



GREENFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL
Ellesborough Close, South Oxhey, Watford WD19 6QH

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting of Greenfields Primary School

Wednesday 5th February at 5.00pm.

Attendance:

HEADTEACHER
Kate Day

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS (4):
Zoe Baines (Chair)
Graham Nash
Kim May
Sue O'Donnell

LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR (1):
David Ray (Vice Chair)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (3):
~~Emma Mulholland~~
Val Griffin
~~Menaka Vettivelpillai~~

PARENT GOVERNORS (3):
Filipa Serra
Andy Perren
Gary Foscett

OBSERVERS:
Joanne Evans, Deputy Headteacher

STAFF GOVERNOR (1):
Shelagh O'Shea

CLERK:
Karen Walton

1 Welcome – To consider and approve absences.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted for Emma, Menaka.

2 Declaration by governors of interests, pecuniary or otherwise, in respect of items on the agenda

There were no declarations.

3 Membership of the Governing Body

Welcome to Sue who has accepted the co-opted governor position.

4 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2024 (circulated via Governor Hub)

The Vice Chair signed the minutes as an accurate and valid record of the meeting held on 4th December 2024.

5 Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December.

Lettings policy to go on website – completed.

6 Subject Microscope – History and Geography – Robin Adak

The presentation and handout were shared after the meeting.

The knowledge organisers are really helpful supporting teachers to quickly reference information to share with classes in different ways.

It was noted that there are good foundations in both Geography and History, the school curriculum and the repetition of information is key in building on this and is working well.

Several governors commented that history and geography is obviously being taught well as the children are talking about it at home.

Q: How do history and geography fit in with school trips?

A: The enrichment calendar highlights curriculum areas for each trip. History and Geography are the guiding reasons for most of our trips.

Q: What historical periods do you teach?

A: As far back as the Tudors. We can also give an overview of before this time and choose specific topics from any time period. Generally, the curriculum through the school follows chronologically.

ACTION: Presentations to be added to Governor Hub.

Robin was thanked for his presentation.

7 Ratification

None.

8 Headteachers report including Safeguarding and Attendance

The report was circulated for comment before the meeting.

Numbers are stable; 216 currently on roll with more joining.

Attendance is currently low due to illness. Some families have gone on holiday. The Head has had to inform county about two families who missed school due to holiday.

Some of class attendance numbers look low but some of it is by arrangement e.g. reduced timetable. By removing the known absences, the school is not too far out of alignment with the national average.

There have been 3 exclusions so far this year.

The school is currently fully staffed. The new staff members have settled and everything is working well.

There will be a SEN child joining year one. So far this year there are ten children who are new to the school with SEN or additional needs. Supporting these children takes a lot of SLT time.

Mock SATS are taking place this week. Maths is a weaker subject this year. Writing is the focus for the whole school and will bring our combined totals down.

The governors commented on how successful interventions are and how well behaved all the pupils are. At the governor's day minor interactions were noted and dealt with discretely and effectively. All teaching staff appear passionate about their roles.

Electric Umbrella is proving to be a really positive and encouraging experience for the whole school.

The Watford Jazz Junction are going to do workshops after Easter with Years 2 and 3.

Forest School continues to be a great success.

The Head thanked David and Anthony for their help with the flood over the Christmas period and in getting the Roofing Project started.

The Head also thanked the staff for helping to empty classrooms so that new flooring could be fitted following the flooding.

Q: Do the fines for absence make a difference?

A: We don't know, county issue the fines, and the funds go to county. It does not affect the school. The Head explained the process when there is an absence, it is time consuming.

Q: What is the reason for County not telling the school if families are fined for absence?

A: The process sits with County. Ultimately, it can cause a relationship breakdown between the school and families, but the school does with what it can.

Q: How do we know if those out of county will get Greenfields as first choice if they put it as first choice?

A: We don't, but most have siblings so they will get the place.

Q: Are there other schools who have similar numbers of high need children?

A: Yes, there is another school in area with similar numbers. We are also becoming a school of choice as the school's reputation for supporting additional needs is growing.

Q: What support is there for those taking SATS this year who need additional support?

A: There are various 121 interventions and additional support processes. The balance is giving a realistic outcome so that those who need support are recognised and get the support when they move to secondary school.

9 Budget

All documents are on Governor hub.

The budget for this year is healthy, but currently there is a deficit forecast next year. SEN funding is currently taking over 8 months rather than the published 4 months.

Next years funding is based on the October census. However, there are already an additional 8 pupils who need SEN support who are not accounted for.

National Insurance changes are unknown. Currently there is no government guidance on how they will support schools with the change. The current impact on budget would be around £35k.

There is an overspend on English and SEN due to the needs of the children. Equally, there is an underspend on Art and DT.

There has been an overspend on DBS, some of this was necessary due to staff changes.

Q: How much is SEN funding?

A: Between £3K and £4K per child for specialist support.

Q: How much is a DBS?

A: Around £50

Q: How much will Electric Umbrella cost and will we be able to keep them?

A: They have cost £4K for the term. We took some funding out of the music budget and the rest has come from the grant from South Oxhey Parish Council. Whilst we would like to have them again, we do need to keep the activities fresh and change them. Electric Umbrella will also want to support other schools.

Q: Are you happy with the service we are getting from HFL?

A: They have been very good and understanding.

Q: When is budget day?

A: 25th March, meeting 2-4pm

10 Good Governance

The Governor Day was really informative, and everyone had a good time. The governors who attended saw lots, spoke to lots of children and really enjoyed themselves.

David spoke to the school council and heard what they have been doing and their plans. He has agreed to meet with them in a few months' time.

11 Health & Safety / Premises (Vice chair)

Fire and flood damage repaired were all completed over Christmas.

The roof project is slightly ahead of schedule. All materials have arrived. The insulation has been laid and is already making a difference.

A new skylight has been added to the kitchen.

The original project included replacing existing drainage. David has shown evidence to County of the flooding that occurs, and they have agreed to improve drainage, not just repair and replace.

Last year we submitted a bid for a fire detection system including an intruder alarm. The bid has been approved to be ratified in June. The value of the bid approved is £22K. As the system requires hardwiring and will be invasive, the current plan is to complete the project over the summer holidays.

The Head thanked David for all he continues to do.

12 Policies for review and adoption

None

13 Any other business

Fencing –

There has been legal contact from a nearby resident that the school hedge is causing subsidence to their property. The school have completed an independent arboreal report which explains that the hedge is not the likely cause of subsidence in their property. Removing the hedge will unbalance the landscaping of the school and will cost approximately £1,800 to remove the hedge with additional cost required for a new fence.

There was discussion about the type and therefore cost of the fence. This was of particular concern as it's a potential safeguarding issue with children being seen from neighbouring houses.

County have advised that it is the school's responsibility. However, there may be a planning issue if the hedge is changed.

The Governors agreed to write to the residents, share the arboreal report and explain the potential consequences of removing the hedge. (Undermining the ground, safeguarding, effect on landscape etc.)

Catering -

Q: What has happened with Gas / Extractor system for heating meals?

A: One day the roofing project contractors stood on a pipe, and it burst. The second time something that was taken apart was incorrectly reassembled. Both times the kitchen were very good and acted quickly to make sandwiches, so all children were fed.

Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 5th February 2025.

Signed:

Governing Body Meeting Dates for the School Year 2024/25

Wednesday evenings, 5pm

26th March

14th May

16th July

And Wednesday 16th July – Sports Day.