

Hindhayes School



Full Governors Meeting Thursday 16th January 2025 starting at 5.30pm – Chestnut Classroom

Minutes

Present: Louise Melia (Chair), Kate Nester (Headteacher), Lucy Shakesby, Helen Clark, Neil Howiantz, Ken Southern (Observer), Ben Amos.

Apologies received and accepted: Sue Court, Michelle Heap, Linda Monaghan.

No apologies received: Martin Lukins

33/2425 – Welcome

The meeting started at 5:35pm.

The Chair of Governors welcome everyone including Emma Plummer (Orchard Class Teacher and Music Specialist) and Ken Southern (observer) to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Court, Michelle Heap and Linda Monaghan. No apologies were received from Martin Lukins (for first occasion). Ben Amos arrived at 5:41pm. With 6/11 governors present the meeting was quorate.

34/2425 – Presentation on Curriculum Areas by Music Specialist Emma Plummer

Emma Plummer began by explaining the subject content expectation for Music in the National Curriculum, that children should use their voices expressively and creatively and play instruments musically, thinking about pulse, rhythm and pitch. At Hindhayes, the Charanga scheme is being used and is in the second full year. It offers a supporting platform for teachers who are not music specialists. Emma showed Governors the online resources provided by Charanga.

Ben Amos arrived at 5:41pm.

Lessons often begin with a listening section.

A governor asked whether there were any children with hearing difficulties using the scheme? Is teaching adaptable for children with hearing impairments?

There are children with hearing aids and cochlear implants enjoying music at school. There is an auditory audit supported by advisory teams which picks the best suited classroom for a child with hearing issues. One classroom has had blinds to support sound proofing.

Emma explained the scheme of work which accompanied the Charanga scheme. For reception classes, songs and performing should form part of every lesson, whilst thinking about pulse, pitch and rhythm.

A governor asked how do children find pulse in different ways?

Children find the pulse not just by listening but practically in different ways by tapping their knees or shoulders or clapping.

There's a wide range of tracks on Charanga some with learning to sing sections and others just backing tracks. There's lots of opportunities for progression. At the end of each term the classes share and perform during performance assemblies.

A governor asked whether there had been positive feedback about the Charanga scheme, being fairly new to the school in the past two years.

Feedback has been really positive. The children really love it.

There's one song choice for each year group. Resources on Charanga is all ready for teachers to use. There is a yearly subscription.

Charanga develops for Year 2 using artwork and asking more open questions about what you can hear? Some children can pick out different instruments, some can just hear the vocal line and the drum. Year 2 looks at style and structure and has extra details for development.

Charanga has lots of warm up games such as clapping patterns, pitch high and low, singing posture. There are some flexible games but this bit of charanga gets lost unless teachers have lots of musicality. There's a rhythm grid which is interactive and helps children to learn about notation.

A governor asked whether children that have had two years of Charanga were showing the impact of the scheme?

Teachers are positive about the impact of Charanga on the children. The music lead observes some lessons, team teaches some lessons where there an issue someone isn't sure about. Teaching Assistants are enjoying teaching from the scheme and the children are enjoying it too.

The children can learn to copy a rhythm round a circle, which is challenging.

A governor asked whether the online scheme supports musical vocabulary?

The introduction and chorus are supported on screen.

Glockenspiels are used most half terms during years 1 and 2. To begin with we remove extra notes so children can play musically, by playing the correct notes! Most melodies are 16 bars long which isn't too long and children start playing the glockenspiels with their fingers first.

A governor asked whether tambourines would be more tuneful than clapping?

Yes the children do use tambourines as well as clapping. They also use glockenspiels for tuned instruments. We should develop our use of untuned instruments.

The school doesn't tend to use recorders. The scheme supports children in experimenting by clapping back, then copying, then doing something different, which is improvisation. We tend to do composition as a group, writing it altogether and putting some words to it to create a song.

During the performance assemblies at the end of each half term, each year group performs to other year groups. It's a nice celebration, with an audience, which can be filmed. These round off the term nicely and give the children performance experience.

This afternoon, the lesson included listening, two flexible games, glockenspiels and a song and that was 45 minutes.

A governor asked whether everyone gets a turn with the glockenspiels?

We ask for volunteers to play the glockenspiels.

Governors would like to come to a performance assembly.

AR: School to let governors know when performance assemblies are.

A governor asked whether there was scope for children to progress within the scheme?

Yes there's definitely scope to improve skills, although not many children are having individual music lessons currently.

The school assesses music through video. Emma would like the progression grid to be the focus for teachers with videoed evidence at the start and end of the terms showing improvement as evidence of progress. Emma showed governors a video of the start and

A governor asked whether music could be outside again for parents to hear, as happened during COVID?

Singing together is a joyful experience. Charanga is enabling quality of music teaching which makes learning music joyful. Maybe there could be a staff choir? Or could the children join the Salvation Army's new Singing by Heart?

end of the term showing evidence of progress. There are opportunities for music outside of lessons at playtime and during forest school on the piano, as well as the Nativity and end of year concerts. The Headteacher remarked that the school was lucky to have Emma with her skills set and passion. There are opportunities for music and song within our subjects, such as learning the seven continents through song, and number bond songs.

The governors thanked Emma for an informative presentation. Emma Plummer left the meeting at 6:23pm.

35/2425 - Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

36/2425 Minutes of the Meeting of 14th November 2024

The minutes of the full governing body meeting of Thursday 14th November 2024 were approved without amendment.

A governor asked what was happening with the PFSA funding?

The PFSA funding comes into the budget funding work that can be done. Elmhurst PFSA has been supporting Hindhayes the PFSA's absence and will be asking for payment for this work. The PFSA is on a zero hours contract until February half term and will be doing a voice over for a tuning into kids workshop powerpoint for parents. The leadership team is monitoring the impact on the team without a PFSA in post and whether to recruit for a new PFSA.

A governor asked whether any schools had been identified where children made faster progress in phonics and reading?

The Headteacher and the leadership team were currently focused on the day to day running of the school and had no capacity for extra strategic roles.

AR: The vice chair will contact the local authority to find out which schools are producing faster progress.

There was a discussion about the impact of COVID on child development and increasing special education needs. Hindhayes continues to say all are welcome. Local schools have reported difficulties with KS1 children needing additional and bespoke support.

37/2425 - Action Points from the Previous Meeting

19/2425 and 25/2425 were complete. 23/2425, 24/2425 and 30/2425 would be carried over to the next meeting.

38/2425 - Any other urgent Business - Pupil Premium Statement for 2024-2025

To be carried forward to the next meeting.

39/2425 - Co-opting Ken Southern as a new governor

The governors approved Ken Southern as a governor with a four year term.

40/2425 - MAT update

The governing body has previously looked at whether or not to join at Multi-academy trust (MAT), 18 months ago three MATs presented and the decision was made to stay with the Local Authority. Since then, Elmhurst has joined the Wessex Trust. The governors now need to decide whether to consider whether joining at Multi-academy trust would be beneficial or not for Hindhayes now.

The Local Authority put a case forward as to why we should stay with them, their core offer as part of due diligence. The Royal Schools Commission with Millfield didn't come to fruition. ACE was a small trust from Devon and Hindhayes was moving forward with due diligence and was at the point of saying yes when it came down to a question of language. Hindhayes was in a good position and didn't need a MAT educationally so chose to stay with the Local Authority.

A governor asked is the choice between the Wessex MAT or Local Authority?

The due diligence would need to be redone. Local schools have joined Wessex or Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust.

The vice-chair wasn't part of the previous discussions or due diligence and would like to talk about it and find out whether joining a MAT would be a good option for Hindhayes

A governor asked how joining a MAT would affect personnel and financially?

It would be worth looking at schools that have joined MATs already. Could it help financially? There's not a lot of support from the local authority.

A governor asked whether joining a MAT would be a good option financially?

Further discussion is needed. Permission would be needed and clarification should be sought on what the options are. There was the deficit budget and conversion is not funded anymore.

A governor asked whether main incentive was reducing overheads?

80% of schools have deficit budgets.

now.

The leadership team doesn't have capacity for the extra work involved in inviting Trusts into school to discuss the options. This work was done previously. Governors could contact the Local Authority and see what the options are.

Jane Weatherall visit would help governors to ask questions and gain knowledge about the process now.

AR – Chair will make contact Jane Weatherall to discuss options and will aim for a Thursday at 5:30pm meeting if possible.

Governors could also investigate other schools experiences.

41/2425 - Policies

A governor asked about the process for the offsites policy.

The Deputy Head checks the risk assessments, which the governing body delegates to the leadership team. There are no residential trips. The Vice Chair will send the list of small queries to the Deputy Head. The abbreviation KCSIE stands for Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The Attendance, Offsites policy, governor allowances, Data protection, concerns and complaints and Health and Safety policies were all approved by Governors.

The new finance governor had some questions about the pay policy so this policy would come to the next meeting in March.

42/2425 - Finance

The Business Manager is currently working on the Month 9 report and will attend the next meeting. The Local Authority is meeting to discuss the financial situation in early February.

43/2425 - Headteacher report (including attendance)

The Headteacher was mindful of the time at 7:20pm so was brief in her report. There have been some new children including one from Australia. Regarding the Attendance policy the school is not currently fining for holidays as this would not support the parent-school relationship.

AR Vice chair to propose to attendance officer that the council fine parents directly if they so choose rather than asking the school to get money on behalf of the council.

The Headteacher talked through January updates on the school development plan:

- Excellent teacher for every child – PFSA has resigned. The Business Manager is completing 3 days of training to supporting safeguarding and this will need to be reviewed every two years.
- New TAs are in post and the school is more settled after the changes. There will hopefully be some emotional coaching by an Education Psychologist soon.

- Governors noted that the new staff seemed delightful and caring and supported to share learning experience with the children.

A governor asked how the school was managing day to day?

Last week was challenge due to a lot of staff being absent but the team got through it. Education psychologist would help shared understanding that behaviour has a reason, expecting a child to say sorry when they are distressed already layers on shame. Sometimes giving a child time to calm down before asking for them to say sorry is the best course of action but it takes time to learn this. Governors asked about morale in school and it is better than it was previously. The team is supporting each other and being solution focused asking who can help with what. The school leadership considered closing a class last week due to lack of staff but the school stayed open.

A governor asked what an overlay session and an impact calendar was?

Overlay is overlarning. An impact calendar records staff training, monitoring, governor meetings on a half termly senior leadership plan.

- Maths Specialist is leading on the Boolean role supporting the language of maths with strategies for teachers to use.
- The Headteacher has passed the NPQEL. The Deputy headteacher is awaiting results of her Literacy NPQ.
- Calming and supportive environments – the older parts of school are cold during winter as the radiators too small and ceiling is too high. The Business Manager has asked whether the local authority could incorporate lowering the ceilings alongside the roofing project.
- The leadership team is looking to see positive impact on attendance from the impact of the recent building project
- The safeguarding audit needs to be completed by 31st January.

AR – Headteacher to number pages of school development plan

44/2425 Safeguarding

The governors looked at the behaviour tracking data for Autumn Term 2024.

A governor asked whether lunchtime supervisors are trained in OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) strategies?

The ideas are talked through with the staff. The main conversation is about risk. The Head and Deputy are also outside a lot to monitor the behaviour on the playground. Where issues arise these can be generalized and talked about in assemblies.

A governor commented that there's a good reduction in behaviour incidences between Autumn Term 1 and 2.

A governor asked how do the figures compare with the previous year?

The Headteacher didn't have the record with her but thought the issues were pretty similar to the previous year. Year 2 children are learning to be role models for the younger children. New staff are working their way through recognising what needs to be recorded and what doesn't.

45/2425 Governor visits and Training

The chair of governors would like to get the list of visits from the entry system. A typical visit by a governor could be for a number of different reasons, maybe to see the Business Manager for finance, or a strategy day or singing assembly.

The chair of governors had visited specifically this week to see the Headteacher for safeguarding reasons.

46/2425 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 13th March, 5:30pm in Chestnut Classroom.

The chair of Governors thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting ended at 8:05pm.

Action Points

Agenda item	Action by	Agreed Action	Update for next meeting
23/2425	MS	The Business Manager will look at the checklist for what must be published online and the pay policy would come to the next meeting.	
25/2425	MH & LM	Write page of behaviour principles	
30/2425	LM	Circulate potential dates for the Governors Strategy Day	
34/2425	KN/LS	School to let Governors know when next performance assemblies are	
36/2425	NH	Contact LA to find out which schools are producing faster progress	
40/2425	LM	To contact Jane Weatherall to discuss options re joining a MAT	
43/2425	NH	Vice chair to write to attendance officer about council implementing their own fining policy.	
43/2425	KN	Head to number pages of school development plan	



Signed by Chair of Governors

Date: 13.03.2025