

## GRANTA SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021 6.00pm  
Via Zoom

## MINUTES



**Governors:** Ruchi Datta (Head Teacher), Caroline Ilott (CI) (Chair), Jeff Andrews (JA), Lucinda Billington (LB), Chris Clarke (CC), Sarah Crouch (SC), Paul Ilott (PI), David Jones (DJ), Tony Orgee (TO), Ian Wilson (IW).

**Associate Members:** Linda Alefounder (LAF).

Ann Abineri: Camclerk.

The meeting was quorate.

1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies for absence were received and accepted from</b> Matt Seymour and Paula Nixon. Not present: Chris Seaton, Laura Jeffs (Governors) and Tanya Seaton (Associate Member)</p> <p><b>Pecuniary Interests</b> There were no declarations of interest concerning matters on this agenda. No amendments to the Register of Pecuniary Interests were requested.</p>	Actions
2.	<p><b>Minutes of Full Governing Body meeting Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021</b> Agreed as a true record. To be signed in due course. No matters arising.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Governor Review Report – responses plus what we can learn from this.</b> Governors asked for their responses to the Report received from George Hayes on the audit which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021.</p> <p><b>The following points were made by Governors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always useful to have an outsiders opinion but I don't agree that the Governing Body lacks a shared vision of the school for the next 3 to 5 yrs. I feel that we share the vision at all our meetings and in our documents such as reports and School Improvement Planning.</li> <li>• Governors individual views may have led to GH thinking Governors weren't sharing a vision.</li> <li>• Three Governors attended the meeting and it is hard to achieve the depth of detail that an external auditor may be looking for.</li> <li>• If the report was inaccurate in some areas that may have been how we came across and we need to be aware of that before</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Ofsted visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is about learning to use the 'correct' language.</li> <li>• GH was asking the questions that Ofsted would ask.</li> <li>• As Governors we do challenge and are inquisitive but will benefit from Ofsted training.</li> <li>• Special Schools are a different experience for many inspectors.</li> <li>• This has not been a typical year due to recruiting a new HT and Covid but we now have the HT in post.</li> <li>• Hive delays have caused a lot of work and discussion but were due to the Local Authority.</li> <li>• Governors are critical friends and we need to consider how we can develop this. The HT added that her impression from GH was that challenge was present in financial matters but less in the curriculum area. The Chair of Curriculum Committee acknowledged this.</li> <li>• We have a broad range of skills across the Governing Body, but lack a Governor with a recent background in education.</li> <li>• There is always a risk of complaisance</li> <li>• The report is accurate when it states that a more structured approach to Governor training is required.</li> <li>• Safeguarding and Prevent training for all Governors is a high priority.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further discussion:</b>  <b>A Governor asked</b> if more challenge should be apparent in the Minutes and the HT stated that it is a question of more probing of initial answers and triangulation of data. <b>A Governor agreed</b> with this comment, pointing out the lack of visits into the school had hindered a more in depth scrutiny.  <b>A Governor stated</b> that it was a valid point that Governors were not scrutinising teaching and learning sufficiently during lockdowns but that the Governing Body would have benefited from more information on how to do this from the LA.  <b>A Governor asked</b> how we are acting on the report's actions. The HT replied that actions have been commenced including Skills Audit and Monitoring Schedule.</p> <p>The Chair summed up that Governors need to learn from this experience, attend and learn from training and learn to present a united front.</p>	<p>All Governors to complete Safeguarding &amp; Prevent training-review at Away Day.</p> <p>Clerk to send reminder of availability of training through GovernorHub.</p> <p>Action: Chair to create a development plan based on this report for discussion at the Away Day.</p>
4.	<p><b>Future of Governing Body – vacancies plus Chair succession Governor Vacancies.</b></p> <p>As noted in previous discussion, the GB would benefit strongly from a member with current or recent educational background. The HT confirmed that she has invited applications via Head's Group and other groups. It may be possible to find a person with Special Needs educational experience through the Special Needs group. Local advertising is planned.</p> <p><b>A Governor asked</b> how being a Governor could benefit a teacher and the HT stated that this would support career development and experience.</p> <p><u>Chair</u></p>	<p>Action The HT to send a flyer to local schools.</p> <p>Action: HT and CI to do a piece for the Linton Village News to recruit governors</p>

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	<p>CI will resign from her role as Chair and as a Governor on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.  Information on the role has been circulated.  Nominations or self-nominations had been requested. None received.  CI pointed out that Governor Services can be asked to try to find us a Chair although that person will not have knowledge of the school.  The Clerk reminded those present that this office is held for a year.  Nomination of Paul Ilott was raised. PI agreed that he would take the post for a year but further succession planning must be considered.</p> <p><i>PI left the meeting for the remainder of this item.</i>  Positive response from those present.  It was noted that PI has educational experience.  Proposed DJ  Seconded JA.  Agreed by those present.  Paul's Chairship to commence 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Meeting dates for next academic year</b>  Circulated via GovernorHub.  <b>A Governor questioned</b> the wisdom of having an FGB at the end of each term as this appears to be late in the term to challenge in a timely manner. <b>A Governor suggested</b> meetings at the start of term would facilitate planning for the term.  <b>Another Governor agreed</b> with this. <b>Several Governors pointed out</b> that a meeting at the beginning at the start of the Autumn term would be an opportunity to plan strategically for the year.  <b>The HT responded</b> that the schedule of meetings runs alongside the Monitoring Schedule and will then include receiving reports and scrutinising data for that term.  The Clerk pointed out that many of the administrative tasks such as Annual Declaration of Pecuniary and Other Interests and Governor Code of Conduct that are usually done at the first meeting of term, are now done via GovernorHub.  Discussion took place on whether the organising of committees and planning could be covered at the Away Day. Opinions varied on this.  <b>Another Governor pointed out</b> that after a very different year, due to Covid, and having received the LA's report, a meeting is required.  <b>Another Governor countered</b> that not all the Actions from the report need to be covered in meetings.  It was pointed out expected attendance at the Away Day is good.  It was confirmed that the FGB parts of the Away Day will be Clerked.</p> <p>PI proposed a September meeting.  6 in favour.  2 abstentions.</p> <p><b>A Governor asked</b> if the Away day will be in school and this was confirmed.  Discussion took place on hybrid meetings. The Clerk pointed out that LA will need to advise on this.  It was noted that online meetings make attendance straightforward for some people  The Clerk pointed out that she is hearing from other schools that a hybrid model with some present in person and some online can be</p>	<p>Action: HT and Clerk to add meeting to schedule.</p> <p>Action: how to hold meetings to</p>

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	<p>logistically difficult.</p> <p><u>Governor Monitoring Schedule</u> This has been circulated. <b>A Governor commented</b> on the advantages of this structured approach. Adopted by unanimous vote.</p>	be discussed at Away Day.
6.	<p><b>Committees</b> <u>Curriculum meeting Tues 29<sup>th</sup> June</u> PI outlined the key points of this meeting, the minutes of which have been circulated. No questions received.</p> <p><u>HR meetings Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May &amp; Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June</u> AW outlined the key points of these meetings, the minutes of which had been circulated. <b>A Governor commented</b> on the increased level of scrutiny and challenge by Governors in the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021 meeting. In relation to sickness, <b>a Governor asked</b> if staff use the Test and Trace app on the premises and the HT confirmed that the staff keep phones in lockers with the app switched off as required by guidance. The school operates its own testing and tracing effectively. <b>A Governor commented</b> that an increased number of infections is to be expected and the HT pointed out that a very high level of staff have received both vaccinations.</p> <p><b>A Governor wished to point out</b> that the quality of applicants for jobs at Granta has demonstrated the school's excellent reputation.</p> <p><u>FPHS Budget meeting Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April and meeting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June</u> TO outlined the key points of these meetings, the minutes of which have been circulated. <b>A Governor asked</b> for a Hive update and the HT confirmed that the tender process has been complete, on-site meeting taken place and work due to go ahead. The company chosen has worked in school previously.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Head Teacher Report summer 2021</b> The HT outlined key points of her report which had been circulated 96.3% attendance, which puts in top 10% of overall attendance for all Special Schools. Safeguarding incidents were reported. Behaviour logging levels were shared, with narrative provided to inform Governor understanding of this issue and the actions and strategies in place. <b>A Governor asked</b> if the work of the Behaviour Lead with the class teacher is formalised. The HT explained that all incidents are reported via Child Protection Online Management system (CPOMS) and members of the Senior Leadership Team respond with comments and suggestions. Actions are then agreed and recorded on the system. <b>A Governor asked</b> if any incidents have led into Prevent logging and the HT confirmed that there have been no Prevent concerns in the last year. <b>A Governor asked</b> about level descriptors and the HT pointed out where these are on the document. <b>A Governor pointed out</b> that page numbers would be useful.</p>	

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	<p><b>A Governor asked</b> about the assessment of bullying incidents. The HT responded that bullying is defined as the persistent upsetting of another pupil, repeatedly targeting another person over a period of time however short or long.</p> <p>Outcomes: the HT outlined how good the data is considering the nature of the school year due to Covid. Some individual Education Plan targets were not addressed due to lockdowns and these have been reviewed and rolled over. Therefore, progress of pupils at Granta has not been as adversely affected as main stream schools. Those pupils who were in school were in smaller groups and in many cases big jumps were made in communication</p> <p><b>A Governor commented</b> that the provision of such good learning is a credit to the staff.</p> <p>Coaching programme has been very successful. Appraisal target reviews have been positive. Stable position in terms of resourcing.</p> <p><u>Update on School Development Plan.</u> Key Priority 2, will now take plan in autumn term. Quality assurance processes – peer observations not been possible due to Covid. Induction handbook – work currently in progress. Priority 3 Enterprise Progression map in place but the position on work experience post Covid is awaited. Quality Assurance activities will need embedding further due to Covid. Priority 5. Outreach developed but not fully established due to Covid. Hive opening awaiting occupation of the Hive.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Safeguarding report</b> PI reported that he visited school in his role of Safeguarding Governor on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June 202. He examined the Single Central Record, His skills in the area of safeguarding have been informed by recent training and the LA Toolkit. LAF confirmed that Section 128 check now recorded on the SCR. PI stated that the training said Section 128 checks need to be carried out retrospectively for all staff. The Clerk agreed to check this with the LA and report back to PI so that this can be actioned. PI suggested KCSIE quiz for Governors in future. PI's scrutiny of CPOMS indicated it to be a highly effective system.</p> <p>Governing Safeguarding training and updates discussed. TO is the Governor responsible for keeping a record of Governor training at present. <b>A Governor commented</b> that the training record shows that some Governors have attended range of training and that for consistency; a more structured approach would be beneficial as discussed in item 3.</p>	<p>Clerk to check with LA re retrospective 128 checks.</p> <p>Curriculum Cmt Chair to action KCSIE quiz for Governors.</p>
9.	<p><b>Governor training and briefing sessions</b> Covered in items 3 and 8.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Strategic Risk register</b> JA explained these are required in Academies and could be</p>	

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	<p>considered good practice for maintained schools. The draft the HT has submitted a version in a different format. The HT explained the matters in JA's example but not hers are covered in the Business Contingency Plan. JA explained that references should be made to the Business Continuity Plan in the Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p>It was agreed that Governors would view JA's version and consider it.</p>	Action: JA to upload his version for discussion.
11.	<p><b>Policies – Health &amp; Safety policy approval</b></p> <p>Adoption agreed.</p> <p>In response to a Governor question the HT confirmed that references relating to Covid have been updated.</p> <p>Approval: proposed by DJ, seconded by JA, unanimously agreed.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Friends of Granta School (FOGS)</b></p> <p>Governors continue to appreciate FOGS contribution.</p> <p>CI reminded Governors of the Hannah Fun Fund which is there to provide funding for projects which would not otherwise be possible.</p> <p>The income from the fund has been used to upgrade the playground and CI reminded all that capital sums as well as income are available if required. To be requested via FOGS and Headteacher/SLT.</p>	
13.	<p><b>School Council</b></p> <p>LB explained that meetings are taking place remotely.</p> <p>A Questionnaire had been circulated to gather Pupil Voice</p>	
14.	<p><b>Any Other Urgent Business</b></p> <p><b>A Governor pointed out</b> there is a development proposal for the Linton area. Discussion took place on this and how it may affect the school.</p> <p>It was agreed that school need to observe this carefully and comment as required.</p> <p>DJ reported that Cambridge Joint Playscheme is planned for 2 weeks in summer. Staff in place. Rates being discussed.</p> <p>JA thanked the CI, outgoing Chair.</p>	Action: IW to circulate information to all members of the GB.
15.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b> 10 am Away Day in school Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021.</p>	Governors to submit discussion topics for Away day to CI.

**Meeting closed 8.25 pm.**