



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

Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting of Greenfields Primary School

Wednesday 26th March 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 Vettivetpillai

PARENT GOVERNORS (3):

Filipa Serra

Andy Perren

Gary Foskett

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 Kim.

- 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**

None.

- 4 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2025 (circulated via Governor Hub)**

The Chair signed the minutes as an accurate and valid record of the meeting held on 5th February 2025.

- 5 Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February**

History and Geography Presentation - to be added to Governor Hub – Complete.

- 6 Subject Microscope – RE – Ellen Dupree**

Ellen shared a presentation explaining RE at Greenfields.

It's a very practical subject and the pupils enjoy relating the topics to their own experiences.

Q: It appears to be a heavily Christian syllabus, does that make a difference?

A: The syllabus followed is given by Hertfordshire and is 50% Christianity as the UK is still classified as a Christian country.

Q: How many of the children know the 10 commandments?

A: Not many. This topic creates good conversations and then in year 5 they create their own commandments.

Q: Does the swastika in the symbol's topic cause any issues?

A: No, it's highlighted as a Hindu symbol and is not related to the Nazi movement.

Q: Some of the topic seem to overlap with PHSE, how does this work?

A: Covering similar topics such as charities and relationships gives us the opportunity to reinforce the schools values.

Q: Do a lot of children identify with a religion?

A: No, if the pupil is from an ethnic minority they may more readily identify with a religion.

Ellen was thanked for her presentation and for creating such a stimulating and interesting curriculum for the school.

ACTION: RE Presentation, Block 3 and Faiths, themes and Festivals documents to be added to Governor Hub

7 Ratification

None.

8 Headteachers report including Safeguarding and Attendance

The report was circulated for comment before the meeting.

Attendance is challenging this year in multiple years. However, if you look at individual cases and understand the reasons the attendance level is above national average.

The Chair noted that the Year 6 transition pupils are going to some great secondary schools, some of which are difficult to get into.

Book Day was really good fun. The annual quiz was enjoyed by all as was Book at Bedtime, which was attended by about 100 children. The Governors acknowledged how much work is involved in Book at Bedtime and how much the pupils enjoy it. It was noted that a lot of parents prefer this event – children coming to school in PJ's is fun, easy to manage and is a great opportunity to remind the children about the love of books. The Head thanked Jo, and Rachel Smith (a parent volunteer) for wrapping 480 bars of chocolate for the special gold ticket event.

The Head also thanked the TA's who are going to work on rotation for the after-school's club to cover a maternity leave. They will do this until the end of the year. September arrangements are to be arranged.

A number of positive comments were received through the staff feedback questionnaire. The usual topics of toilets, and cleaning are continuing to be addressed. Other comments included needing playground equipment and fidget toys, both of which are available, and are being made accessible at the appropriate times.

The school values have been renewed, and it is now time for the motto to be updated. It is proposed to change the motto to 'Going Above and Beyond'. This reflects the children's attitude to learning, the dedication of the staff to teaching and the number of other extra requirements that the staff support, especially regarding SEN and individual pupil support. The staff were asked to vote – 17 said yes, 5 were unsure.

The governors discussed what the motto would mean. There are lots of opportunities for conversation and activities both within school and at home, wider life skills learning. There are also lots of encouragement opportunities to keep the children engaged.

Proposal: To Change the school motto to 'Going Above and Beyond'

All Governors present agreed.

Stacy Smith has unfortunately left the school. This happened after the Head Teachers report was issued.

The Head has started to build a relationship with Hannah Tricket, Head of Maple Cross School as they have similar issues. Chorleywood are discussing legal options regarding the current management of SEN provision by Hertfordshire / Government. Chorleywood have voted to accept any South Oxhey schools who want to join their consortium. The Head will join the consortium. The Chair noted that this is a good form of support although the school will need to be aware of any financial requirements as the budget is already tight.

Q: Have any non-attendance fines been issued yet?

A: No County said they did not see enough evidence to show that the school had done all they could to support the family. The family need to agree and sign a course of action which is proving difficult to get.

Q: What do the school need to do to show evidence of non-attendance?

A: The Head talked through the suggested actions from County, they have all been actioned.

Q: Do you have any information about the demographics / insight into how Reception numbers are affected in the area?

A: Like Greenfields there are other schools in the area who have a full intake. We also have a waiting list. Equally, there are other schools in the area who have not offered a full class of places.

Q: What SEN needs do we have next year?

A: Currently there are 3 nursery pupils who will move to Reception and need EHCP's. We do not know about the new intake until places are formally offered and accepted.

Q: What's the earliest age a child can have an EHCP?

A: A child can be 2 years old if the need is significant.

Q: What does the school need to start the EHCP process early?

A: Parental permission. This relies on parents understanding the potential need and wanting to start the process.

Q: How many nursery children have already been to other settings; do they find it difficult to settle?

A: There is a mixture. We do home visits and a lot of transition work with the families to make the start of school as smooth as possible.

Q: Staff have requested Electric Umbrella becomes a yearly event, will that happen?

A: This will depend on Electric Umbrella, it has cost £4,500 for this term's activities, the school cannot afford this every year. They are also very popular so may not have time! Equally, we have to grow our own ability to teach music

9 Budget

The Head has added a folder of documents to Governor Hub. These documents are confidential.

Currently the school's carry forward for this year is 11% (£128K). However, next year's budget is forecasting that staffing and running costs will create a deficit and by the end of year 2 there will be no carry forward.

The budget is strong, but it should be noted that previously the deficit has been forecast in year 3. It is due to rising costs that the deficit is now forecast for year 2.

The big cost items are staffing and EHCPs (funding takes a long time to be approved and received and the school must fund the first £6K per pupil).

The Chair confirmed that the staffing budget has not been cut. The budget savings are being made on resources, but this is where fundraising and the fund account are important.

The budget will be formally signed off in May, until this point amendments are still possible.

The governors thanked the staff for all they do beyond hours and for fundraising.

10 Good Governance

None

11 Health & Safety / Premises (Vice chair)

The Roof project is finished and signed off. All historical problems with the roof and drainage have now been resolved. All roof lights have been replaced and are easily operated to open.
When the roof project was being assessed the surveyor also reported on the potential for roof solar panels. The main issue for the solar panel project is funding – there are 3 potential options.
Options for this project are continuing.

Q: For funding the solar panels through the Community Benefit Society option, do the electricity company own the panels?

A: Yes, they own them until the loan is paid off after 25 years. During that time, they do everything for the installation and maintenance of the panels. This is potentially an easier option, but the return is not as good as buying the panels ourselves. They also offer an education package which would be for year 6.

Q: On what basis could they object?

A: There is no formal objection, but the 25-year contractual obligation, if we go down that route, may be a concern.

Q: Do we have to go with Solar for Schools and stay with them?

A: No, there is no commitment, we can do the submission with them and choose to fund the project another way.

Q: What is the return if we fund the project ourselves?

A: Payback is approximately 3 years.

Based on current information it is proposed to submit a joint submission with Solar for Schools to Hertfordshire County Council for landowner permission.
All governors present agreed.

The scope of work for the Fire Alarm project was shared. The project will cost £22,500 and the proposed installation will be July / August as it is a 4-week project. The cost has been budgeted for.
All governors present approved the project and the spend.

The school has been in correspondence with the neighbour who has asked for the hedge to be removed. The neighbour's insurance company have assessed the site.

The proposal is to remove 18m of hedge along the length of the side of the house and a suitable distance either side away from the property. The school are negotiating with the neighbour and the insurance company how the work will be funded.

12 Policies for review and adoption

None

13 Any other business

Awards Assembly – Wednesday 2nd April – The Head asked if any Governors could attend to give awards, including to the Governor's Cup, to the children. Sue will attend.

Easter Bonnet Competition – Friday 4th April – Emma and Menaka will attend and judge.

Governor Dates 2025-26 – Wednesdays, 5pm

8th October 2025

3rd December 2025

4th February 2026

25th March 2026

13th May 2026

15th July 2026 – Sports Day MEETING will start at 4pm

Agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 26th March 2025.

Signed:

Governing Body Meeting Dates for the School Year 2024/25

Wednesday evenings, 5pm

14th May

16th July

And Wednesday 16th July – Governors Day and Sports Day. MEETING WILL START AT 4pm

Governing Body Meeting Dates for the School Year 2025/26

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