

Embsay CofE (VC) Primary School
Meeting of the Governing Body held on
Thursday 10th February 2022 at 5.30pm in the school

Minutes

Present: Matt Smales-Cresswell (Chair); Fiona Prest (Headteacher); Rev. Tim Calow (TC); Rachael Higgins (RH); Chris Atherton (CA); Jennifer Stearn (JS); Emma Smith (ES); Andrew Gash (AG) (Joined via Teams at 18:32); Steven Hudson (SH); Helen Ralph (HR)

Apologies: Rev. Marion Russell (MR)

In attendance: Paul Baxter (Clerk)

Core Functions of a Governing Body:

- **Setting strategic direction.**
- **Holding the Headteacher to account for educational performance.**
- **Ensuring financial health, probity, and value for money.**

No.	Item	Action
-----	------	--------

Part A – PROCEDURAL

1.	<p>Prayers – TC opened the meeting with a prayer.</p> <p>Welcome The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from MR which were accepted, and the absence consented to.</p>	
2.	<p>Confidentiality The Chair reminded all present of the confidential nature of all discussions.</p> <p>No item on the agenda was identified as being confidential.</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of interest No declarations were made.</p>	
4.	<p>Urgent business items The Chair advised that he had been advised of one matter to be discussed under item 14 regarding the maintenance of the school grounds.</p>	
5.	<p>Membership of Governing Body Update on LA Vacancy – the Chair advised that he has not yet had opportunity to take this forward since the last meeting but would hope to do so before the next.</p>	Chair to seek an LA Governor
6.	<p>Minutes The Clerk apologised that there was a typographical error on the closing time of the last meeting in the minutes circulated. The minutes should have read that the meeting closed at 19:30 not 17:30. The copy to be signed for the record had been amended. Otherwise, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2021 were approved without further amendment. The Chair signed a copy for the record.</p> <p>Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda: Items 11 & 14 – Link visits – It was confirmed that this is dealt with in the Headteacher’s report.</p>	

Part B – School Improvement

7.	<p>Headteacher’s Report A copy of the Headteacher’s report had been circulated to Governors before the meeting. The Headteacher highlighted some of the key areas in the report as follows:</p> <p>Attendance – It was confirmed that there are currently no staff absent with covid and that there are two confirmed cases amongst the children. Consequently, it is beginning to feel more normal around the school again.</p> <p>Staffing – The Headteacher provide an overview of staff wellbeing and the areas and individuals where she has concerns. Governors were taken through the details, set out in the report, and the plans she proposes putting in place to ensure sufficient cover and minimal disruption to the children’s education. Governors discussed these plans and robustly challenged the Headteacher to ensure that the school would have the resources it needs to provide the curriculum education promised and to deliver the interventions necessary for post pandemic catch-up. Governors were reminded during the discussions that operational decisions remain the responsibility of the Headteacher, the Governing Body should not interfere or direct the Headteacher in those decisions.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that adverts would be placed shortly for 2 new teachers to start in September.</p> <p>Governors were advised that the office manager has applied to work flexible hours and were given an explanation of how this would work in practice. Governors discussed putting a succession plan in place and it was agreed that the Headteacher would consider whether recruiting an apprentice might be worthwhile. Governors approved the office manager’s request unanimously.</p> <p>SEND – Governors were advised that the number of pupils on the SEN register has increased mainly due to dyslexia reports. No extra resources are needed for these. The Headteacher gave an overview of the SEN/Pupil Premium position and advised that there will be a child starting in September with an ECHP and who will need additional resource. Governors discussed the reasons for Embsay having more children with ECHPs than other schools.</p> <p>Governors were advised that the vulnerable children list has recently been reviewed. There was a brief discussion on the criteria for inclusion on the list.</p> <p>SIAMS – The Headteacher advised that collective worship training for staff has been postponed. It is proposed that normal collective worship will resume after the half term break. Governors were invited to attend.</p> <p>Assessment – The Headteacher took Governors through the data and explained why assessing the children this year and going forward is so difficult following two years of disruption. Governors had many questions on the data and took time to challenge the Headteacher and satisfy themselves that the proposals for interventions would see an improvement in the outcome results over time. Governors sought to understand the difficulties the school and staff face and whether they as a Governing Body could do anything further to support the efforts to ensure that the children reached the levels expected and were not disadvantaged as they progress through their education.</p>	
----	--	--

	<p>The Headteacher confirmed that progress is being made and asked Governors to simply be aware of the challenges faced by the school because of the pandemic and to communicate that to parents as necessary. Governors discussed sending a further letter to parents and it was agreed that CA would draft something and circulate.</p> <p>Safeguarding – Governors were reminded of the need to read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021 and to confirm to the school when they had done so. Only two Governors have done so to date. Heather Russell, ESA, will be in school on 28 February and will meet with two Governors.</p> <p>Health & Safety – The Headteacher advised that it is intended to return to normal play and eating arrangements after half term now that covid case numbers are reducing.</p> <p>NYCC’s H&S inspector has completed a fire safety inspection which highlighted one area. This has now been dealt with.</p>	CA to draft letter to parents
8.	<p>SIAMS/SIP A copy of the updated SIP for 2021/22 had been circulated. The Headteacher took Governors through the key areas of progression, particularly focusing on the mental health training she has received and how this will benefit staff and children.</p> <p>Governors were invited to attend two training sessions in April, one on the curriculum and what Governors should be focusing on, this will be provided by the ESA, and the other session will focus on Governance to be provided by the Diocesan SIAMs team which will take up a full day. Governors were asked to confirm their attendance at one or both to the Headteacher as soon as possible.</p>	
9.	<p>Governor Action Plan – update 2021/22 Governors were advised that the action plan will be updated and circulated in due course.</p> <p>Governor Report to Parents The Chair was reminded that this is a statutory document to go on the school’s website. The Headteacher agreed to send a copy of the template to the Chair for him to complete as soon as possible.</p>	
10.	<p>Health and Safety Update Included in Headteacher’s report.</p>	
11.	<p>Reports of: Governor visits/ monitoring Governor Training Feedback from courses</p> <p>Nothing to report not covered elsewhere in the meeting.</p>	
12.	<p>Policies to be adopted After clarifying a couple of points the Governing Body unanimously approved the following policies for adoption by the school: Leave Lone Worker Procedure First Aid at Work Looked After Children</p>	
13.	<p>To note any governors’ correspondence received or sent Governors were advised that a complaint had been received and has been dealt with.</p>	

14.	<p>Any other urgent matters</p> <p>The Headteacher advised that she had received notice from the current contractor for grounds maintenance that it is increasing charges by approximately one third from around £1,800 to around £2,500. The school has invited other contractors to quote for the work and has had one response from a company that has contracts with a number of schools in North Yorkshire and which is aware of the reporting requirements it has to provide to the school each year. Whilst the price is similar, this alone is beneficial and has proved difficult to get from the current contractors. Governors fully supported the switch to this alternative contractor.</p>	
15.	<p>Next Meeting Date: Finance 24th March 2022 at 5:30 p.m.</p>	
16.	<p>How have we helped to achieve our objectives today and how has this meeting impacted on the welfare and progress of our pupils?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors have agreed to a series of action plans going forward for the Governing Body and have committed to training on the curriculum. ○ Governors robustly challenged the Headteacher on her resourcing plans and were satisfied that the welfare and education of the children was properly prioritised. 	
17.	<p>Close of meeting</p> <p>The Chair declared the meeting closed at 19:20.</p>	

Signed:

Dated: