

**Learning, Enjoying & Succeeding Together**

**The Local Governing Board of**

# **Bearwood Primary & Nursery School**

**Minutes of Local Governing Board Meeting**  
**Held on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom**

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**Present:**

Mrs Ann Harris (Chair)

Mrs Rebecca Bridger

Mrs Laura Bennett (Headteacher)

Mrs Ingrid Fido

Mrs Nicola Best

Mrs Sally Wall

**In Attendance:**

Mrs Patricia Rushton (Clerk)

<p><b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>1.1 Mrs Harris welcomed Governors to the meeting.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from Miss Kate Webster.</p>	
<p><b>2. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>2.1 No declarations of interest were made for this meeting.</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of the Last Meeting</b></p> <p>3.1 It was requested that minute 8.4 is amended to indicate that it relates to Covid absences.</p> <p>3.2 It was agreed that, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021 were an accurate record.</p>	
<p><b>4. Matters Arising</b></p> <p>4.1 <u>Parent Governor Advert (Minute 3.1)</u>: Governors were advised that we would be seeking a Parent Governor.</p> <p>4.2 <u>Teaching and Learning Handbook (Minute 6.12)</u>: It was confirmed that the handbook had been sent out to Governors.</p> <p>4.3 <u>SEND Policy (Minute 8.3)</u>: Governors were advised that the SEND Policy had been sent to Governors.</p> <p>4.4 <u>Attendance Policy (Minute 8.4)</u>: Mrs Bennett advised that the section in the Attendance Policy relating to the coding of Covid related absences had been retained.</p>	
<p><b>5. Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>5.1 Mrs Bennett's report was sent to Governors prior to the meeting and invited questions from Governors.</p>	

- 5.2 *Looking at the summary of predictions for Year 1 phonics, it was questioned why the Year 1 predictions have fallen this year and are not predicted to rise again for 2022.* Mrs Bennett advised that this is cohort specific and is tracked back to outcomes in EYFS when 83% of children achieved a good level of development. The data now shows that 87% are predicted to pass their phonics at the end of Year 1.
- 5.3 Governors were advised that the data is dependent on each child. The DfE target for the end of Year 1 phonics is 95%, and this shows the need to get it right in early years. It was recognised that there are always groups of children that need to catch up, so the school is trying to change the mind set so that a high percentage of children are getting a good level of development. This year, there are 87% of children achieving a good level of development, so the target has been set for this for both reading and a good level of development. It is considered that the school will potentially get 95% if two or three children achieve the required standard in Year 1.
- 5.4 *It was questioned why the predictions for greater depth children in Year 1 are falling in all areas. It was further questioned whether this is due to the pandemic or cohort related.* Mrs Bennett explained that this was related to the pandemic and that whilst the school have been trying to keep the children on track with their learning it has been harder for those at greater depth. The school is now trying to build on the numbers of greater depth children as it is not able to allow any of these children to fall off the radar. Governors were advised that if the school tracks back to EYFS then there are some children who are falling behind and some children who have moved to expected rather than greater depth. Mrs Bennett advised that whilst the children are doing some catching up, some are not likely to be greater depth by the end of the year.
- 5.5 Mrs Bennett advised that the prediction for the end of year 6 is now 84% due to a child leaving. It was explained that it was unclear whether the lower predictions were reflected in other schools within the Trust. Mrs Harris suggested that it was likely that there has been a drop nationally, so there has likely also been a drop across the Trust.
- 5.6 Mrs Bennett advised that the Autumn 1 data drop has been done and shows an interesting picture. The data has been triangulated in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 1 there has been a drop of 5 children in reading, 4 in writing and 4 in Maths. These are children that were on the cusp of getting a good level of development in EYFS. The school is now looking at teaching practice to see if they had just achieved a good level of development and then fallen. Other children have maintained their prediction or gone up. Governors were advised that during a scrutiny last week some common trends were seen, but it was hoped that most children would be back on track by Christmas.
- 5.7 *It was questioned whether it was expected that these younger children would fall back during the pandemic.* Mrs Bennett advised that the children that suffered the most were Year 1 and this would be in line as these children are now Year 2. The children have missed opportunities, especially around the development of speech and language. Governors were advised that the lower predictions were

due to Covid, but the children are being tracked to ensure they are now given the opportunities they need.

- 5.8 *It was noted that waiting list numbers seem to be going down or withdrawn, and questioned whether the reasons for this are known.* Governors were advised that as a one form entry school that are situations where the school is able to offer a place in one year group but not another, especially if parents want a place in KS1. The school has contacted the Local Authority to ascertain the possibility of becoming a two form entry school, but have been told that there are already too many schools nearby for Bearwood to be a two form entry school. Governors were further advised that the Local Authority have changed the way in which the waiting lists operate and now parents need to reapply each year. This means if parents want a place in September they need to reapply by June, otherwise they will drop off the waiting list. This is now included in the school's Admissions Policy so that parents are aware of this.
- 5.9 Mrs Bennett advised that Nursery is full and Peter is looking at whether it is financially viable to take over the Preschool from September, which would allow the school to potentially accommodate increased numbers of children.
- 5.10 *It was noted that five families were recorded as taking holidays and it was questioned whether there were particular circumstances.* Mrs Bennett assured Governors that holidays were not being authorised, although some families are just taking holidays. Parents have been told that holidays would be unauthorised and they could be fined. It was noted that some families are choosing to see grandparents in another country and it was acknowledged that this was a difficult situation.
- 5.11 *It was questioned how the reinstatement of bubbles since after half term was going.* Governors were advised that children were being kept in their classrooms and assemblies and staff meetings were being held over Zoom. Staff have spoken to the children about being responsible and ensuring that they socially distance themselves. Hamwic have suggested that schools implement bubbles for the first two weeks.
- 5.12 Mrs Bennett advised that the school has a Covid case in Nursery and Reception and one member of staff has Covid. It was recognised that whilst the number of cases in school are low, locally cases are going up, so the school will not be returning to normal. It was considered that staggered starts and lunchtimes impact on learning. The children are not zoned off outside and this is working well.
- 5.13 Mrs Bennett advised that the Shakespeare Company are coming in soon and the actors will be wearing masks. The school does not want to cancel this visit given its positive impact on the children's learning experiences, so the school may have fewer year groups in the hall during the performance.
- 5.14 Mrs Bennett advised that whilst the school has reinstated bubbles, this is not as rigorous as previously and she is happy that the measures in place are sufficient.
- 5.15 *It was questioned as to how often the Covid risk assessment is reviewed.* Mrs Bennett advised that the risk assessment and Covid is always on her mind. Staff are wearing masks around school. Mrs Bennett assured Governors that she

continues to monitor the situation and assesses the impact of the measures in place.

- 5.16 *It was noted that there had been an increase in Covid cases locally whilst attendance still looks strong. It was questioned whether Covid had started to impact on attendance.* Mrs Bennett advised that attendance needs a closer look to see if the trends are Covid related by removing Covid related absences from the data. It was suggested that the Trust possibly needs to review the data for comparison purposes. The school will also need to look to see if families are regularly absent due to Covid testing and parents keeping their children off school for tests. It was noted that some families are taking a lot of time out of school. The school has some vulnerable children attending school, but there are one or two common offenders taking time out of school. The school is trying to help those families as best it can.
- 5.17 *It was noted that Hamwic have recommended that the school look at phonic schemes in the autumn term, and questioned whether this was now in place. It was further questioned, if a scheme was in place, whether any impact was evident.* Mrs Bennett advised that the guidance around the teaching of phonics from the DfE has changed. In the summer term, a decision was made by Mrs Wall and Mrs Guarguaglini to use Phonic Shed and this has been trialled. During the Hamwic audit it was felt that the teaching of phonics was harder work than it should have been and there were issues with technology and with the children learning the pictures rather than the sounds. The school have looked at another phonics programme and is seeing the impact of this in EYFS, Years 1 and 2. It was considered that it had taken a lot of work to get right and that a lot of resources needed to be prepared. Staff also need to undertake training and this will be done this half term with a view to starting the new phonics programme in January. Governors were advised that this scheme is good as the language is common throughout each year group.
- 5.18 *It was noted that the report says the school should 'ensure pupils are not given the opportunity to opt out by a lack of contribution to whole class inputs and discussions...'* Mrs Bennett advised that with regard to opting out, the school uses the Rosenshine principles of active learning, for example, when reading a whole class text the children could opt out by thinking about something else, so teachers get the children to do a task whilst reading such as listening out for something or writing down words they don't understand. This will be revisited during an INSET day in September. Governors were assured that staff ensure that the children do not get an opportunity to opt out.
- 5.19 *It was further questioned what strategies teachers are using to ensure that every child takes part in the lesson and whether this is partly why the quality of education is graded light green.* Mrs Bennett advised that the quality of education is graded light green as Hamwic were looking at the whole curriculum. Art did really well, but staff are now looking at the next level of detail to see what Art looks like in each year group. Staff have looked at the progression map and added detail for each year group to show the progression of skills. Mrs Bennett advised that the school would not expect all of the audit to be dark green as there are always aspects that can be improved. It was explained that whilst green is good, dark

green is securely good, whilst light green is good with some improvements needed.

- 5.20 *It was questioned whether the school saw a link between the relatively small number of SEND children being excluded and the lack of engagement.* Mrs Bennett advised that the three children who were excluded were all SEND and Pupil premium and have very specific complex needs, rather than a lack of engagement. One of these children was in Year 6 and has moved to a secondary school. This has been unsuccessful so parents are looking at sending him to a special school. One child was inherited from another school and initially was attending part-time but is now full-time so this move has been successful. Another child is in Year 6 and will be moving to a secondary school. It was considered unlikely that this move will be successful and that he will end up in a special school. Mrs Wall explained to Governors that secondary schools do not offer the same level of provision as primary schools and many only offer an academic curriculum. Mrs Wall explained that one pupil who the school thought would be unsuccessful in a mainstream secondary school has been successful.
- 5.21 Mrs Bennett advised that one other child has been excluded and this child is in Year 1 and has very complex needs. Mrs Bennett assured Governors that children are only excluded if she is unable to keep the child and/or other children safe. Governors were advised that four staff are being trained in positive handling and de-escalation techniques. The training also covers safe restraint which will only be undertaken if other strategies have not worked. This training will take place in December.
- 5.22 *An interesting comment “adult time is maximised” was noted within the Hamwic audit and questioned the reasoning behind that statement.* Mrs Bennett advised that adult time is teaching assistants. Hamwic is running TA training across three months to ensure TAs are effective. Mrs Bennett explained that teachers have got into a Covid rut, as they have become used to social distancing and have not been taking groups of children. Teachers have been reminded of the strategies that can be used and that instead of going round and providing real time feedback they should not be concerned about taking off a group of children and working with them.
- 5.23 *Looking at monitoring, it was questioned whether the school had pulled back on this a little for this half term.* Mrs Bennett advised that a lot was going on last term and it was the first time that the children were back in school without Covid restrictions. It was felt that the school needed to assess where the children were and so SLT in class often, but this has now been pulled back.
- 5.24 *Looking at the summary of National data on Pupil Premium and SEND it was noted that speech and language is the most common difficulty nationally. It was questioned how the school compared to the national.* Governors were advised that it was not known how the school compared to national as no statistics comparing schools is produced by the DfE. Mrs Wall agreed to calculate the school’s percentage to see how the school compared to the national average. **Action: Mrs Wall.**
- 5.25 *It was noted that at the end of 2020/21, 67% of Pupil Premium EYFS children were still not on track and questioned whether additional support had been continued*

Mrs Wall

<p><i>for these children in Year 1.</i> Mrs Bennett advised that a staff meeting has focused on Pupil Premium children and so staff are being challenging on these children, asking about the barriers to learning and what interventions have been tried. Mrs Bennett met with Mrs Wall and Miss Prince yesterday and looked at the different aspects of provision and how this could be improved. The next step is for staff to look at their Pupil Premium children and the provision in place. Governors were advised that teachers and TAs know who the Pupil Premium children are and the provision in place. Governors were assured that whilst provision is in place, staff need to ensure that it is rigorous enough. It was felt that often teachers tend to reward outcome rather than effort and staff need to ensure that the children are being given the right messages.</p> <p>5.26 Mrs Bennett advised that the audit report has not raised any areas for improvement that are classed as ‘musts’, although the report does include some ‘shoulds’. The school were congratulated by a Governor for the Hamwic internal audit.</p>	
<p><b>6. Governance</b></p> <p>6.1 <u>Chair of Governors’ Meetings with Headteacher:</u> Mrs Harris advised that recent meetings have focused on staffing, setting the agenda for this meeting and how the changes in the roles of Governors have informed changes to the Schedule of Accountability. Mrs Harris and Mrs Bennett have also discussed the Hamwic audit and staffing in the future. These discussions have all come through in Governing Board meetings.</p> <p>6.2 Mrs Bridger advised that she has spoken to Mrs Bennett and Mrs Wall and had looked at the displays around school and what went on in the classrooms. Mrs Bridger has spoken to Mrs Bennett as the lead on the curriculum to discuss progression in the curriculum from Years 1 to 6. They also discussed the change from ‘survival mode’ that was in place during Covid and that staff are now teaching the full curriculum. Governors were advised that the school’s curriculum strengths are Art and History and the key areas for development are Music and Geography. Mrs Bridger advised that Mrs Bennett is supporting subject leads to empower them and ensure they use their time well. Lesson observations are being undertaken and the planning is in line with the curriculum. Work samples are being collected to show progression. Mrs Bridger reported that the Art subject leader is able to identify the strongest elements of her subject and a check has been done to see that it matches what Hamwic were saying.</p> <p>6.3 Mrs Bennett read a section from the audit report and suggested that Mrs Bridger look at some of the Art. Mrs Bridger will write a short note of visit to confirm that she has cross referenced her findings with those in the Hamwic report. <b>Action: Mrs Bridger.</b></p> <p>6.4 Mrs Bridger advised that she had met with Mrs Wall to discuss the EHCPs and how the school meets the needs of SEND children. Governors were advised that Mrs Wall had advised Mrs Bridger that she carefully matches the skills of the TA to the children. EHCPs are updated at least annually and the IEPs are regularly updated. Governors were advised that the staff have high expectations of the children and overall it came across that the school fosters the belonging of EHCP children in the</p>	<p><b>Mrs Bridger</b></p>

classroom and they are included as much as possible. Two children in school currently have EHCPs, both in Year 6. Both these children are succeeding and are integrated into the classroom and the school. Mrs Bridger advised that she would review again later in the year.

- 6.5 Mrs Best advised that she had met with Mrs Bennett to discuss exclusions, which have been covered already in this meeting. It was considered that the school was doing all that it could. Mrs Bennett has spoken to Longspee regarding one pupil and they have visited Bearwood.
- 6.6 Mrs Best advised that she had discussed the Pupil Premium strategy with Mrs Bennett and how the school ensures that all children are identified if they are eligible. It was considered that the main challenge is due to Covid as the gap has increased between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium children and the school is looking at how the gap can be closed. The attendance of Pupil Premium children is also lower and the staff are finding ways to encourage the attendance of these children. Decisions have been made as to how the school can best spend its Pupil Premium Grant.
- 6.7 Mrs Best advised that she had met with Mr Leddin regarding the Single Central Record and they had gone through a range of questions. This meeting was held over Teams and Mr Leddin was able to show Mrs Best the Single Central Record over Teams. It was noted that there was one gap in the Single Central Record but this is being addressed. Mrs Best advised that all checks except the DBS had been completed and in the meantime this member of staff is not left alone with children.
- 6.8 Mrs Best advised that the Paragon system had been introduced allowing all staff to record online that they had read various policies and documents. It was noted that not all staff had done this yet, but a reminder will be sent out to staff where required. Mrs Best will follow this up with Mr Leddin to ensure that all staff have confirmed they have read the required documents. **Action: Mrs Best to follow up with Mr Leddin.**
- 6.9 Mrs Best advised that she had reviewed the Safeguarding Policy with Mrs Bennett to ensure that the changes to KCSIE had been included. Mrs Harris confirmed that she had looked at how the school's other policies and procedures fitted with KCSIE. It was clear that safeguarding is evident in all policies throughout the school, with the exception of finance and remissions. It was considered that this was a strong feature of the school. Mrs Best confirmed that she had spoken to some teachers about the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. Mrs Bennett has also done safeguarding training with new teachers and with two student teachers.
- 6.10 Mrs Harris confirmed that all teachers had been appraised and their pay progression has been agreed. TA appraisal will take place in the spring term and Mrs Bennett's appraisal will be done later this term. Governors were advised that the Pay Policy had been sent to the Pay Committee.
- 6.11 Mrs Harris advised that she had deferred listening to the children read as she would want to get into school to do this.

Mrs Best

<p><b>7. Ratification of Policies</b></p> <p>7.1 <u>Nursery Admissions Policy</u>: Governors were advised that this policy had been produced by the school as some parents were reserving places many weeks in advance which meant that the school was not maximising its capacity. A protocol has now been put in place to minimise the risk of parents doing this in future. Governors unanimously agreed to the Nursery Admissions Policy.</p> <p>7.2 <u>Admissions Policy 2023/24</u>: It was noted that page 4 of the Admissions Policy needed the school name to be inserted and it was suggested that the secondary information is deleted. Subject to these amendments, Governors unanimously agreed to ratify this policy.</p> <p>7.3 <u>Early Career Teachers Policy</u>: Governors were advised that this was a statutory policy and whilst the school currently had no Early Career Teachers, it may possibly recruit one from January. Governors unanimously agreed to ratify this policy.</p>	
<p><b>8. Any Other Business</b></p> <p>8.1 It was noted that this was the last LGB meeting for Mrs Wall as she will be going on secondment. Governors were advised that parents have been informed. Governors wished Mrs Wall the best for the future.</p>	
<p><b>9. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>9.1 The next meeting is due to be held on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Meeting closed 07:50 p.m.</p>	

**END OF MINUTES**

**Action List**

Minute No.	Action	Governor	Date
Minute 5.24	To calculate the school's percentage of speech and language SEND children to see how the school compared nationally	Mrs Wall	Dec 21
Minute 6.3	To write a note of visit to report that she had cross referenced the Hamwic audit to her findings	Mrs Bridger	Dec 21
Minute 6.8	To follow up with Mr Leddin on whether staff had recorded on Paragon that they had read specified policies and documents	Mrs Best	Dec 21