

Kimbolton St James C.E. Primary School

Full Governing Body Meeting

29 November 2021, 4:30 pm

Draft Minutes

Action	By when	By whom
Review Angela's position depending on whether her position working for school becomes permanent	Next FGB	Adam Breakwell and Gill James
Circulate School Development Plan and Self-evaluation Framework	ASAP	Adam Breakwell
Speak with Adam and staff regarding wellbeing, following the results of the staff survey	Next FGB (progress update)	Judy Thompson
Report back on arrangements made to ensure Charlotte has sufficient time for her SENCo duties	Next FGB	Adam Breakwell
Meet re: embedding the school's Christian ethos and values throughout the school, and report back	Next FGB	Liz Davies and Adam Breakwell
Let Gill know when PCC meetings are arranged, and if it is appropriate for her to attend	Next FGB	Liz Davies and Judy Thompson
Meet with Orleton chair, and then with Orleton representatives and Andrew Teale, to explore the option of joining the DH MAT, and report back	Next FGB	Gill James, Liz Davies and Adam Breakwell
Initiate parent governor recruitment process	January 2022	Liz Mackay and Gill James
Re-circulate governance and parent-facing policies for sign-off	30 November 6 December	Liz Mackay All
Update Staff Code of Conduct as per comments below	ASAP	Liz Mackay
Send comments on policies to Liz M	ASAP	Gill James
Put in place system for volunteers/helpers to record that they have seen the relevant policy	Next FGB	Adam Breakwell
Arrange for a replacement for the ash tree when it comes down	Next FGB	Adam Breakwell and Charlotte Hyde
Ask the Parish Council if a disabled space can be marked out at the school end of the car park	Next FGB	Adam Breakwell

1. Declarations of pecuniary interest and potential conflicts of interest

It was noted that, as the first meeting of the year, this needs to cover general interests not just specific to this meeting. The only interest declared was that Angela is helping one day a week in the office, and also in class; this is currently temporary, but it was agreed to keep this under review as it may affect whether she is allowed to remain a governor if it continues for long or if the hours increase.

2. Head teacher's update

The only significant point not covered elsewhere on the agenda is the heating system. An Air Source Heat Pump is being recommended, costing £230k; Adam has checked the rationale for this high cost with PR Associates and been given a satisfactory answer. In theory, there is a grant available from the diocese to cover 90% of the cost. However, Adam has spoken with Sian Lines (Deputy Director of Education) and she has been clear that Kimbolton will not get the money because the funding is intended to support schools to replace oil or gas heating systems, not electric ones. Sian will let Adam know if any suitable grants do become available.

A concern was noted that parts of school are beginning to feel cold as the cold weather kicks in. However, there is no immediate solution available.

It was noted that the hall already has an air source heat pump and seems to work fine when set up correctly and the air flow is kept clear.

3. Staffing

Governors regretted that Class 4 teacher Sarah Bent is leaving at the end of term and appreciated her excellent teaching. Adam has arranged a short-term replacement (Sian Randall-Jones, who has been a deputy headteacher elsewhere and moved into the area during Covid, and who is very keen to take on responsibility which will enable her to apply for a deputy headteacher's role from September). Adam will advertise for a permanent replacement for September. Parents have been notified.

Governors also expressed their thanks and best wishes to Sue, who is sadly leaving after 22 years. The plan is to bring in someone part-time as a business manager and someone full-time as front-of-house. For front-of-house, Zoë is doing four days a week, and Angela will fill the other day. Adam had hoped that Emma Jenkins (Orleton School Business Manager) could take on the business manager role at Kimbolton; she will do so temporarily but there would be complications were this to become a permanent arrangement. Adam is therefore now exploring recruiting a business manager to work across Orleton and Kimbolton and possibly over a third school as well.

4. School Development Plan (SDP)

This has been completed, including input from individual subject leads. Adam will circulate it.

5. Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

This has been completed by Adam and Sarah Somers and has been circulated. Adam will re-send it with the SDP.

6. Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Herefordshire Council has been under the spotlight recently and there do seem to be some improvements. A recent disclosure through counselling support resulted in a multi-agency referral, initially Child Protection but then downgraded to Family Support. Staff at the Council have been more helpful than they have been previously, but it was noted that there is still relatively little they can do unless there is the compulsion of a Child Protection case (parents are only compelled to engage in the process if it is graded as Child Protection).

Within school, Kerry Jones is now working with Libby to roll out the counselling model to more schools (with funding from the Local Authority). School nurses are now engaging more effectively, and it is proving possible to get support for children from them.

There has been an incident of peer-to-peer abuse; both children involved and their parents are being supported.

7. Wellbeing

The biggest concern at the moment is staff wellbeing due to a tough couple of years, especially with the introduction of the new curriculum. It was agreed that Judy will speak with Adam and the rest of the staff team, following the completion of the staff (and pupil and parent) survey. It was agreed to revisit this at the next full governors' meeting.

8. SEND

Charlotte is currently undertaking a Masters-level SENCo course, which is mandatory but brings with it an expectation of a lot of hours of work (around 200 hours a term).

The numbers of children with SEND are currently high both for the school and compared to the national figure (the national average is 15% and Kimbolton is currently at 19% and may increase to 21%). This is because there are 6 or 7 children in Year 1 who were initially on the register due to Speech & Language difficulties; 2 of these now have Global Developmental Delay diagnoses (meaning that they are behind in their learning due to other factors); 1 has been referred for concerns re: autism; 1 or 2 are possible referrals re: ADHD.

Another child has now gone to a nurture group at Leominster for at least a year although the child is still on roll with Kimbolton.

Judy reported as SEND link governor and highlighted Charlotte's extensive duties as SENCo. Governors agreed that Adam will talk to Charlotte and make suitable arrangements for support and will report back to the next meeting.

9. Christian distinctiveness (including update on vision and values)

The vision and values have now been finalised and have been embedded into the policies and into worship. An artist has been commissioned to do a mural depicting the vision and values.

It was agreed that Adam will meet with Liz D (as PCC link governor) to explore this in more detail and Liz D will report back to the next full governors' meeting.

10. PCC updates

The post of the new vicar is due to be advertised in January but there won't be a new person in post until May at the earliest.

Judy does a report from the school to PCC meetings, as does Liz D. There has not yet been a PCC meeting, but there is one scheduled for 15th December. This is not a full PCC meeting, which probably won't take place until the new year.

It was agreed that it would be helpful for Gill to attend the PCCs to introduce herself. Liz D and Angela will let Gill know when meetings are arranged and if it is appropriate for her to attend.

11. Nursery

The Diocese has been keen for a long time that the nursery pay a fair market rent, and that a proper agreement be put in place. Negotiations are ongoing and a proposal has been put to pre-school. Gill and Adam will update governors when a response is received. In the meantime, Adam will circulate the letter that has been sent to the nursery.

12. Federation / academisation update

It was noted that Kimbolton is currently in a soft federation with Orleton (a hard federation was explored when this arrangement was set up and was not deemed to be beneficial). Things are now changing, and a more formal arrangement may be necessary to protect the school. This may include a more formal arrangement with Orleton, but may also include joining a multi-academy trust. Government policy is for the school to academise in 5-10 years. This may become particularly helpful as the local authority reduces its level of service provision, as an academy trust can offer more back-office services e.g. HR, finance support. Also, as other schools academise, it becomes more difficult to find other schools with which to partner.

As a VA school then the only options are to join the Diocese of Hereford Multi-Academy Trust (DHMAT) or another academy trust elsewhere in the country (because any other schools that are part of an academy trust with a VA school have to match their number of foundation governors).

It will need to be clear how Kimbolton would benefit from joining the DHMAT, and how this might affect the link with Orleton.

It was agreed to explore joining the DHMAT. Gill will speak initially to Camilla (chair of governors at Orleton), and Gill, Adam and Liz D will then meet with Andrew Teale with equivalent representatives from Orleton; if it seems possible then Andrew will be invited to come and meet all governors. Gill, Adam and Liz will update on progress at the next full governors' meeting.

13. Committee updates

Premises

Updates from the minutes are as follows.

- Orleton cleaners cannot do the deep clean so Adam is looking for other cleaners; Liz D mentioned that there was a deep clean done at the church, and will share the details with Adam.
- Des and John did a walk around after the Premises Committee meeting and did note the amount of cleaning that needed to be done. It looks likely that the amount of time is not the main factor, but the skills/expertise. Adam is monitoring the situation and will explore alternatives if necessary. It was agreed that the Premises Committee will continue to monitor this.
- Damaged/diseased tree: Richard cannot take it down in time, Adam has chased two other people and is waiting to hear back. He will report back to the Premises Committee. It was agreed that this is urgent.

Curriculum & outcomes

The first data point will be in two weeks' time.

Rev'd Matthew Burns is going to lead the Christingle service.

Finance

It was noted that Period 7 analysis shows a slight over-spend, but only by 1.7% of the budget. This is partly because of extra supply staff due to Covid, and also because costs have been incurred for things that cover the whole year; the over-spend is, in real terms, actually only 0.7%, which is not of significant concern.

It was noted that the school is now only allowed to take forward 20% in carry forward, not 25%. £564 therefore needs to be spent by February out of devolved capital.

14. Governor vacancy update

Katleen stepped down as parent governor in October at the end of her second term. It was agreed to send parent governor nomination forms out in January.

The team rector has confirmed that the new team vicar will fill the ex officio foundation governor post when appointed.

15. Governance policy

It was queried whether the committees needed formal delegated powers, but it was agreed that they are operating well as they are.

It was agreed to have all the committee meetings on the same night, and for Liz M to minute them all.

Liz M will re-circulate the governance policy for governors to confirm sign-off electronically.

16. Other policies for sign-off: Admissions, Behaviour, Child Protection & Safeguarding, Finance, Healthy Schools, Staff Conditions, Staff Code of Conduct, Staff Recruitment (individually reviewed), and suite of policies for parents

Judy queried possible amendments to the Staff Code of Conduct and it was agreed to remove the blue denim reference. Once the policy is signed off, Adam confirmed that an arrangement will be put in place to ensure that volunteers/helpers have read the relevant sections and that this is recorded.

Gill will send comments to Liz M on the policy she reviewed.

Judy proposed that all those policies that had been reviewed by individual governors be accepted; Liz D seconded; and it was agreed unanimously with no abstentions.

Liz M will re-send the parent-facing policy suite for governors to confirm sign-off electronically.

17. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were agreed unanimously as an accurate record.

18. Matters arising not dealt with elsewhere

Adam and Charlotte will arrange for a replacement tree for the ash tree when it comes down.

19. Any other business

A nursery parent with two disabled children has asked if a disabled space can be marked out at the near end of the car park. Adam will ask the Parish Council to see if this is possible.

20. Date of next meeting

Committee meetings: Monday 7th February; 4pm Finance, 4.45 pm Premises, 5.30pm Curriculum

Full Governors: Monday 7th March; 4.30pm