



**Embsay C of E (VC) Primary School
Meeting of the Governing Body held on
Thursday 14th October 2021 at 5.30pm**

Minutes

Present: Matt Smales-Cresswell (Chair); Fiona Prest (Headteacher); Helen Ralph (HR); Rachael Higgins (RH); Chris Atherton (CA); Jennifer Stearn (JS); Emma Smith (ES); Andrew Gash (AG); Rev. Marion Russell (MR); Steven Hudson (SH)

Apologies: Rev. Tim Calow (TC)

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
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Part A – PROCEDURAL

1.	<p>Clerk in the Chair Prayers – MR opened the meeting with a prayer.</p> <p>Welcome The Clerk welcomed all to the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies Apologies were received from Tim Calow which were accepted.</p>	
3.	<p>Elections Election of Chair The Clerk invited nominations for the post of Chair. Chris Atherton nominated Matt Smales-Cresswell seconded by Helen Ralph. MSC confirmed his willingness to stand. There were no other nominations and MSC left the room. There were no objections to his appointment and by unanimous vote, MSC was duly elected Chair for a term of 12 months. MSC returned and took over from the Clerk as Chair.</p> <p>Election of Vice-Chair Governors were reminded that the post of vice-chair had been vacant during the last academic year. The Chair invited nominations and Rachael Higgins and Chris Atherton put themselves forward. After some discussion it was decided unanimously that RH and CA should hold the post jointly for a term of two years.</p> <p>It was confirmed that Paul Baxter would continue as Clerk.</p>	
4.	<p>Governing Body Admin Register of Business Interests – Governors were reminded of the statutory requirement to complete a return and those who have not yet done so were asked to send their return to the clerk as soon as possible.</p>	

	<p>Register of Gifts and Hospitality – Governors were asked to send a return to the Clerk only if they have received any gifts in the last 12 months.</p> <p>Standing Orders (SO) – A Governor drew to the attention of the meeting that the SO only makes provision for those “in the room” to vote and suggested that the SO be amended to include any Governor who may be attending via a remote access such as Teams. The Clerk confirmed that he would amend the SO accordingly and suggested that Governors might like to consider whether the SO should be amended to make reference to Governors being able to join meetings remotely if it would help their attendance. Governors discussed the technical issues and how to ensure that remote attendees were able to fully take part in any discussions. It was agreed that the Clerk should amend the SO where necessary and recirculate for agreement at the next meeting.</p> <p>Code of Conduct – The Clerk advised that the Code of Conduct was the latest issued by the NGA. Governors were happy to adopt the Code and signed a copy to indicate their agreement to it.</p>	<p>Clerk to review and amend SO and circulate for next meeting</p>																																	
5.	<p>Confidentiality The Chair reminded all present of the confidential nature of all discussions.</p> <p>No item was identified as confidential to be withheld from the minutes available for public inspection.</p>																																		
6.	<p>Declarations of interest No declarations were made.</p>																																		
7.	<p>Urgent business items The Headteacher advised that she had three items to be discussed under item 19.</p>																																		
8.	<p>Membership of the Governing Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of office – The Clerk confirmed that there are no terms of office expiring soon. Governors and their terms of office are: <table border="0" data-bbox="319 1361 1061 1753"> <tr> <td>Fiona Prest</td> <td>Headteacher</td> <td>Ex officio</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marion Russell</td> <td>Foundation</td> <td>Ex officio</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Helen Ralph</td> <td>Foundation</td> <td>01.09.21 – 31.08.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jennifer Stearn</td> <td>Foundation</td> <td>23.07.19 – 22.07.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rachael Higgins</td> <td>Co-opt</td> <td>14.01.19 – 13.01.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andrew Gash</td> <td>Co-opt</td> <td>23.01.19 – 22.01.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Matt Smales-Cresswell</td> <td>Co-opt</td> <td>25.01.19 – 24.01.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tim Callow</td> <td>Co-opt</td> <td>01.09.20 – 31.08.24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chris Atherton</td> <td>Parent</td> <td>21.11.19 – 20.11.23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Steven Hudson</td> <td>Parent</td> <td>22.04.21 – 21.04.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emma Smith</td> <td>Staff</td> <td>18.03.21 – 17.03.25</td> </tr> </table> • Vacancies – It was confirmed that there continues to be a vacancy for a Local Authority Governor. The Headteacher advised that she had received an email from Governors for Schools stating that they have people who are actively looking for positions as school governors. Governors discussed the skill set that would best enhance the current Governing Body and agreed that an educational background and/or facilities management would be helpful. It was agreed that the Chair would respond to Governors for Schools and see if they are able to offer anyone who might be suitable. 	Fiona Prest	Headteacher	Ex officio	Marion Russell	Foundation	Ex officio	Helen Ralph	Foundation	01.09.21 – 31.08.25	Jennifer Stearn	Foundation	23.07.19 – 22.07.23	Rachael Higgins	Co-opt	14.01.19 – 13.01.23	Andrew Gash	Co-opt	23.01.19 – 22.01.23	Matt Smales-Cresswell	Co-opt	25.01.19 – 24.01.23	Tim Callow	Co-opt	01.09.20 – 31.08.24	Chris Atherton	Parent	21.11.19 – 20.11.23	Steven Hudson	Parent	22.04.21 – 21.04.25	Emma Smith	Staff	18.03.21 – 17.03.25	<p>Chair to contact Governors for Schools</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Audit – Governors were reminded to complete the skills audit spreadsheet as soon as possible. 	
9.	<p>Scheme of delegation (from the Budget management Policy) It was Resolved that the scheme of delegation remain as the previous year. The Chair signed the Scheme.</p>	
10.	<p>Head teachers Performance review group It was agreed that the review group will be SH, MSC, HR and the EDA.</p> <p>It was agreed that a meeting of the group will be arranged for as soon as possible.</p>	
11.	<p>Governors with specific responsibilities and Link Governors It was agreed that Governors would have the following responsibilities/ link roles:</p> <p>Finance & Resources Oversight - RH School Improvement Oversight - SH Safeguarding - AG SEND - MR PSHE/Health and Wellbeing – MSC & MR Health & Safety - MSC Governor development oversight - MSC RE/Vision/Ethos - TC Literacy and history - JS STEM – HR & SH Computing/Website - CA Music - AG Geography - RH PE - SH Art - AG French – RH</p> <p>The Headteacher confirmed that Governors are able now to visit the school and that she would provide dates when teachers may have some curriculum release time after half term.</p>	
12.	<p>Minutes The minutes of the last meeting held on 13 July 2021 were approved without amendment. The Chair signed a copy of the minutes for the record.</p> <p>There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	

Part B – School Improvement

13.	<p>Headteacher's Report The Headteacher's report had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The Headteacher took Governors through the report and highlighted the following key areas:</p> <p>Pupil Numbers – Governors received a brief overview of the reception pupils.</p> <p>Staffing – A member of staff is now on non-covid related sick leave which will be covered by supply after half term. Governors were updated on the reasons for the absence. Governors were concerned to ensure that the school was doing all it could to</p>	
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	<p>support the staff member and sought re-assurance from the Headteacher who confirmed the actions taken by the school to date.</p> <p>SEND – The Headteacher provided an overview of some of the children with SEN and the actions taken to support them.</p> <p>Governor question: Your report states that three children go horse riding, is this correct? – The Headteacher confirmed that the three children go horse riding for 30 to 40 minutes once a week. This has been proved to be very beneficial in building skills.</p> <p>Assessments – Governors were advised that teachers are still working to determine where children have gaps following the last 18 months and the response to the pandemic. She explained how the assessments are being measured. Governors discussed the issue of parental support which the Headteacher confirmed varied from child to child, household to household. Governors wondered if there was an opportunity to teach parents how they might support their children’s learning. The Headteacher advised that this might be possible with maths, had previously been done with phonics but would be harder with handwriting, which is an area that has been identified as a weakness. In any case, the difficulty is reaching those parents who do not already automatically provide support. The Headteacher confirmed that she would consider this further.</p> <p>Recovery plans – The Headteacher provided an update on the actions taken so far and those planned for after half term.</p> <p>Safeguarding – The Headteacher confirmed that there were still some actions still to be addressed from the Safeguarding audit and that these are being dealt with. Otherwise, there are no major concerns.</p> <p>Premises – Governors were updated on the works that have been carried out over the summer.</p> <p>Health & Safety – The Headteacher updated Governors regarding a broken pipe in the kitchen and that the number of first aid incidents in the playground have increased since the bubbles were removed.</p> <p>Wider links – CASTLE heads have met for the first time since the start of the pandemic. There has also been a meeting of the Craven Locality Board. The Headteacher provided a brief overview of this and its function.</p> <p>Academisation – The Headteacher advised that the Diocese, following a Governmental push, is asking its schools to consider academisation. A webinar was held by the Diocese but the Headteacher was unable to attend, she has however, received the slides from it. Governors discussed and it was agreed that the Headteacher would take Governors through the slides after the next meeting so that they have more information on which to base any further discussions and considerations.</p>	<p>Governors to meet and discuss after the next FGB</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>SIP & Curriculum Area action plans</p> <p>Copies of the SIP and of the action plans had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The Headteacher confirmed that the SIP is not dissimilar to the previous year and that she has retained the same format for ease. Governors were given an overview of the priority areas and where these may have changed from the previous SIP. The Headteacher advised that she had not under the circumstances of the last 18 months felt that a meaningful SEF could be realistically prepared.</p>	

	A Governor asked about the need to teach French and it was explained that all primary schools are required to provide teaching on a modern language. French has been chosen because most of the teaching staff are comfortable with this.	
15.	Governor Training The Headteacher confirmed that she would circulate any details of training events that she receives.	
16.	Health and Safety Included under the Headteachers report above.	
17.	Policies Child Protection – Governors were advised that this is now a shorter policy document supported by a comprehensive guidance document. There were, in addition, further sub policies that were available for schools to adopt as required. The Headteacher felt that two in particular were not necessary for the school as either other school policies already covered these or they were inappropriate for Embsay school. These related to self-harm and suicide. Governors discussed and were persuaded that there is sufficient safeguarding in place for the two sub-policies not to be needed. However, it was agreed that an amendment to the child protection policy and would be made to include a note as to why the two sub-policies have not been adopted. Other policies reviewed and agreed were: SEN School SEN information report - draft Admissions 2023-2024 Business Continuity and Disaster/Critical Incident Recovery Plan	
18.	Governors' correspondence received or sent None.	
19.	Other urgent matters 1. The Headteacher advised that the Pupil Premium statement needs to be approved for publication on the school's website. Governors approved. 2. Governors were advised that one member of the teaching staff who has passed her NQT is to receive a pay award. Governors approved. 3. Governors were advised that the EDA has suggested asking NYCC to carry out a Governance audit, particularly given the number of recent Governor appointments. Governors discussed and were in favour of this. The Headteacher agreed to take this forward. 4. A Governor raised the issue of the extra bank holiday and whether the Governors should have been consulted on when this was to be taken. Governors were advised that when the holiday is taken is an operational matter for the Headteacher to decide and does not need to be brought to Governors. An explanation was provided by the Headteacher as to why more notice could not have been given to parents.	

	As part of the discussion around this, Governors felt that it would be appropriate to put out a notice to parents celebrating what has been achieved and informing them of future events.	
20.	Next Meeting Date 9 December 2021 (Finance) at 5:30 p.m.	
21.	How have we helped to achieve our objectives today and how has this meeting impacted on the welfare and progress of our pupils? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Link governor roles have been agreed and visits will recommence after half term. ○ Governors have reviewed and agreed the SIP. ○ Governors have agreed to a Governance audit. 	
22.	Close of meeting The Chair declared the meeting closed at 19:47.	

Signed:

Dated: