

Bearwood Primary & Nursery School

Minutes of Local Governing Board Meeting

Held on Wednesday, 11th November 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

Present:

Mrs Ann Harris (Chair)

Mrs Laura Bennett (Headteacher)

Mrs Carolyn Bennett

Mrs Nicola Best

Mrs Rebecca Bridger

Mrs Ingrid Fido

Mrs Kate Gunstone (arrived 7:00 p.m.)

Mr Michael Sussman

Mrs Helen Todd (left 8:15 p.m.)

In Attendance:

Mrs Patricia Rushton (Clerk)

Mrs Judith Ramsay (EYFS Teacher)

<p>1. Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>1.1 Mrs Harris welcomed Governors to the meeting. Mrs Fido was welcomed as a new Governor.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Sally Wall. Mrs Gunstone sent apologies informing Governors that she would be arriving to the meeting at about 7pm.</p>	
<p>2. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>2.1 Mrs Best informed Governors that her husband is now working for BCP Council under construction. Mrs Best advised that she would add this interest to Governor Hub.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>3.1 Governors agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2020 were an accurate record.</p>	
<p>4. Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1 <u>Declarations of Interest (minute 2.2):</u> Mrs Rushton confirmed that all Governors had reviewed their declarations of interest.</p> <p>4.2 <u>Appointment of Co-opted Governor (minute 3.2):</u> It was confirmed to Mrs Fido that she had been appointed as Co-opted Governor.</p> <p>4.3 <u>Distribution List and Governor Hub (minute 3.2):</u> Mrs Rushton confirmed that Mrs Fido had been added to the distribution list and Governor Hub.</p> <p>4.4 <u>Baseline Pilot Presentation (minute 6.2):</u> It was noted that Mrs Ramsay was in attendance to discuss the baseline pilot with Governors.</p>	

<p>4.5 <u>Finance Handbook (minute 6.48)</u>: Mrs Bennett advised that she would arrange for the Finance Handbook to be sent to Mr Sussman so this can be reviewed. Action: Mrs Bennett and Mr Sussman.</p> <p>4.6 <u>Skills Audit (minute 6.50)</u>: Mrs Harris advised that she would distribute the skills audit to Governors. Action: Mrs Harris.</p> <p>4.7 <u>Safeguarding PowerPoint (minute 7.2)</u>: Mrs Rushton confirmed that the Hamwic safeguarding PowerPoint had been sent to Governors and all Governors had confirmed that the PowerPoint had been viewed and that Keeping Children Safe in Education had been read.</p> <p>4.8 <u>Governor Questioning (minute 7.4)</u>: Mrs Rushton advised that a list of questions had been found on Governor Hub and sent to Governors.</p>	<p>Mrs Bennett & Mr Sussman</p> <p>Mrs Harris</p>
<p>5. Presentation on Baseline Pilot – Judith Ramsay</p> <p>5.1 Mrs Ramsay explained that the school had taken on the early adopter baseline to trial for this year. Next year this will be a statutory requirement. Mrs Ramsay explained the reasons behind the change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved outcomes for five year olds, especially early language and literacy • Reduced workload for teachers. <p>5.2 Mrs Ramsay explained that the main changes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Development Matters document. This was previously hierarchical and is now about a typical child, the concept being that children should be achieving certain skills according to their age. • The focus is on depth of learning and the knowledge and skills to be learned rather than superficial coverage. This is about ensuring that the teacher equips the children with the knowledge and skills for the next year at school. • As before, there are 17 Early Learning Goals, however: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Speaking and Listening are now separate ○ Personal, Social & Emotional Development (PSED) now includes self-regulation ○ Physical development includes both gross and fine motor skills ○ Literacy includes comprehension ○ Maths includes only number but with a deep understanding of number to 10. ○ Natural world has its own Early Learning Goal ○ There is no longer any Technology or Shape, Space and Measures. These areas will still need to be taught but not assessed. <p>5.3 With regard to assessment, Mrs Ramsay explained that the Government have not yet decided what assessment will look like. The new scheme does not include the tracking of children from 30 to 50 months or 40 to 60 months and there is no external moderation. Instead, children will be assessed on whether they are on</p>	

track or not on track based on the typical child. There is no exceeding level but there will be a focus on greater depth.

- 5.4 Governors were advised that Hamwic only want data on the Prime Areas of Learning, i.e. Communications and Language, PSED and Physical Development, as these are the building blocks for future learning. Other areas, such as Phonics and Maths, will only be tracked internally.
- 5.5 Mrs Ramsay explained that the purpose of data collection is to inform planning. Evidence will only be collected for those children who are not on track. Governors were advised that if quality first teaching is in place then the children who are on track on entry to the school will remain on track. The school will not be required to produce detailed learning journals for each child as this is no longer considered to be good practice.
- 5.6 Mrs Ramsay informed Governors that teachers will not be observing the children, but will instead be using this time to play alongside the children and to target their learning.
- 5.7 Governors were advised that the purpose of tracking is to ensure that all children achieve the Early Learning Goals and those not on track are tracked to ensure that the milestones are achieved.
- 5.8 Mrs Ramsay advised that whilst no Government guidance has been received, Hamwic have done a baseline on the three Prime Areas of Learning. Data has already been collected on those children that are on track or not on track. The biggest gaps are in Communication and Language.
- 5.9 *It was questioned whether if the children were not identified as not being on track there was a danger of them not meeting the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year.* Mrs Ramsay advised that teachers had identified those children that were not on track so we know the areas that need work for each child.
- 5.10 Governors were advised that teachers looked deeper at each child and progress meetings are held with Mrs Bennett and Mrs Wall every two weeks to discuss the provision in place for those children that are not on track and the intervention strategies that are being used. Governors were advised that those children not on track were constantly being assessed by teachers.
- 5.11 Mrs Ramsay advised that children's Physical Development is low, especially amongst many of the boys, so they are doing lots of painting and playing outside. Some of the children also lack imagination so there is a focus on story lines.
- 5.12 Mrs Ramsay advised that phonics is being taught daily. Adult led activities are being done every day. Staff are focused on the individual needs of the children.
- 5.13 Mrs Ramsay advised that Hamwic are putting together progression models and these will be used to provide an overview of the knowledge and skills that the school should be teaching. A look has been taken at the curriculum and what we want to teach. It is not known as yet what a typical child will look like at the end of each term and so Bearwood is working with other schools on this.
- 5.14 *It was asked how Mrs Ramsay felt about not having an assessment of 'exceeded'.* Mrs Ramsay advised that there is no difference with regard to the day to day teaching as teachers want every child to achieve and should be challenging each

child. The focus when teaching is on the child's next step. With regard to the more able children, the focus is on the characteristics of learning and so teaching will focus on developing children's independence, open thinking and problem solving skills so they should be able to achieve greater depth.

- 5.15 *It was questioned whether there was a risk to the teaching if the Government make changes given this is only a trial.* Mrs Ramsay explained that this way of working feels like good practice. Teachers get to spend time with the children and teach them rather than observe. It was considered that nothing would be lost if the Government made changes.
- 5.16 *It was questioned whether there were issues around the school not being externally moderated under the new system.* Mrs Bennett advised that she had some anxieties with not being externally moderated as it was felt that it can be difficult to know whether children are working at the expected levels. However, Hamwic are involved and are happy to lead the group and to act as mentor to schools. Mrs Bennett assured Governors that the children are coming on 'in leaps and bounds' and there is strong evidence in class of quality first teaching taking place. The fortnightly meetings have been very useful. Mrs Bennett assured Governors that the learning is very fine-tuned.
- 5.17 Mrs Bennett went on to explain that the focus across the school is on the bottom 20% of children and these children are discussed at accountability meetings.
- 5.18 It was commented that it would be interesting to see how these children progress as they move through the school. It was further commented that the new way of working feels like the mastery curriculum
- 5.19 *It was questioned whether the aim of reducing workload has been achieved.* Mrs Ramsay advised that the work is different as there is no need to collect evidence and teachers were now able to see how the children had developed. It was considered that previously the workload was heavy, whilst now it is more child centred and about pushing each child on. It is very clear what the teacher is doing and why.
- 5.20 *It was questioned how the changes had impacted on Mrs Ramsay, Mrs Wall and Mrs Bennett.* Mrs Bennett advised that the timings of the fortnightly meetings are being worked on. The progress reports were taking a long time and as staff have now identified those children that are not on track it is expected that the process will be refined as the time progresses. It was considered that initially the workload had increased, but this is expected to reduce once refined. It was commented by a Governor that often management by exception, whether this is positive or negative, can be helpful.
- 5.21 Mrs Ramsay advised that the baseline came out at the end of October this year but she expected this to be in the summer in future.
- 5.22 *It was questioned whether it was expected that this new way of working would help with the transition to Year 1.* Mrs Ramsay advised that the work undertaken aims at getting the children ready for Year 1, especially in respect of the vocabulary used. As the teaching is more focused on the characteristics of learning, e.g. independence, negotiation, problem solving, it is expected that children will increase their stamina and independence and be more ready on entry to Year 1.

<p>Mrs Bennett assured Governors that it felt as though the school were getting things right.</p> <p>5.23 <i>It was questioned whether the school had contacted parents to obtain their views on the children being part of a pilot scheme.</i> Mrs Ramsay advised that parents were sent a letter and the school has also held parents' evening. The parents are impressed with their children's learning and their levels of independence. Parents feel that the children are progressing quickly.</p> <p>5.24 <i>It was asked as to how easy it was for the children to potentially fall through the cracks as staff are not observing to the same level.</i> Mrs Ramsay assured Governors that this cannot happen because if you know where the children need to go, staff can plan to reflect the needs of the children; the gaps then become evident. The fortnightly meetings focus on every child so there is less chance of a child being missed than previously. The focus is also on those children that are not on track so children falling behind cannot happen.</p> <p>5.25 Thanks were expressed to Mrs Ramsay for attending this meeting.</p>	
<p>6. Headteacher's Report</p> <p>6.1 <u>Pupil Numbers:</u> <i>It was commented that pupil numbers are looking good and questioned whether there was any reason why the numbers in nursery were very low.</i> Mrs Bennett advised that the pre school was full and the numbers in nursery are increasing. It was considered that some children were being kept at home due to Covid at this current time.</p> <p>6.2 Mrs Bennett advised that there is a staff implication once the numbers of children exceed 39 in EYFS as the school will need to employ additional staff. Currently in EYFS, the school has Mrs Ramsay, Mrs Gunstone, an HLTA and a TA. One member of staff is currently on maternity leave and there is also a student but she cannot count towards the staffing ratios. Only two of the children currently in nursery will move to Reception next year and the rest will remain in nursery for a further year. It was noted that Bearwood nursery children make good progress compared to those from other pre-school provision.</p> <p>6.3 Governors were advised that the candidate for the Pupil Engagement & Welfare Officer post comes from an Early Help background.</p> <p>6.4 <i>It was questioned whether the school knew if numbers in nursery would increase. It was further questioned whether numbers would increase further if the nursery was open for longer hours.</i> Mrs Bennett advised that further pupils are expected in the spring term. Mrs Bennett explained that if the nursery is open for longer hours then there will be staffing implications and there is a need to find a balance between cost and income. It may be possible to work with the pre school to increase hours.</p> <p>6.5 <u>Attendance:</u> Mrs Bennett advised that attendance is challenging at present due to Covid. Persistent absence is looking high, but this is due to the number of children arriving to school late. Mrs Bennett acknowledged that it was difficult for some parents to get their children in to school on time, but explained that the children need to be in school promptly to avoid missing the start of lessons. A</p>	

letter is being sent to parents to encourage and support them to get their children in to school on time.

- 6.6 Mrs Bennett advised that she is currently the school's Attendance Lead and is working on fast track appointments to deal with the attendance issues. It was explained that it was challenging as some parents were anxious about sending their children to school; the school needs to reassure those parents that the school is doing all that it can to reduce the spread of Covid. Governors were advised that a child in Year 1 tested positive.
- 6.7 *Mrs Bennett was asked for her justification for closing the school early on a Friday afternoon.* Mrs Bennett advised that Hamwic agreed with the decision. Governors were advised that the school has a large number of staff that are extremely clinically vulnerable and so it was decided to put remote learning in place for Friday afternoons so that extra protective measures can be put in place for the rest of the four-week lockdown period. Mrs Bennett advised that she has to protect the staff and the children, so a deep clean is being completed at the end of each week. Governors were advised that not many staff have had to self-isolate so far.
- 6.8 *It was questioned whether any parents had raised concerns about the Friday early closure.* Mrs Bennett advised that there have been some issues around key workers and whether the school is providing for key workers. This includes a request from another local school who has a member of staff with a child at Bearwood. The school has received three emails from parents seeking clarification as to the reasons behind the decision to close early on Friday. All parents were happy with the response.
- 6.9 *A Governor questioned what the remote learning would look like.* Mrs Bennett advised that teachers will be using the same platform as previously. A Governor requested that the school ensure that all parents can access this. Concern was raised that the remote learning opportunities have not been communicated to all year groups and Mrs Bennett advised that she would ensure that staff had communicated the information to their parents by the end of the following day.
- 6.10 *A question was raised about those children who take unauthorised absence and the decision not to provide them with remote learning. It was further questioned whether this decision was a Hamwic policy or a local policy.* Mrs Bennett advised that this was a Hamwic Policy. Mrs Bennett explained that if a family is vulnerable the school can give them work, and in other cases the families are being signposted to appropriate places to find work. Mrs Bennett assured Governors that the school wanted the children back at school so are not encouraging unauthorised absence. It was considered that signposting provided a good compromise.
- 6.11 *It was asked whether the school was providing remote learning for those children that were self-isolating.* Mrs Bennett assured Governors that home learning is provided as soon as the school is made aware. There are some children who "Zoom" into lessons.

- 6.12 *It was questioned whether the staff were ready to deliver remote learning* and Mrs Bennett confirmed that all staff were fully trained, prepared and ready to deliver when required.
- 6.13 *It was asked whether there were any children who do not have access to laptops and wifi.* Mrs Bennett advised that the school has five laptops out on loan and the ICT Technician is doing a survey of parents to ensure they all have appropriate provision. Teachers have also delivered home learning packs to some families.
- 6.14 *Referring to children who took unauthorised absence, it was asked whether these children were becoming reported as Children Missing Education given that the decision not to attend rested with the parents.* Mrs Bennett confirmed that these were recorded as Children Missing Education if there was a certain amount of time not attending school. The school does daily safeguarding phone calls and provides other support to ensure that the children are safe.
- 6.15 *It was asked whether any of these were families that have had issues with safeguarding previously.* Mrs Bennett advised that the school has to notify BCP Council if a vulnerable child is self-isolating and then a plan is put in place.
- 6.16 *It was questioned whether these children were kept on roll* and Mrs Bennett confirmed that the children remained on roll until officially removed by the parent. Mrs Bennett gave Governors an example of where a family were planning to keep their children at home and she had successfully persuaded them to bring their children back to school.
- 6.17 Mrs Bennett advised that the school had two children who had been taken off roll – one who is extremely clinically vulnerable and whose parents decided to home school and a Year 2 pupil who had a younger sibling. In the case of the Year 2 pupil the school contacted the health visitor so that the family were supported by another professional.
- 6.18 SEND: Mrs Bennett advised that additional EHCP applications are being submitted as more vulnerable children join the school. The school needs to ensure that these children have appropriate provision.
- 6.19 Pupil Premium: Mrs Bennett advised that Pupil Premium numbers are increasing. Mrs Gunstone continues to work on Pupil Premium and is aware of the needs of families. Many have concerns around food, money and the cost of school uniform. Often the school is only finding out about these concerns when the children are not coping in school. Social Services are inundated with concerns being raised at present.
- 6.20 *It was noted that one-third of the children in Year 6 were Pupil Premium and questioned what impact this had on the class.* Mrs Bennett advised that some of the PP children in this class are more able. The PP pupils are carefully targeted and tracked to ensure they are performing in line with the non-PP.
- 6.21 *It was further questioned whether these children were receiving their Pupil Premium entitlement.* Mrs Bennett advised that boosters are being used and much of the plan for spending Pupil Premium funding goes towards staffing, including the time of SLT. Governors were assured that Pupil Premium children are getting above and beyond. Mrs Bennett advised that Mrs Gunstone produces a plan which shows the additional provision that each child is receiving. Mrs

Bennett advised that she will be meeting with Mrs Gunstone next week to look at Pupil Premium provision.

- 6.22 Pupil Outcomes: Mrs Bennett advised that the school has started the year well and with a clear focus. In EYFS the baseline has been completed, whilst PUMA and PIRA tests have been completed for all other year groups. PUMA and PIRA provides an analysis which can be used to identify gaps in children's learning. Areas for development have been identified in some year groups and it has been noted that there is a lack of differentiation in some year groups, which is quickly being addressed.
- 6.23 *A question was asked about when the school would expect the full curriculum to be in place for each year group.* Mrs Bennett advised that the Government expected the full curriculum to be taught by Summer 2021. However, the school is aiming to be teaching the full curriculum by December 2020. The Education Endowment Foundation, however, considered that it will take children between 12 and 18 months to catch up. Governors were advised that the school knows there are big gaps in children's learning and wants to follow EYFS pedagogy to address these gaps.
- 6.24 Mrs Bennett advised that in Year 1, 43% of children are on track to pass the phonics test at the end of the year. Staff are focusing on what the children need and ensuring that the basics are in place. Staff are being encouraged to assess what the children need to learn rather than just teach the curriculum.
- 6.25 *It was noted that there were 33 children in Year 3 and hence this was a big class.* Mrs Bennett advised that there are now 31 children in this class. Governors were advised that these children lost a term of learning last year due to COVID and had three teachers in the year before, so much of the school's catch up funding has been directed to this year group.
- 6.26 Governors were assured that the staff are adopting strategies to cater for the needs of all children. Staff are using QR codes to enable the children to access relevant teaching and learning.
- 6.27 *It was questioned whether the school had access to sufficient devices to support this strategy* and Mrs Bennett advised that the school does need additional tablets. Governors were advised that the use of QR codes has been seen at another school and really works as it allows the teacher to provide real time feedback, encourages the children to be independent in their learning and puts lots of scaffolding in place for the learning activity.
- 6.28 *It was questioned whether Year 6 were doing PUMA, PIRA and mock SATs.* Mrs Bennett advised that Year 6 must do the PUMA and PIRA tests as this is Hamwic Policy. Governors were advised that the PUMA and PIRA tests show high scores whereas the mock SATs were much lower. Mock SATS would only be completed twice during the year.
- 6.29 Early Years Pilot: Governors were informed that the school had signed up to the NELI pilot, an early literacy programme.
- 6.30 Maths: Mrs Bennett advised that Hamwic are funding a Teaching Maths project. Governors were advised that the school is struggling to ensure good progress in

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<p>Maths although its attainment is good. The first meeting of this group was last week.</p> <p>6.31 <u>Ofsted</u>: Mrs Bennett advised that the letter has been received following the recent visit from Ofsted. It was commented that the letter was very positive.</p> <p>6.32 <u>Single Plan</u>: Mrs Bennett advised that Hamwic have suggested that the single plan should include fewer objectives.</p> <p>6.33 <u>Car Parking</u>: Mrs Bennett advised that the school was working with the Local Authority regarding parking in the local area.</p> <p>6.34 <u>Safeguarding</u>: Mrs Bennett advised that a higher number of cases are being referred to Social Care. <i>It was questioned how this compared to other local schools</i> and Mrs Bennett confirmed that there had been a significant increase in other schools also. It was commented that there are many parents who are stressed and anxious at this time.</p> <p>6.35 <u>Health and Safety</u>: Mrs Bennett reported that the school had undertaken a successful fire drill.</p> <p>6.36 <u>Pay Committee</u>: Governors were advised that the Pay Committee had met and reviewed teacher pay.</p> <p>6.37 <u>Staffing</u>: Mrs Bennett reported that the school's new Receptionist has been employed.</p> <p>6.38 Mrs Bennett advised that TA provision across the school will be reviewed and a staffing plan brought to the next meeting. Action: Mrs Bennett. Mrs Rushton to add to the agenda for the next meeting. Action: Mrs Rushton.</p>	<p>Mrs Bennett Mrs Rushton</p>
<p>7. Governance</p> <p>7.1 Mrs Harris drew attention to the Raising Achievement Plan, advising Governors that governance activities had been included on this plan. Governors were informed that currently they can only talk to teachers on the phone or via Zoom, but there are activities that Governors should be undertaking. It was noted that some activities had already been completed.</p> <p>7.2 It was agreed that Mrs Harris and Mrs Best would meet to allocate tasks to each Governor and would provide guidance on how to complete the task if this was felt appropriate. Action: Mrs Harris and Mrs Best. It was suggested that where possible these tasks should be completed before the end of term and a note of visit written. Action: All Governors.</p> <p>7.3 MS agreed to continue with the finance activities already planned, i.e. review of the Finance Handbook and the finance reports. It was suggested that Mr Sussman could also work with Mrs Bennett and Mr Leddin in reviewing TA provision across the school. Action: Mr Sussman</p>	<p>Mrs Harris & Mrs Best All Governors Mr Sussman</p>
<p>8. Admissions Policy 2022/23</p> <p>8.1 Mrs Bennett advised that the school has to determine its own Admissions Policy. It is proposed that the policy is not changed, although there are a number of</p>	

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<p>schools that have changed their Admissions Policy this year. Governors agreed to approve the Admissions Policy for 2022/23.</p>	
<p>9. Hamwic Policies</p> <p>9.1 The following policies were brought to the attention of Governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy • Complaints Policy and Procedure • Staff Grievance Policy • Staff Discipline Policy • Staff Capability Policy <p>9.2 Governors noted the above policies.</p>	
<p>10. Any Other Business</p> <p>10.1 To assist with a reduction in workload, Mr Sussman offered to work with Mrs Bennett to see if there was a better way of presenting data, perhaps graphically so that it was easier for Governors to view the data.</p> <p>10.2 It was suggested that Governors could submit questions in advance of the meeting. It would be assumed that Governors have read the papers before coming to the meeting. It was suggested that questions could be shared online so that all Governors could see the questions as this could spark ideas for other questions. The Clerk advised that Governor Hub could be used for sharing questions.</p> <p>10.3 It was agreed that Governors would think about how questions could be raised in advance and share their thoughts. Action: All Governors.</p>	<p>All Governors</p>
<p>11. Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>11.1 The next meeting is due to be held on Monday, 25th January 2021 at 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>11.2 The meeting closed at 8:35 p.m.</p>	

END OF MINUTES

Action List

Minute No.	Action	Governor	Date
4.5	To arrange for the Finance Handbook to be sent to Mr Sussman. To review the Finance Handbook.	Mrs Bennett Mr Sussman	Jan 21 Jan 21
4.6	To distribute a skills audit for completion by Governors.	Mrs Harris	Jan 21
6.38	To review TA provision across the school and bring a staffing plan to the next meeting. To add the staffing plan to the agenda for the next meeting.	Mrs Bennett Mrs Rushton	Jan 21 Jan 21
7.2	To meet to allocate tasks as noted in the Raising Achievement Plan to all Governors. To undertake tasks once allocated.	Mrs Harris & Mrs Best All Governors	Nov 20 Dec 20
7.3	To work with Mrs Bennett and Mr Leddin in reviewing TA provision across the school.	Mr Sussman	Dec 20
10.3	To think about how Governors could share questions to bring to the meeting.	All Governors	Jan 20