



John Blandy Primary School

Meeting	Local Governing Body	Where	Virtual meeting by TEAMS
Date	Tuesday 23 March 2021	Time	19.00
Governors Attended	Lucie Belcher (LB, chair, parent governor), Hannah Boon (HBo, parent governor), Clare Butcher (CB, community governor), Lorna Butler (LBU, parent governor), Tamzin Einon (TE, community governor), Suzanne Elliot (SE, Headteacher), David Hancox (DH, community governor), Judi Kingdon (JK, staff governor), Sarah Thompson (ST, Headteacher), Kerri Treherne (KT, community governor)		
Apologies	None		
Clerk	Jan Clark		

MINUTES

Item		Action
1	<p>Meeting opened at: 7:05pm</p> <p>Welcome, Quoracy and Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair and the meeting was quorate. The Clerk asked for approval from the LGB to record the meeting using Teams Record. It was explained that the recording would be confidential and deleted immediately the first draft minutes were approved. All agreed to the recording. No apologies received. KT – joined the meeting at 7:45pm, was informed of the business discussed prior to her arrival and raised no questions or objections. 	
2	<p>Urgent matters as previously notified to the Chair</p> <p>None.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of pecuniary interests</p> <p>No new declarations.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of last meeting:</p> <p>a) Approval of minutes of last meeting 2 February 2021</p> <p>The minutes of 2 February 2021 were agreed and approved.</p> <p>b) Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 2 February 2021</p> <p>It was confirmed that the recording of the previous meeting has been deleted. The Clerk confirmed the agreed minutes from 22 September 2020 and 17 November 2020 have been reviewed by the Headteachers and published on the school website.</p> <p>Governor Vacancy Advertising</p> <p>SE has requested an advertisement in KBS News. LB looked into advertising in local shops, but placing an advertisement in Round and About will prove too costly. CB investigated advertising in the private school sector and has also approached a suitable potential candidate, who was unwilling to commit to evening meetings.</p>	

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	<p>The Clerk reported that the staff governor replacement does not have to be non-teaching, but can be any member of staff.</p> <p>Action: Governors will continue to investigate advertising opportunities and identify potential candidates.</p> <p>TLR Leadership Role To be covered in Headteachers' Report.</p> <p>Staff Resigning governor, Janice Simpson and resigning staff governor Helen Benson each received gifts of a hamper. Both responded in writing expressing their pleasure at receiving such a lovely gift and extended their thanks to all.</p> <p>KT organised delivery of governors' thank you cards to all staff. <i>The Headteachers reported that these were very well received and the gesture was much appreciated by all the staff. They thanked all governors for their consideration, time and prompt action in carrying this out.</i></p>	All Govs.
5	<p>Governing body:</p> <p>a) LGB Vacancies Covered above.</p> <p>b) Updating Governor Profiles, Safeguarding and DBS Checks The Clerk asked all governors to update their profiles on GovernorHub, including Declarations, DBS check information and training records. It was explained that, although training and DBS dates might be recorded, it was important to evidence this and ensure both school and the LGB can prove documents have been seen. It was confirmed that most governors had up to date Declarations and those that had updated their records were thanked.</p> <p>It was reported that, with new administration office staff in place, the process of evidencing and recording governor DBS checks, training and other information was being looked at. Governors were asked to contact the school office with any questions about their training records. ST highlighted the need for evidence of GDPR to be addressed. It was acknowledged that some governors had carried out this training in September 2019 and the requirement is to renew after two years. New governors and those who did not have recent training in place were urged to update this within the next few days, as the Faringdon Learning Trust (FLT) audit must be completed by 31 March 2021.</p> <p>Action: Governors to check their profile, DBS and training records, with particular attention to GDPR (using personal login), which should be looked at as a matter of priority to comply with the FLT audit on 31 March 2021.</p>	All Govs.

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	<p>Governors were also asked to view the 'Meet the Governors' page of the school website and check their personal profile was entered as they wished. They were also invited to send a new photograph to the Clerk, if they wished one to be provided (in Jpeg form).</p> <p>Action: Governors to look at their personal information on the school 'Meet the Governors' page and send revised text/photograph to the Clerk if they wish to update their listing.</p> <p>c) Link Governors Covered below.</p>	All Govs.
6	<p>School Development Plan (SDP)</p> <p>a) Review ST identified no changes since the previous discussions.</p> <p>The meeting was informed that the mid-year appraisal had taken place with Duncan Millard (FLT) and shared with Louise Warren (FLT). Feedback was received, but no actions to follow up on. During the appraisal there was an awareness that items will need to be pushed forward to the next academic year due to restrictions brought about by Covid-19.</p> <p>a) School Vision SE commented it would be beneficial for the SDP to have Governor involvement in Writing. This would fit well with the school vision and would also address points such as cultural capital. Governors were asked to think about what they would like school to be working on. It was also suggested that Governor link roles are re-structured to form more meaningful links with named subjects or topic areas, with focussed objectives or tasks. It was acknowledged that discussions around this topic would take time and due consideration to bring about changes that would work well and support the SDP. It was suggested adding this as a separate agenda item for the next meeting in May 2021, with the intention to look at this in a strategic way so as to link with the SDP for September.</p> <p>Action: In preparation for the LGB meeting on 18 May 2021, Governors to consider involvement in Writing, reorganising named subject/area links and SDP.</p>	All Govs.
7	<p>School Self Evaluation Form (SEF)</p> <p>The Headteachers referred to the updated SEF, previously circulated to governors. They noted the changed format and the collaboration with others across FLT to evaluate how each school uses the form. It is a requirement to have the SEF, but each school can devise their own individual format.</p> <p>Headteachers across the FLT observed that the form has been very historical in approach, it has been data reliant, detailed and evidence based, but not successful in providing a summary. In response to these observations a new, user friendly, format has been devised by Duncan Millard (FLT).</p>	

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It was noted that there was no need to burden the document with extensive information that was already given elsewhere; the document should be easy to read and give an immediate and accurate impression of the school. The Headteachers have been using the new form for a year, but there is still a tendency to include too much duplicate data. The aim is to provide a working, current, document that gives all necessary information, but is accessible and summarises the aims of the school.

HB questioned where the evidence can be seen?

The Headteachers referred to the SEF and the extensive evidence documented.

Evidence is also illustrated with the use of the outside area in Reception, which particularly relates to the Ofsted report. This action related not just to the physical space and how it is used, but also regarding the interaction between adults and the children and how they are actively engaged with the learning. When accompanying children outside, adults should demonstrate awareness of what the children are doing and become actively involved, not be present as simply an onlooker.

HB noted good evidence for two issues, but the SEF reports school is still working towards challenging more able children; how is this being addressed?

The Headteachers responded that the challenge for more able children is documented through the priority of more able in the SDP and all related actions.

The Headteachers were asked about the Implementation of enrichment activities and examples.

ST responded that evidence for these cannot be fully based on the last academic year due to the disruption caused by Covid-19, therefore for most evidence it was necessary to look historically. Evidence could include; visitors to school, school trips and activity days.

Despite the Covid-19 restrictions staff demonstrate creativity in devising activities although, out of necessity, these tend to be low key. It was pointed out that experiences and enrichment can be large or small, but still valuable. Examples of the activities successfully arranged around the limitations include: videos created by teachers, teachers dressing up as characters, science week and practical science sessions, arts week and a Victorian lesson experienced by Y4, adapted for online learning. Y3 took part in an archaeological dig and have plans to grow plants.

HB cited remote learning as a particular success of school, but also asked; what do we understand by innovative?

ST responded that one of the ways this could be illustrated is by the best deployment of support staff, which has been clearly demonstrated during lockdown. It was also acknowledged that evidence of innovation and creativity demonstrated by the staff is apparent through many different aspects of the school day as witnessed by the

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Headteachers on regular walks around the school.

SE highlighted how recent training undertaken by the NQT has led to her looking to develop the role of her own TA, so that the TA is working more proactively. Another example of innovation and creativity was observed from children making chalk markings on the outside area patio slabs, relating to an activity they were engaged in. The extended space available in school has also been a benefit.

It was agreed the question had been fully addressed; that examples given had illustrated and supported the innovative and creative measures school employed.

Increasing Challenge – Areas for Development

A staff meeting has taken place, focussing on Rosenshine's principles, focussing on everything that is already done in school, but aiming to make it more effective. An inset day was led by Christine Counsell at the beginning of January 2021 looking at further developing ways to work to up-level children. The NQT has attended FLT sessions.

The Headteachers pointed to a slight change in planning, moving away from differentiated activities to those that most children can do, with the activity stepped up to provide a challenge for more able children. It was noted that this approach is currently being used in some classes. JK commented that all children sit in mixed ability pairs, so children aspire to challenge, not just in maths but in all subjects. The Headteachers agreed that staff are comfortable with the expectations and have a better understanding of what greater depth looks like.

NQT and SCITT support

ST pointed to evidence in both internal and external monitoring, how the SCITT programme is inspected and benefits from external moderation; very positive feedback has been received. Historically Headteachers have undertaken mentoring of NQTs, but the process is now benefitting from additional mentoring within the team. NQTs receive support from other members of the team, with Headteachers monitoring the success of the support the NQT is receiving. This forms additional support to the formal mentoring of NQTs undertaken by Headteachers. A monitoring form is completed each term and there is good evidence and feedback to show the NQT is being very well supported.

The need to address a dip on progress in maths was recognised and the Headteachers outlined how school is working on mental maths strategies. The resource, Mathletics, has been bought in, teachers are doing at least one early starter on mental maths and observations are taking place focussing on developing mental maths strategies across the school.

SE confirmed the Headteachers welcomed questions from governors and appreciated being able to share information to help governors better understand strategies used in

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	<i>school.</i>	
8	<p>Strategic matters:</p> <p>a) Headteachers' Report</p> <p>Prior to the meeting the Headteachers received some governor questions by email, some points have been discussed directly with the governor and those with particular relevance to the whole LGB are outlined below (numbering references the Headteachers' Report).</p> <p>3.6 Have developments on appointing to the TLR posts changed any of the decisions previously made?</p> <p>ST reported that 2 TLR posts were advertised internally, but the existing TLR holder did not wish to apply and will step down from the Senior Leadership Team. Discussions took place, supported by union representation, to ensure that the staff member is clear about the advertised role, how it might impact on the existing role and fully aware of the opportunities open.</p> <p>As previously discussed by the LGB, the KS1 Early Years (EY) lead role has been removed and absorbed into Pastoral Lead; nothing is lost in this reorganisation of roles. It was explained that school does legally need a named EY lead, who will be the most expert member of staff in this field; the existing member of staff is happy to continue in this role. The role is without a financial reward as it is viewed as a subject lead, as with other subject leads in school. A meeting with the EY lead is planned for the summer term 2021 to discuss and review the job description. It was confirmed that union involvement had been sought to ensure clarity, understanding and fairness and it was agreed by the unions as being appropriate. As of 31 August 2021, the existing TLR post will no longer be held; there is no pay protection for this post.</p> <p>3.7 Have NQTs been able to gain enough experience with the disruption caused by Lockdown?</p> <p>The Headteachers responded that NQT Standards mean that NQTs cannot be penalised by Lockdown; they have still been teaching and have gained experience in this way. Now that school is fully open it will be a priority during the summer term to fill in any gaps in NQT experience.</p> <p>3.8 How effective is the timeline of meetings?</p> <p>ST continues to support one member of staff and the appraisal review, due in term 5, is used as a platform to discuss support received. A decision will be made on the level of support needed moving forward and whether this requires a formal action plan, or if there is no need.</p> <p>4.2 What is the progress of replacing the ceilings?</p> <p>Also covered above.</p> <p>SE reported that the quote to put in a false ceiling will be put forward to FLT; this will</p>	

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use up the surplus credit from the original quote.

5.1 Catch Up Funding Report – how are teachers released?

SE confirmed release means for teachers to come out of class. During each Lockdown school has looked at how best to use catch up funding and booster classes have been arranged as a result. There is difficulty in releasing teachers during the school day and it has not been possible to find cover, so paid overtime will be granted as an alternative.

6.7 Formal Assessments - are there children over and above DfE guidance and, as the Headteachers' judgement is probably more relevant than DfE guidance, how will provision for this be evidenced so that it can be done again?

ST responded that school is aiming to identify gaps and recognise which children will need extra help. The number of children in question is minimal; only 3 children did not fit in with DfE criteria. A decision on the best approach was not necessarily a strategy, but more a reaction, based on knowledge of the child and on family circumstances. This allowed children to work from home if appropriate, whilst maintaining communication with school and was not necessarily a formal Safeguarding issue, but could be viewed as supporting vulnerable children. There are different reasons for each child and the wellbeing of parents is also considered. School duty of care was for the child to attend for part of the week and attention was given to supporting Wellbeing and Safeguarding rather than focussing on academic progress.

7.2 Fire Drill

Is there concern over the time taken by younger children to vacate the building?

It was explained that, although Oak class children are not able to walk distance to the evacuation point on the field within 3 minutes, staff are satisfied they can vacate and be safely clear of the building.

7.5 Could the Headteachers give more information on the letter to parents regarding decisions on class/friendship groups?

The Headteachers are confident teachers know children really well and are aware of friendship groups. It is frustrating children cannot cross bubbles but for now this must be strictly adhered to. School is looking at a possible easing of these restrictions, with a review two weeks after school resumes following the Easter break. Any easing will be subject to government advice and data indications of virus cases. There has been some concern from parents that children are not within wider peer groups. School is aware of this and cannot guarantee children will be within a wider friendship group, but they will be with at least one friend. Children are asked to write down one or two children they would like to be with; this will help staff to liaise with parents and confirm the groups.

b) Staffing

The school office Assistant Administrator is taking early retirement; school will be very sad to see her leave. The post has been advertised, shortlisted and interviews are to be held at the end of this week. Applications look positive and it is hoped that the post will be filled with a new member of staff able to start immediately after Easter (subject to a

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notice period).

TLRs roles also discussed above. School is interviewing for one TLR post next week and there has been interest in the classroom Behaviour Lead role. There has been no internal interest in the Curriculum Lead, so the post will be advertised for September 2021 added to one of the teacher vacancies. There will be at least 2 vacancies for September; one for an extra class, which should be needed due to school numbers and the other involves a current temporary staff post, which needs to be advertised to be made permanent. There is opportunity for school to be flexible in appointing to these roles by recruiting a less experienced teacher and also an experienced teacher with the possibility of offering a TLR. This flexibility will put the school in a strong position when considering applicants. The Headteachers are working with Duncan Millard (FLT) and all within the Trust will be aware of the opportunities.

c) Performance and Standards

Due to lockdown and the difficulty of assessing children through home learning, a decision was taken to assess children now they are back in school. Y2 and Y6 children decided they would like to do the SATs paper. Good progress is being made and data will be available for governors after Easter. The FLT decision has been made to give all children SATs week and they will all receive the same paper. This will be at the end of June rather than May to give more time. Read, Write Inc and Phonics checks will also be done and there will be a number of assessments, but no externally reported data.

It was commented upon that Y6 children would miss doing SATs as it is a normal part of the process; the children have been informed mock SATs will take place.

Action: Performance and Standards Data to governors after Easter.

HTs

d) Budget report

ST reported on the recent P6 meeting with FLT.

A review of the financial position indicates that there is currently a -£5K (deficit). Although the figures show a deficit, it was not considered to be too worrying a situation. The deficit will be offset when insurance payment is received for one member of staff on long term sick leave. Payment is due but cannot be claimed until the staff member returns to work. Funding is also due for an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) child who recently joined the school; support is already in place for this child, at cost to the school, so the funding will help to address the budget deficit.

£30K (£5K for each classroom) was received for the new build and £10.5K for sports equipment. Using this funding an order has been placed to furnish the new build and also one empty classroom in the older building. Money has been wisely used to buy in bulk and plan for the next five years. Greater value will be gained from the £6K allocated for the trim trail, as a well regarded local business submitted a reasonable

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quote for work of quality. School has accepted the quote for 2 different sorts of trim trail and additional equipment, to be shared across KS1 and KS2. The work will be carried out during the Easter break.

Some of the funds will also be used for a shed, netball/basketball equipment, a large meeting table and dining room tables that are easier to fold down. It was accepted that school has been spending, but that not all the money had been used. A decision to carry forward funds could mean that the money is absorbed into the budget and not be spent according to the original intention. All agreed the benefits of having a well equipped school, with matching classroom furniture fit for purpose and also comfortable, useful public areas and staff room. As Y6 children will not benefit from the new trim trails and new equipment, classroom tray tables will be purchased for Y6 to help provide a pleasant end to the year.

The Headteachers reported that the school cleaners say cleaning is taking longer than anticipated. The new cleaning company is considered to be very good. However, an oversight in the tendering procedure, through no fault of the school, meant the price quoted did not include classrooms in the new building. It was accepted that in future the price for cleaning would have to increase. As the extra costs were additional to the original budget, this also contributes to the current budget deficit.

An issue with Central Team ICT was reported. Aspect of the Central Team assessment did not adequately plan for the WiFi and this has had an impact on the work. The current server does not have enough power and routers would not be enough as only a limited number can be supported. School was initially told the ICT work would be set up immediately following Lockdown; this did not happen. Central Team ICT would like to introduce a Cloud based system for all schools in the Trust, but this could take up to a year to be implemented. John Blandy is currently waiting for ICT to respond with a solution, which could mean a one year contract to cover need until the ICT team resolves the situation. At the moment the class teacher is being very adaptable; one router is in place but cannot cope with more than one class at a time. Future additional costs related to ICT provision are expected. An amount of £15K has recently been spent on Clever Touch Boards and there are plans to fund-raise to cover these, thereby releasing money to help fund ICT costs.

DH asked what the cost would be for a one year ICT contract?

The Headteachers responded that a cost of £3K for 3 years was recently quoted, which would amount to £1K for one year, subject to the quote still being valid. FLT are yet to respond to the school with an update on ICT provision; the Headteachers were not initially aware of any problem, were not always included in related meetings and conversations and believed that Central Team ICT had adequately assessed the work needed.

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	<p>Benchmarking</p> <p>DH reported that Benchmarking for all schools is carried out to provide comparisons with other schools nationally, locally and across the Trust. Governors will be able to view the benchmarking data in preparation for discussions at the May LGB meeting. He urged governors to study the data and report back any points for discussion. It was agreed the Benchmarking data will prove useful for planning and will help inform the SEF and SDP.</p> <p>Action: Benchmarking data to be forwarded to governors and discussed at the next LGB meeting.</p> <p>Budget Position</p> <p>DH noted the budget deficit and suggested lettings income could prove beneficial in helping to pay this off, as soon as school is able to offer this again. <i>SE commented that it is a better financial plan to put money aside from a direct source, such as lettings, rather than relying on small economies and savings</i></p> <p>It was agreed that a realistic 5 to 10 year plan to clear the deficit would be the best way forward.</p> <p>DH reminded governors that the school budget must be agreed and signed off by the LGB at the 18 May 2021 meeting to meet the FLT deadline of 8 June 2021.</p> <p>Action: Finalise school budget, LGB to agree and sign off school budget on 18 May 2021.</p>	<p>HTs/ COG/ Fin.Gov.</p> <p>HTs/ COG/ Fin.Gov.</p>
9	<p>Update on School Review</p> <p>Covered above.</p>	
10	<p>Policies:</p> <p>a) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</p> <p>The SEND Policy had been previously circulated to all governors. <i>HB questioned how the SEND policy related to online learning, available space and Lockdown restrictions. A concern is that if the SEND children are together with key worker and other children there could be a risk to provision.</i></p> <p>SE informed that this is relevant to both SEND and to children who have an EHCP. 80% of EHCP children attended school at some point during Lockdown. Online learning is difficult for SEND children; 42% of SEND children had been attending. 10 children attended who were SEND and also had parents who were key workers. In the event of another lockdown, there is not much leverage if there is staff absence; if staff are not available a bubble needs to close.</p> <p>It was reported that high behaviour needs of last summer are no longer an issue. All</p>	

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	<p>apart from 3 Vulnerable children were in school. Children identified as borderline SEND were followed up with telephone calls and communication was maintained. Packs were prepared to collect for those who could not engage in online learning.</p> <p><i>It was asked if the catchment for remote learning would be different to face-to-face for and should this be considered for SEND children in the event of other Lockdowns?</i></p> <p>SE responded that school is mindful of this and would continue to look closely at provision. It was a key point highlighted in the parent questionnaire and from informal observations by staff. Some children fail to respond well to remote learning, but teachers were aware of this. Some children enjoyed remote learning; it suited them and this is the reason some did not attend school. Tracking has now changed and is not so focussed on SEND; the Covid-19 Catch Up Fund has been used to purchase a provision tracker system, which links to the School Information Management System (SIMS). An annual report at the end of the school year is completed, but it is also useful to see how children are progressing mid-year. How school approaches SEND interventions remotely is a question that needs to be addressed in the event of further Lockdowns.</p> <p>Governors agreed the SEND policy.</p> <p>Action: SEND Policy agreed by LGB.</p> <p>b) GDPR</p> <p>The current policy, written by FLT and adopted by the school, is on the website. Formal agreement of the new policy will be an agenda item for the next meeting, to be agreed by the LGB.</p> <p>Action: All governors to check the GDPR Policy in preparation for agreement at the next meeting.</p> <p>c) Other Policy Reviews</p> <p>No other policies were put forward for review.</p>	<p>Action Completed</p> <p>All Govs.</p>
11	<p>Governor Reports</p> <p>Governor Review</p> <p>LB is awaiting detailed feedback from Liz Holmes (LH, FLT) on the recent Governor Review. Initial feedback was very positive and the meeting went very well ; LH was pleased with the structure. The main point of focus should be to ensure all governors know what the vision is for the school and this will help inform review of school documents.</p>	

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	<p><i>HB agreed the review went very well and the strength of governors was recognised. All governors and school staff were thanked by the Chair and Headteachers for their continued commitment and support.</i></p> <p>Health and Safety Reports on GovernorHub</p> <p>HB reported that health and safety issues are looking positive; the inspection visit by Siobhan Vinall (SB, FLT) confirmed all paperwork is in order. Water and safety records were inspected and a conditions survey was also completed, focussing on safety of door hinges, trip hazards etc. The only actions identified were the need for COSH warning labels on the cleaning cupboards, sub folder for cleaning products should be stored in cupboards and step stools should be available in the Rainbow building.</p> <p>HB commented on a very positive impression of the school as the inspection was carried out and reported that a governor monitoring form has been completed. The available space and the efforts of all the team has ensured the ability to comply with all Covid-19 health and safety measures. To the benefit of school finances the skylight replacements, highlighted as requiring action, will not incur any cost to school.</p> <p>The impact of the extra work needed by the cleaners and caretaker is recognised and extra hours are in place to ensure work is done. Possible problems could result if the cleaning contract and caretaker costs increase and school should be mindful of how this could impact on the budget and on quality of provision in the future.</p> <p><i>The headteachers commented on the pleasure felt by all staff in having school fully open and looked forward to an easing of restrictions, and to a time when the space can be enjoyed by the whole school together.</i></p>	
12	<p>Correspondence None received.</p>	
13	<p>Academy News Update Report from DH</p> <p>It was confirmed that a Governors' budget meeting is due shortly.</p> <p>Feedback from the Resources meeting was positive.</p> <p>By October the Trust will have breached 3,000 pupils. Within a 2 year period schools will no longer have to bid for CIF funding. Although John Blandy has already completed much of the planned work it does mean that, in future, school will be in control of their physical premises.</p> <p>It was noted that there is a change this academic year in where Y6 are transitioning, with a large proportion electing to go to Mathew Arnold School rather than Faringdon</p>	

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	<p>Community College (FCC). This was not considered to be a negative reflection on FCC, but more a question of opting to stay with friendship groups. This information has been passed onto FLT for their information.</p> <p>Promoting stronger links with FCC was suggested, with strategies employed to incorporate FCC into John Blandy and promote stronger links at an earlier age. To facilitate this it would be beneficial for parents and children to see key personnel from FCC in school at appropriate times in order to underline the connection. Plans for this further involvement can be made as soon as Covid-19 restrictions are eased.</p>	
14	<p>Any Other Business None.</p>	
15	<p>Items for next agenda (not exhaustive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Vision – Governor Focus on Writing, Links and SDP • GDPR • Performance & Standards – Feedback on Data • Benchmarking • School Budget Agreement <p>Next Meetings: 18 May 2021 13 July 2021</p> <p>Meeting closed at 8:50pm</p>	

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