirmed it would not be, and was a safeguarding item instead.

HB – I am concerned that on each risk assessment we are discussing the car park and the gates not being closed as a safety risk; if it is coming up on each and every risk assessment then it is clear our approach is not effective, and we need to reevaluate.

SE recognised that the gate being left open was an issue and noted that she had requested that the office staff ensure it is closed each morning when she leaves to open the front gate for pupils, however added that it is then left open by delivery drivers and visitors during the day and the office staff do not have sight of it from where they sit.

HB – Is there scope for a more official sign on the gate? Is the signage we currently have one of the issues as, though some people would ignore any sign, some people may ignore or not even read a paper sign but may be deterred by something more official. We need the message to be clear.

SE noted this could help, though added that she had spoken to the parents who drove in and it was the same ones repeatedly and yet they still ignored requests. She commented her uncertainty that better signage would eradicate the issue though agreed to enquire into the costs. – **Action SE**

CH – What is the policy for parents who are blue badge holders?

SE confirmed that blue badge holders can drive in.

CH – Would they be expected to get out and open the gate then?

SE confirmed they would need to.

HB commented that they needed to be doing everything they could to rectify the problem, as now it was an identified risk if they did not do everything possible to mitigate it then it could become a liability issue.

TE – The answer is electronic gates. The office staff should not be going in and out to shut the gate.

HB thanked SE for agreeing to look into better signage.



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<p>11.</p>	<p>Policies (Documents: GovernorHub) Policies to be ratified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy (amendments) - Teaching and learning (in conjunction with our adaptive teaching) <p>HB invited Governors to share any questions or comments they had regarding the policies that had been shared.</p> <p>Governors put forward no questions or comments and ratified both the Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy and the Teaching and Learning Policy.</p> <p>SE extended thanks to the committee.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Head</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Headteacher's Report (Document on GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors to receive HT report <p>SE thanked Governors for reading her report before inviting them to share any questions or comments they had on it.</p> <p><i>TE – Regarding free school meal vouchers, I can see they are funded by OCC until the end of July – what happens after that? Will you be signposting families to where they can receive support elsewhere?</i></p> <p>SE informed the committee that OCC would be providing meal vouchers until after the summer holiday, however she was unsure what would happen beyond then, noting that they would of course be signposting if the vouchers were stopped. She added that they could invite parents to take food from their foodbank table over half term and that they hoped to once again provide their PP families with hampers at Christmas time.</p> <p><i>HB – Do the hampers work better than the harvest table?</i></p> <p>SE explained they were different, noting that the donation drive at the harvest had been so successful they offered to the local community to come take food they needed too.</p> <p>GS pointed out a discrepancy in figures between the SEND review and Headteacher's report, and SE confirmed this had been rectified since the report was uploaded.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Head</p>



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	<p>LB questioned whether SE had received the donation from the Blandy Trust, as noted in 5.4 of her report, and SE confirmed that she had.</p> <p>HB extended thanks to SE for her report and to Governors for their questions.</p>	
13.	<p>Finance and Budget Update (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>Receive a Budget Monitoring Report and Services Offered: Review and consider funding and staffing implications of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - current year's census figures - numbers school place allocations, - expected numbers of pupils leaving - Review and sign off revenue and capital allocations for the coming year - Approve the 5-year budget forecast <p>ND noted that she had yet to receive all the figures from the central finance team and therefore they were not included in her report.</p> <p>SE added this was due to teething issues with the new finance system centrally which had slowed down some aspects of their work. She noted she had visited the finance team to discuss the budget, informing the committee that though they are showing a deficit at present they were forecast a surplus.</p> <p>ND informed the committee that the last report, at the end of February, forecast a good surplus, and that she and SE had met to discuss their risks going forward and noted that, should they go into a deficit this year, they would still look to have a secure five-year forecast.</p> <p><i>HB – What is the forecast for admissions that OCC provided this year?</i> SE noted that OCC had forecast 50 applicants both for 2024-25 and 2025-26.</p>	<p>Head / Finance Gov</p>
14.	<p>Procedural Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider ALT recommendations on school hours and term dates for coming year - Confirm governor safeguarding training date <p>SE noted that from September the school week would be 32.5 hours, as they have an 8.30 am start. SE informed the committee that there was a</p>	<p>Head</p>



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	<p>learning activity available for pupils from 8.30 am and then formal learning begun after the register had been taken.</p> <p>SE informed the committee that the Governor safeguarding training date was July 3rd 2024.</p>	
15.	<p>LGC 23/24</p> <p>Discuss and agree an LGC 23/24 report to the board on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what governors have focused on - the LGC's impact - what will they need to focus on next year <p>It was decided that this item would be postponed to the following meeting, in July.</p> <p>RP to add to July's agenda. – Action RP</p>	Chair
16.	<p>Pupil Feedback / Pupil Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback from pupil voice <p>HB noted that it had been positive to receive a broad range of feedback from the pupil voice and invited the committee to share their comments and questions.</p> <p><i>TE – Regarding the pupils' responses on their feelings around challenge, do the children know what a challenge is, in terms of a multi-step process, or do they think it is when the work is too difficult?</i></p> <p>SE commented that the responses on challenge had stood out for her too, and that she had spoken to staff who felt that they did challenge the pupils, however she added that, despite staff believing that, they must listen to the feedback from pupils too. SE stated the importance of not overusing the word 'challenge' as the pupils then come to associate any piece of work as a challenge. SE recognised that, though they did provide challenge to students, this was an area where there was room for improvement and they were now focused on ensuring a breadth of challenge was available.</p> <p>RW informed the committee that the following year they would be part of the BBO hub on mastery and how that is developed in Maths.</p> <p>SE continued by explaining that all FLT schools had been encouraged to be part of the hub and that she had asked for a hub leader who has had experience of mixed age classes. SE commented that it was easier to</p>	Head



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	<p>challenge pupils in English, but that it was more difficult to do effectively in maths.</p> <p><i>CH – In the student survey a large proportion of the pupils said they felt safe, however there was mention of the lockdown practice and fire alarm too; are these perceived as a danger by the students?</i></p> <p>SE noted she felt some pupils certainly perceived the lockdown practice as a danger, explaining that she had visited a classroom after the practice and one pupil had said they had found it very frightening. SE explained to the pupils that it was no different to the fire alarm, however commented that she recognised that it was new to the pupils and that can add to the feeling of it being scary.</p> <p><i>HB – What example do you use for the pupils as to why there could be a lockdown?</i></p> <p>RW noted that they often say it could be a dog on the school grounds, or a fire in the local area which is producing smoke.</p> <p><i>HB – Are the answers anonymised? Are there items you have seen come through that you would like to investigate further?</i></p> <p>SE informed the committee that the responses were anonymous and there was feedback on bullying she would like further investigated and therefore she had asked all teachers to ask their class to come to them to discuss further if they had spoken about anything of concern in their feedback, in the hope to identify where there were issues and to help the students.</p> <p>HB extended thanks to SE and RW for their work and their support for pupils.</p>	
17	<p>Trust Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEND Review and Peer Review <p>Beginning with the peer review, SE noted that the aspect that needed closest attention was their curriculum, inviting RW to elaborate.</p> <p>RW explained that their vision for the curriculum was unclear and therefore they had returned to it, with the staff, and tweaked it for clarity. RW explained that CEO Richard Evans (RE) had stated they needed to have a clear, discernible vision for each of the individual subjects and that each of the visions needed to link to their ‘three Bs.’ RW informed the committee that they had taken RE’s advice, and each subject leader would show how</p>	Head



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their subject linked with the 3 Bs and that would be available on the website. Further to that, RW noted that feedback from the review had been to ensure that the pedagogical drive for each subject was clear as this was what drove them forward. RW informed the committee that RE and the other reviewers were supportive of them not changing the curriculum.

SE continued by explaining that there had been staff changes since the curriculum was written and that the curriculum intent had not necessarily been fed down accurately and, therefore, they were focused on that. SE noted positive feedback from a recent PSHE peer review where the subject lead had begun with highlighting their three Bs and how they led into their knowledge progression document.

SE informed the committee that RE had stated that the three Bs were not clear enough as he walked through the school and that he would like them to work on the environment. RE commended the high quality of education provided to all pupils at JBL, however added that it was not reflected around the school. SE noted she understood RE's comments, adding that they had been working on decluttering the school and tidying the environment, particularly with SEND pupils in mind, recognising busy or disorganised environments can further their struggles to concentrate. SE added that the reviewers had suggested consistent zones of regulation displays that were the same in each year, allowing pupils to quickly recognise them when they moved to a new class. SE informed the committee that they were in the process of creating a document for uniformity and high standards for all displays, however they needed to balance it with the cost of making the changes. SE finished by noting that she wanted teachers to maintain autonomy in their classes, however their displays needed to be high quality.

HB thanked SE and RW for their update on the peer review, commenting that it was positive that the improvements were items that could be easily actioned.

GS then led on the SEND review, informing the committee that it had taken place a month ago and, in his opinion, had two clear findings he wished to highlight. The first, he noted, was that SENCO KE was a huge attribute to JBL, and was knowledgeable and effective in her role. He noted that the review found that KE had created and maintained a culture at JBL where SEND pupils were always included and were able to flourish. GS noted that JBL's strengths in supporting SEND pupils were clear and that they needed



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	<p>to actively look during the review for areas for development, which was an incredibly positive position to be in. From a Governance perspective, GS noted he was surprised how the questions he was asked were lacking somewhat in rigour, commenting that he would expect Ofsted would have more in-depth questions for him.</p> <p>GS commented that the SEND review had been incredibly affirming of JBL and their SEND provision.</p> <p>SE added that she met with LS and discussed that, for the next SEND review, it could be helpful to complete a self-evaluation document in advance to investigate the strengths and weaknesses highlighted and conduct a deeper dive into those areas.</p> <p>SE noted that over the last two years they had spent a great deal of time training staff on adaptive teaching and the five-a-day principles, to ensure all pupils were included and challenged, regardless of their abilities. She continued by adding that they had been working on tackling disadvantage and ensuring staff did not have biases or preconceived ideas of pupils, giving them the best opportunity to thrive.</p> <p>SE informed the committee that she attended a Heads meeting about 'The Big Listen' from Ofsted and there were HMI Inspectors present taking the Heads' feedback. She informed the committee that the HMI Inspector had informed them that Pupil Premium Pupils in the South East performed the least well out of all PP children in the country. SE noted that she had learned that when a school or classroom had a low number of PP children they tended to do well, and likewise if they had a high percentage of PP children they also tended to do well, however those schools in the middle ground tended to perform the worst, which she noted was a concern when JBL's PP % was 16% and moving towards the middle percentage of PP which Ofsted spoke of, alongside having a high crossover with SEND.</p> <p>RW added an action from the SEND review was to create a document tracking opportunities across the school, therefore they had started that, so would soon be able to look at the data and filter it.</p>	
18.	<p>Governor Reports & Visits to School (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and sign off reports - Update on reports posted to the website - Update on further visits undertaken or upcoming 	<p>Head/ Link Govs</p>



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	<p>SE noted that CH had submitted a STEM review following her visit, which included a question on the funding available for science.</p> <p><i>HB – Is there any additional budget for science?</i></p> <p>SE noted that there was an audit happening soon, based on CH's visit, and so they would know more after that.</p> <p>GS added that when he visited for the SEND review the teachers and pupils did very well and commended staff on their understanding.</p>	
19.	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair to lead on any correspondence to be shared with the committee <p>HB noted that she had no correspondence to be shared with the committee.</p>	Chair
20.	<p>FLT News Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on merger between VAT and FLT - FLT staff update <p>SE noted she had no further update to provide on the merger at present, nor any updates on staffing within the Trust.</p>	Head/Chair
21.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>As notified to the Chair before the meeting</p> <p>There was no other business noted for discussion.</p> <p>SE commented that she would like to extend her thanks to RW, Mrs Young, and Mrs Kane for their support for Elm class and ensuring a smooth transition at the end of their school year whilst they awaited new teacher, Miss Matheson, joining the school.</p> <p>HB thanked all for their ongoing support and contribution before closing the meeting.</p>	Chair /Clerk
	<p>Next Meeting Dates 2024:</p> <p>All 7pm</p> <p>16th July 2024 7pm in person</p>	