

# MINUTES

## PENKETH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

### MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY – SPRING TERM 2023

**Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 5.00pm**

#### **PRESENT:**

Mrs Angela Grace (Headteacher)  
Mr Howard Platt  
Mrs Claire Roper  
Mr Steven Hennessey

Mrs Carolyn Williams (Chairperson)  
Mrs Kathryn Bullivant  
Mr Jake Smith

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Maria Warburton (LA Minute Clerk)  
Mrs Sarah Messenger (Observer)

Miss Lorraine Browne (Observer)  
Ms Laura Atherton (Observer)

#### Part One – non confidential business

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#### **1 Welcome**

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **2 Absence and apologies**

Apologies have been received from Mrs Evans and Miss Haywood.

#### **3 Declaration of personal interests for any item on this agenda**

Governors were asked to declare any interest they may have, pecuniary or otherwise, relating to this meeting. No interests were declared for any item on the agenda.

#### **4 Finance update presentation – Sarah Messenger (TCAT)**

Mrs Messenger introduced Ms Atherton who will be attending future governing body meetings in her place. Mrs Messenger informed governors that she will be moving over to Appleton Thorn Primary - who are joining the trust - to help them with the conversion. Introductions took place. The headteacher acknowledged that Mrs Messenger has been part of the school for many years and will be missed.

The headteacher offered Mrs Messenger the use of a room in the school if required. Mrs Messenger is a key holder due to her proximity of the school. The governing body welcomed Ms Atherton.

Mrs Messenger reported that they are at the half-yearly point: Period 6 figures. A revised budget has been provided which includes the additional supplementary grant, which they will be receiving from April 2023 to help cover the pay increases and additional supply.

- Early Years SEND funding: They have increased that budget as they now have additional pupils in nursery that attract that. This will be reviewed throughout the year.
- Other income: They have increased this from the original budget as they have carried out a full review for paid places etc, and they are confident that they will receive that income for Early Years. Mrs Roper added that they have erred on the side of caution. **A governor asked** if they are worried that this may be affected by the proposal of the nursery next door. The headteacher explained that in reality they do not get many children that flow into St Vincent's. Mrs Roper added that there are a number of children joining St Vincent's this year; however it is a large cohort that is leaving and they would not traditionally come to this school. They have included an extra line for nursery free school meals (FSM) that are claiming from the beginning of the spring term.
- Catering: There are two lines for this: paid school meals and FSM. The income is then taken out as the funding sits above for universal FSM income and FSA funding which includes FSM. However, it is difficult to split this; the information demonstrates the figures coming through. In-house catering currently stands at a £6,054 surplus.
- Expenditure: The pay increases have gone through for teachers and support staff. The pay for April 2023 is another £1,925 for all support staff across all bands. They erred on the side of caution and included that. From September there is a proposed 4.5% increase. This year they offered a one off payment of £1,000 to all teachers across the board which is not funded. With on-costs they are looking at nearly £15,000, just for this year. Mr McGuire is keen to put this into the budget. A meeting is taking place at TCAT and they will be guided by what he wants to do.

A governor commented that the feedback on Twitter is that most people will reject this. The advice from unions is to reject the offer because it is not funded, whereas what has been offered in Wales and Scotland has been. Mrs Messenger informed governors that it would tip them into a deficit position. In addition, another impact is that a member of teaching staff has gone on maternity leave and they have mentioned that they are considering the shared parental leave scheme. This means that they would have periods of shared parental leave and periods of being back in work, which falls during the school holidays. Therefore, they would need to pay the member of staff a full salary for that. A governor commented that they would be paying for maternity cover and paying the member of staff for those periods. Mrs Messenger informed governors that this would equate to 45 days and with on-costs this is £7,000.

**A governor asked** if there is a policy at TCAT on how to deal with that as a trust. The headteacher explained that she had contacted Ben Logan yesterday and asked if they are able to set tasks, ie: writing policies and doing monitoring. Technically they could, however it could cause a response from unions.

- Supply: Mrs Messenger reported that they have increased the supply budget as there have been a couple of absences. The headteacher explained that two TAs in Early Years have been absent; one is covering maternity leave. Mrs Roper and the team are managing as best they can. Another member of staff has been off for compassionate leave. They have had some supply; Early Years is managing where they can. One member of staff could potentially be absent for six weeks. The headteacher informed governors that it can be difficult to find staff for Early Years from supply. **A governor asked** what qualifications they need. The headteacher explained that they require an NVQ Level 2, or equivalent. **A governor asked** if any of the other TCAT schools could assist. The headteacher explained that other schools are in the same situation or they do not have TAs.
- Educational support staff: The pay increases have gone through and the difference is significant. The main thing to note is the additional hours for nursery to cover the need in there, this is outweighed by the income and is bringing in a surplus of £33,000.
- Admin: They have had to increase the central charge to 3.75%.
- Curriculum: Mrs Messenger informed governors that they have increased the learning resources budget. A lot of the high schools have a staff wellbeing budget, ie: they occasionally buy tea and coffee for staff. The headteacher suggested that it would be nice to have a buffet once a year on an inset day. The chair acknowledged that wellbeing is worth considering and to allocate some money towards that and consider what would promote wellbeing.
- Photocopier: They have moved to a new provider. The headteacher informed governors that it should be cheaper. **A governor asked** if they have reduced the usage of the photocopier. The headteacher explained that this has reduced slightly, however they need to use it for test papers and practice SATs papers. They did look to see if they could find someone to print these; there is nothing available.
- Swimming: This has been increased based on the autumn charge.
- Recovery premium: They have not spent any of this at the moment, they have put an accrual in there; it cannot be carried forward. The headteacher added that it will be spent; there are specific things that they want to spend it on.
- School led tutoring: Mrs Messenger reported that this is 60% spent. There is £9,955 from the recovery premium for last year and £4,030 from the Covid catch up from last year.
- Apprentice ship levy: This has to go up to reflect the pay increases.
- DBS checks: TCAT may only invoice on a yearly basis for this as there is only one showing.

**ACTION:** Check that the DBS checks for teachers are being done and are going through as they should.

- Utilities, buildings and grounds: Gas and electric has been increased. Grounds has been left as it is, as they want a tree survey to be carried out. Mrs Messenger informed governors that if Mr McGuire wants them to put the teacher increase through, they may go into a deficit and may have to squeeze some money out of these lines. Mrs Messenger added that if they did not have to include the £7,000 for the teacher in Period 6 it would be in line with where they expected. **A governor asked** about the cleaning. Mrs Messenger explained that it may be more than they have included for that. They will be moving away from the LA for maintenance from August 2023. They will continue carrying forward the accrual in case they receive a bill for that. The chair explained that a key risk is £15,000 for a one-off payment which will impact the following year. They run a tight budget and it is difficult to identify any savings.

The chair thanked Mrs Messenger and Ms Atherton for attending the meeting and they left at 5.50pm.

## 5 **Chair's emergency decisions**

There were no chair's emergency decisions to report.

## 6 **Governing body membership**

It was reported that there is two co-opted governor vacancies.

The following terms of office are due to end:

- Mrs Williams (co-opted governor) – 9.6.2023
- Mrs Evans (co-opted governor) – 6.7.2023

The chair informed governors that Mrs Evans will see out her term of office. An email was received today from Miss Haywood; from that, it appears that Miss Haywood has resigned from her role as a community governor due to work commitments.

**ACTION:**                      **The chair to draft a response to Miss Haywood (and forward it to the headteacher) to acknowledge her resignation and that they understand that her circumstances have changed.**

The headteacher asked governors to consider anyone that could be approached for the community governor role. The chair asked that they also consider someone with an educational background as Mrs Evan's term of office is ending.

**ACTION:**                      **The headteacher to email TCAT and Penketh High School to ask if anyone is interested in becoming a governor and gaining primary school experience.**

Mr Platt informed governors that there are currently vacancies on the TCAT committees if any governor is interested.

## **7 Previous full governing body minutes, matters arising and action log**

- a) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023 (copy enclosed) and discuss any matters arising

**AGREED:** The minutes from the previous meeting held on 7 February 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

- b) Action log

The following actions were carried forward:

**ACTION:** C/F: The Code of Conduct to be signed (electronically) by the chair on behalf of the governing body.

C/F: Mr Platt to complete the safeguarding training (the headteacher to send the link to all governors).

C/F: LGB objectives for the year: The document to be amended to reflect that Mrs Bullivant is now a co-opted governor.

The headteacher reported that she had sent all governors the Priority Action Plan and the Scorecard for the next meeting; TCAT had asked that these be uploaded to Governor Hub.

The headteacher informed governors that the school website went down; there was no data breach or information shared. Recent information that had been updated was lost. TCAT have asked if they will start to use Arbor for parental communication. It is not as good for a number of reasons; however, they have been told to do it.

The headteacher informed governors that they will arrange an equality link governor in the autumn term. This is relevant for a primary school and should be part of someone's role linked with something else, ie: inclusion.

**ACTION:** An equality link governor to be agreed in the autumn term (linked with another role, ie: inclusion).

The following action was carried forward:

**ACTION:** C/F: The chair to ask – at her meeting with Mr Moorcroft – if there is any equality training available.

All other actions been completed or appear as an agenda item.

## 8 SEND (standard agenda item)

A wellbeing report from Mrs Baird has been circulated to governors for information. Miss Browne reported that she attended a LA cluster meeting via Zoom recently, SEND is increasing everywhere. Between Christmas and March 2023, the LA had received 102 requests for EHCPs. The demand is across the whole of the LA and does not just affect this school. The LA is taking measures, which should help.

The headteacher explained that an issue is that so many parents are requesting EHCPs and the school knows that they will not be successful; however, Miss Browne has to do the same amount of work. This is taking away from the ones that need it. The LA is asking why there are so many parental requests and the reply is because they are looked at quickly. The school has to prove that they are spending money on it, and in most cases, they are not. **A governor asked** if they are required to prove that. Miss Browne explained that it is Warrington's legislation and requirement.

The chair highlighted that they no longer have a SEND governor since Mrs Baird resigned. They need another governor to take on this responsibility, even if it is just for the interim.

**AGREED: Mrs Bullivant to be the SEND governor (on a temporary basis).**

**A governor asked** if it would be worth asking grandparents if they would like to be a governor at the school. The chair suggested that they ask family, friends and grandparents. They would be happy to meet and discuss this if they would like more information about it.

## 9 Policies

The following policies have been made available for information:

- a) Bomb Alerts and Emergency Procedures Policy (February 2023)
- b) Lockdown Procedures (March 2023)  
Information has been sent out to parents; however they need to do a drill.
- c) Fire Safety Policy  
The headteacher informed governors that the document is not yet finished. A governor highlighted that the Fire Safety Policy mentions alerting next door, this is not mentioned in the Bomb Alerts and Emergency Procedures Policy.

**ACTION: The headteacher to review whether the Bomb Alerts and Emergency Procedures Policy also needs to include that they alert next door.**

With regards to the Fire Safety Policy a **governor asked** if they are able print off a register, ie: for parents' evening. The headteacher informed governors that they have an evaluation list, which they can print. They can also pre-populate this if they are expecting certain parents to attend (they need training for that). It is impossible to keep track, especially on parents' evening. They would need to have someone to physically sign them in.

**A governor asked** if they are able to do a test for these procedures; alert everyone that a test is going to take place.

**ACTION:**                      **The headteacher to consider having a lockdown test or bomb threat test, or both.**

**AGREED:**                      **Governors agreed to adopt the proposed policies listed above (including the change to 9c if required).**

d) Debt Recovery Policy

The headteacher informed governors that this is a policy, which has been sourced from another school. This can be adapted and brought to a future meeting for governors' approval.

**ACTION:**                      **To be amended to suit the needs of the school and brought to a future full governing body meeting for approval.**

**A governor asked** if the child's place would be closed down if they had not paid after three weeks. The headteacher informed governors that the policy states that they would take their circumstances into account. Mrs Roper explained that if parents are not paying they are accruing a debt and their child is only allowed to attend the funded hours (they have done this in the past). **A governor asked** if they are able to ask parents to pay upfront. The headteacher informed governors that they will amend the policy to suit the needs of the school.

e) Accessibility Plan (November 2022)

The headteacher informed governors that an audit was carried out by Adele Partridge and this is the report from that.

## **10 Safeguarding, wellbeing, behaviour and attendance update**

- a) SEND and wellbeing link governor report (Mrs Baird)  
This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

b) Headteacher update

**ACTION:** A link governor safeguarding date to be arranged with Mrs Evans.

**11 Health and safety update (and link governor feedback)**

The headteacher informed governors that the work on the fire doors has been done. There was a bit of an issue with the new reception and nursery floor: the doors were not closing. This has now been rectified. There is an issue with the flags down the side of the building. They have been given a contact name from Mr Lowe to meet and discuss.

**12 Buildings & premises update**

The headteacher reported that the flooring was done but was a different colour. By the time they realised a significant amount had been laid. The company that supplied the flooring admitted liability and that it had to be re-done.

The school has been awarded £40,000 for window and door replacements. Mr Sinnett is looking at which ones to prioritise. They need blinds or something on the windows at the sides of the building to stop the glare as it becomes hot during summer.

**13 Scorecard and Priority Action Plan (business aspect)**

The headteacher informed governors that the scorecard has not been updated. This will take place prior to the meeting at Easter.

**14 Consultation paper regarding St Vincent's CPS (proposed changes)**

The chair highlighted that there are only ten places. The headteacher explained that they propose to share this with the reception class as they are under subscribed. They have done this here in the past and it does work having them together. It is unlikely that the change will affect Penketh South that much. A copy of the consultation paper has been sent to Mrs Briggs and Mr Moorcroft. Mrs Briggs' feedback was that she was concerned it may affect their numbers. Mrs Roper reported that they are likely to lose one child. They do not get the impression that the parents realise that they will be in the same class and how it is going to work.

The chair asked in relation to the school and providing feedback whether it would be detrimental in terms of the business they currently operate, and do they have any objections. The headteacher explained that her personal response is that although it could affect them she does not have any objections.



Mrs Roper explained that they are charging below the funded rate in order to remain competitive locally.

**A governor asked** if they could change the policy to say that children have to attend the nursery for consecutive years. The headteacher informed governors that they cannot stop someone changing nursery. The chair added that they would not be putting their child into nursery to secure the reception place as it is under subscribed. Mrs Roper added that it is also about thinking about the future position.

**ACTION:**                      **The headteacher, Mrs Roper and Miss Browne to draft a response to state that it could potentially affect Penketh South Primary School and impact on its numbers.**

**15      Staffing update (non-confidential)**

There was no information to report.

**16      TCAT governor training – Sway document/TCAT governor seminar (spring 2023)**

The headteacher informed governors that the document has been circulated for information. Governors welcomed having the video format which they can watch in their own time. Miss Browne informed governors that a TCAT leadership conference was held on Friday regarding social justice and SEND.

**17      Any other business**

There were no other items.

**18      Future meeting dates**

- Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 5.00pm (finance focus)
- Tuesday 4 July at 5.00pm (curriculum focus)

The headteacher informed governors that the SATs results are being delayed by a week due to the bank holiday.

PART ONE OF THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.44pm

SIGNED .....  
Chairperson

DATE .....