Minutes of the
SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 27th April 2016
at Greystoke Primary School, Narborough

Present:
Mr Connor Acton               Mrs Candi Norman
Mrs Brenda Davies (Director of School Improvement) Mrs Nikki Taylor
Fr Alan Hawker                 Mrs Mary Thornton (Head teacher)
Mr David Henson                Mrs Suzanne Uprichard (Chair)
Mr Neil Foster

In attendance: Andrew Hayes (DHT), Anna Mousley (Clerk)

PROCEDURAL
1. Apologies for Absence
   There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Interests Register
   Declared: DH - LCC Blaby Stokes bursar. No conflicts of interests pertaining to agenda items were declared.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 27th April 2016
   The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising from the minutes/action log
   Q. When the HT is not in school, who is in charge? The two Assistant Head Teachers.
   • Min 7, pg. 6 of 25.11.15: HT confirmed that the school has the funds to purchase maths text books.
   • Min 7, pg. 7 of 25.11.15: date of parents maths evening to be confirmed.
   • Min 8, pg. 15 of 2.3.16: HT has contacted Louise White re. capping the number of part-time contracts and is awaiting a response.
   • Min 11, pg. 16 of 2.3.16: Governors were reminded to let DH know of any training undertaken. The Chair updated governors on the re-launched GEL (governor online learning), and asked that once an online training module has been completed they let DH know when and which module undertaken.
   Action: governors to log onto GEL and keep DH informed.

   All other actions have been completed, or are agenda items, and can be removed from the log.

5. Notification of any
   None

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
6. Questions on the Head Teacher’s Report
   A copy of the head teacher’s report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Highlights and governors’ questions set out below show the governing board is holding the head teacher to account.

   The HT tabled a best fit whole school map with context data generated from the new assessment system, O-track. The system works on age related expectations at the end of the school year and is colour coded to show where children are developing (D), achieving (A) and achieving at depth (M) the age related objectives. The HT
said the report is a snap shot of where children are at and it should be noted that they have not yet been taught the full curriculum/objectives at this point in the year. It was noted that younger children have fewer objectives to achieve and coverage of the curriculum is a greater challenge in KS2. The HT said she did not expect to bring this report to governors at each meeting but felt that, as a new system, they would benefit from seeing how the children are now assessed; BD said DSAT heads and assessment leaders are working on best ways of reporting on assessment to governors. She said the reports are multi-layered and can be drilled down further in detail and the assessment leaders will be working together to analyse data across schools.

Year 6 shows a variance between girls’ and boys’ achievements, but this is not replicated in other year groups. Girls’ achievement compared to boys’ varies from year to year; there is a gender imbalance in SEN with more boys registered than girls. This data was collected before Easter and represents less than 2/3 of the year – there is opportunity for significant progress to be made in the remainder of the academic year. Data is looked at in detail in pupil progress meetings and the SLT fully understand exactly the attainment and progress of every child in school. They know who is on track to reach end of year ARE. Where catch-up needs to occur, the SLT have arranged with teachers for intervention to be put in place to accelerate learning.

Q. Will this data be shared with parents at parents evening? Yes, to an extent, and not in this format. Individual profile reports can be generated from the system but would not be produced for all children unless there were specific concerns, eg the report can be helpful in writing EHCPs for pupils with SEND.

Q. Who is the Designated Teacher for Children looked After for the school? The HT.

Q. Is the attendance of the two children who have not responded to warning letters being followed up? There are deeper issues with these children (and they not from the same family) and the school continues to pursue this. The attendance figure to date had been omitted from the report and the HT confirmed it is 96.1%.

Q. Is there a reason why the HT report does not include bullying incidents? This can be included in future. It was noted that through work with the Anti-bullying Alliance the school is now recognised as a school which champions an anti-bullying.

Q. Why does the termly summary of the quality of teaching and learning omit a percentage of teaching that is outstanding? This represents a snap shot of the triangulation of evidence observed at the time of writing and reflects staff performance observed in Spring Term. The HT confirmed that there is evidence of some overall outstanding teaching which will be made clear in the end of year Teaching and Learning report.

Q. If staff have a clear view of assessments but recording on Otrack does not always match it, how can assessments be truly objective? Moderation with book scrutinies and work sampling has been taking place between teams of teachers and across those teams, and staff are becoming more familiar with the new assessment system. In addition, there is regular summative assessment which validates classroom assessment. Assessment is being monitored closely by the assessment network and SLT, and teachers are starting to be more confident with generating their own reports within the new system.

Q. The HT report states that the school now has a significant number of children who do not have English as a first language; is this typical of other schools in the trust and what interventions are in place? Schools in the trust are yet to have a significant number of EAL children but as new schools join DSAT this will change and there will soon be skills to share. At one school, basic language sessions are provided even where the numbers are small. The County used to provide a centralised service for EAL but this has been cut. The six children are individuals not from the same family. They are able to speak English and just need additional support; it tends to be the parents that do not speak English.

A member of staff had made a request for flexible working and the governors considered this request carefully. A governor voiced mounting concerns of the number of flexible contracts, and it had already been suggested at the last GB meeting that there should be a policy to cap the number of staff with part-time contracts. The HT said Louise White would need to look into the best ways of approaching this with the unions. Furthermore,
the HT is waiting for confirmation of when a member of staff will return from maternity leave and what their requested work pattern will be. Once this is confirmed she can respond accordingly to this request. Despite their concerns around part-time contracts, governors agreed in principle to the request pending the maternity returner’s requested pattern of work.

The HT report contains information on teaching and support staff days lost due to absence and governors were asked to consider the relevance of the way the information is provided. It was noted that, even taking into account maternity leave absence, the number of teacher days lost is significantly higher than this time last year.

**Q. Does the school looks for trends in staff absences?** The school does this but there are no discernible trends. There have been sickness bugs which require a 48-hour absence. Also time frames vary, i.e. Easter holidays falling differently from one year to the next, and this can have an impact on the termly data.

**Q. Does the HT carry out return to work interviews?** Return to work interviews are held for absences of two days or longer but not one day. It was suggested that if return to work interviews are held for one day absences too it would challenge the absence more rigorously.

It was agreed that the report needed to give more background to the number of days lost, with a year to date benchmark comparison from the start of the academic year, and to show the number of teachers absent for how many days instead of just number of days lost.

*Action: HT to amend the format of staff absence data in her next report.*

**Q. Is the number of new pupils gained (8) unusual?** Yes, this number is quite high, but numbers continually fluctuate as children move in and out of the area mid-term. These 8 children have moved into the school’s catchment area.

7. **Three-year strategic plan**
   The HT tabled ideas for areas of development to inform the three-year strategic plan. It was advised that the governors should have input into the strategic direction of the school, the plan to be agreed with the SLT and cascaded to staff and parents. It was agreed that a single item agenda meeting will be held for governors to work on the strategic direction of the three-year plan. *Action: Chair to circulate dates to governors for three-year plan meeting. HT to add partnerships to the plan.*

**STAFFING**

8. **To discuss any staffing matters**
   Noting further to add to staffing matters covered in the HT’s report.

**GOVERNING BOARD MATTERS**

9. **Arrangements for the House**
   The HT said there had been a quote to develop the house into a before and after school facility and that she is in the process of producing a business plan application to submit to the Trust board. She said there had been a good response to the parent survey (80 replies) which had showed there is a demand for this provision. Costs had been included in the survey @ £3.50 for breakfast club and £9.50 for after school, which the HT said compete well with other schools and day nurseries in the area. It is expected to be able to offer 24 places based on the capacity of the house as well as staffing costs. It was pointed out that the house capacity limits the provision that can be offered and, if it proves popular, some wraparound care would need to be brought into the school. The HT responded that the house would form the main base due to the food making facilities but some provision could be brought into school if necessary. It was suggested that the business plan include soft income too, i.e. the advantages and benefits to children and their families.

10. **Finance update**
   The management account report for end of March, with commentary, had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting.
**Q. Are there any concerns at present?** There are no concerns at the moment and DH is monitoring those areas as noted on the report. However, it was reminded that all schools nationally are facing significant pressures from incremental and cost of living pay increases, additional pension and NI contributions, the impact of the National minimum wage, changes to the funding formula and increasing pupil numbers, and that in the longer term there will be concerns for budget, potentially affecting staffing levels.

DH added that he is expecting an internal audit to take place at some point this term. This has been instructed by DSAT and will be carried out by the LA. The report from this should be ready for governors to see in the Autumn term.

**11. Policies**

**Acceptable use of ICT for children:** the policy had been ratified relatively recently. However, in response to a letter from a parent about the need for their child to have a mobile phone for safety reasons, an additional paragraph had been included under clause 5: Mobile technologies. The Chair said she and the HT had discussed this matter at length and the discussion was continued with the full board.

It was agreed that allowing children who walk to and from school to bring mobile phones into school could be extended to year 5 as well as year 6 in exceptional circumstances only. Parents would need to request permission in writing to justify the need to bring a phone into school, and file a consent form, and there would need to be clear instructions on the process. Whilst phones would need to be appropriately insured by their owner, there were concerns over the school’s liability and the HT said she would need to check this with Louise White. Governors agreed in principle to the change to the policy, extending permission to year 5 under exceptional circumstances, pending LW’s response.

*Action: HT to contact LW for clarification on the school’s liability in holding phones during the school day.*

**12. Governor visits reports**

CA had submitted a report on Pupil Premium/Computing across the curriculum. This had been his first formal visit and he was thanked for his thorough report.

*Action: governors are reminded to arrange their visits.*

**13. Chair’s update**

The Chair reported that DSAT has issued a draft Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA) which is to be published on schools’ websites pending the final version approval by the trust board.

A number of typographical errors had been noted and the clerk was asked to amend these and re-send to the Chair for final proof reading. It was noted that the Articles of Association need to be included in the appendix, and there are some discrepancies within the document that the board will need to clarify. These include the levels of delegation no. 88, pg. 29 *To hold a full LGB meeting at least three times in a school year* that contradicts with 6.3.2 on page 9 that *the LGB shall meet at least four times in every school year/termly*, and it was queried which is was to be and whether it should be four times *yearly* or *termly*. 6.1.1 contradicts with 6.1.4 regarding who is responsible for electing the LGB Chair – the Directors or the members of the LGB, ditto removal in 6.1.18. Additionally, where the SoDA refers to directors does it mean trust board or governors, and should the minutes go to the GB within 14 days or the board (6.7.3)? BD reiterated that the SoDA is a draft and that typographical errors will be amended by the Clerk. Requests to check any other areas, or concerns about any other content should be expressed through the Chair to the Clerk to Governors who will raise these with the CEO.

*Action: clerk to amend typos and return amended document to Chair for proofing. Any other governor with further queries or concerns to raise these specific areas with the Chair; the Chair to communicate specific queries and concerns from governors to the Clerk who will pass them to the CEO to liaise with the Board; any changes will need to be put to the board to approve.*

**OTHER ITEMS**

**14. AOB:** a governor asked if the school provides information about the swimming awards/qualifications gained through school based training, which might encourage parents to contribute to the pool costs. The HT said in-
school awards are made and that she will publish the detail of these for parents. *Action: details of swimming awards / qualifications available to be communicated to parents.*

15. Date of and time next meeting is Wednesday 22\textsuperscript{nd} June 2016, 6.30p.m.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Signed by Chair  .................................................................................................................  Date  ............................................