



**MINUTES OF
FOR THE FGB MEETING OF THE ACORNS PRIMARY AND
NURSERY SCHOOL AND WHITLEY VILLAGE FEDERATED
SCHOOL**

Date	Thursday 7th July 2016
Venue	Acorns School 6pm

Governors:	Di Buckley (DB) Nicola Downey (ND) Susie Harding (SH) Mandy Hatton (MH) Lizzie Langton (LL) Hannah Mansfield (HM) Emma Morgan Lloyd (EML) Martin Nield (ML) Jo Paylor (JP) Gareth Powell (GP) Chrystal Rees (CR) Angela Tolan (AT) Matthew Fullager (MF)	Chair of FGB Staff Governor Co-Opted Governor Associate Member Parent Governor Head Teacher Staff Governor Co-opted Governor (and Vice Chair) Staff Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor
In attendance:	Elaine Dobinson-Evans	Clerk

The meeting met its quorum

AGENDA ITEM 1 INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Discussion:	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Introductions were made there were no apologies received from governors, KC was not in attendance.
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2 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL & PECUNIARY INTEREST

Discussion:	There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interest.
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3 DECLARATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion:	There were no declarations of other business.
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4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (17th March, 2016)

Discussion:	Minutes of the last meeting had been reviewed prior to the meeting. The Chair signed the minutes.
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Decision:	Resolved: to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record.
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5 MATTERS ARISING from last minutes

	Further Actions Required
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Clerk to collate meeting attendance data at the end of the year and send to website co-ordinator.
This will be done at the end of this year.

Ensure that MF signs all of the forms from the last FGB meeting (code of conduct, etc.). MF sent apologies for the FGB due to his work schedule, although it was noted that he visits School regularly regarding Safeguarding matters. **This will be done in September.**

Update governors' skills audit. **All are submitted except for one. They are collated but not yet assessed – this will be done in September as part of the process of reconstitution.**

Arrange tours of both Schools for new members and for new members to attend training courses. **This action has been done. HM explained the different types of visit forms, including a sign in sheet which can be used as evidence for OFSTED.**

Send RoVs to HM to file. **This has been done.**

Feed back to governors regarding progress of working party who are working on Strategic Plan. *SH advised that the strategic working party had not been able to meet however in the light of the news from the government there is now more to consider. It was agreed that DB, SH and JG would meet in the next half term with a view to a review in the summertime. GP encouraged governors to be proactive and suggested that governors should look at strategic plans for the Federation. SH noted the need to be fully informed. AP noted that it would be interesting to obtain feedback from the Weaverham cluster. See below:*

Email governors about another meeting to discuss academisation further following the publication of the White Paper.

HM explained that the SDP will be put together by the senior leadership team after which input and challenge from governors will be requested.

SH noted that three year forecast figures are in now in place.

HM suggested that a working party should be set up to look at options regarding academisation – she explained that because The Acorns requires improvement, they are vulnerable to be forced into academisation. Another head teacher who supports the School has advised that it is better to review options rather than to be forced into academisation because of outcomes. GP advised that Parkgate Primary School has been assessed to be RI for the third time following interim inspections. He suggested that it would be interesting to see whether they are forced into academisation. It was noted that the inspection was before SATs results.

HM requested that the working party be set up in September, SH suggested that research could be done in advance over the summer holiday period. MH advised that she has a contact at RSM (Piccadilly) who would be happy to talk to School free of charge.

Governors discussed whether Whitley being 'Good' will help – SH also questioned whether the fact that the management team has changed will help. Governors discussed the need to understand the difference between being an Academy and a Federation – HM advised that it is expensive to become an Academy. MN noted that there are no longer grants and the amount of money per pupil is decreasing. GP asked whether anybody had talked to Harry Zyman: he noted that he is working with another model.


HM advised that she had attended a meeting at which the Commissioner was present. She advised that it seemed the bigger Multi Academy Trusts of 15 or more Schools are considered to be better – governors were not sure that they agreed. HM noted that three schools appears to be the minimum number. **Q: LL asked about the time frame involved?** MN advised that there is no time frame, although HM advised that June 2017 would be the earliest inspection date at The Acorns. It is possible that it might be six months after this date due to the School having a new head teacher. HM noted the need to be into the process by June 2017, she also noted that the process is not fast. Governors agreed that the working party would consist of HM, DB, SH and MN.

MN advised that he had attended a talk on 'Education for All' by Mark Parkinson – he will pass

printouts from the talk to all governors as soon as possible.

There was also an additional list submitted by JG to the Finance Committee – please see Part 2 minutes for list. Review further proposals via email

This action has been done by the new Business Manager.


CPD Evaluation
proforma.docx

- **Resend the training evaluation template to all governors.** (see attached)
Organise Safeguarding Training for MH, LL and SH. The date is **Wednesday 28th September at Whitley 6pm-9pm**
- **Complete Channel Training.** Please find link attached:
http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness/01/index.html
- **Ensure all DBSs are in place Action: MF to submit paperwork for his DBS before September.**

Ask Mrs Warner and Mrs Ramsey to present at SIC. This was done.


Blog. GP asked who will administer the blog, as there has to be a way of controlling it. Governors concluded that it would be better not to blog but to attach information to Tweets.

Make recommendation re CWAC Living Wage based on JG findings. SH advised that the Finance Committee had discussed this but no conclusion had been made largely due to the fact that there are big implications due to the differential between different roles that would be affected. After much discussion it was agreed that the Finance Committee would ask the School Business Manager to put the matter into context and make a recommendation after which the governors would vote.

Action: SH to follow up with SBM.

6	SUMMARY COMMITTEE REPORTS	Chairs of Committees & Head teacher
Discussion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance, Premises & Personnel Committee SH advised that everything is in hand with regard to the maintenance of the premises. MN noted that there is a potential issue with regard to a new roof possibly being required at Whitley – HM advised that the Local Authority is coming out to look at the problem. SH advised that financially both Schools are in good shape in both the short term and long term. She expressed the Finance Premises and Personnel Committee's thanks to the new School Business Manager for the context and detail of work that she has provided to date. SH advised that the Committee had requested an action plan to reduce the deficit – this has been received and it is now anticipated that both Schools should be in surplus by year three. SH advised that there is an exceptionally high surplus at The Acorns – the Committee has requested a report to show that School can live within its means. She explained that School must be clear about what the surplus is being spent on: it must be used and recorded as exceptional money to be used to close the pupil premium gap. SH advised that benchmarking reports relating to The Acorns have shown that the amount of money spent on teachers is lower than average, the amount of money spent on support is higher than average but that outcomes are lower than average. Personnel: HM advised that she has promoted Mrs Downey to be the new team leader at Whitley. The post will be covered by Mr Keegan in Mrs Downey's absence due to maternity leave.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management Committee DB explained that the Committee meeting had been delayed until the following week because the Committee were waiting for all staff to have their Performance Management appraisals. She explained that this is the first year that the process had started in September and is finishing in July. It was noted that decisions have to be made by October. School uses the Local Authority pay policy model and have never made any changes to this. The LA pay policy for this year has not yet been released. School Improvement Committee AT advised that there been several presentations by members of staff which had been informative and valuable. She advised that the committee has reviewed pupil premium: paperwork is now on track – AT has been working closely with Sarah Ackers the pupil premium lead. HM advised that this TLR was temporary – the responsibility is being passed to the Deputy Head. Governors received some paperwork from Sarah Ackers which was data that had been requested at the last SIC meeting. AT advised that the Committee had looked at action plans for Maths and English at The Acorns – members had found it useful to read the detail. Action plans for Whitley are to be reviewed next term. DB noted that the next SIC meeting will concentrate on data for both Schools. AT advised that Pam and Sarah had presented about their roles and responsibilities in the Safeguarding area. The presentation was very enlightening and helped governors to appreciate what they do. AT advised the Committee had also discussed transition – between Key Stages and also between Primary and Secondary school. EML advised that pupils will be working on recommended texts – when they return in September their Writing and Maths will be displayed to remind them what they were working on. Staff governors talked about the benefits of taking a best piece of work and transferring it to pupils’ new books to remind pupils (and staff) of their capability.
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7	SUMMARY HEADTEACHER’S REPORT
Discussion:  June 2016 Head report to Gobs.docx	<p>Governors had received the Head Teacher’s report prior to the meeting for review. DB noted that it is a more condensed report: concise and giving a good picture. HM requested feedback from governors:</p> <p>Attendance: Q: SH noted that attendance at The Acorns is not as good as pupils get older. She asked how this is being addressed? HM advised Pam and Sarah oversee registers every day. She noted that there has been an improvement over the years, although School is below the national expectation. She advised that attendance will be a focus next year– in September there will be a teacher whose focus is on raising attendance for the whole School. Q: MN asked whether it is a small number of families with poor attendance? HM advised that this is the case but that overall attendance needs</p>

to improve. **Q: LL asked what is the target?** HM advised that attendance should be at 96% minimum.

Q: EML observed that a lot more pupils are taking holidays and asked whether penalties are still in place? HM advised that fines happen after a pupil misses 10 (half day) sessions in a term but noted that a lot of parents simply say that their children are absent due to sickness and it is difficult to prove otherwise. She advised that the LA have encouraged School to follow government guidelines but noted that schools are nervous because of the recent High Court case.

Staff governors discussed the fact that when low achieving pupils take holiday, the impact is huge. DB stated that at her school they have posters in the classrooms about percentage attendance of an A* student. JP advised that attendance is addressed in end of year reports but noted that lateness is also an issue.

Q: CR referred to the fact that bikes are possible prizes as a reward for good attendance and asked whether pupils with medical issues are still put into the draw? JP assured her that this is the case.

GP pointed out that the data suggests that but for two pupils the figure is very close to National. HM agreed that holidays are not the biggest factor, it is simply general poor attendance. She advised that she had rung parents of pupils with poor attendance herself but that this was not successful in improving attendance. Governors thanked HM for her report

Surplus:

Q: DB asked about the action plan regarding the surplus? SH explained that it is important that members of staff understand that it is an exceptional amount of money and will not always be there. She noted that the carry forward is much higher than the suggested level of 8% for The Acorns and noted that it is the pupils' money and should be spent on those pupils, not future pupils.

Q: CR asked how such a large surplus has occurred? HM advised that it is budget that has not been spent and explained that School receive a lot of pupil premium funding.

The governors appreciated that the money cannot be allowed to prop up the budget and must be spent SMARTly to raise attainment.

SH noted that attainment data is down and asked School to consider whether The Writing Project is enough. She also stated that governors need to ask some difficult questions of themselves in the form of are we capable, is SIC getting the right data, etc.?

GP reiterated the need to register the Governing Body's thanks to the new Business Manager for providing the right data.

Attainment:

Whilst the attainment data is disappointing, it was noted that School are in a much better position than they were 12 months ago and appreciated that the national changes had come at a bad time for the Acorns.

GP reminded governors that School knew that this would be a problem with a poor year group. DB agreed that governors had known that this cohort would have poor data but was very disappointed that no pupils were at the level for Writing and questioned the accuracy of teachers' estimates.

JP advised that the problem was that expected standards were not released until Easter. HM also noted that it is now a case of secure fit, not the best fit, therefore

	<p>a child cannot reach the expected standard if one element is not secure. She advised that School are in a better position moving forward as next Year 6 need to make 7 rather than 17 steps.</p> <p>Q: SH asked whether 7 steps is achievable? JP and EML felt that this will be achievable as all pupils are expected to make six steps, therefore it is a much smaller gap. It is anticipated that Year 2s will be just 6 steps by the end of Year 2, therefore it becomes manageable over time.</p> <p>Governors expressed concern that if the next time that data is reviewed is not until Spring, that is too late to make changes - DB requested that when benchmarking is carried out over the summer that it is shared with governors. Governors discussed the fact that the expectations for Year 6 had been unrealistic: some pupils needed to make 14 steps. HM noted that a second teacher has been employed early in the year, then there had been 2 senior teachers in Year 6.</p> <p>Governors appreciated that prompt action was taken following moderation meetings when School had realised the extent of the problem. It was noted that Writing moved from 0 to 20% following KC being put into Year 6 as a teacher. HM advised that there will be an increase of 2% in the figures as there were some mistakes in scoring.</p> <p>Q: LL asked how much pupils regress over the summer? JP and EML advised that it is not a big problem, pupils simply have to be reminded of their capabilities. They referred again to the idea of the best piece of work being stuck inside the first page of the new book.</p> <p>Q: LL asked whether it would be possible for her to attend the SIC committee meeting on 4 October at The Acorns at 4 PM although she is not a member of that committee? She was assured that all governors are welcome at all committee meetings.</p>
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8	APPROVAL OF 2016/17 BUDGET & CLOSEDOWN OF 2015/16 BUDGET
Discussion:	<p>FGB ratification of Finance, Premises & Personnel Committee approvals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2015/16 Budget 'Closedown': Whitley: £53,163 Acorns: £380,383 2. Commitment of surpluses (Analysis of Reserves) <u>Whitley:</u> Carry forward £25,622. Therefore, total carry forward is £53,163. <u>Acorns:</u> Carry forward of £134,599. Therefore, total carry forward is £380,383. 3. 2016/17 Budget <u>Whitley:</u> Income: £411,642, Expenditure: £404,977, Surplus: £6,665, Targeting savings of £6,397, Carry forward surplus: £66,145. <u>Acorns:</u> Income: £1,901,392, Expenditure: £1,959,964, Deficit: -£58,572, Targeting savings of £36,631, Carry forward surplus: £358,442. 4. Staffing Structure for September 2016 – please see HT report. 5. Service Level Agreements for 2016/17 – There are no new SLAs. The SBM intends to review all SLAs over the next months. 6. Governing Body to approve School Fund Audit – This is underway for The

	Acorns, Whitley books do not close until end of August. The paperwork will be sent to the LA.
Decision:	RESOLVED: To approve the Closedown, 2016/17 Budget and Staffing Structure.

9	BEHAVIOUR AND SAFETY OF PUPILS (SAFEGUARDING)
Discussion:	This item is covered in the Head Teacher's report.

10	PUPIL PREMIUM & PE GRANT
Discussion:	This has been taken to the Finance Committee and the SIC: there is an action plan in place together with proposed expenditure for 2016/17.

11	GOVERNING BODY REPRESENTATION	HM
Discussion:	<p>HM wished to acknowledge the support that governors have given to her as the new Head Teacher – she thanked governors for giving up their valuable time.</p> <p>HM explained that the governing body is not reconstituted to Federation Regulations, also the composition of the governing body does not comply with what was originally agreed. There should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 parent governor for each School 1 member of staff for each School 1 LA governor 1 community governor <p>As many co-opted governors as desired.</p> <p>She noted that the governing body need to check what type of governors are in place and whether the structure of committees is the right structure moving forward. This will entail the checking of the Terms of Reference for each committee to ensure that roles and responsibilities are working efficiently without too many overlaps (which can be time-consuming for staff). It will also enable people to ensure that the right information is prepared for the right committee at the right time.</p> <p>It was noted that in future all governors will receive copies of all meeting minutes – this should help governors to have a broader picture of what all committees are working on.</p> <p>HM advised that she is working with an experienced facilitator, John Jones, who is an ex head teacher. Governors will meet with him during the month of September. The skills audit data will be used in the process. He will feedback to all governors on Saturday, 15 October 9.00-1.00 at Whitley after which the governing body will reconstitute.</p>	

12	GOVERNING BODY VISITS/REPORTS ATTENDED SINCE LAST MEETING	
Link Governors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years LL • Safeguarding MN • Pupil Premium AT • MFL AT • SEND CR • Maths CR • Finance SH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PE GP • Humanities GP • Arts GP • Computing GP • PSCHE MF • RE MH • English DB

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H&S MN • Science & DT DB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Training AT • Federation Governors SH & DB
Discussion:	<p>LL has visited the Early Years. MF has emailed parents regarding PHSE. DB has been involved with recruitment all term. DB is arranging a parents evening for new Yr 6s at Whitley. This is to cover Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.</p>	
13	GOVERNOR TRAINING ATTENDED SINCE LAST MEETING/ GOVERNOR TRAINING REQUIRED	
Discussion:	This was updated at the last SIC – see meeting minutes attached to Agenda item 6.	
14	POLICY REVIEW	Chair
Discussion:	<p>HM advised that she plans to review whether any policies can be combined or archived. An example would be ICT/mobile phone/e-safety being combined. She noted that each policy should also detail of the policies to which it is connected. This is a big job – HM advised that she wishes to complete this by Christmas.</p>	
15	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
Discussion:	<p>LL offered to attend all meetings at The Acorns if that is more convenient for other governors, however HM felt that some meetings should remain at Whitley as it is the only time that some governors go to Whitley School.</p>	
16	DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS	
	<p>Thursday 17th November at The Acorns Thursday 16th March at Whitley Thursday 13th July The Acorns</p> <p>All FGB meetings commence at 6pm</p>	