



John Blandy Primary School

Meeting: Local Governing Body

Where: In person – JBL School

Date: Thursday 28 September 2023

Time: 19.00

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

Minutes

Item	Subject	Lead
1	<p>Welcome, Quoracy, Declarations of Pecuniary Interest, Apologies</p> <p>HB opened the meeting with welcomes, apologies from RS were sent and accepted.</p> <p>It was noted that DS has stepped down as a staff Governor, so the LGB structure now reflects the preferences of the FLT in having only one staff Governor.</p> <p>No declarations of pecuniary interest were declared.</p> <p>LGB were reminded to register all declarations on Gov Hub. All are to do ASAP if they have not yet. RP will check they are all showing as completed on Gov Hub – Action</p>	Chair
2	<p>Urgent matters (as previously notified to the Chair)</p> <p>None</p>	Chair
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting: (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Approval of minutes of last meeting on 13 July 2023</p> <p>All reviewed and approved - can be signed.</p> <p>RP to confirm approval on GovHub– Action</p>	Chair/Clerk



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	<p>b) Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 13 July 2023 None. RP to ensure that a summary of actions arising from the minutes is provided to SE & HB when minutes are submitted - Action</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Governing Body:</p> <p>a) Election of Chair & Vice Chair of Governors for 2023/24 HB nominated herself for a further year as Chair. No further nominations. HB stepped out of the room to allow the LGB to discuss if there were any objections to her being re-elected. No objections from LGB. HB elected as Chair for 2023/24</p> <p>CH nominated herself as Vice Chair. No further nominations were received. CH stepped out of the room to allow the LGB to discuss if there were any objections to her being elected. No objections from LGB. CH elected as Vice Chair for 2023/24</p> <p>b) LGB Vacancies: 2 Community SE informed the LGB that she is trying to recruit two community Governors and has placed an advert in the KBS news. SE is considering placing one in the next school newsletter too. SE commented that the LGB is currently heavily weighted towards Governors with an education background and so it would be preferable to have someone with a different skillset, however she recognised that it is most important to fill the vacancies.</p> <p><i>Would a grandparent of a current student be suitable?</i> SE responded that there had previously been a grandparent fulfilling the role, however best practice would be to have someone entirely unrelated to the school to allow them to be completely unbiased.</p> <p><i>Does the necessity for the community Governor to be entirely unconnected to the school depend on the roles they fill? For example, if they covered Health & Safety as opposed to Safeguarding, would it be less imperative that they were not connected with the school?</i> SE confirmed that would reduce the conflict however, if TE were to step down, JBL would need the community Governor to be in a position to fulfil the safeguarding role and so, ideally, they need to ensure there is no connection with the school.</p> <p>HB commented that, whilst bearing in mind the preference for drawing experience in sectors outside of education, it would be worth considering</p>	<p>Chair/Head/ Clerk</p>



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	<p>anyone currently interested as having two vacancies is not ideal. HB also noted that it would be worth considering when reviewing applications that the LGB is currently female heavy.</p> <p>c) Governor Updates and Link Roles</p> <p><i>HB – Do we need to review link roles or are link roles stable right now?</i></p> <p>SE agreed to return to reviewing link roles at a later date due to there being more pressing items on the agenda.</p> <p>Governors asked about the urgency of reviewing the mental health link role. SE confirmed this would need completing in the autumn term. - Action</p> <p>On being asked by HB, SE confirmed that presently she felt happy with the level of support being provided by LGB link roles.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Policies (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Safeguarding Policy</p> <p><i>You have mentioned the Resolve Policy and the new safeguarding tools you have taken on to enhance the work you do with the children, have you undertaken further training since?</i></p> <p>SE informed the LGB that JBL have switched from their former system, three houses, which was used to engage with children and pick up any concerns or concerning thoughts and behaviours to a new system, Clocks.</p> <p>RW commented that, so far, Clocks is more useful for an in-depth understanding of what home is like for each of the children and what each day consists of.</p> <p>SE agreed and confirmed that Clocks has been shared with all staff, who understand how to use it effectively and what to look out for as a concern.</p> <p><i>Do you feel you have had enough information and training on Clocks to disseminate to the staff?</i></p> <p>SE confirmed that they had.</p> <p>SE informed the LGB that the school have an action plan from the FLT with all actions from the safeguarding toolkit, the neglect toolkit, the peer safeguarding toolkit and from the anti-bullying toolkit collated. SE found having the information collated to be beneficial and commented that it is now a more straightforward task to be able to look at the action plan and confirm that they have met the actions.</p>	<p>Head</p>



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	<p><i>Having spoken about the school gates can I confirm that you are looking at getting electronic sign-in, to safeguard the premises?</i></p> <p>SE confirmed that this was being investigated and that she felt that it was a matter of priority.</p> <p>SE reminded LGB to sign the safeguarding policy on Gov Hub if they have not done so yet. - Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) – Part 1 c) Confidentiality Agreement d) Positive Relationships & Behaviour Policy e) Anti-bullying policy <p><i>HB – are there any specific policies that we need to go into in further detail at all?</i></p> <p>SE felt everything included was fairly robust and standard. SE informed the LGB that they have changed the name of Positive Relationships Policy to Positive Relationships & Behaviour Policy. This is due to being informed that schools should have a stand alone Behaviour Policy (as Positive Relationship Policies often don't promote behaviour consequences adequately); however, SE felt that John Blandy's did, and that they were able to show within the policy a robust procedure for consequences arising from pupil behaviour therefore, rather than copy these sections into a new document solely for behaviour, renaming the policy to highlight that it includes behaviour was better practice.</p> <p>SE reminded the LGB that they are due an audit in November, therefore it is imperative they all complete their GDPR training by the end of October, in order to remain GDPR compliant- Action</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Headteacher's s Report (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>HB extended thanks to the LGB for submitting their questions for the Headteacher in advance as requested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Key Points b) Staffing c) Health & Safety/Premises d) School Performance Data e) Wellbeing Update f) Questions (submitted in advance to Headteacher) <p><i>HB – from the data, attendance is looking good. Is that realistic?</i></p>	<p>Head</p>



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SE responded that the data is unreliable at this point in the academic year. SE informed the LGB that the school is currently experiencing a lot of pupil absence.

SE added that there have been many requests for term-time holiday and that they are rejecting the vast majority, explaining to the parents that it is FLT policy to reject all leave requests and to fine parents who ignore this policy and remove their children regardless.

SE explained that it is 'the vast majority' and not 'all' being rejected due to indication during training from OCC that there should potentially be a waiver on this rule in the case of students with a **high** SEND need.

SE commented on the difficulty faced in fining parents when presented with their reasoning, however reiterated that the rule must be enforced consistently across all cases.

To what extent do you receive genuine requests for permission and how many just inform you that they will be taking term time holiday / leave with or without school's permission?

SE responded that in most cases the families notify her but go ahead without permission. She added that reception children under the age of five cannot be fined and so, in their cases, the absence is marked as unauthorised but no more can be done. SE felt it was important it is an unauthorised absence to reiterate that those children should be in school, regardless of whether the school can fine them or not.

HB – do you have some form of decision-making flow? A document to show clearly what you can and cannot authorise? If there is a document you can refer to when the requests come in it would make it easier to manage, having a referral point for how cases are managed and responded to.

SE agreed this would be beneficial and she will look to complete it. - **Action**

GS - Do you report attendance to parents?

SE confirmed that each child's individual attendance is given verbally to parents at parent and teacher meetings and in writing on the end of year report. The class attendance is shown in the school newsletter which is issued to parents.

SE informed the LGB of complaints she had received from parents querying the school for celebrating attendance. During Friday assembly SE announces the whole school attendance for that week, the house with the highest attendance and the class with the highest attendance. The class with the best attendance is awarded with use of the trim trail on a Friday lunchtime (or 'Attendance Ted' for the reception class). This was introduced as a positive way to celebrate the children's attendance, however a small number of parents have said this could impact negatively and could impact



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children's well-being if their class did not win, and that the school was encouraging children to attend even when poorly.

SE emphasised that it is never the school's intention to encourage poorly children who should be at home into school, but to encourage those who miss school needlessly to attend. Considering the complaints, SE looked through the recorded data and checked to ensure that every class had been awarded the trim trail and confirmed all had been on multiple occasions. SE's stance remains that, though she is listening to the parents' views, to remove the additional trim trail time would negatively impact the children, who are always excited by the announcement in assembly.

HB – I think it is great that you have considered the complaint, contemplated the impact of it from both sides and troubled to look at the data of your own volition to ensure no children are being unfairly penalised, showing you have taken the complaint seriously. You are in a privileged position in that you know first-hand the reaction of the children when they win and can see the immediate benefit and positive impact.

I think it is about encouraging the pupils who are absent for minor reasons rather than those who are poorly; it celebrates how positive it is when they choose to come to school each day.

HB – and it presents a nice opportunity to mention attendance in the assembly.

SE responded that she felt some of the parents perhaps thought that the focus on attendance was about the attendance figures for the school and how that is viewed, however SE wanted to reiterate that good attendance is not about the impact on the figures, but about the children not missing out on important lessons and the sequential knowledge they gain.

HB – It is part of our contract to ensure that every day DOES matter, so that families recognise that there are no days where the lessons and attendance are not important – there is always something valuable that should not be missed.

Governors commented that they were surprised that it was being viewed as a punishment for those children who do not have the highest attendance rather than as a reward for those who do. It is a positive reward that has unfortunately been perceived negatively.

SE confirmed that she would never look for, nor reward, 100% attendance as she is fully aware this is unattainable for some children – for example those with medical needs – and would be unfair. Rewarding high attendance felt a fairer system that was accessible for all classes.



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HB – Do you feel that the communication with those parents who are unhappy with the attendance reward is working?

SE confirmed that she had communicated with one of the parents but was in the process of arranging phone calls to discuss in further detail how and why the attendance award occurs. It was suggested an explanation be placed in the newsletter, however SE felt this was unnecessary as the complaint came from a small minority. SE will continue to speak directly with the parents.

HB – In terms of filtering and monitoring, regarding keeping children safe in education, have there been any big changes to the way you operate since you undertook the Sweethaven training?

SE confirmed no major changes, though SE has a greater understanding of the range of sites and words being blocked by the filtering system which has always been in place. A bigger change has been implemented in the handling of monitoring, with SE now receiving a report of everything accessed. The report is also available for RW, which allows continuous monitoring between SE and RW to minimise the scope for anything being missed.

SE informed the LGB that the FLT are updating their IT and IT Safety Policy and that, once complete, JBL will update their E-safety policy in line with FLT.

Are Sweethaven trust-wide?

SE confirmed that Sweethaven are a contractor employed by FLT trust-wide.

HB asked LGB if there was anything further to discuss. GS would like to briefly discuss sport.

To what extent do pupils have access to being part of a school sports team?

SE explained that JBL have an external sports club that come to school but that there are no longer JBL teams; in part due to no longer being allowed to ask staff to run a team, so it becomes reliant on staff volunteering.

With regards to the sport premium, does that have to be spent within the confines of the school?

SE responded that it does not, however sporting activities within the school day are reliant on the sports premium. The premium pays for enrichment activities, for forest school and for many positive opportunities which SE would not want to take away from.

Is it just JBL where there are no longer teams, or do you see this in other schools too?



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	<p>SE confirmed it is not only JBL. Most schools she is aware of no longer have sports teams. SE further noted that all should be aware that the sports premium will reduce in a year – it has been inflated since covid but is due to decrease again.</p> <p><i>Is the sports premium the one which has been ring-fenced – if you do not use it, you lose it?</i></p> <p>SE confirmed this is correct. JBL use it to pay for swimming for children in year 6, allowing them to foot the entire bill – parents are not expected to contribute at all – ensuring that children from every family can attend.</p> <p><i>Do all the pupils swim?</i></p> <p>SE responded that all pupils go swimming once they are in the upper years.</p> <p><i>HB commented that the pupils gain a lot from swimming in addition to the skill itself; they are taught independence, life skills and benefit from the enjoyment of going and so it is an important resource for the children.</i></p> <p>HB extended thanks, on behalf of JBL and the Governors, to the John Blandy Trust who had gifted the school a very generous donation.</p> <p>SE explained that this donation is fantastic and funds those children who cannot afford their residential trip, school trips or activities. SE noted that this is not only pupil premium children but extends to those children whose families are on the borderline or are experiencing hardship.</p> <p>Both HB and SE also extended thanks on behalf of the school and the LGB to the FoJB for their donation which allowed the purchase of new screens.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>SEND Review 2022-2023 (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p><i>HB – Did any surprises crop up in the SEND review? Or anything that you would specifically like to talk about or draw the LGB’s attention to?</i></p> <p>SE informed the LGB that she had added information about adaptive teaching in relation to SEND pupils into the SEND review, as she felt this was a key point in the SDP and so should be included.</p> <p><i>HB – I can see figures in here for reception and year 6, does that data relate to the current year 6 or the ones who have just moved up to secondary?</i></p> <p>SE confirmed that is for the previous year 6 who have now moved up. It is standard procedure across the FLT to present data in this way, and JBL now use the standardised Trust SEND report.</p> <p>SE confirmed that JBL have bought into new programmes to help SEND pupils, particularly with speech and language. Programmes such as NELI have been shown to help pupils make great progress. SE emphasised the</p>	<p>Head</p>



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	importance of programmes like NELI in early intervention and support for children, as referrals to S&L are taking up to 18 months.	
8	<p>Health & Safety (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>HB asked SE for an update on the actions arising from the Health and Safety audit that was carried out last term, noting that the audit was very good overall, and most issues are minor.</p> <p>SE informed LGB that they have completed a lot of the actions. All medium-level actions have been accomplished, other than improving the audibility of the fire alarm; this is in hand and a quote has been requested from Churches Fire for the work.</p> <p>Most low-level actions are also underway. SE confirmed that, on advice from a tree-surgeon, they will not be removing the large tree in the staff park which is causing the surface to lift and become uneven. The tree surgeon has confirmed that, most importantly, the tree is safe and poses no threat, and that to remove it would mean also resurfacing the car park which could cost the school tens of thousands of pounds.</p> <p>SE confirmed that a zebra crossing will be painted in the car park to improve safety. She would like electric gates and would like to look into this as a further security measure. -Action</p>	Head /H&S Gov
9	<p>School Self Evaluation Form (SEF) (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>HB commented that the SEF felt very well put together and had made marked and recognisable progress from previous years.</p>	Head
10	<p>School Development Plan (SDP) & Strategic Plan (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>SE commented that she enjoyed writing the SDP. She drew the LGBs attention to the 'Headline News' as their focuses for the year and asked if they were happy to approve it.</p> <p><i>I noted on page five that the strategic values of VAT were listed before those of the FLT, is this an indicator that we will be merging and adopting the VAT values?</i></p> <p>SE explained that it is not an indicator of a preference of the VAT values, merely this was co-produced with the FLT and VAT and so it shows both trusts side by side and what each of them value.</p> <p>SE explained that she wanted to share the strategic values to show parents what JBL are doing and to allow them to engage with the school and their approach to learning.</p>	Head



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	<p>HB thanks SE for her time spent writing the SDP.</p> <p>LGB approved SDP to be sent out -Action</p>	
11	<p>Finance & Budget Update (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Sports Premium Review <i>I do not have information on the sports premium – is this correct?</i> SE confirmed that LGB will not yet have this information as it is not complete. SE will share when it is. – Action</p> <p>b) Pupil Premium ND confirmed that PP report had been reviewed and sense-checked against previous years and that she and SE had met to discuss the background to it. ND gave summary of PP numbers, including an increase in both pupils and finance, and confirmed she had reviewed how JBL spends PP money and how best to do so in future, whilst considering the previous year’s numbers to understand the impact it has and where spending could be improved. She confirmed that reading is showing above national level but that writing showed scope for improvement.</p> <p>SE discussed the difficulty faced when viewing the data for PP children, as there is a high crossover between PP and SEND children, resulting in a need for recognising this when looking at progress and attainment of PP pupils. It would be preferable to separate the data in order to look at pupils who are solely PP, with no other contributing factors, to view their progress and what could be holding them back if their attainment is down.</p> <p>ND explained there was no update on the budget yet but there would be a budget meeting held soon. SE added that all invoices have now been paid and it is expected that, when the figures are finalised, they should have a surplus. HB commented that this is a good position to be in.</p> <p>ND confirmed that she has signed off and approved the pupil premium report.</p>	<p>Head/ Finance Gov</p>
12	<p>Governor Reports & Visits to School No updates since last term.</p>	<p>Head/ Link Govs</p>
13	<p>Correspondence None</p>	<p>Chair</p>



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14	FLT News Update No updates.	Head / Chair
15	Any Other Business Discussed changing the date for two LGB meetings (originally 21/03/24 & 18/07/24) due to clash for RP in clerking with FLT Board of Trustees also. New dates were agreed and are highlighted below.	Chair
	Next Meeting Dates 2023/24: All 7pm 30 November 2023 25 January 2024 19th March 2024 – Change of date agreed by LGB 23 May 2024 16th July 2024 – Change of date agreed by LGB	