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| ***GOVERNING BODY OF*** ***HIGHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL******STAFFING, CURRICULUM AND PUPIL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE*****11 March 2025** | R:\Education\MGS\GSS\Mandy\highfield logo.png |

**Members***:* Tim Guha, David Wilson, Sophia Loizia (Chair), Emily Cloke, Ann Campbell, Sandra Johnson and Stephanie Morton

*Italics denote absence*

**Also attending**: Mandy Newell (Minute and Advisory Clerk)

MINUTES

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1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**NOTED** that all Governors were in attendance.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Governors were reminded that they should **declare** any interest relating to items on this agenda. No declarations were made.

3. **MINUTES AND ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

 The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

**RESOLVED** these be signed on GovernorHub by the Chair.

**ACTION: CHAIR**

There were no matters arising to consider.

4**. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)**

**RECEIVED** the SIP, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that the Headteacher guided Governors through the priorities for this year and the overview was highlighted.

1. Governors were reminded that a full review of the SIP had taken place at the end of the Spring term;
2. work had been ongoing to embed the Walk Thru strategies and there had been a focus on key areas this year. This work would continue to ensure any areas where improvement was required were addressed. A great deal of work had been conducted with teachers this year around modelling. The Headteacher explained that this was quite a skill and was now working well across the School. In response to a Governor’s question, it was established that external monitoring and Walk Thrus that were conducted really helped staff;
3. work continued to embed technology. Governors had visited the School today to review this area and had noted work was on track. The Headteacher stated that having more devices in class was helping teachers to improve their teaching and learning. The Digital Leads had trained the staff well and teachers had been reviewed. Overall technology was now being used well across the School;
4. the outdoor curriculum had been reviewed by Governors during their visit today and there was a great deal of work being done around creative and hands on learning. The good summer weather meant that more outdoor learning could be conducted this term. A Governor asked whether the Headteacher had considered the School becoming a Forest School. He said he had not looked into this and to be a Forest School involved different processes. They had to be realistic about the capacity of the SLT but he had not ruled out considering it but at present the focus was more generally on hands on learning. The Governor commented that the work the School was already doing was in effect what a Forest School would do in respect of outdoor learning. Everyone agreed this was the case. The DHT explained that the staff had access to an online resource called Padlett. This was used to help schools make the best of their individual situations and resources. Padlett was now being used by staff a great deal for outdoor learning and could also be used for indoor learning too. The Headteacher said they were mindful that outdoor learning had to be made as easy as possible whilst not insisting on an agreed number of lessons being conducted outside;
5. in respect of maths, targets had been met overall. There had been many improvements seen in writing too and a review had taken place. A key area of development was to ensure there were more detailed mid-term plans in place to enable all skills to be covered in the best place they should be;
6. a great deal of work was being done around behaviour and attitudes. The Behaviour Policy had been sent to parents for comments. There had been a very small response (11 parents) but those who had replied seemed happy with the contents. Teachers had received relevant training and work was now being conducted around the values of the School. The Policy would be going live in September and ongoing training would be in place for staff around restorative practices being used consistently and efficiently. Governors discussed the low response rate but agreed with the Headteacher’s view that if parents were unhappy they were more likely to respond than if they were not. In response to a Governor’s question, it was clarified that there were no significant changes to the policy;
7. work in the community continued to be conducted by the children in order to develop them to be responsible, respectful active citizens. This year the children had been raising money for Noah Ark and next year they would be changing this to the Nightingale. Every class had been working on their community action plan;
8. in respect of the SLT, a DHT was still on adoption leave and whilst the SLT had been stretched at times they had managed well overall during her absence and were where they would want to be in respect of the SIP. The atmosphere around the School was calm and purposeful and staff seemed fine in respect of managing their day to day jobs. No major concerns were being seen. The DHT would be returning to School in a couple of weeks which would of course help and in particular the AHTS who had been very successful in their roles this year despite the pressures they had been under. Dali class had been a real success as had Year 6 where there had been low attendance and some challenge to manage. Following a Governor’s question, the Headteacher said it was the job of the School to backfill maternity/adoption leave from the resources they already had as they had felt they could manage for the time that was involved. Another Governor congratulated the Headteacher and DHT on how they had managed this year. In response to further questions, the Headteacher said that the Year 6 staffing would remain the same for 2025/26 as the job share had worked well. A Governor was concerned about whether the AHTS involved could attend SLT meetings if they were working and was informed that these began during the School day so an HLTA covered any lessons for an hour or so;
9. another nurture group had been developed and an external review had been held which had been good. The reviewer had been pleased with the practice seen and one/two of the children were ready to transition back to mainstream. This was good news not just for the children but also meant spaces were freed up for any pupils coming into reception who might need the provision;
10. in respect of Early Years, phonics teaching was good and some adjustments had been made. The Summer data would show the impact of the measures in place. A Nursery Nurse had been employed to run phonics interventions and this was working very successfully;

**NOTED** that Governors thanked the Headteacher for this very useful update.

5. **ATTENDANCE**

**RECEIVED** attendance data, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

1. Governors reviewed the overall attendance data and that for SEND versus Non-SEND and disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged. Overall attendance was 95.0%, just above national which was 94.9%. LA attendance levels were at 94.8%. Governors noted the information in the report. In response to a Governor’s query, the Headteacher explained that authorised absence would be given if a child was unwell whereas non-authorised absence was when families took holidays without permission;
2. Governors discussed non-authorised absence at length. The Headteacher said that he was now considering fining parents and would welcome Governor’s thoughts on this. A Governor pointed out that some children who were not taken out did not feel it was fair that others were. The Headteacher said he understood this.. He considered that fining parents could be a deterrent. In response to a Governor’s question, it was established that any money received in respect of fines did not come to the School. Following further discussion, the Headteacher said that his view on fining had changed as he had seen a change of attitude in parents about taking their children out without authorisation and he was concerned the trend could continue to grow if there was no deterrent in place. The DHT added that non-authorised absence used to only really be seen before or after the summer holidays but they were now seeing it throughout the year at the end and beginning of half terms more and more. It was recognised that some parents would continue to remove their children without permission but the Headteacher said they wanted to stop the cumulative effect around parents feeling it was acceptable for their child to miss school in order for them to have a cheaper holiday;
3. it was pointed out that there was not a great deal of difference between the attendance ranges for SEND and non-SEND. In response to a Governor’s question as to the reasons why SEND might have more absence than non-SEND, the Headteacher said there were no real reasons but SEND children were often more vulnerable and at present they had two SEND children who were pretty much school refusers. Some had disorganised, chaotic lives or attachment issues at home. Governors discussed some issues in individual classes and following questions, the Headteacher said that a child being educated off site did not affect attendance figures. Governors discussed an individual case where a child was off site for 2.5 days a week;
4. the attendance range for disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged was larger. Governors reviewed the data in depth and the reasons for poor attendance such as illness, vulnerability, attachment issues and the fact that some parents kept a child at home for the slightest reason or went on holiday in term time on a regular basis;
5. the DHT explained that at present the School’s Educational Welfare Officer, (EWO) was on long term sick leave so they had to go to the top of the service for advice. The School did have a very good Attendance Officer who spoke to parents and the Learning Mentor had good relationships with many of the parents but the provision of an EWO was missed;
6. the Headteacher considered that a casual attitude to attendance was the main problem overall. He had produced a letter that he wished to send to the whole School even though he was targeting a particular group of parents. Governors reviewed the letter and gave their recommendations as to how it could be slightly amended to ensure all parents read it and understood clearly what the message was. They determined that bullet points would be useful to ensure parents understood the salient points being made. The Headteacher thanked them and said he would amend it accordingly. Governors assured him he had their full support when it came to reducing non-authorised absence.

**RESOLVED** that the attendance letter be amended and sent out to parents.

**ACTION: HEADTEACHER**

6. **PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT**

 **RECEIVED** the progress and achievement data, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book

 and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

1. Governors reviewed the spring data which showed that overall progress was good but that there were some gaps in certain year groups around Pupil Premium (PP) and non-PP which needed to be addressed. A great deal of work had been done in Year 6 this year and it was hoped the SATS results would reflect this;
2. Governors were assured that attainment for disadvantaged children would always be a focus at the School. Disadvantaged did not always mean those who were economically disadvantaged but also those with mobility issues, SEND or child protection concerns. The Headteacher said he wanted to point out that some families might have an income as low as £7.5k p/a. He was pleased to inform Governors that last year both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged achieved above the national average;
3. In response to a Governor’s question about the Year 3 figures, the Headteacher explained this was a tough year but at this point in the year the children were now more used to the curriculum and the demands being made upon them. The DHT also pointed out that one Year 3 class of 30 had been badly disrupted by one child which had affected their learning. This had now improved as the child concerned was only in School part-time. Whilst the behaviour of this child had affected the others wellbeing and ability to learn they were now flying and doing well. The intervention for the one child would continue into next year. Governors discussed how the figures could be skewed by just one child;

7**. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**RECEIVED** HEP reports for Spring and Summer, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

1. the Headteacher guided Governors through the reports and they focused on the areas of WWW, what went well and EBI, even better if. He explained that where necessary work had been conducted with relevant teachers. In response to a Governor’s query, the Headteacher clarified that there were standardised marking codes in place and work was ongoing to ensure everyone was using them. The marking codes would be stuck in the back of the children’s writing books to ensure all teachers had access to them;
2. during the Summer term review and EYFS specialist also visited and looked at EYFS and Reception provision. Governors noted the WWW and EBI comments that had been made;
3. following a Governor’s question, the Headteacher informed her that they had felt that EYFS provision was fine but that the data for Good Level of Development (GD) was not where it would have been expected to be hence the review by a Specialist. Following her comments measures had been put in place for staff including ways in which learning time could be maximised;
4. Governors discussed the fact that some children were able to learn more independently than others;
5. Governors considered the reports in depth and were pleased that issues highlighted were being addressed and that this work would continue next year. A Governor asked if the reports would be used to put together support plans. The Headteacher said they would not but individual issues were being addressed and the feedback from the reports had been well received. Both reviews fed into immediate actions and longer term plans. Everyone agreed that it was useful to have outside opinions. Governors discussed how they had witnessed the positive use of technology in School during their visit today and they had noted that the vast majority were using it to enhance teaching and learning.

8. **STAFFING**

1. Staffing structure

**NOTED** that there were no changes to the Staffing Structure.

1. Annual cycle of Performance Management

**NOTED** that the final appraisal for staff this year would be taking place the week after next.

1. Continuing professional development

**RECEIVED** the CPD log, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book

 and available to view on GovernorHub.

 **NOTED** the range of opportunities for staff both internally and externally.

1. Staff absence

**RECEIVED** the staff absence data, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book

 and available to view on GovernorHub.

**REPORTED** that

1. the Headteacher explained that there had been some long term absence this year. One staff member had been injured on holiday and one had a significant operation. There had also been some long term sickness. One staff member was back at work but two were still off ;
2. the Headteacher informed Governors that they had tried to encourage attendance using a star system. Once a staff member had achieved six, ie one for every half term if they had not been absent, they would be given a day in lieu, however the Headteacher was not sure this incentive was working in terms of improving attendance and giving a day in lieu could be difficult in terms of staffing. He planned to continue with this incentive next year and see how it went;
3. 80% of staff had at least one absence this year compared to 68% last year;
4. Governors questioned what wellbeing leave was. The Headteacher said he would need to clarify this with the SBM but following discussion it was determined that this was very likely for a spouse’s illness ad this figure could relate to just one staff member. Governors also wondered about the high figure for anxiety/stress and what was included in other absence. The Headteacher said he would clarify this too. in response to a query from a Governor, it was explained that the data was given to the LA but in more detail.

**RESOLVED** that the Headteacher clarify figures for wellbeing leave, anxiety/stress and other with the SBM and report back to Governors.

**ACTION : HEADTEACHER**

9.  **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

 **REPORTED** that

· (a) Strategies to improve parental involvement

Reading breakfasts had been held over two days with 70 families attending each day. Governors who had attended this event commented how good it had been. Phonics talks were arranged for EYFS to help parents understand the subject. Year 6 parental meetings would continue around SATS and secondary transition. The friends of Highfield were very active now. The excellent work done by the Chair of the Friends was discussed and Governors wondered if she might be able to help with the Governor’s newsletter. A quiz had been arranged for parents vs staff, there were Christmas events and the Summer Fayre. School assemblies were a good way to involve parents too.

* (b) Feedback from parents on the curriculum and related issues

The Headteacher explained that a parent survey based on Ofsted questions had been sent to parents and a good response had been received. Over 200 replies had been submitted. Governors discussed the ban on mobile phones that the majority of Enfield Schools had signed up to from September. They considered whether this could be extended to parents at the gate as had been done by another local School but recognised this could be hard to implement.

10. **WELLBEING**

**RECEIVED** the Highfield Fulfilment Plan, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

· **REPORTED** that

1. the Headteacher explained that they liked to use the term fulfilment rather than wellbeing. The plan stated that Highfield Primary School recognises that staff fulfilment is central to delivering high-quality education. We have intentionally chosen to title this document a *Fulfilment Plan* rather than a Wellbeing Plan because our primary focus is on creating professional conditions that make work fulfilling and manageable. While wellbeing can vary significantly from individual to individual—encompassing personal health, educational growth, and community involvement—professional fulfilment focuses specifically on what the school can do to enhance job satisfaction, effectiveness, and sustainability for all staff. Aligned with the Department for Education's Guidance on workload management and professional support, this plan outlines clear strategies to promote manageable workloads, effective communication, and ongoing professional development. It acknowledges, however, that education includes periods of increased activity and occasional stress, which are natural elements of a dynamic working environment. This plan aims to mitigate unnecessary workload pressures and provide supportive measures wherever possible, accepting that certain challenges remain an integral part of professional life;
2. Governors discussed the fact that stress was part of the job at times. They considered the something as small as having free tea and coffee was appreciated by staff and they wondered if parents could be asked to donate these items sometimes. They determined that the rebranding of wellbeing to fulfilment was good one;
3. A Governor asked about external help for staff. The Headteacher said they had access to Place2Be. They now also had access to the Blue Light Card which offered discounts for certain professionals such as NHS staff and teachers at a number of places;
4. the Headteacher said that the plan would be shared with staff in due course and would be part of the September inset day.

11. **GOVERNING BODY SELF EVALUATION**

 **NOTED** that

(a) Governors had conducted a skills audit earlier in the year and were satisfied that the Governing Body had a wide range of skills.

(b) succession planning would be considered later in the year.

(c) **RESOLVED** following discussion that the Governor profiles needed to be updated on the website.

**ACTION : HEADTEACHER**

12. **POLICY REVIEW**

* School Complaints Policy (LA) February 2025.

**RESOLVED** that the above policy be recommended to the Governing Body for ratification.

13. **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

 **NOTED** at all training sessions were listed in the Governor Training Brochure 2024-25, available on Governor Hub.

Governor training could be booked via the School based booker, Catherine Moens.

Tim Guha would be undertaking GDPR training.

<https://traded.enfield.gov.uk/professionallearning>.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

 **NOTED** there was no other business to consider.

 15. **ITEMS TO REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL**

**RESOLVED** that no items be regarded as confidential.