

**MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY (FGB) OF
STEEPLE MORDEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL
HELD VIA ZOOM ON 10 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30PM**

Governors Present: Marie Gardner (Chair for the meeting), Christian Amadeo, Sam Brown, Ryan Ellett (Associate Governor), Liz Martin, Gillian McGuire, Karenza Nutley (Co Chair), Catherine Seward, Shamus Williams.

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk), Debbie Littlefair and Ann Lynn (prospective governors)

The meeting was quorate.

(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in bold)

Action By:

1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>NOTED: Apologies for absence were received from Tracey How because of ill health. The Chairs had agreed with Gabrielle Edwards that she would not attend meetings for a while because of work commitments. They tendered apologies on her behalf.</p> <p>AGREED: to accept the two apologies received for the meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: Gabrielle Edwards had also been absent from the previous meeting, but no apologies had been recorded at the time because of mixed communication between her and the Chairs, with each expecting the other to tender her apologies.</p> <p>AGREED: the register of attendance should be amended to show that apologies for Gabrielle Edwards had been retrospectively tendered and accepted for the December meeting.</p>	Clerk
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest.</p> <p>NOTED: there were no declarations of interest in relation to the meeting's agenda.</p>	
3.	<p>Resignation of Governor and Appointment of Associate, Co-opted and Foundation Governors</p> <p>NOTED: Suzanne Summerhayes had resigned as a Foundation Governor since the last meeting. A copy of her resignation later had been circulated with the agenda in relation to item 7.</p> <p>NOTED: Ryan Ellett's term of office as an Associate Governor had come to an end.</p> <p>AGREED: unanimously to reappoint Ryan Ellett as an Associate Governor for a further period until 31st July 2022.</p> <p>NOTED: the Governing Body had vacancies for a Co-opted Governor and a Foundation Governor. Debbie Littlefair was willing to serve as a Co-opted Governor and Ann Lynn was willing to serve as a Foundation Governor, subject to the Diocese agreeing her appointment. All governors present introduced themselves to the two prospective governors. The two prospective governors</p>	

	<p>then spoke about themselves. The Clerk advised that the Governing Body had the power to appoint the Co-opted Governor, subject to DBS and Section 128 checks, with immediate effect. The Diocese had to appoint the Foundation Governor and confirm the official term of office for the role. Shamus Williams confirmed he had submitted all the necessary paperwork to the Diocese several weeks previously, but usually did not hear back from the Diocese regarding appointments. The Clerk believed the Diocese appointment board was meeting that day to make appointments for the Summer Term onwards, but did not know when the school would hear back regarding any such appointment.</p> <p><i>Debbie Littlefair and Ann Lynn temporarily left the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p>NOTED: appointments to the two governor vacancies were discussed.</p> <p>AGREED: unanimously to appoint Debbie Littlefair as a Co-opted Governor for a period of four years starting from 11th February 2021 and until 10th February 2025, subject to satisfactory completion of DBS and Section 128 checks.</p> <p>AGREED: unanimously to welcome Ann Lynn as a Foundation Governor subject to the appointment being made by the Diocese and the term of office for the role confirmed, as well as DBS and Section 128 checks being satisfactorily completed. Ann Lynn would join the Resources Committee as an observer until her appointment was confirmed by the Diocese.</p> <p><i>Debbie Littlefair and Ann Lynn re-joined the meeting at this point and were advised of the governing body's decisions.</i></p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting – 9th December 2020</p> <p>NOTED: the Chair would be talking to the school re. the Governor sections of the school's website. The Clerk confirmed the accuracy of the autumn term attendance record. The record for the autumn and spring terms combined would reflect recent governor resignations and appointments that had taken place following the December meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes of the full governing body meeting held on 9th December 2020 as circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>NOTED: the following MATTERS ARISING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of Last Meeting (min. 4 refers) – Karenza Nutley, as the Chair for the meeting, had spoken to Gabrielle Edwards, who had confirmed she would abide by the Code of Conduct. • Committee Structure, Terms of Reference etc. (min. 4 refers) – the Curriculum TOR had been checked. • Minutes of Last Meeting (min. 4 refers) – all administrative actions had been undertaken. • Headteacher's Report (min. 8 refers) – the new report format was being used. • Safeguarding (min. 9 refers) – documents had been placed in the governors' folders. • School Development Plan (RDIP) (min. 10 refers) – the Headteacher had begun reviewing plan formats and the process would be completed when she had recovered. 	TH

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety (min. 11 refers) - the internal staff review was delayed because of other priorities and therefore the governor review was delayed until this had taken place (scheduled for Spring 2) • Policies (min. 12 refers) – all administrative actions had been undertaken. Review of section 4.3 of the Code of Conduct would be carried forward to the next meeting when, hopefully, the Headteacher would be recovered. Similarly the Co-Chairs’ meeting with Mandy from the school to see if the list of policies and procedures to be agreed could be more evenly spread would be carried forward to the next meeting. • Use of Electronic Signatures (min. 14 refers) – sample signatures had been provided • Staff Well-Being (min. 15 refers) - The Chairs and Head had not been able to consider if the two external phone numbers were one and the same and finalise the January email to staff. This action would be carried forward to the next meeting. Christmas cards and a small gift had been sent to all staff. Use of a staff questionnaire had been postponed until the pandemic situation was more settled. • Governor Training and Briefings (min. 16 refers) – it was believed all documentation was on the shared folders, but Gillian McGuire was asked to check that her training slides had been uploaded. <p>AGREED: the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th December 2020 as a true and correct record of the meeting. They would accordingly be signed by the Chair for the meeting and delivered to the school for safekeeping. The Clerk would send a copy of the minutes to the school for uploading onto its website.</p>	<p>TH/ KN MG</p> <p>KN/MG</p> <p>KN/ MG/ TH</p> <p>GM</p> <p>Chair Clerk</p>
5.	<p>Minutes of Meeting of Resources Committee – 27th January 2021</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes as circulated with the agenda. The Chair of Resources summarised the committee’s areas of discussion including: the Premises Management plan, Energy Project, pensions, Safer Recruitment Policy, School Trips Policy and SFVS, which the school had decided to complete. There were ongoing issues with the energy management system. The Remote Learning Policy had been discussed and placed on the School Website.</p> <p>AGREED: to receive and ratify the Resources Committee minutes of 27th January 2021.</p>	
6.	<p>Minutes of Meeting of Curriculum Committee – 21st January 2021</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes circulated with the agenda. The Chair of Curriculum summarised the committee’s discussions as focussing on Remote Learning, including Learning Grids, and also safeguarding and Christian distinctiveness. The Committee wished to record its thanks to Mr Beavan for all the support he had provided in terms of setting up Zoom sessions. Live lessons were not being recorded and pupils were attending in real time. The meeting had discussed the very high level of pupils physically attending the school. It was at 34% of the school roll prior to the recent spate of COVID infections. The Headteacher felt the school could not exceed 40% and tighter restrictions in relation to which children could attend might be necessary. The meeting had felt the school’s Christian distinctiveness was particularly evident because of regular Zoom assemblies and related activities.</p>	

	<p>AGREED: to receive and ratify the Curriculum Committee minutes of 21st January 2021.</p>	
7.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>NOTED: the school/ Chairs had received two letters since the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Resignation – Suzanne Summerhayes’ letter of resignation, as accepted, had been received and circulated with the agenda. The matter had been discussed under item 3. • Parent Correspondence – an email had been received regarding a child’s physical attendance at the school. The matter had been resolved. 	
8.	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>NOTED: the Headteacher’s report as available in the governors’ folders. The Chairs had been in almost daily contact with the Headteacher while she was ill and had agreed to lead on the report in her absence.</p> <p>NOTED: there were 9 pupils with confirmed COVID 19 infections and 13 members of staff. It was known that a number of parents also had confirmed diagnoses. The school had been deep cleaned thoroughly. 33 children were attending school in mixed bubbles. The staff governor highlighted that the member of staff in the classroom was responsible for everything relating to the class including teaching, breaks, lunches and routine cleaning during the day.</p> <p>NOTED: the parental remote learning questionnaire had not been circulated because of the disruption caused by the current COVID 19 outbreak. The school would consider circulating it after half term and depending on the expected Government announcement.</p> <p>NOTED: pupil applications to join the school in 2021/22 were encouraging. Some PE lessons were currently being delivered live. Governors praised this approach.</p> <p>NOTED: Governors asked if it would be appropriate to send the Headteacher a Get Well message from the Governing Body?</p> <p>AGREED: Governors’ best wishes for a speedy recovery should be sent to the Headteacher.</p>	Chairs
9.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>NOTED: the Safeguarding report circulated with the agenda. The Safeguarding Link Governor highlighted the recent changes to the KCSiE following Brexit as detailed on the agenda.</p> <p>AGREED: all governors present had read and understood the changes to the KCSiE.</p> <p>NOTED: the Safeguarding Policy appendix had been updated and would be considered under item 12 on the agenda. The Link Governor hoped to talk to the Headteacher about safeguarding after half term and when the Headteacher had recovered.</p>	

10.	<p>School Development Plan</p> <p>NOTED: the School Development Plan (now known as the Recovery, Development and Improvement Plan) as available in the governors' folders. In the absence of the Headteacher, Karenza Nutley summarised the changes to the layout and structure of the report. The Recovery, Development and Improvement Plan had been RAG rated by the Headteacher and she had started the process of discussing with staff its merger with the former Staff Development Plan structure, as agreed at the last meeting. The COVID outbreak at school had meant the task had not been completed. It was suggested that the meeting should discuss and minute any suggested changes to the plan for the Headteacher's consideration once she was well.</p> <p>NOTED: Priority 1, Quality of Education – governors queried the likelihood of reading standards slipping as a result of lockdown and wondered whether the document should be amended to reflect this? The staff governor advised that the school was aware of the possibility and had a proposed plan for tackling this. Governors asked if the reading recovery plan should be referred to in the document?</p> <p>NOTED: Priority2, Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development – governors queried the likelihood of pupil behavioural issues manifesting when all returned to the physical classroom. The staff governor advised that learned school appropriate behaviour might be lost during lockdown and would be monitored, but after the previous lockdown, pupils swiftly transitioned back to school appropriate behaviour. Governors asked if monitoring and possible behavioural recovery action should be referred to in the document?</p> <p>NOTED: governors asked if slippage in writing skills could be an issue because of pupils using IT devices and Zoom to learn at home? The staff governor said the school would be monitoring pupils when they returned to school, as a decline in writing skills had been identified in the July audit. The school budget would be shaped by identified needs.</p> <p>NOTED: Priority 3, Leadership and Management - governors commented that this section referenced the governor skills audit and the role of governors and queried whether the supportive nature of the governing body role during the pandemic should be referenced. Previously the role had been one of monitoring and challenge, but the need for governors to be supportive of the school and staff because of COVID 19 had now come to the fore. The Clerk stressed that the critical friend role in terms of monitoring and challenge should not be lost, as it was still a governing body requirement, but the increase in the supportive nature of the role could be highlighted as well.</p> <p>NOTED: recent OFSTED reviews of Early Years provision across England had highlighted that many Reception pupils had not acquired pre-school skills before coming to school. Governors asked if this should be referenced in the SDP? The staff governor felt that most years, and not just the Reception intake, were likely to be behind in terms of developmental stages.</p> <p>AGREED: the School Development Plan should be placed on the agenda of the next governing body meeting.</p>	TH/ Clerk

11.	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>NOTED: the Health and Safety Link Governor advised that the Health and Safety review had been postponed until later in February and his review in light of the LA's Health and Safety checklist would have to wait until after lockdown when he could physically have access to the school. The recent deep clean of the school was highlighted along with the appointment of a new cleaner.</p>	RE
12.	<p>Policies</p> <p>NOTED: the list of polices put forward for approval as listed on the agenda and available in the shared governors' folders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Safety Policy – had been updated • Behaviour Management Policy – included a governor statement on behaviour • Safeguarding Policy – the appendix to the policy had been updated • Trips and Visits Policy – had been re-worded to take into account a recent change in terminology. <p>AGREED: all policies listed above.</p> <p>NOTED: the Relationships and Sex Education Policy, whilst listed on the agenda, was not available in the shared governors' folder. The document had not been finalised because of the need to consult with parents and the difficulties of doing this during lockdown. Development of the policy was ongoing, but the Chairs did not know when it might be completed. It would therefore need to be carried forward to a future meeting.</p>	Clerk
13.	<p>Governor Training and Briefings</p> <p>NOTED: the in-meeting screen share of the current governor training record. Some training courses that had been booked by governors had been postponed or cancelled. The Chair would update the record accordingly. Any training undertaken, booked or otherwise pending and not listed should be advised to Marie Gardner via email or governors could access the record on the shared folders and make the changes themselves.</p> <p>NOTED: Sam Brown was scheduled to attend the Summer LA briefing. If anyone was unable to make a briefing they were scheduled to attend, they were advised to contact the next governors on the list to see if they could attend instead.</p>	MG All
14.	<p>Governor Visits.</p> <p>NOTED: governor monitoring activities were taking place via Zoom and telephone calls. Safeguarding and Health and Safety monitoring activities had taken place. The Chairs had visited the school premises when appropriate and were in regular remote contact with the Head and other staff.</p> <p>NOTED: Governors asked if governors who were also parents might attend a Zoom assembly? The staff governor advised that the Monday assembly took place for 15 minutes at 1.15pm every Monday and another large assembly took</p>	

	<p>place at 1.15pm every Friday. Dave Beavan was delivering remote assemblies in the absence of the Head.</p> <p>AGREED: specific governors should be invited to specific assemblies after half term and a record of their remote participation made. Gillian McGuire would attend a Monday assembly because of its link to Diocesan priorities.</p> <p>NOTED: governors who were parents were informally observing remote learning lessons while supporting their younger children. The staff governor advised that years 5 & 6 pupils were more independent and required less parental involvement in their lessons. The level of school /parent communication had increased because of the pandemic, remote learning and emails, with the school endeavouring to achieve a 48 hour response to emails.</p>	TH
15.	<p>AOB</p> <p>NOTED: the staff governor provided a detailed overview of staff welfare and well-being. The last three weeks had had a significant impact on the school because of the number of staff off sick with COVID 19 or who had returned to school, having had it, and were attempting to recover from it while continuing to teach. Media rumour-mongering about shortened summer holidays and increased length of teaching days was also a negative influence. Governors said they were not surprised to learn this and appreciated that it was a very tough period for the school, made worse by media speculation. They felt the way staff were obviously supporting one another was positive and an indication of the positivity of the school, even if staff were not feeling especially positive at the moment. Governors asked if the employment of temporary staff, if all pupils returned to school on 8th March, was a possibility? The staff governor felt it was something the school could consider when the Headteacher returned, but highlighted the challenges of employing supply teachers who might be carrying infection from a previous school posting or who would need to be trained up in the requirements of the school. The meeting discussed whether there were any quick fixes or whether solutions would have to be longer term. Governors asked if changes could be made to Remote Learning activity in order to support staff? The staff governor said staff had already determined the nature of their remote input. She was not sure changes would be helpful, especially if pupils returned to school in March. It might be something the school could review if pupils did not return after Easter.</p> <p><i>Shamus Williams left the meeting at this point</i></p> <p>NOTED: the slides from the LA termly briefing were available on the shared governor folder.</p>	
16.	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>AGREED: the next scheduled meeting of the Full Governing Body would take place on Wednesday. 24th March 2021 at 7.30pm by ZOOM.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The meeting finished at approximately 9.14 pm</p>	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk To The Governors
12th February 2021

Approved by the Full Governing Body on:

Date: 24 March 2021.....

Signature (Chair):

A square image showing a handwritten signature in blue ink. The signature is cursive and appears to be 'K. N. G.' followed by a horizontal line and a period.