

**Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Presteigne Primary School, held at the school
on Thursday, 11th July 2019 at 2.30 p.m.**

Present: Mr A Faulkner Mr A Lancett Mrs K Roberts Mrs N Latham
 Ms E Smallpage Mrs R Davies Mrs K Stinton Mrs A Tennant-Eyles
 Mrs K Stinton Mrs F Preece Mrs L Owens

1. WELCOME

Mrs Lynne Owens was welcomed to her first meeting as the new Community Governor.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs B Baynham, Mrs F Samah and Mrs J Davies.

3. CONFIRMATION THAT GOVERNORS HAVE NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ANY AGENDA ITEM

Mrs Preece declared her interest in item 9 on the agenda, "Future of Education in Presteigne" as the Minor Authority Representative Governor.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 6th JUNE 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2019 were reviewed, agreed and signed as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Page 2, Item 8a. Budget update is an agenda item.

Page 2, Item 8b. It was confirmed that the Little People's Playgroup were now occupying both their rooms at the school, as of 14th June. The playgroup will be invoiced for all hours they are using the old room, and supplementary hours in the new room.

Page 3, Item 9. The Breakfast Club needs to make £6.50 to help cover two members of staff who work 2 ½ and 3 hours a week respectively. The club currently makes £16 a week. Numbers have increased since the fee was dropped to 50p and the session is now only ½ an hour long, but the new system is working well.

Page 3, Item 10. Information with regard to changing the school hours has been sought and the governors will start looking at changing the school day in the next school year.

ADDITIONAL ITEM

VISIT FROM THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

Four members of the School Council, from Year 6, introduced themselves to the Governors, and explained some of what they have done as members of the council. With the help of the PTFA they had signed up for a Tesco's grant and with the £1,000 that they were awarded had chosen items for the school playground. Specifically, a playhouse, a castle and various games painted on the yard, such as Snakes and Ladders. Governors asked them if they thought it was worth having a School Council and they gave a resounding "yes". They were also asked how the council was chosen and how were children's views put forward. There are 2 council members from each year and they are voted onto the council by their classmates. (The 2 councillors from

Year 5 continue into Year 6 to give the council some continuity from year to year.) Council members are able to consult with their class and bring items to the council meetings. They had been visited in school by a member of Presteigne Town Council, Councillor Veary, and had been involved with a Design a Poster competition for the Town Council. They had all enjoyed the experience of being on the School Council. The Council members were thanked for attending the governors' meeting and praised for their confidence in being able to talk to a group of adults.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter had been received from Presteigne Town Council, an agenda item.

A letter had been received from Mrs Crichton, resigning her post as Midday Supervisor, also an agenda item.

7. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT - Written

Mr Faulkner explained that there would be a new report format for next year; there would be less data comparison with the rest of Wales.

He said that staff have been doing very well in helping the children get the results they have. Other items pointed out were:

Page 4. "Priority 4, to ensure the well-being of staff", he pointed out "Lack of funding will increase class sizes; this will impact on teacher wellbeing."

Page 4. "Priority 2. Behaviour Management for midday supervisors" – he hoped this would give supervisors the best ways to deal with problems on the playground and also ensure the midday supervisors were given more respect by the children. Lunchtime clubs do help but with reduced staff numbers it does and will restrict extra-curricular clubs. Currently the school has four mid-day staff, although guidelines say that the ratio for KS2 is just 1 to 75 and KS1 is 1 to 30. There are also 3 SENTAs on the playground.

Page 5. School to School Support – The headteacher continues to support both Knighton and Clyro school. At the recent Clyro inspection the inspectors had been impressed with the School to School support.

Also on page 5 he highlighted the school had achieved the "Siator Lalth" Bronze Award and the school would now work towards the Silver level.

Page 6 shows that number of roll is still falling. Governors questioned why this is happening. Currently the school Reception class and Year 5 are very small. There are very few young families moving into the area and a small number of families choose for their children to go to another primary school in order for them to get access to a different secondary school.

Page 7 shows that attendance dipped during the Autumn term, mainly due to a bout of illnesses. The target for the year should be met, however, a lot of holidays are being taken, this is within the guidelines but it does affect the attendance figures.

Page 7, Staffing. The advert for the midday supervisor is ready to go in mid-August with a view to appoint by the end of September. It will possibly be for a one year contract. Governors agreed that the advert could be placed.

Page 12, item 14. The alarm bells are not working correctly since the new system was installed. The system should be working with sirens. This work needs to be done but not on the school budget. PCC should pay for this to be done. Also the quote for the fire door seals had been very high. HOWPS are looking into this.

Page 10 and 11 indicates there have been lots of visitors and lots going on in school. Google translate has also been working well for the Bulgarian pupils and parents.

8. FINANCE

The Budget 2019-20 NOTICE OF CONCERN, to review and discuss

The Chair voiced his concern, and that of the governors, with regard to the forecast budget deficit and the school being unlicensed for the 2019-20 financial year. He read out the "Issue of Notice of Concern" as received from Mr Alec Clark, Head of Education on 25th June 2019. A response with an action plan was required by 5th July. The chair pointed out to the governors that at least 20 schools will have received the same Notice of Concern, most of them mid to large schools.

The Chair read out his reply to Mr Clark, dated 5th July. The Chair writes that there is evidence to show that the lack of ALN funding, by the authority, for SEN pupils, is the reason the school budget is in deficit. He also points out he was unable to arrange a meeting, before the end of the school term, with any of the council officers who should be available to support the school. Both letters are filed with the meeting documents. Governors were in support of the reply sent to Mr Clark.

Following the earlier Finance and Staffing sub-committee meetings governors were updated on staffing issues. It is recommended that the agreement made at the last governors' meeting, regarding extending a teacher's contract, be reviewed. If she continues at the school after Christmas, she will have been at school for 2 years and will come under full employment law conditions. If a redundancy procedure needs to be pursued, due to financial pressures, it would affect all staff and lead to low moral. Mr Faulkner explained that as of September only 5 classes will be funded (i.e. 150 pupils) which will lead to just 2 classes in Foundation Phase, these classes include SEN children. Also the curriculum is changing and new ALN changes are coming in. The school and staff cannot sustain this level of pressure.

There was a lot of discussion around this point. What else can governors do? Are parents really aware of what is happening in school? Should governors have a meeting with parents? Parents may be believing what they read in the press about a "Leadership Crisis" which is not what is happening. Even if the school loses one teacher, others may resign due to the pressure.

It was proposed that the teacher's contract be extended to December which will give the school some "breathing space" and possibly allow more time for extra children to come to the school and the budget situation may have changed. All governors agreed this was the way forward. There was also some discussion about whether the governors should go to the press with their concerns about the budget.

Governors were told that the new leader of PCC, Caroline Turner, seemed in favour of closing small schools, which may benefit Presteigne, however it was not sure how long this would take.

The chair summed up by saying it was impossible for the school to produce a business case when it is something the school does not believe in. The teacher governor said that from a staff point of view, they understood they are not on their own and the governors are supporting the school. The governors are being positive and supportive and for that the staff say thank you.

The head confirmed that the SENTAs contracts will be done this week as agreed at the last meeting.

Hereford Council had been very supportive, but there is still no guarantee of funding for one SEN child at the school, who lives in Herefordshire.

- 9. FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN PRESTEIGNE** communication from PNTC
The Chair read out a letter received from Presteigne and Norton Town Council with regard to the possibility of a “through school” for pupils in the Presteigne area. It was stressed that this is just “an exploration of the possibilities and we are seeking to get the views of both schools”. Governors felt it would be a good idea to explore all ideas with the Town Council and the school should be involved from the outset. Did the Town Council know how serious the current financial situation was? A date would be set for a preliminary meeting at the earliest convenience.
- 10. POLICIES**
Equal Opportunities – this policy hasn’t been changed and was accepted by the governors
Publication Scheme for Schools - this policy was accepted by the governors.
Freedom of Information Policy – this policy was accepted by the governors.
- 11. SUB-COMMITTEES & LINK GOVERNORS**
The Curriculum sub-committee would meet on Thursday 18th July at 9 a.m.
- 12. GOVERNOR TRAINING/INFO**
The clerk would chase up Beth Groves to ensure online training was set up for Mrs Owens.
There were no further training issues.
- 13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
There was no further business to discuss
- 14. NEXT MEETING**
The AGM would be held on 3rd October 2019 at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.