



# WATERBEACH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## MEETING OF THE CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 6.30pm  
held at the school

## MINUTES

**Governors present:** Martin Brown (MB, Chair), Jane Green (JG, Head); Jessica Lechner (JL); Anne Morten (AM); Mark Smith (MSm); Lisa Wakley-Davis (LWD)

**Also Present:**

Helen Andrews (HA, Clerk)  
Angela Barks (AB) – Co-Science Lead  
J Fowler (JF) – Co-Science Lead

Agenda Item	
1.	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b></p> <p>MB opened by welcoming all to the meeting.</p> <p>No Apologies were received. NW, as new Parent Governor was invited to attend as part of her governor induction but sent her apologies as she could not make the date.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p>
2.	<p><b>Declaration of Interests in Items on the Agenda:</b></p> <p>No declaration of interests in items on the agenda were declared.</p>
3.	<p><b>Subject Lead Presentation – Science</b></p> <p>A presentation was shared for the benefit of governors around the Primary Science Quality Mark.</p> <p>The PSQM is a process with no end point, it is a cyclical process with frequent opportunities to reflect and evaluate. The process started in October 2022, beginning with a 40-point RAG-rated self-evaluation. This later evolved into an action plan. A vision and curriculum vision statement has been collaborated with other staff.</p>

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**Challenge:** A governor noted that each individual comes at science from a different perspective, have there been any opportunities to assess the starting points for each member of staff?

Not yet, the initial starting point was necessary to ensure all staff come from the same place.

**Challenge:** A governor asked, are staff comfortable with science?

This is not yet known; in terms of the curriculum, it is accessible for most teachers and CPD opportunities will be available. There had to be a starting point, the pedagogy had to be the first point of discussion. The session on the recent training day was positive in getting buy-in from the team. Discussions were not just about the children; it was about how Science is perceived by the whole community.

Subject Leads have started to get involved with local Science networks. The buy-in helps to establish what learning and pedagogy of science looks like at Waterbeach.

There are great resources within school; it is important to ascertain that they are being used effectively. The RAG-rating exercise deemed there were no risk assessments based on science activities, which are now all collated into a file going forward. Governors learnt that there are no chemicals used on site but, the risk assessments cover the health and safety of the children during those activities – such as cleaning hands after handling mud.

It is important that, across the school, there are child-led activities. It is this that may be a concern around teachers' confidence in science lessons. Governors were described practical examples for how child-led activities are used within a science lesson. It is important to ensure there are different types of enquiry embedded throughout the curriculum at Waterbeach. The enquiring mind is what is important at the heart of the science curriculum, it is not a knowledge-based curriculum but more about the skills that are used to develop learning further.

One of the children actually commented that doing the physical activities were not the only aspect of learning about science, it also included the research too. It was a very positive element of pupil voice that shows us the children are aware of the direction of this approach.

As staff get more involved with the development of the science curriculum, they will understand cross-curricular aspects to reinforce the children's understanding of key concepts.

Governors learnt of an after-school science club.

**Challenge:** A governor asked, what is your girl/boy ratio?

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	<p>It is not far off 50/50. JF explained some of the examples of themes used for these sessions, which are based from resources shared by the Science Week website. Science Week resources were used by staff to run activities for their classes. It was fun for the children, it was not linked to any curriculum unit, but it engaged children through their natural curiosity.</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor asked, do you do anything with the Cambridge Science Centre? The Centre itself is too small to consider a visit by the school but, they are set up to visit the school. It is on AB's To Do List to contact them.</p> <p>Most classes do one hour per week of science.</p> <p>You need to show that the school meets the criteria and demonstrating impact from the improvements being made. A portfolio of slides must be shared showing the development of the action plan but, what the school does well, and its impact. The final submission is 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023, which is assessed independently.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that the work involved to achieve the PSQM was considerable.</p> <p>Subject Leaders acknowledged that the process has been useful in identifying gaps but also understanding that there is an awful lot already in place. They key thing is about pulling everything together to evidence this.</p> <p>The Chair thanked both Subject Leads for their presentation and response to governor challenge.</p>
4.	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Children's Committee Meeting, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b> The minutes of the Children's Committee meeting, dated 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023, were submitted, and will be signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.</p>
5.	<p><b>Matters arising and actions</b> There were no actions or matters arising from the previous meeting, dated 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023.</p>
6.	<p><b>Committee's Priorities for 2022-2023</b> <u>Primary Science Mark Accreditation</u> JG explained that the process is heavy on the paperwork but there is a lot of stuff to do within the timeframe. It has clearly shown that, although there are a lot of things already in place, Subject Leads need to identify the impact of what is in place. It is hard to source agency staff to cover lessons, additional time needs to be considered to teach science in class going forward.</p>

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**Challenge:** A governor asked, do they have a choice of when they can start the accreditation?

No, there is no choice of when they start or finish.

**Challenge:** A governor asked, whilst the Science Mark will either be achieved or not, is there the capacity to continue the evaluation cycle going forward? The school development plan (SDP) is being redeveloped for the start of the new academic year. The SDP will show each subject or area as a priority. These actions will be shown in the various ways that the school will consider them. The Action to Reflection Planner for the PSQM is a robust document that will continue to be used by the school for science.

**Challenge:** A governor asked, do either of the Co-Subject Leads have previous experience of science?

AB comes from a science background.

**Challenge:** A governor asked, how comfortable do teachers feel about science?

The training from the PSQM Assessor will be delivered after easter to dispel the myths and lack of confidence when it comes to teaching children child-led activities.

One governor shared her experience of gaining the PSQM and the impact it made on teacher's subject knowledge and confidence. Parents with a STEM background always support the school with science-based days, such as the Ada Lovelace Day recently.

A governor noted that the risk assessments now in place will support the teacher's confidence in teaching science.

#### Phonics Update

JG explained that the implementation of Little Wandle has changed the school's perspective on the teaching of phonics. It will cost the school £16k to implement the scheme throughout the school. Some funding can be accessed by the English Hubs; they will be auditing the school in May 2023 to look at the provision from their perspective. This financial support may equate up to approximately £6k.

School leaders have visited a school in Colchester demonstrating best practice teaching of phonics. JG explained the strategies used by teachers to make the learning of phonics interactive and engaging.

All TAs were trained on the first four principles of Little Wandle during the strike day on 15<sup>th</sup> March whilst the school was closed. Reception and Yr 1

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	<p>teachers have also received the training. The next inset day will be used to train up the remainder of staff. JG feels that the scheme is brilliant; within the training there are mantras that must be used by all teachers for consistency and understanding.</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor asked, do you think that any more money will be needed to put towards the resources for this? The £16k cost includes all the resources required.</p> <p>Governors learnt that the teaching of phonics is very engaging and interactive for the children. She hasn't planned on how this will be communicated to parents. The new scheme will roll out from September 2023, the usual workshops and parents' evenings will follow. This time will be used to implement and embed the scheme across the school ahead of the new academic year.</p> <p>The main priority on the SDP next year will be around reading.</p>
	<p><b>Spring Data</b> Headlines were shared with governors ahead of the meeting. There are some improvements in places, the school are aware. Action meetings have taken place and interventions are being put in place to close those gaps. JG is hopeful that the new phonics scheme will impact data going forward.</p> <p>The good thing about Little Wandle is that the scheme provides catch up opportunities from Reception through to Year 6. Staff are aware of the data and are responding accordingly. Year 6 data is not strong, they have been doing mock SATs which suggest that the data is looking much better. Governors were advised that SATs Year 6 data is not going to be so strong this year and learnt more about the cohort dynamics and the support being put in place to support individuals, for whatever reason.</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor noted that the younger years seem to be better at maths, the middle years seem to be quite even with the upper years being stronger in English. Is there any reason for the disparity on previous data? JG explained that much of this is around the child's confidence in a subject. There is no doubt that once a child reaches year 6, if they do not have the basic concepts, they do struggle with mental maths. It is very cohort specific down to their strengths.</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor asked, is there a similar approach to maths as with Little Wandle? The children do use Times Tables Rockstars, and there is the Year 4 multiplication test, but the school isn't shared the results of this currently.</p>

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	Spelling is not a strength of the school. One of the jobs for next term is looking at the TA team and focusing them where there is a need from the next academic year. They will likely be placed in the earlier year groups rather than the upper end of the school.
7.	<p><b>PPF Update (SI)</b></p> <p>During the last visit, LAC and PLAC were considered as part of the new remit of the link role. Numbers of this cohort are increasing. This has increased more prevalently since the pandemic. The mobility of children throughout the school is well above the national average. JG believes this is a reflection of the local demographic. At a recent Heads Conference, JG learnt that there is a massive turnover of children who present with severely challenging behaviours.</p>
8.	<p><b>Link Governor Monitoring Updates</b></p> <p>AM held a recent visit with the two English Leads. The report will be shared at the next FGB meeting. The Subject Leads subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject is amazing. JG explained that this has been reinforced by a recent visit by the School Improvement Adviser. They work they have done to the core spine of books is outstanding.</p> <p>There is no doubt that both Subject Leads would be able to talk about their subject confidently. JG explained that what is missing is the evidence of reading throughout the school. Deep dives go beyond the superficial</p> <p>JL has conducted her visits.</p>
9.	<p><b>Policy Review (SI)</b></p> <p>9.1 <u>Behaviour Policy</u></p> <p>The policy is a template from The School Bus which has been reviewed by Senior Leaders, it is now compliant with new guidance from the DfE.</p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> A governor noted that not all the related policies were published on the school website.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that not all policies (either statutory or non-statutory) were required to be published on the website. These can be requested by parents at any time.</p> <p>The Behaviour Statement will be published at the front of the school website, it will link to the Behaviour Policy for a greater understanding. The Behaviour Policy has been amended to reflect the new changes around suspensions and exclusions.</p> <p><b>Ratification:</b> Governors unanimously approved the Behaviour Policy.</p>

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	<p>9.2 <b>Behaviour Principles Statement</b>  <b>Ratification:</b> Governors unanimously approved the Behaviour Principles Statement.</p>
10.	<p><b>Safeguarding (SI)</b>  JL completed a check of the SCR in March. 4 people started in January, the medical check has now been outsourced and linked with EPM. New staff make their safeguarding declarations through My Concern. Gaps in the SCR are being followed up by office staff. JL reviewed the induction of a new member of staff to reassure herself that the SCR was being updated compliantly. It has been interesting to learn about the Barring System. Members of the PTA are now on the SCR. There has been a clean up of the Visitor page of the SCR to tidy it up and make the information relevant.</p>
11.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  There were no strategic items of any other business raised at the meeting.   There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8pm.</p>
13.	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b>  The next Children's Committee meeting will be 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 6.30pm at the school.</p>

### Actions from the meeting, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023

	Action	Owner	Deadline
	There were no actions from this meeting.		

### Governor Meeting Dates 2022-2023

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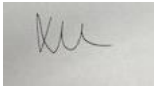
Date	Meeting		Topic	
<b>Autumn</b>				
20th Sept'22	Children's	Autumn 1	Tues eve	
5th Oct 22	Resources	Autumn 1		
19th Oct 22	FGB	Autumn 1	Data Review (incl SEF)	
9th Nov 22	Resources	Autumn 2		
15th Nov 22	Children's	Autumn 2	Tues eve due to Clerk's availability	
14th Dec 22	FGB	Autumn 2		
<b>Spring</b>				
11th Jan 23	Resources	Spring 1		
18th Jan 23	Children's	Spring 1		
1st Feb 23	FGB	Spring 1	SDP Focus	
15th March 23	Resources	Spring 2		
29th March 23	Children's	Spring 2		
<b>Summer</b>				
24th April 23	Resources	Summer 1	Budget Agreement - THIS IS A MONDAY EVENING	
3rd May 23	FGB	Budget	Budget - 4pm as Clerk needs to stack budget meetings this week	
17th May 23	Children's	Summer 1		
7th June 23	FGB	Summer 1		
28th June 23	Resources	Summer 2		
4th July 23	Children's	Summer 2	THIS IS A TUESDAY	
11th July 23	FGB	Summer 2	Business - THIS IS A TUESDAY	

## Governor Training & Development

To view the Joint Annual Governance Training Program and book courses online is now booked via GovernorHub. For the short term, please contact the Clerk if you have any courses that you wish to attend.

Governors for Schools - [click here](#)

NGA Learning Link – [click here](#)

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