 **Beechwood Primary School**

Engagement & Wellbeing Committee Meeting

Held remotely on

Monday 26th September 2022 at 5pm

**PART ONE MINUTES**

***Present:***  Graham Chadwick (GC) Chair

Sara Harper (SH) Headteacher

Sam Hart (SHa)

Kate Shackleton (KS)

Julia Cargill (JCa)

Katie Bostock (KB)

***In Attendance***: Hilary Cummings (HC) Clerk to Governors

Rachel Geary (RG) Assistant HT

1. **Apologies for absence**

No apologies were received as all governors were present.

There were no items of other business to be considered.

1. **Declaration of Interests**

There were no conflicts of interest declared in relation to the business to be discussed at the meeting. General declarations of interest were recorded on GovernorHub.

1. **Election of Committee Chair**

GC was elected as Chair for a further term of 1 year.

1. **Election of Committee Vice Chair**

JCa was elected as Vice Chair for a term of 1 year.

1. **Agree Committee Terms of Reference and Year Planner**

The Terms of Reference for the Engagement & Wellbeing committee were reviewed and agreed for recommendation to the FGB.

Governors discussed whether staff wellbeing should be included, but agreed that it should come under Leadership & Management which dealt with all aspects of HR.

The committee year planner was also approved.

1. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Governors agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th May 2022 as a true and correct record.

1. **Matters Arising/Review of Action Points**

All actions listed on the action log from the previous meeting had been completed, and there were no other matters arising from the minutes.

1. **Headteacher’s Report**

The report was available on GH for governors to review. The Headteacher noted the following:

**Behaviour**

There had been exclusions totalling 41 sessions and affecting 5 pupils during the 2021/22 academic year. However, more than 50% of the sessions related to 2 pupils for whom specialist provision had been agreed, but who remained on roll during the autumn term 2021 while placements were found. A third pupil, excluded for 12 sessions, remained at Beechwood, but was being discussed for a move to specialist provision. The final 2 pupils, who accounted for the other 7 sessions, had been in year 6 and had now left the school.

Governors noted the actions taken to address poor behaviour, as part of the school’s positive behaviour policy. Report cards were rarely used, but were a measure available to staff where appropriate. SH also explained that data was analysed for patterns of poor behaviour, so that effective support could be provided. Refresher training on the behaviour policy had been provided for staff on the INSET day at the start of term.

Overall, behaviour across the school was of a very high standard and a governor noted the exemplary behaviour of pupils during a recent visit.

**Attendance**

Overall attendance for September was lower than for previous years, but had been affected by one family of three children who had not returned to the school in September. There had been a delay in removing them from the school’s roll while their whereabouts was established. The return to normal travel following the pandemic had seen some EAL children returning from abroad after the start of term. Attendance for PP children and those with an EHCP, had improved on last year.

The report listed the strategies employed to increase attendance, and the introduction of the School Attendance Mascot (SAM) had proved particularly popular.

Covid had had a major impact on staff attendance in the previous year, but if Covid absences were excluded, attendance had been very good.

**Punctuality**

The report showed that punctuality for September 22 was much better than for the same period in previous years. This was attributed partly to the bagel bar and also to the persistence of SHa in tackling lateness with parents. The ‘make up your minutes’ system was being implemented again and the school was looking at ways to link punctuality with attendance, so that time missed through lateness would count against pupils’ attendance in terms of rewards. It was recognised, however, that many children hate being late, and the fault lies with parents rather than the children.

**Pupil Wellbeing**

The report listed the ways in which pupil wellbeing was supported, including physical after-school clubs which were now back to full-strength and included a dedicated girls’ football session. Moki bands had also been introduced in KS2, to track activity levels. The 3 pupils in each class with the highest levels of activity were celebrated creating a degree of competition.

A dedicated Mental Health Lead was working in school every afternoon, and there was a wide range of pupil responsibilities which helped to motivate and engage pupils.

The new school counsellor was working with children 2 days per week. Confidentiality meant that it was difficult to monitor effectiveness, but the children enjoyed seeing the counsellor and the school would use Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) to gauge progress.

1. **Parents & the Wider Community (Included in the Headteacher’s Report)**
2. **Beechwood Family Tree (BFT) and Fundraising**

The BFT had been very successful in its first year and had a number of events planned for the current year. A Youth Club session for years 4, 5 & 6 was planned for each half term, along with A Spooky disco on 31st October. It was hoped to arrange 1 large event and 1 smaller event each term, alongside the Youth Club sessions. Some of the funds raised in the coming year would be used to support the attendance rewards.

£2,989.92 had been raised over the previous year for various charities, and the next event would be the annual MacMillan coffee morning on 30th September.

**Governor question**: Have you reduced your fundraising activities in light of the cost-of-living crisis?

Response: We are spreading them out and trying to be mindful of the pressures on parents. For example, we no longer award dojos to pupils for bringing in donations, as this potentially puts pressure on those unable to contribute. Beechwood parents have always been extremely generous and continue to be so, despite the current challenges.

1. **Engagement activities**

Governors noted the activities detailed in the report, in particular:

* The school had purchased a National Trust school membership which would allow unlimited visits to National Trust properties for all pupils.
* A school camp was planned for year 4, on the school grounds later in the year. This would provide a very different experience from a normal residential trip and would also help in keeping costs down for parents.

1. **Collaboration with outside agencies**

Governors noted the partnerships detailed in the report, including the Taekwondo club, and heard that the school was looking into the possibility of further lettings to generate additional income.

Following discussions with St Paul’s church it was hoped to set up a hot food event for Beechwood parents and children, twice a week between November and February. Parents would be able to get a hot, nutritious meal to either eat in or take away, completely free. School staff had volunteered to help at the proposed ‘Beechwood Soul Food Café’ and it was hoped that it would help to support the community through the winter while both food and energy prices were so high. The school hoped to build a strong relationship with the church and was also looking at a joint project to provide Christmas hampers.

A governor suggested that the school may also want to look at building links with the Wishing Well Project.

1. **Parent/Pupil/Staff surveys**

143 families had responded to the recent parent survey delivered via Survey Monkey. The results, which were overwhelmingly positive, had been shared with governors and staff. Individual comments praising specific teachers had also been shared with those members of staff.

There were some areas for development, which SH would follow up, but 141 respondents said they would recommend the school.

Pupil and staff surveys had been issued the previous week and the results would be shared at the FGB meeting in December.

**Governor question**: Do you think Dojo has helped parents to raise issues and communicate with the school?

Response: Yes. Although some parents do not understand that it is not always possible for staff to respond immediately.

Governors discussed whether it would be helpful to hold some form of drop-in to give parents the opportunity to talk to governors. It was agreed that this would be useful and could possibly be done alongside a parents’ evening.

1. **SDP 2021/22**

**Behaviour and Attitudes**

Governors reviewed the updated Behaviour & Attitudes Action Plan for 2021/22, noting progress against the milestones agreed for the end of the summer term. Attendance and punctuality had already been discussed under item 5 above.

**Quality of Education – SEND**

Governors reviewed Priority 2.2 of the Quality of Education Action Plan (Embed procedures for children with SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) difficulties to receive timely and appropriate support), noting progress against the milestones agreed for the end of the summer term.

By July 2022, 49 children had accessed provision in one of the SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) pathways, with support being put in place within 6 weeks.

**Personal Development**

Governors reviewed the Personal Development Action Plan. It was noted that all children had been given the opportunity to experience 6 different activities through the Enhanced Curriculum, and visits and experiences had taken place for all pupils linked to curriculum work.

1. **SDP 2022/23**

The Headteacher introduced the School Development Plan for 2022/23, noting that Key priorities 3 and 4 would be monitored by the Engagement & Wellbeing committee. Governors heard that there would not be a Personal Development priority for the coming year as this remained a strength at Beechwood.

**KP 3 - Quality of Education – SEND**

**Embed ‘catch up’ reading programmes to ensure that ALL pupils, including the lowest 20% of readers, are able to confidently read books appropriate to their age and stage.**

Governors heard that the Reading Recovery programme had already transformed the attitude to reading of pupils involved. This had also improved their attitude to learning overall, so was expected to have an impact across the curriculum.

**KP 4 – Behaviour and Attitudes**

**Further improve attendance and punctuality, particularly for vulnerable groups of children.**

Targets were similar to those for the previous year as this remained an area for improvement.

1. **Safeguarding update (included in the Headteacher’s Report)**

Governors noted that the number of Early Help and Child In Need cases had fallen since last year, while the number of other cases had remained largely similar.

**Governor question**: Why do you think the number of cases has fallen?

Response: There was a clear spike in numbers after Covid, but a number of families were able to meet their targets and cases were closed. However, we find that some of these families will re-appear later on requiring further support.

1. **Health & Safety**

GC had carried out a H&S monitoring visit in the summer term and made a full report to the FGB meeting in July. All previously outstanding items had been completed by the time of the visit, and the five ‘opportunities for improvement’ identified in the report had been actioned following the visit.

**ACTION: SH to confirm whether the risk register had been uploaded to GovernorHub.**

1. **Director’s Report – Autumn 2022**

The Autumn term Director’s Report was not available at the time of the meeting. The clerk undertook to upload it to GH as soon as it was published, and to highlight any items of particular relevance to the committee.

1. **Summer Term policy review**

The following policies had been available for review on GH:

* Equal Opportunities
* Health & Safety
* Social Media

All policies were approved with no amendments.

The First Aid Policy had been approved by the leadership & management committee in the summer term.

**ACTION: Clerk to update policy schedule.**

1. **Date and time of the next meeting**

Governors confirmed the date of the next meeting as Monday 30th January 2023 at 4.30pm.

It was discussed whether meetings should return to face-to-face meetings in school, and agreed that it should be discussed further at the FGB meeting in December.

1. **AOB**

There were no items of other business to discuss.

**Part Two – No Confidential Minutes were recorded at this meeting.**

**The meeting closed at 6.15pm**

**Signed Date:**

***(Chair of the Engagement & Wellbeing Committee***)

***Minutes by H. Cummings (30/9/22)***