

Invited:

Penny Young Clerk

Academy Heads:

Dan Turner Bearnès Primary School
Jason Keenan Hennock Primary School
Sam McCarthy-Patmore Ilsington C of E Primary School
Alex Waterman Moretonhampstead Primary School
Des Stokes Widecombe in-the-Moor Primary School
Anthony Arnold Widecombe in the Moor Primary School (new AH from September)

Governors:

Chair Lynda Cooper, Parent Governor (Hennock)

Bearnès Primary School Peter Reed, Community Governor
Ewa Ziubryniewicz, Parent Governor
Jo Carter, Co-opted Governor

Hennock Primary School Olivia Gentile, Staff Governor

Ilsington Primary School Dr Paul Brassley, Community Governor
Rosie Stamp, Foundation Governor (not approved yet)
Oliver Heathman, Parent Governor

Moretonhampstead Primary School Vivienne Hodges, Community Governor
James Gething, Parent Governor
Kate Wellings, Associate Governor

Widecombe Primary School Rob Steemson, Community Governor
Chloe Schwab, Parent Governor
Caroline Rolls, Staff Governor

Present: Lynda Cooper (LC), Dan Turner (DT), Des Stokes (DS), Anthony Arnold (AA), Ewa Ziubryniewicz (EZ), Vivienne Hodges (VH), Jo Carter (JC), Olli Heathman (OH), Paul Brassley (PB), James Gething, (JG) Olivia Gentile (OG), Caroline Rolls (CR) & Penny Young

Apologies: Jason Keenan (JK), Alex Waterman (AW), Rosie Stamp (RSta), Rob Steemson (RSte), Kate Wellings (KW), Chloe Schwab (CS) & Holly Edgington (resigned now)

Welcome

LC welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Declaration of Business Interests

None

Minutes of previous meetings 04.05.2022 for approval

Approved

Personnel changes

LC welcomed OH, who is the new Parent Governor for Ilsington. RSta, who sent her apologies, is the other new governor for Ilsington. CS is the new governor for Widecombe, but sent her apologies. Holly Edgington is now an Academy Head (AH) and has left Moretonhampstead. AW will appoint a new staff governor in September. It is DS's last meeting, so LC wished him all the best in his new position. AA was welcomed as the new AH at Widecombe. He will be joining the meeting shortly. JK is also leaving Hennock but currently on a residential trip, so sent his apologies.

1. Strategic Governance

1.1 Focused visits for this half term (ASIP/well-being) with a brief report on the main findings from each school

Moretonhampstead– VH and KW met with AW and VH read the report from KW.

The first thing we looked at was teaching and learning – wellbeing. AW stressed that this year it has been focussed on building trust and relationships with parents, staff and pupils. She feels that she has a good relationship now with all of the above. She feels the school is much calmer and feels confident that staff and pupils will come to her with any issues. I have also seen this with some staff members and pupils.

She would like to do both a staff and parent survey but we all agreed that this probably wasn't the right time of year for that and to wait until the autumn term. This may be something that is done at trust level.

Staff absence has been very little, apart from COVID, which backs up her feeling of calm in the school.

Staff leaving has obviously been an issue but she has tried to include the staff in decisions in taking the school forward with new class structures and has enjoyed watching staff members discussing how they can work together.

We also talked about the ASIP for next year which has been released.

Trust level

Oracy

Behaviour management

Marking and feedback

School level

Curriculum leads

Structure

As the staff will change a lot in sept the leads will need some implementation, AW has an idea on who, but will need to see how it goes. Also, she is keen to make sure the new class structures are a success and wants to keep it flexible to see how they can improve.

LC – It sounds as though you were happy when you went in? There is lots of upheaval but you were given a good account of reasoning etc.? VH - AW is very confident and explained in a very friendly way the changes she was proposing and why. Staff seem to be working well together after a troubled few years. We were happy about this. Ilsington – LC and OH went in and it was LC's first visit to Ilsington, what a lovely school. SMP took us on a learning walk around the school, getting a feel for the setting. There is a report on Teams of what was discussed. Strengths around the school - a good Christian ethos coming through. The plans to integrate the Early Years with the rest of school. The setting itself, the physical site and the work that has been done to make that a really high standard. I walked away feeling very positive and there seemed to be a good atmosphere around the school. There was evidence of communication between pupils and staff and staff team. LC asked OH as a parent does he have a positive sense of where the school is or any concerns he would like to flag? OH – no concerns at present and I echo LC's thoughts that it felt a very positive visit and was the first time I have been into school during the day. Very impressed with everything I saw and as a parent, the positive things my children come back with but also some of the things SMP picked up on

around school values. I quizzed my daughter and she knew them and could talk around them which really impressed me.

LC - One of the things SMP flagged and I will flag again to S&C is concern around future resourcing for SEN pupils. There is an increasing SEN need, particularly over the next few years, and maybe the resources aren't there yet to meet that need successfully. It is a recurrent picture and something we have talked about before but I will definitely flag it again on Ilington's behalf. LC asked PB if he would like to add anything. Nothing to add. Will have a clearer idea about ASIP after meeting in a couple of weeks. Will be more to talk about then. LC asked if they could add any notes to Teams.

Widcombe – DS did a report as no governors present. RStE has been in a few times this term. He helped with SATS administration and joined us on a walk to school so he could meet new parents and also came in this afternoon to do the main part of his governance role. He came in to look over the focus areas. He is going to write a report and forward that. Main part of the report was sharing with him the things that have been going well on this year's ASIP, phonics was a good success. Area to further develop is Maths curriculum which has gone into next ASIP. He spoke with the PSHE lead about Jigsaw and provision across school. Recently had ODP which had a deep dive in PSHE so he was able to triangulate and talk to lead and speak to children and watched PSHE lesson. With regard to wellbeing will hand over to CR.

CR – the general gist of things, obviously we aren't the only school in the Trust in a transitional period. Obviously DS is leaving and AA is starting. You have this transition where you are not in the same place as you were so things feel a little less secure. Everything else continues the same, so all the same pressures. The feeling that I got from staff was just that that is quite a difficult thing to manage. That message could go back to the Trust again, the process of interviews and appointments are all very smoothly run, but there is just the potential to feel a little "left" I suppose and we are transitioning and it can just be a little unsettling for staff. This was one of the messages that came back. Staff support each other really well, but there are other schools in the Trust that are also going through this process and I just think it is worth noting the impact that has on a school when things have been the same for a while and then there is change. The other thing that keeps flagging up is Work life balance. Talked about it in relation to hubs, and that has potentially brought about some change next year in the way that is going to be managed and I think the other part of that is the process of OPD. The week previous to that we had a phonics review. Better planning so they don't all fall in a short space of time. It just made for a very intense 3-4 weeks which is the nature of schools and we are all used to it and all manage it. It felt that maybe those two things did not need to be quite so close together just from a wellbeing point of view because it is a lot to manage and a lot to prepare and a lot to deal with. LC - what was the feeling about OPD when it happened? Did staff find it useful? CR – it is a positive process, everyone is open to developing and moving forward etc. It is just an intense process and we all understand that. Because this was going along with a period of change within the school as well it was just a combination of things. Staff commented on this and it would be worth feeding back. Our Phonics review was changed which didn't help. LC - really useful feedback and could be acted on easily. DS introduced AA. LC – welcomed AA to the meeting and asked are you in school much with hand over? AA - Had 3 days with DS and Heads meeting. Will meet with DS at the start of the holidays. LC – it's a bit early to ask but is there anything from a governance perspective that we could consider on your behalf or escalate to the Trust? AA – nothing at present. A list of contacts, who to contact and talk to for what. Having the mentor is really helpful and I have peace of mind but email and phone numbers would be great. LC - thanked him for coming along tonight.

Hennock & Bearn – LC - not had an ASIP conversation with DT or JK yet. Been in to Hennock a lot more obviously. I have supported a few trips and been in and talked to pupils. I can comment on a general sense about school mood. It feels positive and buoyant amongst parents, sadness Jason going but acceptance of that. There is a new head, recruitment seems to have gone well. I hope to get in and see JK about ASIP next week. OG – Chris Martin came in yesterday, he is going to be really good I think. Trying to talk to all staff and all pupils. Children very excited. Will be a good asset to school. We have an ASIP and have been through it as a staff. LC - any comments on how the year has gone? Will put up notes once I have spoken to JK and can comment on this next time. I need to meet with DT to discuss ASIP, anything you want to comment on or EZ wants to comment on around mood in the school?

DT – I am currently working on next year's ASIP, seeing where we are going next. Staff changes but will talk about that later. Everything seems to be moving in the right direction. Some of our main areas - curriculum model revamp. Just going through this now and making sure staff are ready and raring for September and are aware of what the new curriculum revamp will look like. Phonics to continue to be on there for next year and we will continue to develop that further. Started the journey and there is a lot further we would like to go with it and Oracy staying. Pinning a disadvantaged aspect to our ASIP and make sure we cover those children who most need the input and intervention. Get that quality first teaching and make that progress and have those opportunities. Number of trips and activities recently. Great to see these happening again. Had sports day and Sports Enrichment day with Hennock. Well organised and gave our children a number of chances to try different sports. Y6's went with Hennock to Decoy kayaking. A good day out for them. Continuing with swimming currently. Busy as ever and lots of things going on and lots to work through.

LC – you mentioned staffing changes. Do you have any vacancies for next year? DT – currently I have a vacancy for next year but have applications in and interviews next Wed. Luke Ansermoz leaving Y1-2, internal move to Landscope. Leaves a space in his area and Georgia Gilby off on maternity leave in Oct – Y5/6. Filled one full time position and they will take 5/6 and trying to appoint for Y1-2. LC - two things to pick up on. Positive reflection on

sports provision. Will speak to Hennock too. As a parent I see this as being really positive. Is this the same picture around all the schools? Have the PE team knocked it out in the last few weeks? DT - yes recently have done but had issues earlier in the year and other schools also having issues. Last two events went very well. Just had the next years dates which is great, as this year it was sometimes 2-3 weeks notice. This makes it almost impossible to plan for those events and sometimes we have missed out. DS - been good to have Tayler for consistency throughout the year. Not had sports day or enrichment day yet, they are coming up soon. Took Y2-Y6 to Taunton to watch the England Women's Cricket. CR will tell you more as she was there. CR - It was a part of the Chance to Shine programme. For small village schools, going on a coach and going to a stadium and watching an international team play cricket, especially women, was really exciting. This raised lots of really interesting discussion around stereotypes and it was just a really good opportunity and a great event to attend. Gave us lots of good discussion points. DT - Bearnas Y4-6 went on the Tuesday. Also won the training session at lunchtime with some of the players and coaches. DS - Widecombe one this as well! LC - asked DT when I feed back that sports provision has been good recently, but you mention earlier issues. Have you been able to escalate or anything you want us to take up. DT - yes I have spoken to Matt Tanner and he has had meeting and discussions with Tayler. With Georgia Gilby joining us (she was at Diptford) and we saw the discrepancy of what Matt was offering other schools. Matt has been on to this and that is why improvements have been seen recently. We also joined with some of Matt's competitions so our children didn't miss out. LC - has this been raised with AH's as if Bearnas have had different provision has there been an opportunity to talk this through? DT - I know AW has had concerns around provision, but not sure if this has been raised. Matt looking at how he is going to audit and ensure the provision is the same across the schools. LC - any other comments on PE provision. JG - provision good at Moretonhampstead. Been swimming weekly, and have Tayler each week. Not had sports day or swimming gala yet. Overall the feeling is that sports provision is good. One thing is that parents have to drive to competitions. If enough parents they can go, if not they can't. When they get to events all the other schools turn up with their own minibuses! LC - how do we share the minibuses? DT - A portion of the budget is put aside for transport. Bearnas does not have a minibus and we share Hennock's bus sometimes or hire one. LC - how do we share the minibuses. PY - there are three minibuses throughout the Trust and these can be booked through each school administrator.

LC - other question from DT - you mentioned staffing. Are they Teacher roles or TA provision and are they roles recruited for Sept? DT - TAs are ok, it is just teaching staff currently. DS - recruiting for TA but only just got permission. Hennock recruiting for 2 x TAs.

EZ - nothing to add. Just had commitments so not had time to do a visit this term.

LC - I will liaise with DT to come in and discuss the ASIP and hopefully we can all get in together.

1.2 Update from Standards and Curriculum and Local Board Working Party meetings

LC - I had a grumble about Trustees not being known to us and how nice it would be if they were. That was taken on board and one of the new trustees who works with S&C will do an information pack about Trustees, who they are, what the different roles and how all the different committees work. We will have that going into next term and it will be useful from a general governance prospective and it will show how the governance structure all works. The plan is for trustees to take responsibility and be assigned to a hub, so we will get our own trustee who will come into schools and be a bit more of a presence. For any new governors, we are at local level, we have trustees who are responsible for issues around recruitment, remuneration etc. We feed up local issues to them. I feel it would be a more successful relationship if they knew about the local hubs, so hopefully this will change through next year.

LC wanted to ask JC about the Ofsted visits. JC - we had 3 Ofsteds out of 4 schools within a few weeks! The first one in SATs week! I thought we may see Trustees at Ofsteds. Not seen any. I am going to complain about this. Everything on us all the time. Nicky and Lizzie were there but no Trustees and there were 3 inspections they could attend. I understand not much warning but I had to dial in from Holland! I was a bit disappointed with this. The Ofsted inspectors were not like Ofsteds before. They were calm, and it was a real team discussion. Not the usual grilling for governors, the schools may have found it different! It was interesting, more like the Hennock one. I have tried to pull together the general questions they asked us and how we responded. JC has shared with LC and these will be on Teams. The questions Babcock emailed JC were very similar to JC's list of what to expect. Things like "what was working well and what wasn't" there were very honest discussions around this. AH's need to make sure the self evaluation form is up to date, different to the ASIP. This is more internal stuff. Quite open and honest discussions about what was going well and what wasn't going so well. Ofsted were quite supportive. They asked this at all 3 schools. If anyone has a SEF and its up on the Sharepoint, that would be really useful for governors. Communication with parents they asked about. Behaviour - did a deep dive into behaviour, how its dealt with and policies backing it up. Attendance - impressed the Trust have an attendance person. Governor visits - what they entail. At one of the schools the inspector was keen to look from Preschool to Y6 and taking a thread and evidencing that in a visit report. Will look at this in our working group about how we can do this in visits. You need to be going into your school and you need to know your school and need to know these threads come all the way through and there is a progressive curriculum. I know the AH's know all about this but this is from our governors point of view. I think there needs to be a bit of work on those really detailed visits. My problem is that we are not there to do teaching monitoring or moderation, that's not our roll, so it's quite tricky. We are led by teacher or AH, to say this is what we are doing and this is how it all works but whether that level of teaching is good enough, that is not our remit. Needs work from our working party.

LC agreed that it is a grey area, what are we actually looking for when we go in and how we access it. Will be having a local board meeting to discuss all this and will then feed it back.

JC – visits, what we look at. Triangulation and all that. Extra curricular activities. Safeguarding – they always through a “curved ball”. One of the questions was about the SCR. You should look at that when you do the Safeguarding audit and all the recruitment goes through HR anyway. All DBS checks all done by HR anyway.

LC – for any new governors, the SCR is a spreadsheet that is held in each school office and tracks every member of staff, governor, Trustee, volunteer and contractor who comes into school on a regular basis. It track DBS information and ensures they have gone through full checks before coming into school. It is a safeguarding record. All governors are on it and you should go in at least once a year and ask to see that record and check it is updated and look for any gaps, and ask the school administrator about any missing information, how often they update it and check they can talk through exactly what the SCR is.

JC – it was the fact that the inspector called it the SCR rather than the Single Centre Record seemed like she was trying to trick me. The other question was about Equality. There are a few strands to this. There is the equality of are all children getting the same education? Also around staff recruitment. Sue Howard does an annual audit to show who has been interviewed etc. This is fed back to Trustees so they can see there is equality in people being interviewed and recruited. That was an odd one but they did ask this.

Asked about Safeguarding Governor and if we had one at local level. This is a question that has come up at S&C about whether the governor should sit on the Hubs or just the safeguarding Trustee. One inspector said there should be one in each of the hubs, but I disagree. We don't get to see the detail of any safeguarding issues. We just need to make sure that everyone has done the correct training – the L2 training and the KCSiE and read the monthly safeguarding focus from Babcock. You do not need to be L3 trained to be doing this. Actually, the person that has the legal responsibility is the Trustee. This will be discussed at the working group. Trying to find a governor is difficult enough at it is, trying to find one with Safeguarding training is a nightmare.

Phonics – instant fail if you say you don't know what schools are using.

Support from the Trust – we talked about the fact that we feed into the S&C meetings and we meet up with Sarah Clarke.

Staff wellbeing – we need honesty. I know you guys speak to each other or you can speak to Nicky or Lizzie. There have been a couple of instances where I had thought if we had known we could have helped. For instance, the overload of SENDCO is a prime example, it is a country wide problem. We have nagged and nagged about getting more time and more people to help out with the SENDCO stuff. It is a real problem for people and unless we know about it, we can't escalate it. An element of honesty needed so that if things not going well tell staff governor, or tell us at meetings or in private. We might be able to do something about it.

Read the document as lots of information. Any questions, please email me.

LC – for the sake of other school governors if we get a call and Ofsted are coming in, we would expect a local board governor to come in, I would also come and help and explain how we link into The Link. Don't feel too overwhelmed by that. The questions we all know the answers too.

JC - it really is important to have two governors. If you are on your own its really hard. Sometimes you forget little things and you work with each other. Really helpful to have at least 2 people. You can do it remotely – I dialled in from Holland for Tedburn, as did the parent governor and that was acceptable. Really important that we are available. Having been through 3, I am more than happy to help even if I am not directly linked to your school. It is better if there are a few of you, I don't want people to have a bad Ofsted experience.

LC – we raised the issue about governors being involved in AH interviews. Trustees understood this and will make a decision through the next academic year. LC will feed back when she has news. Nicky gave a CEO update. A lot we have already discussed but she talked about staffing & recruitment around the Trust and what's being done to address that. We know that Wolborough are now part of the Trust in a managed partnership and how this was progressing.

Focus on Preschool provision around hub, not specific to the Moorland. Noted trust wide moderation had happened a few weeks ago. Nothing came out that we needed to be aware of. Nicky wanted us to know about Safeguarding and that Ofsted had flagged this as a positive. Noted that Becky Humphreys from Inclusion Hub has set up a relationship with a local school, School for Inspiring Talents, local to Newton Abbot, to share best practice. A nice example of us looking outside the trust for information sharing and new ideas.

Local board working party meeting – this was cancelled due to covid etc. Will be start of next term.

1.3 Governor training

Nothing requested. Will look at internal training – making a visit successful, what does a learning walk look like, how to do book scrutiny etc.

2. Procedural matters (if not covered above)

2.1 Attendance

DT – lots of outbreaks of Chicken pox and D&V currently. All schools have a plan going forward for September with all the new letters and processes to follow, which we have started, so hopefully will see the impact of this from then.

The illness will have a knock-on effect though.

DS – very similar. Got over parents taking lock down holidays, pretty settled for a while, now a lot of illness. Down to 93.8%, most of it illness and some unauthorised holidays. As letters have just come in part way through the year, there is a bit of cross over and causing extra work. It will be easier from September to follow the new system.

2.2 Safeguarding

Nothing to raise. DT – it continues but continually monitoring. I deal with social workers and police on a daily basis. Nothing massive at present.

2.3 SEND

LC - Discussed Becky Humphreys expansion of SEND provision and efforts to make it ever robust and our ongoing concerns about the resourcing of SEND. I would like to note ongoing delays with 0-25 team. This is a Devon issue and largely out of our hands.

Nobody had anything else to flag up.

2.4 Sports Premium grant, Pupil Premium grants

Nothing

2.5 Health & Safety/Risk Assessments

DT – we have just had the front playground cleared, no longer a building site! All the rotting planters and very overgrown shrubs have gone. We now have a much larger front playground. We are going to have new roof over the summer holidays so scaffolding will encase the school. Shouldn't impact the children as they will probably wait until we break up.

JG – I am sure everyone is aware that Claire Slee is taking on the dedicated trust H&S role from September – she used to do it part time. LC – how does that impact us, if we have a H&S issue can we escalate it? JC – If we had an issue we would take to AH, if AH had an issue they would take to the Trust. This is why it's on the agenda so it doesn't get missed.

3. Personnel (if not covered above)

3.1. Staffing: staff wellbeing and workload, including feedback and observations on term from Staff Governors

OG – I just wanted to mention TAs. This has not come from them but from me. I want to raise how hard they work, teachers are given a lot of focus in work life balance and obviously TAs don't take work home like teachers, but they do do an awful lot of work for what they are paid. I felt it important to raise this. At Hennock they are also MTAs.

CR – Wellbeing: just have to be very careful as a Trust that we are not in the process of “ticking a box” in terms of wellbeing. I think there are things in place to support it across the academy, do they need to be more tangible? Could there potentially be a person in school? We have a wellbeing newsletter and sometimes we are too tired to read it. It is a good intention, but should there be a representative in each school or a Wellbeing governor? I know there is a good level of support in each school, but unless somebody has this as a focus, there is so much going on and people “manage”. Something more tangible other than just a newsletter.

JC - totally agree as there have been at least a couple of cases where things could have been picked up earlier and dealt with. If for any reason people can't talk to AH or somebody else, then to go to governors. We can try and help in some way.

CR - needs a clearer route for people to take. We support each other very well but everyone is under the same pressures and working in the same environment. Some people are comfortable taking one route which is anonymous and others prefer another. People naturally take on that role and most schools have them so we are not ticking a box saying we are doing the things we need to do.

LC - will take back to S&C.

CR – we appreciate what you do as it does appear that things get actioned once we have discussed them.

3.2. Parents: parent forum meetings, PTFA, areas for concern/complaints

LC – Hennock. Amazing school production, really phenomenal and all children were involved. Good support from PTFA, really transformed and active and engaged. Array of activities happened recently. I went to beach with OG, and took older children to look at the Tamar bridge. Got Enrichment week next week, with lots of things planned. Just to have the energy at the end of term to offer this to the children is fantastic. This is hugely appreciated by the parent community too.

LC – thanked the governors for their support throughout the year and for helping her in her first year as chair. If you need to contact me, please email me and I will pick it up over the holidays.

The meeting closed at 18:50

Next meeting: Wednesday 12 October, 2022