



# WATERBEACH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 6.30 pm

### MINUTES

**Governors present:** Martin Brown (MB – CHAIR); Patty Congedo (PC); Jane Green (JG, Head); Kasia Piwnicka (KP) joined the meeting at 6.40pm; Lisa Wakley-Davies (LWD)

**Also Present:**

Helen Andrews (HA, Clerk)  
Clare Freeman, English Co-Lead  
Helen Scrivener, INCo

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
1.	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b> MB welcomed all to the meeting, he apologised to those expecting a face-to-face meeting. To remain quorate for the meeting, it was necessary to change the meeting to a remote format to allow members of the committee to attend.  Apologies were received and accepted from JL and AM.  The meeting was quorate. Governors met remotely using MS Teams.
2.	<b>Declaration of Interests in Items on the Agenda:</b> No declaration of interests in items on the agenda were declared.
3.	<b>Minutes of Previous Children's Committee Meeting, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022</b> The minutes of the Children's Committee meeting, dated 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2022, were submitted, and will be signed by the Chair as soon as C-19 pandemic restrictions permit, pending the amendments detailed below:  AM was missing from the attendee list. Item 6 – change "child absence" to "children's absence".
4.	<b>Matters arising and actions</b> There were no matters arising from the previous meeting, dated 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2022. All actions from the previous meeting have been completed and closed.
5.	<b>Teacher-led Presentation</b> CF led a presentation on vocabulary accumulation and retention.

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CF shared a presentation at the meeting. The following points were raised: CF explained that she is currently prioritising word consciousness with children, it's not about the children learning lists anymore. Vocabulary is important as it is central to a child's ability in understanding text. As a result of the C-19 pandemic, the nation is coming out of a period where children have not had as much exposure to vocabulary as they normally would have by attending school full-time. CF was referring to both national lockdowns that prevented most children attending school on a full-time basis for several months.

CF explained that 95% of words need to be known in a text to ensure reading comprehension. CF gave the example of 85% of a broad vocabulary during her presentation. There is a huge breadth of possibilities that a child may be missing from text, it doesn't have to be during an English lesson. It affects all aspects of life. If the school is not able to plug the gap now, it becomes much broader later in their education.

Staff are now aware of what is meant by language tiers. Staff are focussing on tier 2 words, that are used frequently in written text but less so in common speech.

KP joined the meeting at 6.40pm.

Breadth and depth – it is the aim of the school for all children to leave in Year 6 with a deep understanding of word consciousness. In school, word consciousness looks like:

- Pupils reading more actively
- Pupils and teachers being clear about words and how they are used for communication, both in specific subject disciplines and texts.
- Pupils recognise parts of words; root words, prefixed and suffixes, and word families.
- Pupils have an enthusiasm for etymology
- Pupils unlocking and discussing layers of meanings of both words and texts.
- Pupils developing strategies to work out the words they do not know.

CF provided an explanation of a model showing what vocabulary teaching looks like. It provides teachers with the various ways to promote vocabulary consciousness across the curriculum.

CF has provided staff CPD on language tiers and the importance of vocab and Word Power strategies, based upon the work of Kelly Ashley. Staff had had the opportunity to trial these techniques with their classes and have had time to evaluate successes and issues preventing development.

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Staff have also received additional CPD to explore best practice models for selecting vocabulary to be taught within classes, as well as an introduction to further strategies to support the teaching of vocabulary.

CF elaborated on the strategies for teaching vocabulary. The final stage, consolidation, is the benchmark that shows children understand each word and are building upon their breadth of vocabulary. In class, children are already applying new words in different contexts – e.g., “rancid”.

The next steps for staff are embedding their practice of the selection of words to be taught within their planning process for teaching texts across the curriculum.

A series of staff meeting are being planned to fully explore and further embed understanding of how children are taught.

The Chair thanked CF for her interesting presentation. He opened the meeting to questions from governors:

**Challenge:** A governor asked, what feedback are you relying on in class. The profile of words around school is much higher. CF’s TA is working on a whole school vocabulary display. CF has had the opportunity to observe in several classes, you can see evidence of selected words within each room. CG stated that it was also possible to see the evidence of this coming through in the children’s work. There is regular dialogue with other staff, particularly for newer members of staff where CF has been able to facilitate issues as they arise.

JG advised governors of a visit from the English Adviser today. CF provided a presentation for the visitors, which was well received by all. She thanked CF for the work she has put in to present to visitors and governors in one day.

KP, speaking from a personal perspective, felt the strategy is working well for those with English as an additional language. The breadth of vocabulary has improved, she congratulated CF for the “really good work”.

LWD seconded governor opinion. She is setting an easter challenge for staff at the pre-school to read Peter Pan and Scarlet to improve their own vocabulary as it is such an exemplary book to broaden the use of words around the children at preschool.

PC has attended recent meetings with CF, she is enthused by the energy and effective way the school has focussed on developing children’s vocabulary and literacy for the children. It is evident that the energy for development in this area has been ignited by the relaxation of C-19 restrictions.

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The Chair urged CF to continue with the good work!

CF left the meeting at 7pm.

HS was invited to the meeting to remind governors of their statutory obligations around SEND:

Governor responsibilities were highlighted from the LA SEND Expectations for Schools document. From the same guidance, she shared an overview of the nine steps to effective SEND provision.

High quality teaching includes adjusting daily classroom practice to accommodate children with SEN e.g., dyslexia friendly classroom practice, autism friendly classroom practice.

She has seen good dyslexia-friendly classroom practice being used around the school. HS explained the various things that can make learning easier for children with SEN, such as coloured paper and dyslexia-friendly fonts.

Staff are receiving training to meet the needs of the children in their class. Training for TA's is taking place on how to embed new concepts using Clicker. Analysis of data via termly Pupil Action Meetings take place to identify children who are not making their expected progress. HS attends these meetings with her SENDCo hat on to recognise early issues. A graduated response may also involve individual provisions and/or interventions. The school follows the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle, and has bought into Provision Map, which stores information about children for building up a log of which provisions and interventions each child has been offered and their effectiveness. HS explained that Provision Map is useful for evidencing the impact of a provision. This will be useful for the evaluations process inevitably but, it is early days.

There are 40 children on the SEN Register, they each have an Individual Learning Plan which establishes individual targets for each child. Parents Evenings for those on the SEN Register will also include the class teacher and SENDCo to build better communication and relationships with families. Pupils with EHCPs are those who receive high needs funding – there are currently 7 in school.

**Challenge:** A governor asked, how does minor low-level support effect the school budget, such as yellow paper etc.

Governors were advised that there is a specific SEND budget, when it comes to paper it falls under the general paper budget. It falls under usual practice that coloured paper is now used across school.

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	<p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor was previously concerned that budgetary constraints may affect provision. However, it seems this is not a problem, currently. The governor was reassured to know that there is sufficient budget to allow for small changes to support those with dyslexia and autism.</p> <p>HS, along with LO and TGz, have carried out an audit of the physical environment for the future publishing of the Accessibility Plan. Parents will be invited to contribute their views in a future newsletter.</p> <p>HS is undertaking a National Award for SEN Coordination; this is due for completion in January 2023.</p> <p>HS's current priorities are getting to know the children and families; developing links with outside agencies; and embedding the use of Provision Map to record provisions and individual learning plans.</p> <p>The Chair thanked HS for providing a good picture of SEND practice at Waterbeach. He added, it is interesting to see the accessibility aspect of the role too. Concerning the new build, the Chair suggested that it has better accessibility than the older part of the building.</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor asked, is there any obvious issues that you have spotted during your audit of the site. Governors were advised that there is an option within each year group to find something suitable for all individual needs.</p> <p>HS will share the presentation with governors via the Clerk after the meeting. HS explained that the outgoing SENDCo provided a good handover, SEND was left in a really good shape for her to pick up.</p>
6	<p><b>C-19 Update</b> C-19 cases continue to rise across the school. JG confirmed that there was no further update since the FGB meeting.</p>
7.	<p><b>Focus on Committee Priorities</b></p> <p><u>7.1 Vocabulary Accumulation &amp; Retention</u> Reflecting on the presentation delivered by CF, the Chair stated that he enjoyed her enthusiasm. JG agreed, CF is so passionate and has real knowledge about this aspect of English.</p> <p><u>7.2 CONFIDENTIAL</u> See separate confidential minute.</p> <p><u>7.3 Outdoor Space</u> The Outdoor Space is a project that JG is passionate about. LO has taking this on as her Performance Management objective. Senior Leaders have</p>

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decided that the Waterbeach curriculum needs a range of outdoor provision across the school. The school will work with The Lees School to work on progression in this area of the curriculum and to build on the staff CPD offer.

LO and JG have proposed to develop a Welly Award for outdoor learning. It will go throughout the cohorts in rainbow colours and will include different aspects of outdoor learning. JG provided the following examples of current outdoor learning provision: Year 4 camp on the school field, the Year 5 residential to Graffham Water, and the Year 6 Isle of Wight residential. JG hopes to set up orienteering and forest school. JG is really excited about the concept. This project will become part of the School Development Plan going forward.

#### 7.4 DATA

JG advised that there have been lots of conversations in Pupil Action Meetings, the report circulated ahead of the meeting describes all the support being put in place to support children to plug those gaps. JG agreed that the data does not look good, particularly for Year 1. Her concern is seeing a flow back from C-19 for KS1. This is not affecting the Early Years cohort. When more is being asked of KS1, their resilience and ability to rise to a challenge is now showing obvious gaps.

In contrast, Year 6 are looking promising, especially for reading. Extra support has been put in place for maths using mock SATs test papers. JG reminded governors that it has been two years since SATS have been taken in school. Year 5 teacher assessment data is not currently available due to staff sickness.

Year 4 and 3 are not making massive progress according to the data, but in the classroom, this is more positive. Further assessment will be used to unpick the challenges in both cohorts.

Children that have missed consecutive days at school through sickness is really having an impact on their learning. Staff sickness has also had a negative effect as the approach is never consistent for the same cohort.

**Challenge:** A governor asked if other schools were in a similar position. JG confirmed, suggesting in some schools it is even worse. Some schools have lost children to home education. JG is not seeing a lot of Head Teachers currently as it is so “full-on” in school at the moment. Staffing and children’s attendance issues are prevalent across the country.

**Challenge:** A governor asked if they should expect to see data patchy for the next two terms.

JG reassured governors that the school will do its best to plug those gaps for all children. Teacher ability to assess their own data is now good, the data

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	<p>has proved disappointing, but it needs to be understood that the children have not had a consistent educational provision for the last 2 years.</p> <p>Parents have tried their best to maintain their children’s progress but, things have been dropped despite the best interests of all concerned. Many children are not ready for the transition to their next key stage or developmental milestones.</p> <p>A governor suggested it was important for teachers to see the bigger picture, children have all witnessed different experiences throughout lockdown effecting all aspects of their lives.</p> <p>The Chair agreed that it is vital to know that this is a long-term project going forward.</p>
8.	<p><b>PPF Update (SI)</b> The PPF Link confirmed there were no updates since last meeting.</p> <p>JG has asked the School Improvement Adviser to look at PPF, she will run through the findings with PPF Link at their next meeting.</p>
9.	<p><b>Other Link Governor Reports</b> Governors confirmed the following: A SEND visit being arranged with HS. PC is arranging an English Spring 2 visit with LO and CF.</p> <p>MB explained that in normal times, governors would expect an Inclusion Manager’s Report in the summer term. He will try to meet with HS to get a common view of what will be reviewed for that visit in due course.</p>
10.	<p><b>Policy Review (SI)</b> There were no policies reviewed at this meeting.</p>
11.	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> JG reported no current concerns, all details will be provided at next FGB.</p>
12.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> There were no strategic items of any other business raised at the meeting.</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8pm.</p>
	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b> The next Children’s Committee meeting will be on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 6.30pm.</p>

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## Actions from the meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022

	Action	Owner	Deadline
	There were no actions from this meeting.		

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Dated: .....11<sup>th</sup> May 2022.....

Draft – Children’s Committee Meeting Minutes 16.03.2022 v2 (+JG)