



# John Blandy Primary School

**Meeting:** Local Governing Body

**Where:** In person – JBL School

**Date:** Tuesday 24 January 2023

**Time:** 19.00

Name	Initials	Governor Type	Attended
Hannah Boon	HB	Parent/Chair	Yes
Lorna Butler	LBu	Parent	Yes
Simon Dando	SD	Community	Yes
Nina Davis	ND	Parent	Yes
Tamzin Einon	TE	Community	Yes
Suzanne Elliot	SE	Headteacher	Yes
David Hancox	DH	Community	Yes
Christina Holleywood	CH	Parent	Yes
Gareth Sheer	GS	Community	Yes
Rachel Skeet	RS	Staff	Yes
Dianna Swale	DS	Staff	Yes
Rebecca Wilson	RB	Other/Deputy Headteacher	Yes
Jan Clark, Clerk to Governors	JC	N/A	Yes

## MINUTES

Meeting opened: 19:00

Item	Subject	Action
1	<p><b>Welcome, Quoracy, Declarations of Pecuniary Interest, Apologies</b></p> <p>All were welcomed to the meeting, there were no apologies and the meeting was quorate.</p> <p><b>New Declarations</b></p> <p>TE declared that SE has asked for information about the Education Tutoring Charity where she currently works. A further Declaration of Interest will be made at future meetings, if applicable.</p>	
2	<p><b>Urgent matters (as previously notified to the Chair)</b></p> <p><b>Proposed Teachers Strike</b></p> <p>SE received a letter regarding the strike and has been asked to refer to the LGB. It was explained there are some staff in school who may choose to strike and they are not obliged to let the Headteacher know, although they could opt to inform of their intention if they wish. This lack of advance notification which is encouraged by the Unions makes planning at this stage very difficult.</p> <p>In the event of teaching staff shortages, it is anticipated school would not close entirely, some Year Groups will be open; potentially, at this stage, three</p>	



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	<p>classes. If the class teacher is not in school the class would close. It is advised that schools must remain open for vulnerable and Key Worker children, so they would be accommodated if a class has to close. Parents would be informed of arrangements for their children when appropriate. School has been told they should provide online learning and offer face-to-face learning; it is not clear how this would be put in place. Teachers cannot be asked to plan if they are on strike. SE has spoken to the kitchen to ensure there will be food available to FSM children if strike action impacts on the normal school day. Packed lunches will be available for FSM children.</p> <p>No further decisions have taken place and advice is being sought from the Trust before planning and details are arranged. This includes any plans to provide online learning. Headteachers are in a difficult position, but closing school would be a last resort.</p> <p><i>Question: What is the ratio of teachers to pupils?</i> The ratio of teachers to pupils is 1 to 30, with different arrangements in place for those children with special needs.</p> <p><i>Question: Is there anything the Governors could do to help in the event of a strike?</i> SE thanked Governors for the offer of help, but engaging Governor help was not considered to be a realistic option.</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting:</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Approval of minutes of last meeting on 6 December 2022 The minutes had been read and were agreed as a true record for publication on the school website.</p> <p>b) Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 6 December 2022</p> <p><b>ACTION: SE to action DBS check for CH. SE Completed.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: All Governors to check Training, DBS and Confirmations on GovernorHub, including reading and reviewing the new FLT Scheme of Delegation (New Confirmation). All Gobs</b></p> <p>The Clerk had compiled a full report in advance of the meeting, and copied this to the Headteacher and Chair. All Governors who still have gaps are now aware of what they need to do to complete their profiles. It was reported that Governors have been more proactive in managing their information on</p>	



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	<p>GovernorHub and there are now fewer gaps. SE will send a link to PREVENT training to all Governors.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SE to send PREVENT link to all Governors.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: ND to complete an Out of Committee Report on visit to school. ND</b> In the process of being completed.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SE and LBU to make minor adjustments to the RSHE Policy. SE/LBU</b> Completed.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Suspension and Exclusion Policy agreed. Action Completed.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: GS to oversee School Policies. GS</b> This is an ongoing Action; GS will report any discrepancies to the LGB when necessary.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SE to check and action Health and Safety points, as necessary. SE</b> The one outstanding Action, the Fire Assessment, is now complete. All staff are now aware of the Accident and Incident procedures and are clear about the reporting process and classification of Incidents. There have been some changes to tighten up the classifications.</p> <p>Category 2 – Near Misses A Near Miss is recorded on CPOMS, Near Misses can include an adult feeling at risk, or threatened, by the behaviour of a child. Further training (Team Teach) is planned, together with another Trust school.</p> <p>Incidents occurring at After School Club are classed as Visitor Incidents.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SE will circulate a draft document for the LGB, to be discussed at future meetings. SE</b> Complete.</p>	SE
4	<p><b>Governing Body:</b></p> <p>a) LGB Vacancies: 1 Community This role is still vacant.</p> <p>b) Governor Updates and Link Roles The Vice Chair role is still vacant, to be discussed at a future meeting. There were no changes to Governor Link Roles.</p>	
5	<p><b>Policies</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) FLT Admissions Policy from 2023</p>	



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	<p>2023, Previously Agreed and Completed, the 2024 version will be available later in the year.</p> <p>b) Positive Handling Policy</p> <p>The document had been circulated and read by all. The following points were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SE confirmed the gender specific references have been removed.</li> <li>• Wording changed to clarify the procedure If a child is being isolated.</li> <li>• GS identified a couple of typo errors, which will be corrected.</li> <li>• Sub-heading Principles: the sentence referring to the 'breakdown of discipline' appeared to be out of place. SE agreed and will amend this.</li> <li>• Paragraph above Monitoring and Evaluation of Incidents, Page 7, the wording will be changed to make clear the meaning.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: Positive Handling Policy accepted and agreed, (subject to the minor amendments detailed above). Completed.</b></p> <p>c) Dealing with Allegations made against Staff and Volunteers Policy</p> <p>The document had been circulated and read by all. It was highlighted that the Positive Handling Policy and Dealing with Allegations made against Staff and Volunteers Policy are linked. A copy is kept to hand and accessible to visitors.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Dealing with Allegations made against Staff and Volunteers Policy, accepted and agreed. Completed.</b></p>	
7	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b> (Documents: GovernorHub)</p> <p>a) Key Points</p> <p>All had read the report in advance of the meeting and SE outlined the Key Points, as detailed in the report.</p> <p><b>HB stated a conflict of interest involving one of the incidents to be discussed and withdrew from discussions relating to this.</b></p> <p>b) Staffing</p> <p><i>Question: Has the number of reported staff absences had an impact on the quality of teaching and learning?</i></p> <p>Teacher absence has been managed well, as part time teachers stepped up to become full time to cover teacher absence. Teaching Assistant (TA) absences have been more difficult to manage and this does have an impact. Coping with staff absences was particularly challenging during the autumn term, due to the number of viruses and illness circulating. There are still some long term</p>	



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absences, but one member of staff has now returned. School successfully recruited for a TA, who will be in place after half term.

*Question: Is there still a requirement to report Covid absences?*

There is no requirement to report Covid absences separately.

Absences are monitored and an appropriate approach is taken with staff when absent, in line with our Managing Sickness and Absence Policy.

## c) Health & Safety/Premises

The pipework has started and is progressing well. There was a slight delay whilst waiting for full enhanced DBS checks, but that has now been resolved. School is pleased with the contractors and report no problems.

*Question: How is the cleaning situation in school?*

There are some ongoing issues with the standard of cleaning carried out in school, this has been raised in the Health and Safety Audit and with the Trust. There is also some concern around the cleaning staff's management of, and compliance with, COSHH, including the lack of labelling on bottles and containers.

During the last week SD carried out a school inspection focussing on Health and Safety and Cleaning. SD identified a total of 11 Actions to be addressed, including some issues with unlabelled cleaning products. The cleanliness of toilets was found to be below an acceptable standard and the general level of cleaning was poor. The state of the urinals is of particular concern and the Caretaker will look into having these removed. Before this is actioned, school must ensure there are enough toilets for the number of children; the ratio is 1 to 20 for pupils in KS1.

SD also did a survey on Health and Safety amongst staff, it was felt that all the staff spoken to were clear about procedures and knowledgeable about issues relating to Health and Safety. Staff are COSHH aware, vigilant about safety matters and report all concerns as appropriate.

## d) Safeguarding

*SE was asked to provide more information on the Racial Incident.*

This refers to a comment made by a child, who remarked on the skin colour of another child. Parents of both children have been spoken to and the matter resolved. Both parents agree with, and support, the school action.

SE confirmed that school has taken steps to address the issue of bullying, inclusivity and equality; this has been highlighted to KS1 and KS2. This is



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ongoing and the positive messages will be reinforced throughout school, including in Assemblies.

All bullying incidents are reported to parents, who are always supportive of school action and help to reinforce the positive messages at home.

*Question: How are the bullying and racial incidents being reported to school staff?*

Incidents can be reported in various ways, either coming from other school staff, the child or from their parents. School encourages children to report all incidents and reinforces positive messages at all times.

Two governors raised an incident of bullying within school before Christmas which was recorded in the Headteacher's report. Parents had been notified and the incident has been dealt with whilst still being continued to be monitored.

SE noted that we have seen an increase in bullying incidents recorded in the Headteacher's report. GS asked why this was. SE reported that all schools have bullying but that we are better at identifying them. Bullying many years ago was seen as issues with friendships that had become very big issues. However, in more recent times, we recognise that bullying takes the shape of many forms from name calling, to being unkind and targeted

If parents approach Governors for information regarding any incident they should refer the parent to the Headteacher. Governors can confirm to parents that incidents are reported to the Local Governing Body in an anonymised form; no individual is identified. Minutes of LGB meetings are available to parents on the school website and are in the public domain. If there is a possibility of an individual being identified by the circumstances, this would be recorded in Confidential Minutes, which are not public. Governors offered reassurance that they remain impartial at all times.

School believes the incidents outlined above have been resolved, but will continue to monitor the situation.

Behaviour and expectations have needed to be addressed this term with reminders of what we expect from the children as they work in lessons, how they show respect to others and as they move around school. SE called an impromptu assembly to ensure the message was received by all regarding our expectations and a consistent approach is followed by all. Since this intervention, behaviour and expectations have improved. The situation is being monitored.



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Gemma Rogan, Trust Safeguarding Lead, continues to support school and is aware of the referral problems experienced with the County backlog. These difficulties continue to be monitored, with the issue addressed at school and Trust level.

SE was acknowledged for the proactive development of Safeguarding and for the introduction of the Neglect Toolkit. Governors considered this shows excellent Leadership and forward thinking in the area of Safeguarding. Addressing Safeguarding issues is a key priority and is also an area of focus for the Trust. A Trust Safeguarding Action Plan will be introduced for all Trust schools. A Safeguarding page will also be included in school websites. The importance of correct monitoring and recording on CPOMS was stressed.

***Governors thanked SE for all the work done to progress Safeguarding and believe that JBL is at the forefront of developments.***

e) Wellbeing

It was acknowledged that staff have been under pressure due to sickness absence, which has added to the workload. School and the LGB continues to support all staff and recognises the importance of Wellbeing across the school.

***SE extended thanks to all staff for keeping school open during such a challenging time at the end of 2022.***

f) Questions (submitted in advance to Headteacher)

*SE was asked to provide more detail on the nature of the written complaint.* The complaint was directed at the School Caterers, Caterlink, by a parent of a child with several allergies. The parent considers that Caterlink does not provide enough choice of menu for their child. SE informed that the alternative menu for the specific dietary requirements had been signed off by a Caterlink Food dietician and is considered appropriate and sufficiently varied. She has been assured that the menu in place is suitable for the child's needs.

*Did school formally gather Pupil Voice from the Curriculum Week?*

No formal Pupil Voice was recorded, but remarks were positive. Pupil Voice will be collected and the Curriculum Week will be included at that stage.

***SE was thanked for organising curriculum week, which was exceptionally well executed, very successful and enjoyed by both staff and children.***

SE highlighted the success of the recent Young Voices event in Birmingham. This was an amazing experience and enjoyed by all who attended. Children were supported to attend if their circumstances made it difficult.

***The Governors extended their thanks to Katy Towersey for organising the event.***



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8	<p><b>School Performance Data (including Performance &amp; Standards Data Report)</b></p> <p>The Performance and Data Sub Committee met before the main LGB meeting and gave the following report.</p> <p>In general, data is better than it initially appears. School is being realistic with the Assessments and all deviations in data analysed. When analysing certain data sets, the sub-committee noted that it was evident where there had been staff absences, preventing some interventions from being able to take place/delayed from starting in some Year Groups.</p> <p><i>Question: What would the data look like if school was classed as Outstanding?</i> School would be above National Standards and would be able to show that SEND children had the teaching they needed and were on track. How to track and serve the SEND children should be a focus.</p> <p>RW has put together an evaluation of where a subject stands, so that all subjects have a consistent approach to Assessment. School is also committing to the next steps in improvement, which is considered to be a proactive move.</p> <p>SE analyses the data and it is plotted on the tracking grid. It is studied by staff, who are then aware of the point the child is at; this helps all staff. The Senior Leadership Team are carrying out Observations, with each member of the team responsible for a different area.</p> <p>The impact of improvements can already be seen across the data sets and this should increase further in future years. Work continues to ensure the children always receive a high quality of education.</p>	
9	<p><b>Strategic Matters</b></p> <p><b>Strategic 5 Year Plan &amp; 5 Year Vision</b></p> <p>All had studied the updated document, which was circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>HB asked for two minor edits, to clarify the Strategic aspect of the document, rather than the Operational; SE agreed to the edits.</p> <p>All agreed the document should be aspirational and look ahead. There should be no pressure to complete, but to move towards the set goals.</p>	



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*Question: Should there be more specific information included in the Vision, detailing exactly what an Outstanding school should be? Do all Governors know what an Outstanding school looks like?*

The point was made that there are other considerations to take into account when measuring success, rather than concentrating purely on Ofsted requirements and formal classification. This can include equipping children for life and promoting other positive areas, which are not easy to formally assess.

Visits to other schools to share ideas are very useful, but finding time for the visits can be a problem. It is difficult to arrange cover to release staff from their duties in school.

Other schools who have achieved Outstanding for Personal and Social Development, organise various visits and the children can converse well on the visits. It was noted that it can take years to lay down the foundations of this approach and JBL are moving well towards these aspects of development.

Currently 20% of JBL children are SEND and it is important to recognise the limitations this brings to achieving Outstanding.

Outstanding is not only apparent from recorded results, it can also be a 'feel' for a school and can be identified by the atmosphere and environment.

SE will continue to work on the Vision, the current course being studied is very useful and will help with the development. Rich discussion amongst staff is generated by cascading down training and also benefits Continuing Professional Development. SE was pleased to report that staff are engaged in these highly productive sessions. Discussions include questioning: how rich and challenging is the curriculum and how can school provide challenge to more able children to prevent disengagement? Staff are asked to think about adapting teaching whilst teaching.

*Question: Have teachers contributed to the Vision?*

Teachers have not yet been asked to contribute, but SE will look into asking for staff input.

*Question: Has there been parental feedback on the proposed new classes?*

SE has received no feedback on this, but considered that the information might not have reached everyone, despite the letter having been sent to all parents. School is able to monitor who has read correspondence and analysis shows



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	<p>some parents do not always read all letters sent. School will organise a reminder if necessary.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that work on the Vision could inform the SDP and change the way the SDP is compiled.</p> <p>Governors asked for progress updates and reports on changes made to the document.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SE to provide progress updates on the School Vision and 5 Year Plan.</b></p>	SE
10	<p><b>Finance &amp; Budget Update</b></p> <p>DH reported that school was initially hoping to have a <u>small surplus</u>, this subsequently dropped to suggest a deficit but has again risen to indicate a small surplus of around £5K. Finances are on track for this year and the budgeting process for the next financial year has started, in conjunction with the Trust finance team.</p> <p>Increased fuel and staffing costs will <u>have a significant impact on the budget</u>. Pupil numbers will increase slightly due to new families moving to the area and this will also alter the figures.</p> <p><i>Question: Has the additional government funding been confirmed?</i></p> <p>Some of the <u>income has been received by the Trust</u>, but there have also been increased costs for staffing and IT.</p> <p><i>Question: If school is allowed to expand, how would class numbers be affected?</i></p> <p>School will <u>assess each class and look at the mix of year groups</u>, as well as the class <u>make up</u>. School will move towards their preferred structure and this is seen as a <u>positive approach</u>. Parents seem satisfied with the class <u>arrangements</u>, but school is unsure how further changes in the academic year 2024-2025 <u>would be received</u>. The preferred model of classes will be costed out over the coming weeks.</p> <p><i>Question: Is there a way that Community Governors can receive information that is sent to parents?</i></p> <p>SE will arrange this and ensure all Governors are included in letters and notified of events etc.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Governors to receive copies of Newsletters and notification of school events.</b></p>	SE/ School Office



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11	<p><b>Governor Reports &amp; Visits to School</b></p> <p>LBU met with Caroline O'Brien to discuss Reading and was very impressed with progress being made; the full report will follow.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LBU to complete an Out of Committee Report for Reading.</b></p> <p>HB visited school for a walk-round. The comments from children were very positive. Children could talk easily about their work; they were all focussed and enthusiastic. HB was able to speak to a Reception Teacher, who is fairly new to the role. The teacher talked enthusiastically about their work, the school and the children. HB commented that this illustrates the supportive and caring environment of school.</p> <p>ND supported HB's observations, as she recently had the opportunity to go into school and enjoyed a positive visit.</p> <p>Health and Safety report SD, see above.</p>	LBU
12	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
13	<p><b>FLT News Update</b></p> <p>Duncan Millard has resigned his post and a new Trust CEO will be appointed from September 2023.</p>	
14	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <p><i>Are social media checks carried out for recruitment?</i></p> <p>The Trust has guidelines and carries out checks as appropriate, informing schools of findings where necessary.</p> <p><b>Pre-school</b></p> <p>SE attended one Pre-school Committee Meeting, but withdrew as it was felt there would be a conflict of interest.</p> <p>It was agreed that further links with the Pre-school would be of benefit and the provision of a local Pre-school is important to the School.</p>	



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	<p><i>Question: What would be the preferred course of action if Pre-school closes?</i> SE has offered to support the Pre-school with advice and help around Safeguarding and SEND. Discussions will be held with the Trust if the situation with Pre-school indicates closure is necessary.</p> <p><b><i>The Governors confirmed they would support any decisions school makes with regard to the Pre-school.</i></b></p>	
	<p><b>Next Meeting Dates 2022/23:</b> <b>All 7pm</b> 14 March 2023 16 May 2023 18 July 2023</p>	

Meeting closed: 21:14

Final