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## **HOLLAND HAVEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Minutes of the Governors' meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023**

- 1. Apologies for absence** - Mrs S Bardetti (SB) gave her apologies due to being unwell so has gone home. These were accepted. It was assumed that Mr A Dunnett (AD) would not be here for personal reasons which were accepted.
- 2. Colin Madge to attend as an observer as his appointment has not been confirmed.**  
JN gave the background information as to why his appointment has not yet been confirmed. When the approval comes through then he will be starting as a full governor straight away, however if this is not sorted out by the next meeting then we will confirm that he still wants to be a governor.

*Since the last meeting JN has had contact with CM who has provided the nomination form which she has sent off to Governor Services for him to become an LA Governor.*

- 3. Governors to declare if they have any changes to their business interests or any conflicts of interests arising from any point on this agenda. Also Governors to confirm that they had not accepted hospitality or gifts over £30** - There were no changes to Governors pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest arising from any item on this agenda. No governors had accepted hospitality or gifts over £30.
- 4. Any items for 'Any other business' to be given to the Chairman prior to the meeting. Items brought up at the meeting will not be discussed.** - There were three items of any other business to be discussed.
- 5. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2023** - These were approved and signed as a true copy. JN to fine. (JN)
- 6. Matters arising -**

**Action points from the above meeting** - An updated copy was shared with governors prior to the meeting.

KW will complete her report following the governors' visits in the spring term. It is believed that SB has spoken to the PTA about speaking to her first before asking staff to help out at PTA events following the large number of overtime claims from the halloween disco.

- a. Parent Governor Election** - JS informed governors that JN contacted parents asking for nominations but had no response. The governing board can now approach parents to see if they would like to become a parent governor, however if we do not get anybody to fill the vacancy then an election will have to be held each term.

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- b. **Update on the Aveley Carpets claim** - JS informed governors that the Assets Committee agreed to recommend that the board writes off this debt. Governors asked how much the debt was. JS replied that the debt was just under £4,000. The decision had not been taken lightly but CM had looked into using an outside company to write and get the money back for us but it would cost us more than half of the debt and involve a lot of work. The owner of the company does now have a County Court Judgement against him as we had gone through the small claims court to try and retrieve it. Whilst the committee did not want to let the company get away with this, it was felt that the school had done as much as it could. It was suggested that SB mention the problems we have had with this company at an STPP meeting so that no other school has the same problem. Governors agreed to take this off the agenda now. (JN) (SB)

7. **Headteacher's Report which includes among other headings;** Pupil Attendance, Pupils/Welfare/Behaviour, Excluded Children, Pupil Premium / Looked After Children, SEN Pupils, Sports Premium, Community Cohesion, Local Authority News, OFSTED News, Budget/Finance, Performance Management, Standards Achievement / Progress, Teaching, RAP, Partnership work and Safeguarding.

### **Comments and questions received prior to the meeting.**

1. (Comment) 1.1 Admissions - Joiners and Leavers: Well done for 95% attendance to date. I know it is early in the school year but this time last year it was 93.6%. Aiming for 96% next year might be ambitious but with the incentives (carrot) you have given pupils/classes I am sure you will carry on closing the gap.
2. (Question) 1.1 still: Any thoughts/comments on the 46 families requesting unauthorised absences (only 28 this time last year, but shocking 100 this time two years ago). Can we, the Governors do anything, such as lobby our MP, to get the penalty charge increased significantly?  
I attend STPP and TESB attendance groups and we are at a loss at what can be done because only the DfE can change this.
3. (Question) 3. Safeguarding Report/Behaviour/Complaints Racist Incidents: The number of racist incidents seems to be on the increase - is this cause for concern? Appreciating that one is one too many.  
There have been 2 incidents but one was addressed by parents who are friends.
4. (Question) 3. Behaviour Incidents (STAR behaviour sheets): Having appeared to have fallen over the three terms of 2022/23 it is now on the rise again - is this a growing problem? And do you see Pupils with Behaviour Plans likely to be on the increase over future years? Behaviour incidents are half of the number last Autumn term. A number of these are from EYFS pupils. EYFS pupils are extremely challenging this year. This year only 46% of EYFS passed the Wellcomm speech and language assessment whereas last year 69% passed. This shows how different and challenging EYFS are this year.
5. (Question) 3. Suspensions: Is it unusual for a Year R pupil to be suspended? I understand the behaviour of Year R has been noticeably worse than previous years, and one thought is the impact of Covid lockdown highlighting dysfunctional families not coping when stuck at home with their very young - do you have any thoughts on this? See above. Yes they are a very difficult year group and COVID has probably

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had an impact on socialisation of these children.

6. (Comment) 3. Parent Questionnaire 2023: I believe the School should be congratulated on such an impressive set of results. I obviously don't know how that compares to other primary schools but, in my opinion, the figures shown tells me that the HHPS is outstanding. I was very happy with the results

7. (Comment) 3. Environmental Safeguarding: An excellent time for clearing the building with the fire drill. Yes, the best we have had in a long time.

8. (Question) 4. Staffing, Staff Welfare and issues: I have always been concerned that job sharing, whilst suiting the employee, is not necessarily best for the organisation. Is the job share in Year 3 in any way disadvantageous to the children in that class? Job shares can be an advantage and a disadvantage. I prefer one teacher per class, but retention is not easy and we have to work around many employment laws. When we have more staff we have more work, for example more: PPA to cover, PMR meetings, Pupil Progress meetings, office manager paperwork etc

9. (Question) 4. Staffing, Staff Welfare and issues: Have we still got a problem recruiting, and keeping, MDAs? Yes. MDAs are hard to keep. Many people are told by the Job Centre that they need to find some work to keep receiving benefits. Currently, we have one person who has worked for us since July and has now been off sick for 3 weeks and it may go on longer. This term Mr Bardetti and Mrs Sharman have been helping along with myself, Catherine Humphrey and Ally Wilson. Because we are using LSAs as MDAs, when they are off, we also lose MDAs. It is very hard to manage.

10. (Comment) 14.1 Standards Achievement / Progress KS 1 - Year 2: Boys Expected and Boys Exceeding columns - the school is below national average, but the Girls Expected and Girls Exceeding - the school is above national average. I am not sure I can think of the big divide.

8 out of the 9 SEN pupils in this year group are boys, so therefore the data for boys will be much lower.

### **Questions asked during the meeting**

Governors asked if the behaviour had improved in EYFS during this term. CH replied that the teachers say that this is the most challenging cohort they have ever had. As the term has gone on the class has settled and is a lot quieter. There are a 6 pupils for whom we have had to put strategies in place. The level of language being used is far stronger than before which could be down to their early years being during the Covid pandemic when there was a lack of outside influence and children spent a long time at home with just their parents. The level of learning, however was excellent and the transitions from play into phonics was smooth. The team have worked with small groups and one to one. AC has noticed that the year two pupil are very bright but are emotionally very needy which could also be due to their early influences.

Regarding the changes in teaching staff this year, governors asked why the job share has been placed in year 3 as highlighted in the Headteacher's report. This is where the vacancy was. KW said that her child had a great experience with a job share as both teachers were enthusiastic. Parent governors have said that their children have benefitted from being in a job share class. It is important that schools invest in their staff and would never want to lose a good teacher because they did not want to work full time.

Governors asked how many parent surveys were returned and would Ofsted see this.


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There were 184 paper surveys returned which would be seen by Ofsted if they were filled in on Parent View. CH will send a message out to thank the parents for completing the surveys and asking them to do it on the Parent View so that Ofsted would see it. (CH)

8. **Key Facts Document** - This has been updated and shared with Governors.
9. **Pupil Premium Strategy** - CH and CT have reviewed the impact of the pupil premium strategy and pointed out that last year's phonics results showed that the disadvantage gap is closing for the younger children, however there is still a big gap among the year 6 pupils. Governors commented that they appreciated seeing the impact of the strategy and to see that we now have evidence of this impact. Governors wanted to thank CH and CT for the work that they have done on this.
10. **Safeguarding / Child Protection:-**
  - a. **Safeguarding Folders** - A confirmation that these have been updated. PD does not have the 2023 booklets. JN to remind JS in the morning. (JN & JS)
  - b. **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Part 1** - This can be found in the Safeguarding Folder which governors sign for.
  - c. **Safeguarding Training** - All governors have received the annual refresher Safeguarding training.
  - d. **Safeguarding Governor to report** - For Information only, the Single Central Record and Joiners and Leavers records are checked on a termly basis. This was carried out on 6th November 2023 by four governors. PD & KW looked at safeguarding for children and JS & CT looked at safeguarding for adults. CT had completed a report which will be shared with governors, however there were only minor issues with the front pages of the records where staff had changed roles or had more than one role. (JN)

KW (the safeguarding governor) visited on 20th November for a safeguarding in the curriculum meeting with CH. A report on this visit has been sent to all governors.
  - e. **Pupil Safeguarding File** - KW looked through these on 21st November 2023. She is still to write up her report. (KW)
11. **SEND - Governors to receive and consider the annual SEND Information Report and ensure that it is published on the school website** - Governors have received and considered the annual SEND information and all the statutory information is on the website.
12. **Friends of Holland Haven Report** - A copy of their report was sent out with the agenda. Since then they have had the Christmas Fayre. Heidi, the Chair, reported that they had done well but we do not know how much was raised at this time. Governors wished to congratulate them on the surplus made and the diversity of events that they have put on. CH reported that at the moment we are in the position where we have a generic wish list

  
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which they fulfil each year. Governors are really impressed and have asked JN to compile a letter of thanks for JS to sign. (JN) (JS)

### **13. Governor Monitoring, Development and Training: -**

- a. **Review the Standing Orders for the Governing Board-** There is a minor change in the layout of section 25.5. JS will amend. (JS)
- b. **Termly review of the GAP (Governors' Action Plan) -** The meetings with subject leads was very good and it was felt that it would be beneficial if it was completed each term.
- c. **Link Governor's Report -** KW reported that governors had completed the Safeguarding training at the beginning of the term and the GBDS session on Mental Health & Wellbeing, which was not very effective. JS has also completed training on; Holding to Account, Equality and Diversity, Safer Recruitment and How to fulfil the governance role. CT has completed training on 'Governance-Your Role Your Responsibility Your Organisation, Safeguarding - How to fulfil the Governance Role and Pupil Premium MD has completed Safer Recruitment and Governor Induction. JS asked that all governors complete one NGA training session each term. There is another GBDS booked for 22nd January 2024. (ALL)
- d. **School Website -** CH assured Governors that the school website is up to date. There are links to the statutory pages that we use.
- e. **Any Chair's actions that have taken place since the last meeting -** JS to report on the cheques that were also recorded in the Assets minutes.  
22nd July - A cheque for £8,099.50 had to be re-written for Johnsons Garden Centre as the payee was incorrect.  
25th August for £9,000 made out to L Fairey for decorating.  
10th September for £7,404 to Monthind, which was for two months cleaning bill.  
10th October for £8,099.50 to Johnsons for the remaining balance.  
17th November for £9,121 to ECC for various invoices including over £8,000 for school building insurance.
- f. **Chair's Business correspondence -** JS had not received any business correspondence.
- g. **Governors' Terms of Office -** There are no Governors' Terms of Office expiring this academic year. We do still have one parent governor vacancy as the parent governor election yielded no nominations. Governors can now approach potential parent governors to see if they would be interested.
- h. **Governors' Skills Audit -** As there have been few changes to the Governing Board it has been suggested that we do not to do this, this year. It will be done

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next year in September. (JS)

- i. Code of Conduct for Governors** - A copy had been sent out with the agenda. It was agreed to remove the word full when relating to governors' names (page 4 item 6). Also to change the date before publishing. (JN)
- j. Table showing numbers required for Committees to be quorate** - It has been suggested that this change to at least 50% of the committee members including either the Headteacher, Chair of Governors or Chair of Committee. The curriculum committee terms of reference is different from the other committees as regards the number required to be quorate and it has been suggested that it be changed to match the other committees which was agreed. JN to amend. (JN)

**14. Non-Pupil days for the 2024-2025 Academic Year to be approved** - The 2nd of September had already been agreed for safeguarding training. The following dates are being put forward for approval:-

Friday October 25th,

Friday December 20th,

Monday & Tuesday 21st & 22nd July 2024

These were approved. JN to update the term dates and send out to parents in either the spring or summer term. CH to put this on the website at the same time. (JN) (CH)

**15. Assets Committee Issues: -**

- a. Questions on the minutes of the meetings held on 26th June 2023, 2nd October 2023 and 27th November 2023 (If available).** - Governors did not have any questions on the minutes from 26th June or 2nd October. They had not received the minutes from the meeting held on the 27th November. JN to carry this forward. (JN)
- b. Terms of Reference to be ratified-** There was one minor change (making Site Manager plural) These were agreed.

**16. Curriculum Committee Issues: -**

- a. Questions on the minutes of the meetings held on 18th September 2023.** - There were no questions on these minutes.
- b. Terms of Reference to be ratified-** A copy was sent out with the agenda. In light of the last meeting not being quorate the committee recommended changing the requirements for being quorate to bring it in line with the other committees. This was agreed. *Governors asked why the limit for the number of pupils to be*

  
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admitted in years 5 and 6 was not 60 as we now have two classes per year group. JS replied that it was because the PAN (pupil admission number) for these cohorts was 45 when they started at the school which can not be changed.

### **17. Pay Committee Issues: -**


- a. **Questions on the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9th October 2023 which have been shared with you.** - There were no questions on the minutes of this meeting.
- b. **Pay Policy to be ratified** - This has already been shared with Governors and was ratified.
- c. **Pay Committee to make recommendations following the Headteacher's Performance Management review** - All staff left the room for this item. The Pay Committee reported that SB did succeed in all of her targets, however as she is at the top of her scale she can not have an incremental rise.
- d. **Terms of Reference to be ratified**- These are now part of the Pay Policy and have been approved under agenda item 17b above.

### **18. Personnel Committee Issues: -**

- a. **Questions on the minutes of the meetings held on 6th November 2023.** - There were no questions on these minutes.
- b. **Terms of Reference to be approved** - There were no changes from the previous year.
- c. **Leave of absence requests (if there are any since the last meeting).** - Any that JS had received had been discussed and minuted at the personnel meeting. There have not been any further requests since then.

### **19. Policies / Procedures to be approved by the Governing Board (these have all been shared with governors : -**

- a. **Admissions Policy 2025/2026** - This had been approved by the Admissions Committee and is now being ratified.
- b. **Child Protection Policy** - This policy was approved.
- c. **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy** - This policy was approved.
- d. **Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school** - This policy was approved.
- e. **Suspension & Permanent Exclusion Policy** - This policy was approved.
- f. **Fire Safety Evacuation Plan** - This policy was approved.
- g. **Access Plan** - This policy was approved.
- h. **Equality Objectives** - This policy was approved.

  
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- i. **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy** - This policy was approved.
- j. **Gifts and Hospitality Policy** - This policy was approved. JS signed the policy which also needs to be signed by SB. (SB)
- k. **Early Careers Teacher (statutory) Induction Policy** - This policy was approved.
- l. **Governors' Allowances Policy** - This policy was approved.
- m. **Surveillance Management Procedure (CCTV Policy)** - This policy was approved.
- n. **Intimate Care Policy** - This policy had been approved.
- o. **Ethical Policy** - This policy was approved.

### **20. Policies / Procedures approved by the Curriculum Committee, to be approved a s meeting was not quorate. These have all been shared with governors : -**

- a. **SEND Policy** - This policy was approved.
- b. **Behaviour and Relationship Policy** - This policy was approved.
- c. **Child on Child Abuse - Harmful Sexual Behaviour** - This policy was approved.
- d. **Pupil Attendance Policy** - This policy was approved.

### **21. Policies / Procedures that have been reviewed this term that do not need to be ratified FOR INFORMATION ONLY: -**

- a. **Early Years Foundation Policy**
- b. **English Policy**
- c. **On-line Safety Policy**


### **22. Any other urgent business as agreed under agenda item 4 above. -** Governors had received an Email about changing the date for the next meeting and asked if there was anyone who could not attend on the 18th March 2024. All governors were able to make the new date therefore the date of this meeting will be amended.

CH reported that the school is applying for Miss Vincent to complete her ECT training one term early due to her pregnancy. The relevant Information has been sent off and is presently being considered.

It has been suggested that the new furniture in the DT room is not suitable for adults therefore the Governors meetings will be moved to either one of the Upper School classrooms or the staffroom. The consensus was to use the staffroom. The Site Managers will be asked to set this room up in future.

### **23. Date and time of next meeting -** This has been arranged for **Monday 18th March 2024**

The meeting finished at 7.33pm.

  
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