



Learning God's Way

FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING
Thursday 18th January 2024, 7pm in the Staff Room

Meeting Focus – Children's Welfare

The meeting was opened with prayer. Emma Craughan chaired the meeting.

	<p>Present: Brian Baker, Jane Burke, Emma Craughan (Co-Chair), Kate Goater, Mike Jee (Head), Leila Kemp, Al Knox, Carolynn Lorimer, Debbie Ricks (Co-Chair – via zoom), Chris Snell, Mark Standen (Vice Chair)</p> <p>Apologies: none</p> <p>Clerk: Jennie Ring</p> <p>Also present:</p>	Action
60	Apologies for absence – none	
61	Declaration of Interest – none	
62	Urgent matters to be considered for inclusion – none	
63	Approval of minutes of meeting 9th November 2023 – the minutes were agreed and signed.	
64	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>General matters arising – none</p> <p>The action table from November's meeting was reviewed:</p> <p>Item 1 (minute 45) – William Older Trustees have accepted the governor's offer of a formal letter with reference to rental of a room for 3 years, beginning September 2024. They have drafted a letter, which has been agreed, outlining this arrangement and rate of rental.</p> <p>Item 3 (minute 45) – one governor has still be review the Skills Audit integral to Governor's Virtual Office (GVO).</p> <p>Item 4 (minute 45) – 4 governors have completed the module. The Chair asked others to consider completing it.</p> <p>Item 5 (minute 45) – the Chair and Head agreed to cover this imminently.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>Head Chair</p>

	<p>Item 6 (minute 45) – Pupil voice is available – see minute 71.</p> <p>Item 8 (minute 54) – contact with various possible guests to be part of an opening ceremony for the Tomlin Centre and outcomes of the contacts made were discussed. Other suggestions and avenues to explore were discussed. It was suggested that a well-known guest who also has a diagnosis relevant to the support centre could be sought.</p> <p>All other actions were complete.</p>	
65	<p>Questions arising from monitoring visits – none.</p> <p>One governor mentioned a visit which took place on 1st December with Early Years, for which a report is being finalised with follow up plans. This will be shared on GVO in due course.</p> <p>The Head commented on the “absolutely fab” way another governor was heard to be reading with children recently.</p> <p><i>Mrs Lorimer arrived at the meeting.</i></p>	JB Clerk
66	<p>Headteacher’s Report, to include: Safeguarding, Attendance, Exclusions, H&S incidents, Safety & Security incidents, Complaints</p> <p>The Head went over the detail of the report.</p> <p>Staffing – the Head referred to the snapshot of the current staffing picture in the report, giving more detail and answering questions on the circumstances, workload, contract details and decisions made. It was evident in replies that the decisions were made to increase consistency and support children’s outcomes. The present challenges of recruiting were acknowledged. The tables showing the current staffing picture were discussed with reference to the challenges of allocating staff to support children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), exploring the picture in school with respect to children with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) and how the Tomlin Centre children and the rest of the school’s children might work together. Information on the role of parents, the school, and the local authority was shared in relation to the process of applying for entry to the Tomlin Centre and decisions about who is allocated a place. The local authority SEN Assessment Team (SENAT) has the responsibility of allocating places from applications received.</p> <p>The Head outlined the current picture of staffing in terms pay scales, experience and gender mix concluding that there is a now a good range of new, recently qualified and experienced teachers in the school. <i>I heard the number of people wanting jobs in teaching is decreasing?</i> Yes, and so many teachers leave after 5 years. The school needs to maintain the mix for the budget’s sake and for the new ideas and energy brought in by new blood.</p> <p>Staff absence – further to the information presented in the report it was mentioned that a couple of members of staff have had lengthy absences because of significant physical issues/illness. Generally speaking, support staff absence is ordinarily higher than teaching staff and mid-day meal supervisor absence is ordinarily higher than support staff. Again, some of the absence is due to longer term physical issues/illness. It’s very challenging for staffing when the absence involves a member of staff giving 1:1 support to a specific child.</p>	

	<p>Exclusions – a racist comment results in an automatic exclusion. Parents and children were involved in addressing the issues around the exclusions.</p> <p>H&S incidents/Safety & Security incidents – none. The building company, Walkers, had high priority on health and safety.</p> <p>Attendance – the figures presented in the report on attendance were reviewed and discussed - the main figure of concern being the persistent absence figure. A discussion took place on the possible reasons for this, and what the school is doing to address matters. The patterns of attendance/absence were outlined by the Head. The following points were mentioned: the figure indicates that about 1 in 5 children have an attendance rate of under 90%; parents seem to be keeping children at home more readily than before covid; parents don't always respond positively to the school's following up on children's persistent absence; taking holidays during term time remains a reality; the local authority are the ones who decide whether to fine or not; and the figures are much the same across the locality. Do you think the cost of living crisis is affecting this? I don't know. I think parents weight up the costs of travel, accommodation and fines and proceed with going away in term time anyway. A brief discussion took place on the general pre-emptive communications with parents attendance and absence and what avenues were used. Is a consistent message given to children? Yes, and some work is done with children, including creation of posters. Further reasons for absence were touched on, eg travel reasons and parents mental health and wellbeing. Is the persistent absence percentage up since Covid? Yes, it has doubled since pre-covid times, perhaps the impact of parents working from home.</p> <p>Complaints – there were no formal complaints. The Complaints Policy has been updated. The Head spoke of work done with teachers inviting them to respond to letters of complaint received from parents (before reaching any formal stage). It's hoped this gave teachers insight into what could be done differently in communication and practice to prevent situations arising or resolving issues before they develop enough to elicit a formal complaint.</p> <p>Returning to Health & Safety for a moment, and with the Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan in mind, does it need any change because of the Tomlin Centre? The practical systems, risk assessments and plans for handover and fire drills have been checked by the local authority and are in place. It was agreed, however, to add to the policy an explicit mention of the Tomlin Centre and the area children from it would have to gather in the when a fire alarm sounded.</p> <p>Safeguarding – the new Children & Family Worker (CFW) is growing into the job quickly. The Head and Deputy Headteacher are Designated Safeguarding Leads until she is fully trained and joins them. There are quite a few vulnerable children being monitored at the moment. There are no children under a Child Protection Plan. Does the CFW role include children accessing Early Help? That's separate although it will be part of her role with children under her care. Is she full time? She works 4 days a week. The CFW is a broad role and a key member of staff.</p>	Clerk
67	<p>SDP progress update</p> <p>The Strategic Plan for School and Learning Development (Overview for Governors) 2022-25 was part of the update provided by the Headteacher before the meeting. The</p>	

	<p>objectives of the plan are around curriculum development, subject leadership, the Tomlin Centre and maths.</p> <p>The Head spoke about recent twilight inset sessions reviewing projects currently being worked on, each year group reporting on last term's work, useful resources, areas to work on, reflective practice and sharing of ideas in an atmosphere with a sense of permission to be learning and developing. The work on curriculum development will take 3-5 years to embed across subjects and year groups. An important aspect of the development is the aim to teach children to think in a different way, eg like a historian or artist in the way they approach work with associated language and concepts on board. The Head gave some examples. Y6 are finding this most challenging since it is new to them at this stage in their school life.</p> <p>Is this a real step-change for staff too? Yes, but there's lots of time and training being given to it, and will be in future, building on experience.</p> <p>Have parents noticed? That's hard to say. There was positive feedback from parents on the Fashion Show, which was linked to final outcomes. The Art Gallery – showing progression in art from Early Years to Y6 – was another way to easily see outcomes.</p> <p>The school is pressing on with the Maths Mastery approach to teaching maths particularly in Y3 and Y4. Y5 is strong. With Y6 it is being embedded. Particular investment in early Key Stage 2 (KS2) is being made for its long term benefits.</p> <p>Is there any support for the Maths Lead? The task is big but the Lead is certainly up to the task, and she is now a national figure in the teaching of Maths Mastery. If she was to be absent? There are primary and secondary subject leaders to meet such circumstances. There were further questions about the approach being taken in Y3 and Y4, targets, how staff meetings are used, the effect the use of White Rose is having and what CPA meant in the Maths Mastery context (C – concrete – calculations done with materials; P – pictorial – calculations done using images; A – abstract – calculations done mentally). It was agreed that it would be valuable to have the Maths Lead visit a future meeting to speak about Maths Mastery.</p> <p>The figures presented in the Headteacher's Update for reading, writing and maths were discussed covering the areas for development, the possible reasons behind these, comparison with last year's predictions, national and locality data, and measures in place to improve children's outcomes.</p>	Clerk
68	<p>Curriculum development update</p> <p>See minute 67.</p>	
69	<p>Pupil Premium (PP) Strategy progress update</p> <p>The strategy is connected to the work the CFW and support staff are doing. There's a correlation between PP, absence, attainment and vulnerability. The PP funding covers a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and the CFW salaries, and is therefore part of balancing the school's budget.</p>	
70	<p>Children & Family Worker and Pupil mental health and wellbeing</p>	

	<p>The new Children & Family Worker is settling in well. Care has been taken to ensure she's working with children with the highest need and that teachers understand their primary responsibility with children. The strategic plan has been updated and is now being monitored to address any gaps. Examples of how the CFW is working, with whom and the kinds of interactions between staff roles were outlined, the aim being for consistency in ways of working and relating.</p>	
71	<p>Pupil voice</p> <p>Following on from the classroom audit conducted recently from the perspective of social, emotional and communication needs children Mrs Kemp spoke to children with learning and cognition needs - all were able to articulate their views. There were some definite likes and dislikes along with mixed feelings expressed on various aspects of the school environment, resources and experiences. Actions such as adjusting resources provided with a less generic approach and including specific information in pupil profiles will be taken. A write up will follow, to be shared via GVO.</p> <p>Will actions taken or further actions be fed back to the children, and if so, how? Through work with the teachers and meeting the same children again.</p>	LK Clerk
72	<p>3 Year Budget – 1st draft</p> <p>The 3 Year Budget Executive Summary was tabled at the meeting. The Head outlined information and thoughts about 3 year budgets in general and specific factors around the revenue reserves carried forward figures.</p> <p>What number of pupils is the budget based on? 2023-24 is based on 401. 2024-25 is based on 391. 2025-26 figure was unremembered. There's a lot of interest in the school, with prospective parents visiting every week. Some parents are resident in the new houses. There will be 8 on the Tomlin Centre role and therefore on the school role. They may have siblings. The number of pupils in the school for 2024-25 could be around 400.</p> <p>How does funding work for in-year admissions? Funding is allocated following the census in October each year. So for any children joining the school after October funding isn't received until after the next census, the following October.</p> <p>The Head expressed his view that with continued prudence this year the financial picture for the next 2 years will be OK and get better. The consequences of a new government after the next general election is something to keep abreast of.</p> <p>The detail behind the Executive Summary is available from the Bursar. Could it be imported into GVO? Yes.</p> <p>Is all of this scrutinised? The local authority does this and will contact the school if there's an issue. When will the money from the local authority reimbursing the school for staff costs already spent with reference to the Tomlin Centre? Before the end of this financial year.</p> <p>Has the School Fund been audited? The answer to this was unknown. The balance of the London Account is £35K. The Head informed governors that there is a plan to bid for School Condition Allocation funds from the Diocese to fix drains, and explained the problem. The maintenance of them is ongoing and expensive.</p>	Head Clerk

	Do we have any involvement or say in what PTA funds are allocated to? The PTA funds aren't big. We've just asked for a contribution of £2K for the building of a shelter outside Y2 classes.	
73	External validation update – LA Autumn conversation/Diocese There was nothing to report, and the question of whether there may already be a report in GVO was raised. See addendum to the minutes.	
74	Tomlin Centre update (10 minute walk around) It was agreed to do this when all other agenda items had been covered. As they walked around the Centre governors commented on the spaciousness, facilities, and feel of the Centre and questions for context and understanding were responded to.	
75	Policies The following policies were before governors: Administration of Medicines Policy 2023 Asthma in School Policy 2023 First Aid Policy 2023 Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy 2024 (model) Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan 2024 Charging & Remissions Policy 2024 A minor amendment to the Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan was highlighted – see minute 66. Should the aim and attainment of the school as an Asthma Friendly School be included in the policy? It's a good thing to have, but it doesn't need to be in the policy. One governor attested to the complete and efficient practice indicated by the policy applied by the school when his grandson was recently diagnosed with asthma. It was agreed to give 7 days from the meeting for any further comments from governors, after which the policies will be taken as approved.	Clerk Clerk
76	Chair's Action - none	
77	Date of next meeting – Thursday 22 nd February 2024, 7pm in the Staff Room Governors were asked by the Head to consider whether they would be able to meet and greet parents at the upcoming parent's evenings. If so, to notify the Head by email.	All

Addendum: With reference to minute 73 the Clerk received the report of the local authority Autumn Conversation from the Head the next day and imported it into GVO. It had been published in Perspective Lite without separate notification to the Head.

ACTION TABLE

D = Done

P = In progress – give update

O = Still outstanding

	Minute:	Action from:	Action by:	Status
1	65	JB/Clerk – provide and import monitoring visit report for GVO	Post meeting	D
2	66	Clerk – inform Sc Sec of addition to make to the Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan	By Friday 26 th January	
3	67	Clerk – check Maths Lead visit is on agenda plan/agenda	Post meeting	
4	71	LK/Clerk – write up and import into GVO the pupil voice gathered	By next meeting 22 nd February	
5	72	Head/Clerk – provide and import into GVO the detail behind the 3 year budget Executive Summary	By next meeting 22 nd February	
6	75	Clerk – see action point 2	By Friday 26 th January	
7	75	Clerk – process policies if taken as approved	Friday 26 th January	
8	77	All – any governor available to meet and greet at parents’s evenings – contact the Head by email	Post meeting	