

**Castle Vale Nursery School  
Full Governing Body Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022**



**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Mark Phillips (MP)- Chair of Governors  
Sally Leese (SL) – Head Teacher  
Kate Bateman – Staff Governor  
Kerri Treasure (KT) – Parent Governor  
Sue Martin – Co-Opted Governor

**In Attendance:**

Christina Meakin – Deputy Head Teacher  
Jackie McCorrison (JAMC) - Clerk

**Apologies**

Kirstie McElroy-Stringer (KMS) – Co-Opted Governor  
Sarah Swords (SS) – Parent Governor  
Tracey Quirk (TQ) – Co-Opted Governor

The Apologies were accepted

**1) Welcome, Introductions & Apologies**

MP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2) Declarations of Interest**

MP reported that since the last meeting, he has begun working for Esteem MAT. There are no other changes to Pecuniary Interests since the last meeting.

**3) Minutes of the Last Meeting**

SL proposed and MP seconded the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The Governing Body approved.

**Matters arising**

All Matters Arising have been covered.

**4) Feedback from the Personnel & Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee have just met and the feedback was given as follows:-

The budget was set on indicative figures, school were able to access the indicative budget on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The budget was set at £746,366 but the indicative budget shows £731,293. The shortfall was in the Supplementary funding but not as bad as it could be because numbers were still fairly stable despite the pandemic.

Since then, the Indicatives have been taken down as the LA got the 2 year olds funding mixed up with Pupil Premium.

The finance report has been added to GovernorHub and Boris Thompson gave an update.

The School Budget Share carry forward balance has been officially notified as £353,387 surplus, This equates to 43.05% of the schools in-year funding. There is an in-year surplus of £27,120.

Approximately £127k of this funding will be committed in the new year for Castle Approach and Developing Local provision

***Governors noted that the carry forward will put the school in a strong position moving forward in these challenging time and there are a number of projects which may need to have some funded allocated against them once agreed. The budget plan discussed in the April meeting shows that the school cannot set an in-year budget for 2022/23. School is potentially heading for financial difficulty as evidenced by the financial position predicted at the end of 2024/25. The estimated carry forward balance will be used to offset the in-year deficit.***

***They noted that Leaders and Governors need to be mindful of how we move forward regarding expenditure because costs are rising and the budget is getting tighter.***

***Utility prices are rising, and large increases are predicted for 2022/23.***

SL and other staff met with the LA to discuss the possibility of creating a resource base at the school and are awaiting the response. Some funding may be needed to support the implementation of this if agreed.

The Devolved Capital carry forward balance has been officially notified and the Committee recommended that that some of this be used for laptops for the staff, a lot of them are stepping up and taking on additional roles. **The FGB agreed with the proposal for use some of the Devolved Capital Balance to purchase laptops for staff.**

NL gave an Office Managers Update.

- She reported that school received £65,031.00 in EHCP funding for Summer Term 2022 and the report details the breakdown.
- *She reported on the fact that school have not had any Reconciliation Files since the end of May and discussed the difficulty with Oracle. There is a dramatic effect on office workload due to ongoing Oracle issues and NL is concerned about the amount of work, when the rec files come through.*
- She reported on the new process with the Simplified Loader.
- There was an update regarding the Coombs Contract for School Meals.
- Northern Gas and Power are looking into our cheapest/best suppliers for utilities.
- The Business Continuity Plan has been updated, there are changes made to Student and Volunteers details. **The Governing Body approved the updated Business Continuity Plan.**
- *There is a nil return in the Gifts and Hospitality register*

SL reported that the Nursery is full for September and there will be consideration as to whether more staff are needed depending on the number of 2 year olds and whether school is given permission to open a Resource Base.

The Committee completed the questionnaire about the potential impact of the Early Years National Funding Formula.

**The Governing Body agreed with all of the recommendations from the Finance Committee.**

## **5) Head Teachers Report.**

This had been added to GovernorHub and SL fed back as follows:-

SL reported that the Sensory Unit is being upgraded and MP saw the work that is being undertaken. There will be changeable coloured lights and a bubble tube etc. and the room will be blacked out with a new screen. It is hoped that the room will be completed soon so that some of the children will be able to use it before they leave.

MP also saw the Garden Club which is in the 'bubble 1' outdoor space. The new garden is called 'Short meadow' and we will start Garden School (working title) which will be like Forest School but where children learn about gardening and growing. The children will be part of a video that will be shared to Gardeners World.

SL discussed Family Hubs. As part of the government offer to roll out some form of Family Hubs, Erdington is going to pilot a model and we will be a part of the planning and implementation.

The Summer Census Numbers are positive and SL reported that the numbers look to be good for September but there are a large number of 2 year olds. School have applied for a 24 space Resource Base and will find out from the LA whether this is successful W/C 18<sup>th</sup> July. The LA have delayed the decision and the plan is for a January 2023 start.

### **DLP Update.**

Kate Bateman gave an update on the DLP project.

- Kate leads the Erdington and Sutton Districts and details what is on offer to enhance the work already being done by early years settings and mainstream schools in providing support to children in their local area.
- The Stay and Plays are up and running and both this and the Perry Barr districts have reached over 100 families.
- There are additional Stay and Play groups at the Children's Centre due to the number of families who attend where the children have additional needs. There are universal sessions and Step by Step sessions and the Children's Centre have put on another Stepping Stones group for children with SEND. There is also another one at Featherstone.
- Some of the children who have been identified with SEND have been at Stay and Play and some of these children will be starting at Nursery so it is positive to have their needs identified. SL said that there are a lot of children who have been identified who have complex needs, many have not seen a paediatrician etc. and parents have been signposted to support.
- There will be a focus in September for professionals (SALT, EP etc.) to attend the Stay and Play sessions, Coffee mornings and Inclusion meetings, this will mean that parents and staff will be supported further,
- KB showed the Governors a bag which will be sent home with the children, and the leaflet to promote what is on offer. The bag contains resources such as pencils and crayons and paper etc. to support the children with their learning.
- The leaflet was discussed and there is a QR code for parents to contact staff as well as other ways, they are asked to complete a short form which goes directly to Kate and it is important for any questions to be forwarded ASAP and for settings to not wait until September.

- The Early Years DLP project can support all children under 5 with SEND or possible SEND and the DLP Co-ordinators can offer support both prior to the child and family starting school but also while they settle.
- There is also an offer of outreach support to reception or nursery staff to support children schools have concerns when they start in September.
- The KPI's were discussed and there is a very good working relationship with Sharon Eels the lead on Sutton. One of the KPI's is around the number of children who access their full entitlement by half term in October, it was acknowledged that placements may fail and September will be a busy month.
- SL said that the children with EHCP's in mainstream will not count in the data, they have high level and complex needs and the DLP cannot be answerable to a legal document that states the children need to be in a special school.

The Governors thanked KB for her feedback.

Christina Meakin gave an update as follows:-

- The Maths Champion work is finishing and next year the Nursery are taking part in the Oracy project and will be a trial school for Learning Language and Loving it through Hanen.
- Christina Meakin has applied to work on the DFE EY Recovery programme and will be an expert who supports settings that are either nominated by the LA or ones who have put themselves forward who are either judged to be RI or have a high level of SEND / disadvantaged children. Initially CM was to support 2 settings a term but she is doing an additional 0.5 days which will be 1 more setting. School will be allocated
- £10,500 for the 2 schools per term each year, this will be higher with the third school being supported.
- Helen has trained to be a Level 3 SENCO award trainer and Ellie Reece who is joining the school in September is a Level 2 SENCO award trainer and school will get funding for the support they offer.

***Governors said this is excellent news and asked whether there is sufficient capacity in nursery for the staff to be involved in these different initiatives an whether staffing needs to be looked at?***

SL said that there will need to be a review, Ruby is an ECT and Theresa has really stepped up, neither of these have a group next year and will have a whole school overview, there are also other staff who do not have a group.

**Action: - It was agreed to review the staffing in light of the decision regarding the Resource Base. MP and SL to meet and put together a proposal.**

SL said she checks in regularly with the staff and all of the initiatives benefits the School and compliments what staff are already doing and developing,

**Action:- Governors asked SL to detail the support Nursery is giving to support work/life balance for staff at a future meeting.**

School are aware of the areas that need further focus and all of the work will benefit the newer staff who are becoming extremely upskilled, particularly with supporting pupils with SEND.

**Early Reading Update.**

Theresa was welcomed to the meeting.

SL explained that Theresa has been a TA in school for some time and has a real passion for children's books and she has supported the planning and writing of the reading curriculum and has done an excellent job.

- Theresa explained she has supported Christina Meakin. She has audited and logged each book into different categories e.g. wild animals, number, rhyming, science, health, festivals etc. and she has recorded all of the festivals in the curriculum and logged all of the big books as well. She has sorted the books that are being kept in Nursery as core books and also any books suitable to go home as general readers.
- She showed the Committee a grid for the 6 half terms where she has logged the books being taught for the 6 half terms for N1 and N2 and has worked out all of the festivals that might come up during the term and has added in a narrative as to why the books will be used.
- She explained that in September the staff will be using simple interactive books with repetitive text such as Dear Zoo, Noisy Farm and Brown Bear etc.
- She has also logged the books to focus on in the reading areas and has picked out some of the books from story of the week so the children become familiar with them. She has also planned all of the resources that can be used with these books including story cards and puppets etc.
- The books are levelled and differentiated to match ability there is a programme of books to send home. In each pack there is an explanation for parents as to how they can support their children and the vocabulary to use.
- She has looked at the books that needed to be ordered and sourced the cheapest quotes.

***Governors commended Theresa and Christina for their hard work and said it is an excellent approach to support the children to develop further. They asked how school will track which children have read the different books and whether there are any gender specific books?***

The Governors were informed that the books will be allocated to the different learning groups so the content is aligned to ability and there has been a focus on purchasing different types of books, fiction and non-fiction and books that may take into account preferences from boys and girls. There has also been an investment in touchy feely interactive books so the children in Buttercups so can access them.

***Governors asked if the grid will be transferred to electronic form?***

SL said that this will be done.

***Governors noted that the financial commitment to the books has been an excellent investment and thanked Theresa for her support in such a very well thought out approach.***

**Transition Update.**

SL explained that there is excellent support for transition from home to Nursery and from Nursery to primary, and she has asked staff to come and speak about this transition and also movement in the different parts of the school.

Governors welcomed Rachel, Ruby and Tammy to the meeting.

- They explained that they have made sure that there is a completed transition form for all of the children so that the teachers get to know a child's character and needs, this acts as a starting point in getting to know them. Parents and children contribute to this. They are an excellent way of identifying children who may be anxious and need support.
- Ruby has added in the Wellcomm scores for the children transitioning to Primary.
- Staff have an excellent relationship with many of the primary schools and are very flexible when it comes to accommodating staff visits.
- Ruby attended a transition meeting one evening to support one mother and typed up the notes to explain what she needed to do and the mother said that she had more help from the Nursery staff than she did from her own family.
- Staff have been able to help families apply for Free School Meals etc. and have also arranged for additional transition for 2 children.
- Next week a parent is not able to attend a session at the new school with their child as they are in court. School are supporting them by taking the child to their session.
- They explained that safeguarding is considered for transition and there are face to face meetings for children who are CIN or EH etc. so as to understand their needs and how to best help and support the children and families.
- Rachel is very rigorous in her approach to safeguarding and encouraging good attendance.

***Governors asked if the children are moving to schools who are not on the estate?***

Staff confirmed that the children are moving to a number of different schools, including Minworth, Yenton, Gunter, Paget, Castle Bromwich, St Josephs in Sutton and a school in Curdsworth.

Rosie explained that staff have created leavers and returners packs which were put together after the children were assessed, this is a home learning pack that parents can use to support learning, this includes physical resources and SL said that the team have worked hard with putting these together. This is used alongside Tapestry.

There are different packs which reflect work around the Jubilee, oral health etc. Each of the packs are different, there are sensory things such as bubbles for some of the children as well as paper and pens etc. SOGS is taken into account (Schedule of Growth Skills) for the children who are not at the Wellcomm level.

This approach will support in some parts of the SDP and there is a bank of resources that can be used when needed to encourage parents to work with their children at home.

Staff said that the feedback from parents has been really positive, they have appreciated the thought that has gone into each pack which are personalised to the needs of each child – there has been a real investment made so as to support learning.

***Governors asked how the school will know whether the packs have been utilised?***

SL said that there will be feedback on tapestry. Also a lot of the content in the packs can be accessed by the children who do not necessarily need the support of an adult. Staff know what motivates the children and the resources are exciting and very accessible. If parents are not engaging then staff can test and support the returner children.

**Governors thanked the staff for their hard work and for attending the meeting and for feeding back.**

The Safeguarding Update has been produced by Rachel and added to Governorhub.

**Assessment** was discussed.

CM and MP met to look at the Assessment Reports.

Staff have been ambitious with what they want the children to achieve and whilst the results are positive, some of the children did not meet their targets, these are mainly boys - most of the girl leavers are on track.

It was noted that the starting points were very low for the boys in particular with a higher percentage of them needing support.

The assessment outcomes will feed into the priorities for next year and the leaders and returners packs will support with this.

**MP asked about how the progress of the children with complex SEND needs is recorded?**

CM said that the graphs do not fully reflect the progress the children are making, some are making huge steps forward. There is one child who was non-verbal who is now able to speak in sentences, but on paper they may have only made small steps. Helen and Kate have worked on a curriculum based on their targets.

MP made some suggestions to show the progress and make the graphs more visual. MP and CM are meeting in September to look at the data and look at the priorities on the SDP and what is being done to address them.

**Governors thanked SL for her report and thanked all of the staff for their feedback and hard work.**

## **6) Policy Approval**

### **Attendance Policy**

SL reported that Rachel wrote this policy based on the processes that are followed in school and the appendices are based on the LA Policy.

This was formally approved.

### **Privacy notices for Staff, visitors and Governors**

These were formally agreed.

### **Prospectus**

This has been updated and there is reference to inclusion.

The Prospectus was formally agreed.

### **British Values Statement**

This was formally approved.

### **SEND Policy**

This has been written by Helen based on the information shared in SENDo Networks.

The Policy was formally approved.

## **7) Any Other Business**

### **Head Teachers Performance Management.**

SL, CM and KB were asked to leave the meeting.

MP reported that he and TQ met with Rob Meadows to look at whether SL has met all of her PM targets and to agree the targets for next year. He reported that SL has met all of their targets for this year and an approval was given regarding her salary.

**8) Date of the next Meeting**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November – 9.30am F&P Committee  
10.30am FGB meeting