WELLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Dudley Hill Road
Bradford
BD2 3DE
Head Teacher: Mrs Joy Wood

MINUTES

of the

Full Governing Body Meeting

Monday 13th January 2025 at 6:15pm

Meeting held via Teams

Governors Present (alphabetical)	Jon Dolby (JD), Mark Jamieson (MJ, Chair), Tracy McMahon (TM), Andrea Memdonca (AM), Aaron Sidebottom (AS), Joy Wood (JW, Headteacher), Tanny Yousef (TY, Co-chair)
In attendance	Sally Hughes (SH, Clerk)

Agenda No.	Minutes	Action
29/24	**Welcome & apologies for absence** Apologies were received and accepted from Laura Sheffield. The absence of Mubeen Ilyas was noted. The meeting was quorate.	
30/24	**Declarations of interest in items on the agenda** None	
31/24	**Minutes of the last meeting, held 18/11/2024, and matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda** The question of academisation is either to be parked or newly researched. This is the only decision to be made tonight. TM observed that in a previous experience, due diligence took more than a year before academisation could even be considered. JD clarified that the decision would be for September 2026, not September 2025. JW clarified that there is only one vacancy for a governor as long as LS remains on the board (i.e. until the end of the academic year). JD also stated his intention to resign at the end of the academic year. **Resolved:** The minutes of the full governing body meeting held 18 November 2025 were accepted as a true record. Proposed by JD, seconded by TY, all in favour. Interest in becoming a governor has been expressed, but the person in question would need to be co-opted and the only vacancy is for a parent. JD observed that he is co-opted, but he is also a parent and offered to switch roles, thus freeing up a co-opted governor vacancy.	

	Action: Clerk to inform LA school governor service that JD's role is now parent governor, not co-opted. A sequence of events was clarified: 1. JD will write to parents stating that he is relinquishing his governorship from next September, outlining what the role involves and encouraging other parents to apply. 2. JW (as returning officer) will start the process of advertising and holding an election. JW noted that full governing body (FGB) meetings are open meetings and may be attended by interested parties to see what is involved and if governance might suit them. Governors agreed that this was a sensible transition.	**SH**
32/24	**Correspondence** None	
33/24	**Headteacher's report** In the ordinary course of events, JW would present a written report to the Spring1 half term FGB. However, last week was extraordinary and the report did not get written. JW proceeded with a verbal report, beginning with the decision to close the school, day by day, on account of the unprecedented weather conditions and the caretaker's inability to secure safe entry to school for families. JW asked governors whether they would like the verbal report now, followed up by a retrospective written report for Spring 1. Or if they would like a written report for the Spring 2 half term in lieu. **Action:** MJ will let JW know which HT report should be written, Spring 1 or Spring 2. The week commencing 6th January was without precedent owing to the progression of the extreme weather. JW reminded staff of procedures in these circumstances: JW gets up at 5:00am and has a telephone conference with Andrew Smith, the school's Premises Manager. JW lives far from the BD2 postcode, and Andrew is local and can give eyewitness evidence as to road conditions, etc. Andrew walked to the school and had a second telephone conversation at 5:45am, indicating that the school's opening would need to be delayed giving him time to make the premises safe. JW noted that more than 100 schools were closed during the week. Andrew has an assistant who had succumbed to flu and couldn't help. **Q Is the assistant paid or a volunteer? A** The assistant is a paid casual worker for the school. JW explained the implications of volunteers helping to clear snow and grit pavements, namely that they are not covered by the school's liability insurance. **Q What about asking existing staff to help clear snow? A** They may not be insured. **Action:** Find out whether paid staff are insured to do grounds work at the school. JW continued. Radio Leeds is a reliable source of weather and travel information and was advising that travel was not safe, which JW considered as some staff must make lengthy journeys. Any decision to close needs to be made early, to enable the message to be received before people set off. It was apparent that it was not feasible to open safely and so JW changed her decision from a delayed opening to full closure. JW noted	**JW**

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	that the Bradford East Whatsapp group of headteachers agreed that poor clearance of secondary routs contributed to their own decisions to close schools. The Wellington PS carpark was also snowbound. A text was sent to parents, and although Google Classroom had been set up, JW acknowledged that this information was not shared in the text. Andrew continued digging out the school's walkways, etc., single-handedly. The intention for Tuesday was, again, a late opening. Andrew and JW had their 5am phone consultation, and Andrew walked to school. The paths that had been gritted on Monday had now frozen over. Considering the weather forecast, road conditions, headteachers' WhatsApp discussions, and AS's report from school, JW again made the decision to close the school for the day. She noted that on Monday parents had expressed their appreciation for the early decision. JW added that a scaffolding van was blocking the school entrance, and the driver could not be found. JW contacted the police as access was needed for the snowplough. Andrew was assisted in trying to clear the school grounds for Wednesday by AS. JW asked AS to describe the conditions at school on Tuesday. AS stated that the conditions were "not great". Snow was deep, the school site is large and the grounds were not clear. The plan for opening on Wednesday was to clear a path to Wellington Road, but once the temperature dropped below zero, Wednesday became riskier. Gritting on the pavements and roads was "non-existent". A full closure was decided on for Tuesday. The school then remained closed for the rest of the week. On Tuesday, JW was able to obtain the services of a snowplough, which she assumed would come on Wednesday, but owing to a backlog of work the plough came on Thursday. It cleared the whole of the car park and gritted twice. School then hoped to open on Friday, but that didn't happen. Remote learning was available all week, and work was made available via Google Classroom as during Covid. Contact was made with all families, and an online class meeting was convened to avoid isolation. JW, AS, and Catherine had many meetings throughout the week. Andrew was onsite Friday to check the building and consulted with JW on Sunday. School was able to safely reopen on Monday the 13th of January. A staggered reopening was decided against because of difficulties that would cause families with siblings. No additional maths or English was provided after the closure as it would have meant time taken from foundation subjects, and JW felt that children's attainment and progress were not impaired by the one week. JW invited questions. **Q Why does insurance not cover volunteers? Last year there was a call for volunteers to help clear grounds in similar conditions. A** That was not authorised by me. Another governor stated that they also recalled a call for volunteers last year, and JW repeated that there are serious implications for using uninsured volunteers. **Q Was there no one on site Wednesday or Thursday? Were people only physically present Monday, Tuesday, and Friday mornings? A** Yes, it was dangerous for AS to travel in on Wednesday and Thursday according to WhatsApp evidence from others who	

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	are local to the school. Andrew had worked alone all day Monday and Tuesday and needed to rest. **Q Why is it only the education sector that was unable to open? Why can other businesses and service deliveries remain open and their employees travel, but not schools?** Governors gave various personal accounts of journeys that they had made without difficulty during the week. **A** Greengates stated that they could only open because they are adjacent to a main road. The same is true for Menston. Bradford Council had a poor response to clearing secondary roads. **Q Dudley Hill Road was drivable on Wednesday and children's swimming lessons went ahead. The decision to close school on Monday and Tuesday is understandable, but Wednesday, Thursday and Friday I question. Online resources for home education were lacking and support for parents was poor. A** In what way were the resources lacking? Various complaints were made by parent governors about their perceived inadequacy of materials, including that lessons were quite short, and the answers were provided for pupils to see. Work "looked like it had been found on the Internet" and one Year 6 child finished their lesson in 15 minutes. JW thanked parent governors for this useful feedback and admitted that staff were "rusty" with remote learning provision. Children are now being coached within the computing curriculum in how to use Google Classroom to access and submit work. Staff are being upskilled in Google classroom as well after CPD on Thursday. JW commented that Moira Cochrane, the computing lead, and Andrew Smith, grounds person, did amazing work during the week. JW continued by stating that the decision was made during Covid that there would be no live lessons as many children would often be sharing a single device, which may have been a phone. Governors endorsed the decision at that time. JW concluded by confirming that teaching staff are committed to posting quality work. JD thanked JW for this information. **Q Other parents have relayed the burden of teaching children when they themselves are working from home. Parents have also said that they do not understand the work. Could the school management please create a business contingency plan (BCP)? One school reported making their teachers available online, and children can "pop in and out" – a flexible arrangement.** JW stated that the decision to close is a weighty responsibility. She has a responsibility for the safety of 500 children and their families plus 70 staff. The decision was not made lightly. **Q I appreciate your concern for so many people, but risk assessments can be individualised.** **Q Could the school undertake an audit of what devices families have?** Another governor added that a device audit could help inform the BCP remote learning plan. TM stated that this was a rare occasion, and the devices could not have been distributed immediately after the holidays even if school had them. She added that no contingency plan could have managed this. **Q We still need to understand the remote learning environment and we need to know what changed between Friday the 3rd and Monday the 6th. A** Temperatures rose to	

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	above zero and we know the melted snow would not have refrozen. TM added that even this morning there were slips and parent complaints about reopening. **Q Today is more treacherous than Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. The difference is that the other schools did not close today. A** No, the site was safer today than it was Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. JW emphasised that the decision to close is not driven by what other schools are doing. TM added that 23 schools remained closed today. TY pointed out that 80% of the allocated meeting time is finished and we need to move the agenda on. **Action:** A BCP needs to be written by the school's management and reviewed by the governing body. **Action:** Look into the cost of insuring volunteers to help clear snow and deal with ice in the future. **Action:** The remainder of the HT report will be written up and circulated.	**JW, AS** **MJ** **JW**
34/24	**Safeguarding** AS provided a verbal report: The review period covers the period from 15/11/2024 – yesterday. AS reminded governors that incidents are dealt with in line with other policies. Smoothwall reports nine categories of breach. One incident falls outside of these as it took place at home. A Y3 child filmed themselves with an iPad. One offensive user was using swear words on a reading platform. All incidents have been dealt with and there is not much to report. AS invited questions; there were none.	
35/24	**Teaching and Learning, including** • **December 2024 Progress and attainment data** AS presented the data beginning with Year 6 and explaining that "Combined" refers to Reading, Writing, and Maths at Age Related Expectations (ARE). The percentages in brackets reflect the proportion of those working at ARE who are also working at Greater Depth. Autumn 1 baseline is useful for finding gaps that need addressing. Autumn 2 was measured before Christmas against the expected standard for the end of Year 6. 48% were working at the end-of-year standard at the A2 monitoring, and they will now be pushed to work at Greater Depth. AS stated that this year's cohort's attainment is better than last year's, but added that cohorts differ. AS invited questions. **Q In Years 3, 4 and 6, there is a marked gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Is this not about additional learning needs? A** Pupil	

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	Premium (PP) encompasses different groups Some of the PP cohort may also include children with SEND needs. We cannot separate out the SEND children eligible for PP from the rest of the PP group. **Q What kind of children are eligible for PP? It would be good to have a breakdown of the numbers re PP and SEND. Action:** AS will provide this. JW added that much of the PP funding is spent on staffing. Policy always favours targeting PP to reduce the attainment gap. **Q Another column shows one class achieving 41% at ARE in Writing and another class achieving 0%. Is this related to a new teacher in the school? A** The children could be "almost there". Writing is not tested but assessed by teacher judgement. Grids are used for teacher assessment, and every box must be ticked. This will be addressed in meetings – we will look at the writing grids. AS told governors they could skim the other year groups as those are not statutory assessments. A Year 1 colleague has not got their data in on time. JW asked if phonics data was included in the document pack. **Q Could we have all the Year 1 and all the phonics data ASAP? A** Yes (**Action**). AS continued by explaining that this year's reception cohort was stronger overall but displayed a wider range of abilities. Reception aged children working at 2-3-year-old expectations are described as "E" (emerging) and those working at 4-5-year-old expectations for the end of reception year are "S" (secure). AS invited questions on attainment data. There were none, but TY observed that the approach was good and thanked AS. **Action:** As well as providing the Y1 data, TY asked AS to present a deeper look into writing assessment. JW stated that the focus of the senior leadership team's monitoring will be writing, and that this had already been agreed. The assessment grid as well as quality and consistency of feedback are particular aspects of monitoring. Multiplication is taught up to 12 x 12. The school has "Wellingtonised" the Thackley approach. • **Attendance data** TM explained the attendance data. The school's target is 95.5%. Whole-school attendance is 94.32%. The Bradford attendance team had been working very closely with one family whose child arrives very late. The team are giving up. The child came last year, mid-year from another school where their attendance was 13%. At Wellington, the child's attendance is 70% - a big improvement even though it falls short. However, the attendance team feel that they have done all they can do with this family, which will receive a fine. The family cannot afford the fine. They have already been receiving early help support with basic needs (coats, duvets, etc.) and the fine will not solve the problem. The school are challenging late arrivals and making home visits. Wellington is doing well compared to other schools and is improving, too. JD wished to record governors' thanks to Samila and to TM for going "above and beyond" in the attendance area. **Q There are 132 unexplained absences. Why are the unexplained and not unauthorised? Are there any safeguarding issues associated with these absences? A** "Unexplained" means that the family do not contact school to report an absence.	**AS** **AS** **AS**

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<table>
<tr><td></td><td>JD wished to inform governors that he made an unannounced visit to school, and whilst waiting in reception noticed a surprising number of late arrivals. No one was checking the reason. TM assured JD that the log is reviewed and the reasons checked. JD stated that he was reassured and that he would like the visit to be noted as a governor visit. (Done.)</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>36/24</td><td>Policies to ratify These will need to be carried forward. It is 8:15pm.
Financial Transparency – TY to review in advance
Charges and Remissions – LS to review in advance
Complaints – JD to review in advance
Live Learning – MJ to review in advance
Remote Learning – MJ to review in advance</td><td>SH</td></tr>
<tr><td>37/24</td><td>Membership of the full governing body
Done at 31/24</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>38/24</td><td>Governor matters
Training completed
Training requested
Visits made – see 35/24 for note of JD’s visit to school</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>39/24</td><td>AOB
Prospective new co-opted governor (Hanna) will be invited to the next FGB meeting. MJ to circulate her personal statement to all governors and a vote on her co-opting will be held by email. (She would have had to leave the room for the vote had she attended tonight.)</td><td>MJ, all govs</td></tr>
<tr><td>40/24</td><td>Dates and times of next meetings<table><tr><td>Resources Committee</td><td>Wednesday 5 February 2025</td></tr><tr><td>FGB</td><td>Monday 17 March 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Resources Committee</td><td>Wednesday 26 March 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Resources Committee</td><td>Wednesday 7 May 2025</td></tr><tr><td>FGB</td><td>Monday 12 May 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Resources Committee</td><td>Wednesday 25 June 2025</td></tr><tr><td>FGB</td><td>Monday 14 July 2025</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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The meeting finished at 8:20pm.

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