



Malvern Wells CE Primary School
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting
Monday 19th July 2021 11am by Zoom

ACTIONS

Action	By whom	By when	Agenda no / Progress
Include governance in the SEF	AE	September	2
Meet Rob Philips or another LA adviser to make accurate projections on the Deficit Recovery Plan	AE	Early summer break	3
Accept Claire Davies offer of help	AE	Early summer break	4
Provide governors with best- and worst-case scenarios regarding financial situation	AE	Early summer break	4
Send completed Deficit Recovery Plan to governors for approval	AE	Early summer break	3
Approve Deficit Recovery Plan by email or virtual meeting	AE, FS, DS, Governors	Over summer	3
Revisit the teaching timetable	AE	Over summer	3. Proposal
Discuss staffing with Alison Ragbourne	AE + interested governors	18 th August	4
Speak to Lorna Lymer about setting out a date timetable for redundancies	AM & LL	End of August	4
Offer a second opinion on staffing – Sarah Pawson offered support to headteacher during the summer.	SP & AE	Over summer	4



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(NB Challenge or comment by governors is shown in red, head's response in blue)

Present: Dave Bruce, Alison Earp (Head), Ali Mesley, Sarah Pawson, Frances Surridge (Chair), Colin Robbins

In Attendance: Dinah Sage (Clerk)

1) Apologies for absence

Jen Alford, Alec Fisher, Lorna Lymer, Helen Routledge

The Chair of Governors reminded governors that they a strategic group, and the Head implements the strategy.

2) Head Teacher's report

Governors were asked if they had any questions

As elements of finance and staffing are linked, a governor hoped to see some reference to finance in the HT report.

A key headline in the SDP is Governance. The most important governance tasks are sorting out the finances and becoming at academy

Governance can be included under Leadership and Management in the SEF, which is being updated for September.

Six out of seven teachers are rated good. The expected resignation of one teacher has been repeatedly minuted. The overstaffing must be strategically managed to retain expertise.

Governors agreed they are looking for excellent teaching, as a priority in the reduction of staffing levels.

How definite is the predicted 86 on roll?

The number includes children who have already joined, 5 firm applications and one possible.

The head needs figures from the elusive finance officer - she has spoken to his manager.

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What income would the extra children bring?

About £3,000 per child.

The possible child will go to the Wyche if a space comes available. Children can't be counted till they walk through the door.

Remember that any increase in funding will not appear in the budget until April.

The budget is based on the October census.

3) Deficit Budget Plan

Worcestershire County Council is expecting the Deficit Budget Plan. But the figures need looking at again with Rob Philips, or another LA adviser. The absence of accurate figures is frustrating.

£90,000 overspend is alarming.

Can governors make any suggestions?

The document is confusing. Has restructuring been taken into account?

A new finance assistant is needed to manipulate the figures.

Hasn't the head populated the Deficit Recovery Plan?

The 2021-2022 figures should be accurate, but 2022-2023 are not based on changes in staffing. Needs to talk to the finance officer.

More detailed discussion of staffing is recorded in the Confidential minutes

If there are no in-year joiners, numbers could drop to 83 next year after Yr 6 leave, and to 81 the year after. Based on the catchment area, the NOR would remain in the 80s.

Best-case, worst-case and in-between scenarios would be more meaningful. This is the best case but shows the same deficit.

The finance assistant had been working on that. The finance officer should be able to access her input.

Their expertise is needed for exact figures, but rough calculations could be done on the basis of an income of £3,000 per child.

By 2023-2024 the number of classes will definitely have to be reduced to three with 3 FTE teachers, as recommended at the Project Board meeting. But the projection is based on 3.4 - 3.7 FTE.

The focus needs to be on long-term planning. What are the birth stats?

The numbers in the catchment area have been included, 8 for September 2021 and 10 for September 2022 Children have to be taken from outside the catchment area.

If the school was rated Good, they would be fighting to get in

Children have come from out of catchment. Marketing includes targeting the new houses on St Andrew's Road. Unfortunately, Welland has increased its NOR.

Governors are not happy with the projections on the Deficit Recovery Plan. They want to see worst-case and best-case scenarios

The reasons for the deficit are the low NOR, partly because of Requires Improvement, and overstaffing over several years.

Concern was expressed that all classes except Class 4 are taught by more than two teachers in a week. Greater consistency would help to achieve excellence.

Deploying part time staff to achieve consistency is very difficult.

Teaching assistants can provide a consistent adult presence

PE is taught by Jane Hopkins, who is a specialist sports teacher.

There will probably be only three classes after March.

The school is still overstaffed, but some sessions are taken by TAs.
This is not best for the children, and could lead to claims of unfair dismissal if teachers were made redundant.

The head has tried to find the best provision

As the school is overstaffed it should be possible to provide a qualified teacher for all classes all the time.

Proposal:

Ask the Head to revisit the staffing structure, aiming to have a qualified teacher in charge of each class at all times.

Proposer Frances Surridge, Secunder Ali Mesley

Governors agreed unanimously

Governors are not in a position to sign off the Deficit Recovery Plan

The SFVS benchmarking suggests that MW staff have more PPA time than average.
Could release time be brought in line with other schools?

10% of teaching time is allowed - 2 ½ hours for a full-time teacher. This should be the same for all schools, but some have a shorter day.

Why does Class 2 have a teacher in the morning, a TA in the afternoon, then two days with a different teacher?

So that all the teachers are in on Wednesday afternoon for meetings.

Core subjects are consistently taken by class teachers.

Some teachers are paid to do their PPA at home, others have to be in school.

What percentage of the budget goes on staff?

The Chair replied that at the Project Board meeting Rob Philips said 100% and it should be 80 - 85%.

This equates to about 1.5 teachers.

Educational provision needs to be maintained - hence a 3-year plan

More like 9 months as any redundancy procedure must start in September.

4) Business Case

Governors were asked to bear in mind that this business case is incomplete.

Can anything be done in September so that the classes remain the same till the end of the year?

That is why, although Y1 and Y2 will be merged in the afternoon after Easter, they will still be taught as year groups in the morning.

There are some concerns regarding the number of TAs teaching, and the Head said that she is very happy to teach and will look again at the timetable.

Detailed discussion on how to mitigate possible redundancy is recorded in the Confidential minutes

As academies are funded monthly, the DoWMAT cannot carry schools with deficit budgets, so even if MW could join by April, the overstaffing would need to be reduced.

There needs to be a plan in place. Claire Davies has offered the services of her finance department.

Take up this offer straight away.

Joining the DoWMAT is key

The staffing cost must be reduced to 85% of the budget.

The business plan has to show that the deficit will be approaching zero in three years' time - say less than £20,000.

The children come first. Teaching must be secure.

Governors need to see best and worst-case scenarios.

Need to move towards combining Class 1 & 2 in the afternoons.

Who would be teaching them?

Can't say, but combining the classes is the first step.

The ideal culture would be to employ good teachers, who moved on, to be replaced by less costly members of staff

They would need to have taught the different key stages.

Teachers do experience the different key stages.

Plan and proposals for the next FGB meeting

AE to talk to Alison Ragbourne over the summer. Governors were invited to join.

The redundancy timetable needs checking - there may be actions to take before September 1st.

The process needs to be followed precisely in good time for any redundancy notices to be issued.

Ali Mesley will speak to Lorna Lymer about setting out a date timetable for redundancies.

Governors suggested that a second, objective view could be helpful when the head is considering staffing. Uncontaminated governors may be needed for appeals panels - to be appointed early September. As SP's term of office finishes in October, she offered to help.

It is really important to join the DoWMAT as soon as possible.

5) AOB

The leavers assembly was lovely - outdoors and face to face.

Grateful thanks to all the staff for their hard work over a particularly challenging year.

6) Date of next FGB meeting

To be arranged by email.

Signed: Date.....