



MINUTES

PENKETH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY – SPRING TERM 2024

Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 5.00pm

PRESENT:

Miss Lorraine Browne (Acting Headteacher) Mrs Carolyn Williams (Chairperson)
Mrs Claire Roper Mrs Kathryn Bullivant
Mr Steven Hennessey Mr Howard Platt
Mr Jake Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Maria Warburton (LA Minute Clerk) Ms Janou Birchall (Observer)

Part One – non confidential business

1 Welcome

The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Miss Browne who is attending the meeting in her new role as the interim acting headteacher.

2 Absence and apologies

It was reported that Mr Hennessey may arrive late.

3 Declarations

No interests were declared.

The headteacher mentioned that the school currently has two assistant headteachers: Mrs Roper who is the staff governor, and Ms Birchall who is attending the meeting as an observer.

4 Chair's emergency decisions

There were no chair's emergency decisions to report.

5 Governing body membership

There are currently three co-opted governor vacancies and one community governor vacancy.

The headteacher informed governors that she has two prospective new governors:

- Pamela Lucido:
The headteacher reported that she has arranged to meet with Ms Lucido. Her children came to the school previously – one of which works for TCAT (Laura Fletcher). Ms Lucido has worked her whole career in banking and worked her way up to manager. Ms Lucido was also a financial consultant and dealt with high-net-worth clients and also obtained a coaching qualification. Ms Lucido retired in December 2015 and since then has volunteered in a number of roles, ie: in the magistrate’s court and the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Simon Carroll:
Mr Carroll is a parent of a child at the school and is also the IT manager at TCAT. The headteacher explained that Mr Carroll approached her and expressed an interest in becoming a governor at the school; he later followed this up with an email. Mr Carroll is very enthusiastic and keen to become involved.

Mr Hennessey entered the meeting at 5.03pm.

The clerk highlighted that the governing body should bear in the mind the number of parents on the board for balance.

A brief discussion took place; it was emphasised that the governing body had been looking to recruit governors and have had vacancies for some time. They have reduced the link governor roles as a result of that.

AGREED: Governors agreed to appoint Ms Lucido as a community governor and Mr Carroll as a co-opted governor for a four-year term of office.

ACTION: The headteacher to send Ms Lucido and Mr Carroll’s email addresses to the clerk.

The headteacher informed governors that when she meets with Ms Lucido and Mr Carroll, she will point them towards the induction training and any relevant compulsory training.

6 Previous full governing body minutes, matters arising and action log

- a) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 and discuss any matters arising

AGREED: The minutes from the previous meeting held on 5 December 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

b) Action log

The following action was carried forward:

ACTION: C/F: Finance update – Miss Atherton to provide a profit and loss for the Nursery.

Governors were informed that they are required to ensure that they have read Keeping Children Safe in Education updates at the start of every academic year, and the same for the safeguarding training. Once completed governors should access their profile on Governor Hub and under 'Compliance' click to say they have read this.

ACTION: Mr Hennessey, Mr Platt, and Mr Smith to confirm on Governor Hub that they have read KCSiE and completed their safeguarding training.

The following actions were carried forward:

ACTION: C/F: Mr Hennessey to review the Debt Recovery Policy. The revised version to be brought back to the next meeting.

C/F: The headteacher to arrange a meeting with the health and safety link governor (Mr Smith).

All other actions had been completed.

7 Headteacher's report

- Agree curriculum model and staffing structure for next academic year
The headteacher reported that this is not yet known; information will be provided when this becomes available.
- Scorecard & Priority Action Plan (education review)
Scorecard: The headteacher reported that she met with Mrs Briggs last week; the scorecard is completed by them both. Mrs Briggs brings challenge which is good and as a new headteacher it is very positive. The Ofsted ratings are included, and they self-assess the scorecard. They discussed their strengths and good ideas came from the meeting.

Priorities: Data and progress remain as part of the priorities. Two more pupil progress meetings are scheduled which means that the information will change. All headteachers are presenting this information differently.

Mrs Roper and Ms Birchall have been involved as a team and it is helping to develop their roles. The school needs to improve their progress measures across all areas, in particular writing.

Interventions: The headteacher explained that some interventions work, and some do not, and she plans to observe these to ensure they are having an impact.

Insight is a good tool. They input all their data, and it gives a lot of information. Mrs Roper – as the new SENDCo – inputs everything from Early Years throughout school so that they can see every intervention and all the learning plans, and these are all kept in one place. **A governor asked** if Insight is a TCAT system. The headteacher explained that most primary schools in the trust use Insight. Ms Birchall is working with other deputy headteachers on this. They have not been using Insight for long.

Unleashing Greatness: The LA has invested £10,000 for headteachers in this programme which focuses on how they want to lead their school. The primary headteachers are working together and they are all experienced; this is good CPD – the TCAT collaboration is also beneficial for that.

The headteacher reported that they are improving communication and they have introduced a newsletter to parents (staff already have one of these). They want to reduce the number of emails being sent to parents. **A governor asked** if the staff newsletter is useful. Mrs Roper reported that it is good for staff, and they also see the newsletter sent to parents, so they are aware of the information being sent out which is useful.

A governor asked what method they use to send emails out. The headteacher explained that they must use Arbor. They sent a survey out to parents and the issue of communication was raised. The responses were generally positive; however, they did highlight the number of emails and contradictory information. The survey and responses have been shared with the office staff. The chair suggested that a follow up survey takes place to see if the changes have made a difference – it would be useful to share the newsletter to all governors; it would be good for governors to see this that do not have a child in the school.

ACTION: The school to circulate the parents' newsletter to governors for information.

Data: The headteacher informed governors that she went through the data with Mrs Briggs. These targets are for the Year 6 children. EYFS have been set a low target of 64% which is unusual for their school; however, taking the cohort of children into account it is a true reflection of where they are. Targets have been set and debated with Mrs Briggs and this will be amended following last week's meeting.

Attendance: The headteacher reported that attendance is still an issue and is not as good as it should be.

They have started doing fast track prosecution meetings for children not in school. Matt Reynolds (TCAT) is coming into school to set up a better system. The data highlights children that are on the cusp and below 95%. TCAT shares good practice. The DfE and the LA have a focus on pushing attendance and punctuality. This has featured in the newsletter to parents over the last few weeks. In Reception there are seven children below 70%; a lot of this is due to holidays. **A governor asked** if they could send out attendance information like they do in high schools. The headteacher informed governors that they plan to do this as a next step. Mrs Roper added that in the case of the reception class children, they are missing essential learning, for example the phonics teaching is very fast-paced, and they introduce a new sound each day – over two weeks they can potentially miss out on five to ten new sounds.

The headteacher confirmed that there have been no suspensions; they plan to discuss safeguarding later in the meeting.

Priority Action Plan: The headteacher informed governors that it was decided to start this from scratch – it is not yet as impactful as they would like it to be.

The headteacher informed governors that Mrs Roper has passed her SENDCo award and is now fully qualified – this will feature in TCAT Voice. The headteacher added that the Priority Action Plan is a standard TCAT document which is updated on a rolling basis. **A governor asked** about the highlighted action in red which relates to the windows. The headteacher explained that this is ongoing. It can be particularly unpleasant during summer in the Year 3 and Year 5 classrooms when the sunlight comes through the windows.

The headteacher mentioned that a number of jobs are being done over the half-term. They have submitted two bids for an outdoor canopy area and new office/entrance. They have asked for the front of the school to be extended out so that the office can be made bigger. The current office layout is not private for safeguarding issues. Most schools have the facility where visitors sit outside of the main school in a reception area before being invited in. They will find out at the end of February if they have been successful with the bids.

- Pupil progress
This was discussed as part of this agenda item.

8 SEND (standard agenda item)

Mrs Roper circulated her report to governors. They have reviewed their current data with staff and asked them to look at their classes to ensure that the children that are on the register are correct. They have also included some children on the register that are having SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) interventions.

Current status: 20.32% of pupils are classed as having SEND, but do not have an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan) (51 children). This figure is higher than the national figures of 13.5% - however, there are genuine reasons for this.

A total of 3.19% of pupils have an EHCP (8 children) and this could rise with another potential two referrals going in during the next half term. It is a similar picture elsewhere.

A total of 23.51% of pupils in school are identified with SEND. One child in Nursery currently has Early Years SEND funding. They have applied for another child to receive this funding from the spring term onwards.

Autism is the most common primary need for their children with EHCPs (following the national trend) – five out of eight children. The other EHCPs are for a range of complex reasons including cognition and learning, ADHD and speech and language.

They have introduced a new monitoring group. Children are flagged through pupil progress meetings or on a referral process.

They have a school mental health team link (Karen Hennis) who comes into school and works with pupils. They also have two ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and a counsellor.

In the younger Nursery, five children are on SEN support, and all are on the register for speech and language; one child is already under CDC (Child Development Centre).

For Nursery (2) one child has an EHCP; three are receiving SEND support and all are listed for speech and language. They are finding that they can refer easily for speech and language; however, there is a huge waiting list. The CDC only look at ASD and no longer look at anything else.

Reception has twenty-eight children; two have an EHCP and both have ASD; there are five in addition under speech and language, and one is under CDC (neuro development pathway). It is significant to have seven children struggling and an additional few children in that class on monitoring, ie: where speech may be an issue, or they are not retaining information.

Following the national trends – speech, language and communication needs are the most common type of need (16.73% - 42 children). SEMH is now the second most common type of need. Year 1 and Year 2 is more speech and language. They are finding as the children move up through the school and they become older that they are discharged from speech and language and then SEMH may become more of an issue as they are not fully developed in speech and language skills.

Year 3 has one child with an EHCP and nine have SEN support. Year 4 has one child with an EHCP and eight with SEN support.

The needs of the children include ADHD, a visual processing disorder, SEMH and sensory processing.

Year 5 has nine children on SEN support (dyslexia). Years 3 to 5 are quite significant year groups. They are trying to provide the best they can for these children. They have worked as a staff team and looked at their core offer, ie: universally and then next level children who are on SEND support.

The support from the TCAT SEND hub has been very beneficial. They meet for a full day and have had various training. They provide advice which is really useful and a great deal of additional training for their TAs.

The school have now included on Insight all the interventions and learning plans. A one-page profile is completed for each child which is uploaded to Insight with targets.

Two coffee mornings have taken place with parents - one was an informal discussion and the other had Early Help in attendance. Dates have been booked in for the year. A member of the school mental health team will be in attendance at the next one.

In January, Karen Hennis (school mental health team) led workshops for the Year 5 and Year 6 classes on 'The importance of effective communications.

Next steps:

- LA Committed to Inclusion Award (this is being applied for again).
- Staff training (Sarah Brady from the CDC, NASEN, National College).
- Monitoring interventions and tracking individual pupils across school.
- Continue to build parent partnerships: updating the website, a half termly SEND newsletter, and providing clear flowcharts for different SEND processes.
- Whole staff EBSA (emotionally based school avoidance) Level 1 training (Chapters 1-2).
- Mrs Roper to complete EBSA training Level 3 (Chapters 1-6).

A governor asked if they know why so many children are affected; is it because teachers are more aware, and the school is better at identifying needs. Mrs Roper explained that the school is identifying better. The health visitor team came into school today and reported that she is extremely busy seeing children for their 2-year progress checks – they are not passing, and they are having to review and make referrals which is taking some time. There are not enough educational psychologists to meet the needs. Mrs Roper added that there is also a raised awareness amongst parents and also on social media.

The chair acknowledged that they have a TCAT hub that links into that, and interventions are in place. The chair thanked Mrs Roper for her report.

ACTION: **Mrs Roper to send her report to the clerk to be uploaded to Governor Hub.**

9 Non-confidential safeguarding

- Safeguarding review – 15.11.23

The headteacher reported that the review was positive. The safe and sound team (Mrs Roper, Ms Bennett and the headteacher) have been doing a lot of training. Safeguarding remains a clear priority in the school and the roles and responsibilities are defined. All the required training has been completed. Every member of staff uses CPOMS, and they have an action log. The safe and sound meetings are held weekly, and they look at any actions. However, daily conversations take place if needed. Online safety is a huge focus. Children are made to log-in on the Chromebooks so that they know who they are; and they are taught what to do if anything does come up.

Single central record (SCR): Lisa Gannon (TCAT) came into school last week and confirmed that it was compliant.

The report lists the safeguarding strengths. With regards to the safeguarding recommendations the headteacher confirmed that have a plan in place to ensure that the SCR will be checked regularly that they have a safeguarding action plan and regular meetings take place. TCAT will come into school to carry out spot checks.

CPOMS: Mrs Grace circulated an email to staff prior to her retirement to ensure that the way staff are writing is factual.

PHSE has been completely overhauled and streamlined and they are covering all the objectives.

The vast majority of kitchen staff have had safeguarding training via TCAT Safeguarding Essentials; there are a couple of members of staff still do this that are currently absent.

The headteacher confirmed that they continue to engage with the trust wide filtering and monitoring work.

Following children's feedback, they have brought in six zones across the playground which include a skipping area and a ball area, etc. This is safer and calmer for the children – they also have Year 5 play leaders.

The chair informed governors that two reviews take place annually to provide assurance along with regular updates at meetings.

Safeguarding visit (C Williams) - 7.11.23

The chair explained that this was an introductory meeting - ensuring that staff have had the relevant training and that all the necessary training was in place. The safe and sound meetings take place on a fortnightly basis. The school receives supervision support from TCAT which is important to note and is good for staff.

The chair reported that all governors have now completed the safeguarding training and have confirmed that they have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

Governors have seen the report from the peer-to-peer review. Mrs Williams informed governors that for her next visit she will attend a safe and sound meeting. Reports from the previous link governor explain how these operate and work. The impressions from her visit indicate that safeguarding in school is a team approach which is valuable; they also have designated roles.

10 Policies

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

11 Admission arrangements

Mrs Roper reported that the information is on the school website. TCAT have an admissions policy which went out to consultation until the end of January 2024. The trust wide policy will bring all schools in line. TCAT have included their Nursery and also a minimum number of hours (15) as they were starting to have a number of children attend for a day and a half under the impression that they would be higher up the criteria and would be given a place in Reception. They have some children that attend for two full days (13.5 hours) and they are discussing ways around that. The school will follow TCAT's admissions policy.

A governor asked if they know the 2024 admission numbers. Mrs Roper confirmed that currently they have 23 first choices. They only received the out of authority admission numbers this afternoon (they tend to have some children attending from Widnes and St Helens). The numbers are much lower than they would like – they are not sure how this compares to other local schools. It could be that being over-subscribed last year put parents off applying this year. They had a cohort of 33 in Nursery 2 last year and only 21 this year. They have a lot of second choices so hopefully they should fill the numbers.

The headteacher informed governors that they are doing a lot more marketing with TCAT, and TCAT will be producing a video for them and a poster with a QR code which will go up in the library. They will advertise the school more. There are 31 children leaving in Year 6 and currently 23 coming into Reception.

A governor asked if they know who the first and second choices are. Mrs Roper explained that they have had the information from the LA, and they go through and rank according to the over subscription criteria. Approximately 50 came through originally that were first, second and third choices with three out of authority. They have dealt with an admission for a SEND children separately. A governor mentioned that the LA has projected a reduction in birth rates for the next few years.

12 Review School Improvement Plan

This was previously discussed under agenda item 7 (Headteacher's report).

13 Review school's equality information and objectives

The information is on the school website under the policies section and the website also directs parents to TCAT's policy page.

14 School website compliance

The headteacher informed governors that TCAT do a lot of work around this, and they carry out compliance checks - they need to keep governor documentation on there for three years. The chair added that having a consistent way of doing this is good and ensures they are compliant as Ofsted will check that.

15 Governor visits

- Safeguarding (C Williams) – 7.11.23
This was discussed previously (under agenda item 9).

16 LA governor briefing papers

Governors noted the content of the following reports:

- Governor Briefing
- Early Years Update
- Place Planning and Admissions
- Primary Assessment
- Primary PE & Sports Grant
- Gender Questioning Children – DfE Consultation

17 Governor training

Governors noted the LA training available.

18 Governor Hub compliance check

This was discussed earlier in the meeting, ie: ensuring that all relevant training has been completed, etc.

19 Any other business

There were no other items.

20 Future meeting dates

Spring Term 2024:
Thursday 14 March 2024

Summer Term 2024:
Tuesday 25 June 2024
Tuesday 16 July 2024

PART ONE OF THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.12pm

SIGNED
Chairperson

DATE