**POWERSTOCK CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held via Microsoft Teams at 6.30pm on Wednesday 24 February 2021**

**Present:** Joanna Moss JM (Chair), David Jones DJ (Vice Chair) Amanda Montague AM, Louise Greenham (Headteacher) LG, Julia Stantiford JS, Linden Boothby LB, Kate Shelley KS, Anna Seal AS from 6.42pm, Gill Butler GB from 6.40pm, Claire Kelton CK to 8.05pm

**In Attendance:** Natalie Green NG (Clerk)

Q/C = Question/Challenge

**Item 1. Welcome**

JM welcomed all to the meeting. She noted that NG had communicated her intention to step down as Clerk at the end of the current school year. Governors noted that NG would be missed.

**Item 2. Apologies**

These were received and accepted from Tim Connor TC and Revd Chris Grasske CG.

**Item 3. Minutes of the last FGB**

The minutes of the FGB Meeting held on 21 January 2021 had been included in the pack.

These were agreed virtually as a true record.

**Item 4. Matters Arising**

1. Governors to email NG, JM and LG when read KCSiE – some returns were still outstanding. ONGOING
2. LG to make Staff Handbook available to all governors – LG reported that this was now on Sharepoint. COMPLETED
3. LG/JM to discuss inclusion of governor’s section on School Plan - ON AGENDA
4. Governors to send updated headshot photos to LG for the website - some governors were yet to do this. ONGOING
5. Governors to familiarise themselves with the new monitoring process agreed at the meeting, to read the Intent, Implementation & Impact statements for their subjects on the website and contact LG regarding a Spring monitoring visit. - this was ON HOLD due to school closure and JM noted that governors were doing as much monitoring as possible in the current circumstances.
6. Governors to complete registration on NGA Learning Link and review modules - JM requested that any governors who had not already registered do this ASAP and focus on the Finance modules she would outline at Item 11. ONGOING
7. Subgroup to report on Relationships Education – ON AGENDA
8. CK/DJ to examine website and submit any ideas to LG. - this would be completed shortly. ONGOING
9. LG to consider whether Ryan Hobby (RH) could deliver any sessions without contravening furlough rules - RH was delivering sessions online on YouTube. - COMPLETED
10. DJ to look at options for siting a new gazebo in school grounds - DJ had visited and the ideal place had been identified. A surveyor would attend in the following week then would submit application for planning permission. COMPLETED
11. Governors to review SFVS and report back - ON AGENDA
12. JM, DJ, GB to attend NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training - ONGOING
13. Governors to submit 3 SWOT headlines to JM – completed and on AGENDA

There were no other matters arising that would not be covered by the Agenda.

**Item 5. Declaration of** **Governor’s Business Interests**

There were no matters to declare that would conflict with the Agenda.

**Item 6. Declaration of Urgent Business Items**

None.

**Item 7. Correspondence**

A written confirmation had been received that the Police and Crime Commission Election would now take place in the Three Horseshoes Public House rather than the Hut.

**Item 8. Chairs Report**

JM reported that she had attended the Chair’s Briefing that day, the main items on the Agenda had been:

* Locality within Dorset – Chairs were asked to input into how this new approach was going and Governor Services had noted that they planned to change from full Dorset briefings to local ones.
* Covid - how to support Headteachers in the full re-opening of schools and Governor Services pointed to the NGA guidelines which had been published on 23.2.21.
* OFSTED – information had been given on inspections starting in April 2021 and that inspectors would use assessment data schools needed to use at the end of the academic year to measure accountability.
* Budgets – noting that schools must spend PE underspend in the summer term / National Funding Formula and changes to the budget (the scarcity factor was increasing which would hopefully bring a benefit to the school) / contingency budgets and creating one for Covid support (noting that the school did not apply for this).

**Item 9. Headteacher’s Report**

9.1 *Review Latest Weekly Report* – these had been included in the meeting pack and LG would provide two more before full re-opening. She highlighted the report by Jo Cleden (JC) in the last one. A review of remote learning which had been conducted using the DfE guide was also in the pack for governor’s information. The remote learning survey had been very positive. Governors noted the positive tone of the review and LG said the school was feeling confident about the remote learning impact.

9.2 *Planning for full reopening* - LG noted the government document on full reopening and said that there were no substantial changes to the Risk Assessment since the last reopening after closure in Lockdown 1. LG had drafted a letter which had waited until the FGB had met to review and agree the updated Risk Assessment, before sending to parents. She noted that the first 4 weeks back would be non-uniform and that the school was considering the situation with Y6s. The main thing the school wanted to do was to introduce children to being back in school gradually and to allow them to settle in. She added that the school was taking more measures than suggested by the guidance i.e., bags would not be brought into school to minimise the infection risk. Staff had been wearing face coverings in school most of the time and children were now familiar with it and no issues had been experienced. Additional Perspex screens had been purchased (using the capitation funds) to further protect class teacher and were used for close up work. There would be no homework in the first stage after reopening. RH would not attend for the first 4 weeks and PE provision would be delivered by teaching staff; however, Claire Smith would be invited to cover Forest School as she was based outdoors. School times would be 9am to 3.30pm with staggered drop off and pick up times. The bus would be reinstated, which closed the gap with timings. **Q/C Governors asked about issues with social distancing for parents on the road outside school.** This was a challenge due to the narrow road and passing traffic, but the school would use signage to discourage double parking, and create space nearest to the gate. LG would also look at rebranding safety messaging. Two adults per class were needed to operate a full class, and LG said that the school may need to look to supply or stepping up internal staff to maintain the bubble approach in the event of any staff absence. **Q/C A parent governor suggested showing children what the school would look like when they return as part of the remote learning before re-opening.** This would have the potential to allay worries for anxious children. **Q/C Governors asked about parents being asked to wear face coverings at drop off and pick up times and LG said that they had been asked to do this in the Autumn term and would be expected to do so again.** **Q/C Governors asked about children wearing face coverings.** LG said that this was in place on the bus in particular, as bubbles then merged, though children were still seated apart. There was some discussion on this and LG would invite children to wear a face covering if desired, but it would not be compulsory. LG informed governors of the 2 days of the week designated for staff testing of Sunday and Wednesday pm. **Q/C Governors asked about the general age and health of the staff and their confidence around Covid-19**. LG noted the general age make-up of the staff and added that she had asked all staff for any change regarding their clinical vulnerability/extremely clinical vulnerability and no changes/responses had been received. **Q/C Governors asked if the staff felt that the school was doing all it to minimise risk.** LG said that no staff members had asked for anything further, and AS added that the staff felt as safe as they possibly could be in the circumstances. JM noted governor obligations in terms of this and thanked LG for providing the assurances governors needed prior to re-opening. Governors confirmed that they were in agreement with the Risk Assessment.

9.3 *Safeguarding* – LG noted that teachers had maintained a good overview of issues with remote learning and school attendance.

9.4 *Wellbeing* – **Q/C Governors asked if there was anything further they could do to support staff wellbeing in the first 2 weeks after re-opening.** AS noted that parental confidence was very important in ensuring staff wellbeing. **Q/C Governors noted the reference to fining parents if their children did not attend even though fining was unlikely at present. They suggested that removing this may reduce parent anxiety and LG agreed to remove this reference**. LG noted that children were a ‘bit frayed round the edges’ and needed interaction with other children to ensure their wellbeing. Governors agreed to hold a staff survey on Wellbeing with JM to compile it with DJ. Results would be reviewed at the next FGB with a resulting action plan.

9.5 *The Maths Monitoring Report* had been included in the meeting pack and JM noted how effective the report was. LG would provide a similar report for Literacy. **Q/C Governors asked about comparisons in the Collaboration but LG said that she did not receive a response when she asked for feedback.**

JM thanked LG for her report. There were no further questions.

**Item 10.** **Policy Review**

10.1 The Relationships and Sex Education Policy had been included in the pack. LB gave an overview of the Relationships and Sex Education Policy sub group’s meeting and recommendations:

* Link the policy to the guidelines from the Church of England, and specifically the Diocese of Salisbury.
* Ensure that there were clear indicators between the policy and the requirements of SIAMS.
* Help to embed SIAMS as a dynamic road map, for example, Strand 2 Wisdom, knowledge, and skills, also Strand 5 Dignity and Respect.
* To demonstrate the RSE policy in terms of living out scripture, for example psalm 139 v13-16.

The decision had been made not to teach the non-mandatory sex education topics. In such a small school, parents exercising their right to withdraw children from these sessions may potentially leave very small numbers being taught, which might in turn be uncomfortable for the children left. It was felt to be more beneficial to signpost parents to the plethora of excellent material on these topics. It was strongly felt that the children should be taught these topics in mixed groups, particularly in consideration of equality and Strand 5 of SIAMS, dignity and respect for each other. The group asked LG to include a Corram Scarf lesson plan grid in the communication to parents, to help their understanding of the teaching, and hopefully to allay any concerns. This material was seen to be factual and moral but not moralistic. LG noted the success of having a small sub group of the FGB work with her on the RSE policy review prior to FGB and requested the FGB do this again for similar policies or areas to further investigate. This was agreed. Adoption was agreed.

10.2 The Pay Policy had been included in the pack. AS noted some of the issues with teacher pay in a small school and the lack of TLRs available for subject leadership etc. Adoption was agreed.

10.3 The Health & Safety Policy adoption was deferred to the next meeting.

**Item 11**. **Governance Issues**

*11.1 Finance update*

The Finance Commentary from Finance Officer Janet Halberry (JH) had been included in the pack and JM provided an overview. She noted that she had requested that governors examine the Schools Financial Values Statement following the last meeting and she gave an outline of the checklist and dashboard. This was approved.

The Supplier Contract Review had also been included in the pack and JM noted two service providers which would be reviewed: one within the next few weeks where competitor prices would be reviewed and the second provider would be reviewed in the Autumn/Spring terms 21-22. The service they both provided was deemed excellent, reliable and value for money based on service and reliability at present.

The February Outturn was showing an underspend of £18, 728 and JM gave an overview of the reasons for this, which had mainly been due to school closure impacting the scope for expenditure, such as PE, the bus not running, laptops ordered but not yet paid for, not providing hot school lunches, SLA underspends and costs against teaching staff. The underspend was within the designated limit and therefore was not at risk of clawback. She explained that if Covid-19 funding had been given and resulted in an increase of the surplus, there would have been a need to create a contingency fund to potentially pay this back, but this did not apply as the school did not apply for this funding. The Outturn projection was agreed.

JM reported that JH was now formulating the 2021/22 budget and was looking to create a staffing plan to meet the ambitions of school. Staffing included a TA in Cogden supporting AS and leading individual and small group interventions and the other TA in Cogden would also undertake small group interventions. A further TA in Burton would cover 30 hours until the end of the school year which would then will drop to 22.5 hours, with a TA in Cogden supporting Forest School and providing one to one support for a child with Type 1 Diabetes. There was a need to protect these posts as much as possible. JM asked for the GB’s broad agreement, which was given.

JM asked governors to look at the NGA courses on Understanding School Finances and Resources: Making the Most of What You Have Got and to complete these by the next FGB or the by the budget setting FGB in April at the latest.

Capitation Spend – it was noted that this would be reviewed at year end to assess the impact of monies spent.

(At 8.05pm CK left the meeting).

Benchmarking - DJ noted the DfE School Financial Benchmarking Charts which were used to inform a benchmarking review, which he presented. He had looked at comparisons with 15 other small rural schools in Dorset and gave an overview of the types of costs and expenditure. He added that it was a worthwhile exercise and noted in particular the challenges around energy costs in an older building. JM noted from her own benchmarking work that schools (compared nationally but with similar characteristics as Powerstock) with high progress scores tended to have higher expenditure on TAs which was worth noting given the plan to protect the TA positions in the next budget.

11.2 *RE and collective worship* – LB and CG had put together a recorded session on Lent for an Assembly which had been very well received. She added that she and CG planned a further input on Easter and then proposed looking at bible stories. She stressed that she was open to cover what the school wanted i.e. a session linked to the school values.

11.3 *SWOT* - JM thanked governors for their feedback and noted that she felt it had been a very useful exercise. The top 3 choices were clear from the feedback and the SWOT would now be used to review the vision, the work on SIAMs and other discussions throughout the year.

11.4 SIAMS - LB noted speaking to LG and JC about prep for SIAMS. LG and JC would meet then feedback to LB.

11.5 SDP next steps – JM proposed 3 broad outcomes for governance to be included in the plan, which governors were in agreement with. This would be further refined by JM and LG. The outcomes were as follows:

* Design and implementation of a new monitoring process during Covid-19.
* Wellbeing to be a top priority with Governors demonstrating support for all staff and children.
* All Governors to access the new NGA learning modules and to undertake the core training modules.

**Item 12. Any Other Urgent Business as declared at start of meeting**

None.

**Item 13. Date of Next Meeting**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

NG noted that the date of the May 2021 FGB had been changed to Tuesday 25 May at 6.30pm and she would circulate an updated meeting schedule.

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 25 March 2021 at 6.30pm. JM noted the following for the Agenda: Review of Pupil Premium, review of the full school reopening, review wellbeing of staff, Treasurer’s Report

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| Item No | Action | By Whom | Date |
| 4 | Governors to email NG, JM and LG when read KCSiE | All | ASAP |
| 4 | Governors to send updated headshot photos to LG for the website | All | ASAP |
| 4 | Governors to complete registration on NGA Learning Link and review modules. | ALL | ASAP |
| 4 | CK/DJ to examine website and submit any ideas to LG | CK/DJ | ASAP |
| 4 | Attend NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training | JM, DJ, GB | ASAP |
| 9 | Hold a staff survey on Wellbeing. Results to be reviewed at the next FGB with a resulting action plan. | JM/DJ | By next FGB |
| 10 | Health and Safety Policy adoption on Agenda. | NG | By next FGB |
| 11 | Governors to complete NGA modules on Finance as above in preparation for budget setting meeting. | ALL | By next FGB |
| 11 | Add governance themes to School Plan | LG/JM | ASAP |
| 13 | Update meeting schedule and circulate to governors | NG | COMPLETED |