

FERN HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Richmond Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT2 5PE

**Minutes of the Full Governing Body (“FGB”) meeting
held at the school and virtually on Thursday 16th July 2020 at 6.30pm.**

Constitution, Membership and Attendance – (Bold=absent)

LA - 1	PARENTS - 2	CO-OPTED – 6	ASSOCIATE MEMBER- 3	STAFF – 2
<i>Claire Strong (CS)</i>	<i>Rob Terry (RT)</i>	Susan Dean (SD) CHAIR	Rachael Crook (RC)	Adam Scott (AS)
	Alan Waterman (AW)	Hugh Kincaid (HK)	Diane Hutchence (DH)	Veronique Torres (VT)
		<i>Dean Morley (DM)</i>	Sam Stephenson (SS)	
		Saphina Sharif (Crocker) (SSC)		
		Marcus Stanton (MS)		
		<i>Jo Tatum (JT)</i>		

Apologies: As above, in bold
Absent without apologies: None
Also attended: Assistant Head, *Anna Davies (AD)*
Francesca Lee (FL) – Clerk

People in italics attended virtually via Googlemeets

1	Welcome and Introductions: SD welcomed everyone to the meeting at 6.40p.m. Apologies for absence, as shown above, were accepted.	ACTIONS
2	Declaration of Business Interests in Agenda Items: None	
3	Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising: The minutes of the previous 14 th January 2020 meeting, having been circulated prior to the meeting, were accepted and signed as a true record. An HTR and governor questions and answers on it had replaced the FGB that had been scheduled for April 2020 at the time of the COVID-19 closure. With regard to matters arising from the January minutes, all points were as per the update given on today’s agenda in the “July 2020 update” column and were either completed or on the agenda for this meeting.	
4	Head teacher’s report It was acknowledged that normally in the FGB July meeting, governors would reflect on the SDP and its outcomes, but understandably, in the light of COVID-19, the SDP had not been the main area of priority. The SLT had therefore, appropriately, not RAG-rated the document for 2019-20. The focus of the meeting today would be to look forward to resuming school in September with all year groups able to return full-time.	

Governors acknowledged firstly the immense job that SLT had carried out so successfully during the pandemic, and noted the letter that SD had written to all FH staff on behalf of governors to express their gratitude.

Governors were also keen to place on record their thanks to KET for their support during the past few months, noting that SD had sent an email to Sophie Cavanagh and Graham Willett thanking them.

The September Reopening Protocol document was discussed and governors agreed they were comfortable that it fulfilled all DfE guidelines and guidance.

SLT explained the logistics of staggering the arrival, departure, break and lunch times had been challenging but that the school were in a good position to welcome all year groups back full-time in September, in class sizes of 30, having already opened for all year groups at different points this term.

They have spoken to Head teacher, Sophie Cavanagh, to ensure that TKA's arrival and departure times would also be staggered to complement FH's.

The Protocol, on which staff had been consulted, will be on the website as of tomorrow, 17th July.

The recommencement of Treetops, the wraparound care provision, was discussed. Bubbles of fifteen would exist within this provision and Governors acknowledged that from a financial perspective, it was important to maximise this provision for the Autumn term. It had been anticipated that there might be an increase in numbers attending Treetops, because there will be no after-school clubs running, but DH had also hypothesised numbers for Treetops could drop as more parents are now working from home and thus do not require childcare.

Regarding Nursery, only full-time children would be permitted to stay for lunch. This is a figure of 7, although 8 more had requested lunch.

The SLT did stress that the Protocol is a working document and not a risk-assessment document as such. There will be more risk-assessment components added in due course, such as a greater emphasis on individual risk assessments being drawn up for staff members at high risk.

Governors questioned what the communication plan was to parents, who could be unsettled by large amounts of potentially conflicting information in the news. SLT confirmed that a letter will go to parents tomorrow regarding INSET day changes (to be discussed later) and the Protocol will be on the website.

Governors congratulated the SLT on such a thorough Protocol. The SLT could take some comfort that the previous Protocol had been a success from an operational perspective and that they had written the September Protocol as thoroughly as possible to welcome back the 706 children at the same time next term.

Governors queried what would happen in the cases where children did not return to school for reasons other than medical ones. It was noted that such absences would be regarded as unauthorised and the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) would become involved as necessary. As a general point, SLT agreed to make reference within the document to the fact that the school's Attendance Policy will apply as normal from September 2020.

Governors were reminded that guidance could of course still change before the return in September, and that should the need arise for governor approval, SD

	<p>would contact the GB during the summer, after she had discussed any matters of urgency with AS.</p> <p>The matter of INSET days was discussed. INSET days will now be Wednesday 2nd September, as previously planned, and also Thursday 3rd September instead of Wednesday 21st October. The SLT had hoped to have three “free” days on top of the 5 annual INSET days given, as this is something the government had spoken about. However, the LA had not supported the school’s proposed move to welcome children back into school on Monday 7th September. The LA had expressed the opinion, in line with government guidance, that children need to be back in school as soon as possible and that some families had struggled with such an extended period of school closure. SLT agreed with this opinion and will communicate to parents that Thursday 3rd September will now be an INSET day to help prepare for the new year ahead. The SLT will provide justification of their reasons for the change to parents. Governors fully supported this change given the current exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Governors asked whether staff could have been asked to come in two days prior to the planned Wednesday 2nd September INSET day, but it was explained that there was not the financial provision for this, nor would it be good for staff morale.</p> <p>AS confirmed that should parents have planned for absence on the October INSET day, which will now be a school day for children, authorised absence will be given.</p> <p><i>CS joins virtually, 7.10pm</i></p> <p>The SDP for 2020-21 will be seen at FGB on 24th September 2020. Its main areas of focus will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum • New assessment system • CONFIDENTIAL <p>AS reiterated the point made at the TLC meeting last week that there would not be a shift from the Five-Year Plan as this remains the long term ambition for FH and he stressed that the SDP 2020-21 would remain aligned to the Five-Year Plan.</p>	<p>FGB Sept 2020 agenda – to present SDP 2020-21</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Finance Pay Panel Update: HK updated governors on the Pay Panel meeting of midday today. A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. There had been no decisions requiring governor challenge and no great movement of staff on the differing pay scales. The Pay Policy had been recently updated and approved by governors at FRP. Governors questioned whether more staff might have been interested in moving up the pay scale but whether COVID had impacted the number of applications for this received. It was explained that the application for movement spans two years, so had not been affected by the pandemic of the last few months. SD requested governors approached her with any further questions they might have on the Pay Panel meeting after today.</p>	

	<p>It was noted that the FRP minutes of 9th July 2020 were on the drive and gave further information about the financial impact of COVID-19. Governors were made aware that the financial impact of COVID on the school would be more likely to be felt in the 2021/22 academic year.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>Governors ratified the revised Pay Policy (as approved by the FRP Committee). It was agreed that the numbering of paragraphs and points would need to be checked on the policy, but all the content was ratified. Communications Officer, Lumia Kenyon, will format and number the document.</p> <p>Governors ratified the Accessibility Policy, which LF had worked on with AW. Governors queried whether actions should state they are “ongoing” (as is currently the case) as opposed to having a fixed deadline. It was noted though that giving a deadline was difficult when each action would be personal to a particular child. It could be amended to state an action was “ongoing and regularly reviewed” or “ongoing as needs arise”. LF will amend the wording on the policy.</p> <p>It was noted that the Financial Procedures Policy had been approved by governors via email during the school closure, hence this was duly ratified today.</p> <p>Governors discussed the new Equality Statement and SLT explained there were now three objectives written for it. In addition to the objectives, evidence must be given to exemplify what the school has done towards those aims for the past two years. Governors advised that the wording would need to be clear to ensure it did not appear that the objectives were listing actual difficulties the school has seen, rather that the school wishes to enhance its procedures in these areas in order to identify whether any problems exist.</p> <p>It was also noted that a review should precede setting the objectives to ensure correct appropriate objectives were chosen.</p> <p>It was concluded that as the policy is a statutory one to display on the school website, the statement, in its current iteration, would be put on the website tomorrow with a holding note to explain that owing to the exceptional current circumstances, the final version of the objectives would follow. It was agreed that by 21st October 2020, AS, SS and SD would have a final version to circulate via email for governor approval, before official approval at TLC on 1st December 2020.</p> <p><i>LF leaves at 7.35pm</i></p> <p>It was acknowledged that Governor approval of the Annex to the Safeguarding Policy had been given via email during the COVID closure.</p> <p>It was noted that other policies due for review (per Committee meeting minutes) will be held over until next term. AS would be writing policies linked to the Pay Policy over the summer holidays and AW would provide support as needed.</p>	<p>To have Equality statement put on school website</p> <p>Clerk to forward policies to Comms Officer: Accessibility Policy, Financial Procedures Policy & Pay Policy</p> <p>Amendment to Accessibility Policy wording –LF</p> <p>Equality statement/ policy to be circulated to governors for email approval by 21st Oct 2020. TLC 1st Dec agenda for formal approval</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Governing Body Administration</p> <p>The Chair and Vice-Chairs for the GB for the next academic year were elected. SD will continue to Chair and JT and HK will continue in their roles as Co-Vice</p>	

	<p>Chairs.</p> <p>Governors who are shortly stepping down, namely CS and VT, were thanked for their hard work and contributions. CS was thanked for her bringing her particular skillset and commitment to the GB. CS will depart in September, while VT is retiring at the end of this term.</p> <p>The approach to filling vacancies on the GB, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LA-appointed Governor ○ Co-opted Governor ○ Staff governor <p>was discussed. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM</p> <p>A new Staff Governor will be confirmed by AS next week. Interest has been shown by two staff members.</p> <p>Link Governor role vacancies were noted that CS had held. These were: PPG, SEND, GDPR and PSHE as a subject role. Governors were asked to consider over the summer holidays which roles they would be keen to take on. RT volunteered to hold one of the roles; which to be decided next term.</p> <p>Governors approved meeting dates for the next academic year (noting FRP dates had changed) and agreed priorities for the first meeting of the FGB - provisionally scheduled for 24th September 2020 at 6.30pm – as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SDP ● Update on the return to school ● Policies ● CONFIDENTIAL ITEM <p>Governors were reminded to complete the online Level One Safeguarding training as previously requested by email, and to then inform the clerk and Nicola Dwyer when complete, with certification as evidence.</p> <p>JT reminded governors that TLC matters that had been on February’s action list, but not yet addressed as priorities during TLC last week, would now be carried over to the September 2020 TLC agenda.</p> <p>It was noted that governors may need to be contacted during the summer holidays should the September Reopening Protocol require revision owing to government changes. Governors were asked to check their emails over this period, but could also be contacted by text message by the clerk in a matter of urgency.</p> <p>AS closed the meeting by expressing extreme gratitude to each of the governors for their hard work and commitment this year, and for their support at this unprecedented time. He praised them for undertaking their roles voluntarily and having offered challenge and support to the SLT and school to ensure this year had been as successful as it had.</p>	<p>To fill the link governor areas of SEND, PPG, PSHE, GDPR in September TLC/FRP/FGB meetings</p> <p>Clerk to add priorities in item 8 for FGB discussion to Sept FGB agenda</p> <p>All governors to complete Level One Safeguarding training and send certificate to clerk and Nicola Dwyer.</p>
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The meeting ended at **7.54p.m.**

Signed by the Chair _____

Date _____

Summary of Actions

Item number	Action	Responsible person
4	FGB Sept 2020 agenda – to present SDP 2020-21	Clerk/SLT
5.1	CONFIDENTIAL	All governors
5.2	CONFIDENTIAL	Clerk/SD
5.3	CONFIDENTIAL	SD
7.1	To have Equality statement put on school website	SLT
7.2	Clerk to forward policies to Comms Officer: Accessibility Policy, Financial Procedures Policy & Pay Policy	Clerk
7.3	Amendment to Accessibility Policy wording –LF	LF
7.4	Equality statement/policy to be circulated to governors for email approval by 21 st Oct 2020. TLC 1 st Dec agenda for formal approval	Clerk
8.1	To fill the link governor areas of SEND, PPG, PSHE, GDPR in September TLC/FRP/FGB meetings	Clerk/govs
8.2	Clerk to add priorities in item 8 for FGB discussion to Sept FGB agenda	Clerk
8.3	All governors to complete Level One Safeguarding training and send certificate to clerk and Nicola Dwyer.	All govts/Clerk