



Minutes of a meeting of the board of governors held at Rogate school on Wednesday 22nd September 2021 at 3:30pm

Present: Rev Trish Bancroft, David Bertwistle, Paul Brown, Richard Christmas, Rev Edward Doyle, Vicky Elms, Steph Garwood, Rita Harrison-Roach, Chris Hawker, Sarah Hill, Susie McAuley, Ed Platt, Neil Ryder.

In attendance: Pippa Bass (clerk).

1. Welcome and apologies

NR welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new academic year. Apologies were accepted from Jeremy Cogman and Kate O’Kelly.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Election of chair/vice-chair(s)

The clerk reported that governors supported the proposal to have one chair and two vice-chairs, and prior to the meeting had nominated NR as chair and VE and CH as vice-chairs. There were no other nominations. Governors voted unanimously to elect NR, VE and CH respectively to these roles. Governors thanked TB for her contribution as vice-chair for the previous year.

4. Governor changes & responsibilities

- a. Carolyn Costello had sent in her resignation. NR had asked Carolyn to remain on the Compton Local School Committee (LSC) but had not yet had a response. He reported that Rev Lindsay Yates had indicated she might consider standing as foundation governor. The diocese had confirmed that three vicars as foundation governors would be acceptable but only two could be ex-officio. Governors agreed to recommend to the diocese that Rev Lindsay Yates should be appointed to the vacant position.
- b. Margaret Farwell had asked to resign to focus on recovering her health. Governors agreed that a new co-opted governor from Rake would be ideal to maintain a balance on the governing board. NR agreed to approach either Nik Taylor or Claire Dennis.
- c. Governors reviewed the role allocations table in light of the resignations. SH agreed to approach Carolyn Costello about remaining on the LSC at Compton and continuing with the H&S role. There would also need to be a board governor allocated to H&S. Margaret had been involved with ethos and safeguarding but those areas still had good governor coverage.
- d. The clerk reminded governors that WSCC required details of associate members, which should also be displayed on school websites. The clerk agreed to follow-up with the LSC members to request the necessary details to include on the websites.

5. Governance and annual statutory items

- a. Governors approved the code of conduct and agreed to abide by the terms.
- b. Governors signed their entries on the register of interest.
- c. Governors agreed that the statutory committees (exclusions, appeals, complaints) would be setup on a case-by-case basis with governors who had no involvement in the matter.
- d. Governors agreed the membership of the HTPM panel would be NR, TB, VE.
- e. Governors agreed the pay panel membership would be NR, JC, CH, SH.
- f. VE summarised her two monitoring visits last term on lesson observation and task group meeting. She had been pleased to note – and DB confirmed - that teaching staff were relaxed about being observed.
- g. Governors agreed to conduct one monitoring visit per term relating to their lead governor role and the SIP. Governors noted that visits are for monitoring what is happening in the school and do not feed into performance management of staff. DB agreed to circulate a list of dates for his teaching observations for governors to select from.

- h. Governor activity over the period:
- 08 June 2021: VE - TGM (CU)
 - 09 June 2021: VE - Lesson observation (environment and engagement) (CU)
 - 13 June 2021: VE - Reading with owl class (CU)
 - 15 Jul 2021: JC/NR/PB - Assessment visit and briefing (CUP)
 - 20 Jul 2021: RHR - visit to Compton - pupil conferencing re safety & well-being
 - 05 Aug 2021: RH/NR - inset day (DVSF)
 - 11 Aug 2021: EP/NR - website meeting
 - 16 Aug 2021: EP/NR - meeting with Schudio (website shortlist)
 - 17 Aug 2021: VE/CH/NR - chair / vice-chair meeting
 - 08 Sep 2021: DB/NR - EHT/CoG meeting
 - 09 Sep 2021: EP/NR/DB - website meeting
 - 09 Sep 2021: NR - briefing Computeam (CUP pupil accounts contractor)
 - 14 Sep 2021: TB/JC/NR (plus LSC members) Rake comms meeting
 - 15/16 Sep 2021: CH/NR - WSCC termly governor briefing
 - 16 Sep 2021: NR - Rother Valley Schools future strategy meeting
 - 20 Sep 2021: SM/NR - GovernorsForSchools seminar: Leveraging technology in schools and governance
 - 20 Sep 2021: VE - Reading with owl class (CU)
 - 20 Sep 2021: NR - GovernorsForSchools seminar: Data-driven decision making: guide for governors
 - 21 Sep 2021: NR - WSCC course: HT performance management

6. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2021 were approved.

The actions were reviewed:

Reference	Who	Action
2021.06.15-5	NR, JC	Look at the assessment approach next term, the clerk to add this item to the September agenda. Complete.
2021.07.14-6	DB, CC, SH, VE, NR, TB	Further develop the mission, vision statement and values. NR agreed to arrange a sub-committee to finalise these.
2021.07.14-7c	PB	Complete the Sports Premium plans for all three schools. Complete.
2021.07.14-8a	VE	Provide a visit report from the recent class observation. Complete.
2021.07.14-8b	NR	Write to Compton parish council to invite a member to join the Compton LSC. Pending further discussion with Carolyn Costello.
2021.07.14-8b	DB	Provide some analysis of pupils' postcodes to understand better where pupils come from. Complete, although the analysis was not as useful as hoped.
2021.07.14-9a	SG	Contact the person who had offered to provide a drone video of the school sites. Complete.
2021.07.14-10	PB	Apply for the DfE grant to help fund the IT upgrade work. Complete. Work cannot start until the Compton domain name has been acquired.
2021.07.14-10	NR	Provide a draft staff workload survey for the next meeting. Complete.
2021.07.14-11	PB	Revise the assessment policy before circulating to JC for review. In hand, JC will approve this policy off-line.
2021.07.14-11	NR, VE, JC, PB, RHR	Review the policies listed (using versions on TTG). Update provided at item 10 below.
2021.07.14-12	NR	Re-send SG and RHR logins for The Key. Complete.

7. HT Report

DB provided his report (see annex A) and highlighted the following points:

- Staff levels are critical, particularly at Rogate due to SEN demands.
- The open day was very successful with positive responses.
- The change in SLT working, which should ease some of the pressures on the SLT.

Governors thanked DB for his report and raised the following queries:

Q Is half a day per week ever going to be enough for SEND?

A We hope it will be, meetings can be scheduled with SG for the allotted half day, any further appointments would be scheduled with Steph via Teams but we will review this position.

Q Do you feel you will see enough of the other two schools with the new SLT arrangements?

A Yes, and I do have very able deputies! I have to focus on Compton at the moment with SIAMS, H&S, and Ofsted all happening or due shortly. In fact, our H&S audit has now been completed and we scored 99%!

Q Looking at attendance records, how do they compare with other schools?

A Anything under 95% will be investigated, all schools are above this. Last term's attendance suffered with cautious parents worried about Covid but our attendance remained well above national levels.

Q How is the nursery going at Compton? Do the numbers need to increase for it to be viable?

A It is well-used after school, there are 4 children during the day, and it is positive that we can now offer wrap-around care. There is also capacity for holiday clubs. At the moment, we are not making a charge for the nursery whilst it gets established. Rake and Rogate both offer wrap-around care as well.

Q Can you tell us about the use of volunteers in all three schools, is everyone fully briefed?

A Yes, but the number of volunteers is not as good as it used to be, hopefully it should pick up as we come out of the pandemic.

Q Can you provide the numbers of exclusions, bullying incidents for each school, with previous year comparison, if possible?

A Yes – there has only been one exclusion (last term at Compton).

As requested by governors, DB had also provided pupil breakdowns by year and category (SEN / disadvantaged) and tables of attendance at all three schools. Governors congratulated DB on the Compton H&S audit result and agreed that the attendance figures showed a good start to the term. Governors then discussed the concerns raised about staff workload pressures, particularly amongst the SLT, and thanked the SLT for being open about the reality of their workloads. Governors concluded that:

- The pressures on staff are serious - (sadly) endemic in the teaching profession;
- The SEN provision across the schools was a particular concern and needs to be addressed as soon as budgets allowed.
- The solution to financial shortages could only be either to reduce the number of classes – which governors were reluctant to do, particularly when trying to attract new families – or to continue with the agreed strategy of generating more funding for the school – via grants, more pupils, etc;
- A top priority, when affordable, would be to augment SEN resource but training existing teachers to take on a SENCo role would not be viable as everyone is at full capacity;
- The sparsity funding will help to close the deficits but won't solve the overall issues;

8. School improvement

Governors had reviewed the SEF and SIP documents. NR's suggestions had already been incorporated and other governors had recorded a number of points on the TTG forum, including the following:

- What data/metrics will be available to governors to confirm that the focussed interventions are having a measurable outcome?

- Have the covid restrictions over the last 18 months meant that we are unable to provide satisfactory supporting data?
- Great to hear about the additional funds at Compton for supporting maths and writing and that it can be worked across the federation. When will we see the impact on childrens' learning?
- The majority of parents are supportive of their children's learning, but some have low aspirations and low levels of personal literacy and numeracy. Could we put something out to all parents about the importance of changing fixed mindsets?
- Can we have some examples of how the curriculum is broad and balanced and how this impacts on outcomes?
- It will be good to see if the new (and fantastic) after school clubs/sports clubs will make a measurable impact on the children.
- Can we have an update on the autumn phonics screening for the current yr2s?
- Suggest you consider including training for staff on mental health awareness to be able to recognise and support children who may be affected, and include induction training with an emphasis on safeguarding and child protection procedures. Also, there is no mention of the H&S checks being undertaken. (Compton SIP)
- Congratulations on 100% good or better teaching! How close are we to supporting the SEF with pupil progress data?

Governors discussed the various points. DB confirmed that, through PB's work on assessment data, there is some good evidence coming through and subject leaders are asking for the SIP to complete their action plans. In addition, the websites are being updated and will include the new class structures. DB also confirmed that Compton is now formally part of the Rother Valley locality group, and that Ofsted preparations are looking positive and the classroom displays are good.

9. Assessment data and update

- a. NR summarised the meeting the assessment governors had held with PB in July and thanked him for his open, thorough, briefing. They were impressed with the thorough data collection, although keen to see staff reactions via the staff workload survey. They had agreed, though, that the analysis and reporting was very labour intensive and could probably be better done by proprietary systems, which they agreed to review with PB. JC and NR had also spent a highly instructive morning observing pupil progress meetings with SG and NR told governors he was deeply impressed by the staff's clear understanding of the progress of each pupil and the discussion of interventions.
- b. PB presented the latest assessment data and explained how the information is fed back to teachers and used in pupil progress discussions. The assessment governors would meet PB soon to study the data together with historic trends and benchmarks and work on a summary for governors to clarify outcomes and trends – always accepting that changes in small cohorts make comparisons difficult.

[ED left the meeting]

10. Policies

- a. Governors approved the following policies:

Complaints policy	Staff grievance policy
Staff appraisal policy	Equalities policy
Staff capability policy	
- b. Governors agreed to review/approve the following policies before the next meeting (** = FGB approval):

Child protection & safeguarding (RHR) **	Charging and remissions policy (NR) **
Attendance policy (RHR) **	Pay policy (NR)
Exclusions policy (RHR)	Governor visits policy (NR)
Behaviour policy (RHR) **	Finance policy (NR)
Intimate care policy (RHR) **	Lockdown policy (clerk)
RSE policy (RHR) **	

11. Safeguarding and staff welfare

- a. KSCiE. Governors agreed to read the latest document, which is available in TTG (documents>current documents).
- b. Audits. RHR reported that the audit work in all three schools provided evidence and was a good framework to follow. The two omissions from the SCR at Compton needed to be completed.
- c. Staff workload. Governors agreed that the survey should be launched before half-term, and that VE (well-being governor) would talk to the SLT for their input.
- d. DB confirmed that the issue at Compton regarding the LA/nursery unit has been resolved.

12. Future meetings

The next FGB meeting will be held on Wednesday 20th October 2021 at 3:30pm at Compton. The clerk will send Outlook invitations for all the future meetings and NR asked governors to accept or decline these so that meetings could be moved if any were difficult for governors.

Approved by the board of governors and signed by A Neil Ryder

Date: 20th October 2021

ACTIONS:

Reference	Who	Action	By when
2021.07.14-6	DB, CC, SH, VE, NR, TB	Finalise the mission, vision statement and values.	20.10.21
2021.07.14-11	PB, JC	Finalise the assessment policy and approve off-line (copy to be sent to clerk).	asap
2021.09.22-4a	NR	Invite Rev Lindsay Yates, Nik Taylor or Claire Dennis to join the board.	20.10.21
2021.09.22-4c	SH	Approach Carolyn Costello about remaining on the LSC at Compton and continuing with the H&S role.	20.10.21
2021.09.22-4d	Clerk	Follow-up with the LSC members to request short 'pen-pictures' to include on the websites.	20.10.21
2021.09.22-5g	DB	Circulate a list of dates for teaching observations for governors to select from.	20.10.21
2021.09.22-10b	RHR, NR	Review policies listed above under item 10.	20.10.21
2021.09.22-11a	All	Read "Keeping Children Safe in Education"	20.10.21

Annex A: Executive headteacher's report to governors – September 2021

Many apologies for not tabling this report seven days before the meeting.

School context

There has been a very smooth start to the academic year in all three schools and, despite our covid restrictions, it is good to be back to normal.

The arrangement of classes is detailed below:

Compton and Up Marden CE Primary School

Hedgehogs	Owls	Foxes	Buzzards
Sarah McLauchlan/Hayley Smith Christine Francis	Amy Stevens Jo Valentine	Sam Cain/Andrea Taylor Margaret Jury	Richard Christmas Pauline Scott Jackie Brown
12	12	16	21
			Total = 61

Rake CE Primary School

Robins	Sparrows	Jays	Kestrels
Sarah-Jane Smith/Rachael Towns Sheena Whitehead	Louise Muir Janina Melska-Udoh	Holly Hayward Kate Reynolds-Haigh Lucy Wildsmith	Emma Gregory Hannah Todd
9	28	28	25
			Total = 90

Rogate CE Primary School

Wrens	Starlings	Kingfishers	Red Kites
Deb Hockley Jenny Stonehouse	Katarina Jarratt Julie Sutherland	Susie McAuley/Rachel Field	Christine Ward Dawn Spice
11	18	20	20
			Total = 69

Governors will be aware that numbers across the three schools are low and in all schools we are funding an additional class in each school, as discussed and agreed.

Open days have been arranged for each school this week for new and existing parents.

Stay and Play is operating in Rake and Rogate and Miss Jessy has started her breakfast, after school clubs and nursery at Compton – all of which should help to attract more children to our schools.

The schools are all looking magnificent with new displays in place. We have, at Rogate and Compton, been let down by our grounds maintenance SLA. We are currently looking at ways of getting a better and more cost effective service from outside the local authority.

All children from year 5 and 6 will join together for a residential trip to Fairthorne Manor next week. This will be the first time that the children will all be together, although I know that joint visits and trips are being planned for all year groups.

I have asked Jo Palmer to go ahead and organize the lease of a minibus for the use of the federation, funded by the parent fund built up for the purpose. This, I hope, will keep the cost of the trips down and will enable more joint activities to take place across the schools.

The staffing levels are much reduced with Rake losing a class teacher and three support staff and Rogate losing a learning support assistant. It is at Rogate that the loss of staff is having the biggest impact. Of the three LSAs one is based wholly in Early Years (0.8), one works on a 1:1 with a SEND child and the other (0.8) works across two classes picking up the SEND interventions. There are three EHCPs pending at Rogate and, it is hoped, that these will bring in additional funding to allow us to employ new learning support staff.

Quality of the curriculum

We were extremely lucky that we were able to hold three whole staff INSET days in July and September. The first, at the end of the summer term, was held at Rake and focused on medium term planning and the sharing of resources. The chair of governors also spoke to the staff of the three schools to both thank them for the hard work of the year and to encourage staff to look at ways to raise revenue for the schools.

The second, held at Compton, focused on the smooth running of the schools, safeguarding training and (very entertaining) health and safety training.

The third, at Rogate, focused on maths mastery and the use of manipulatives to move children's learning forward. These days, without a doubt, have had a positive impact on the quality of the curriculum and on staff wellbeing, which in the main is very positive.

Compton staff have made the decision to invest in Read, Write inc, a new phonics scheme. Staff have undergone training and this will be implemented this week. I will track the impact of this expensive resource. It is hoped that we can make a bid to the AIB for funding to cover this.

Leadership and management

The senior leadership team are in their first week of a new way of working: each head of school will stay in their own school for the majority of the time, rather than moving two days a week. This will allow both Steph and Paul to develop a greater presence in Rake and Rogate. It was a comment from one of our most vociferous parents who raised a concern that if she asked one of the heads of school to deal with something on Monday after school there could be no feedback until Wednesday and often this is not immediate enough when working with children.

At Compton we have been notified that we will have a SIAMS inspection this term and we have a health and safety monitoring visit on Wednesday of this week.

At Rogate there was a concerning breach of the fencing around the school. It is thought that a man climbed over the fence that leads to the forest school area. He walked across the field and climbed the gate into the car park. There is no evidence that he meant any harm, but I have asked Steph and Rachel to look at making the forest school gate more secure and to get some quotes for a higher gate to prevent this happening again.

David Bertwistle
Executive headteacher
September 2021