

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD**

**HELD ON 29 MARCH 2023 VIA TEAMS**

**Governors Present:** Paula Riordan (PR) Chair

Jonathan Norris (JN) Head Teacher

Nicola Daley (ND) *from 18.06*

Dean Grice (DG)

Helen Pugh (HP) *from 18.56*

Julien Rye (JR)

Blair Whitehurst (BW)

**Also in attendance:** Su Garbutt Senior Governance Officer

**PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

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|  |  | **Actions** |
|  | **APOLOGIES & ADDITIONAL AOB ITEMS**   1. Apologies were received and accepted from Kathy Lewis (KL) and Richard Stockwell (RS).   Governors noted and accepted the apologies received from Nicola Daley (ND) and Helen Pugh (HP) as they would both be late joining the meeting.   1. There were no items of additional business. |  |
|  | **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**   1. There were no conflicts of interest to declare. 2. All declarations of interest were completed. 3. The Board noted the school would update the register of business interests on the school website and on Get Information About Schools (GIAS). |  |
|  | **MEMBERSHIP**   1. Governors noted that Kathy Lewis had informed the Headteacher that she would be stepping down as a governor in June 2023. Paula Riordan agreed to shadow the Safeguarding role and Peter Grogan agreed to shadow the SEN role currently undertaken by Mrs Lewis. 2. Governors noted that there remained two co-opted Governor vacancies on the Board. The Headteacher had received two expressions of interest in the roles and would be showing the potential candidates around the school this week. 3. Governors **reappointed** Mrs Helen Pugh as a Co-opted Governor for a period of 4 years. Her term of office would run from 19th March 2023 until 18th March 2027. The clerk would update her term of office on Governor Hub. 4. The Board did not currently have Associate Members. | CLERK |
|  | **PART ONE MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING**  a) The Part One Minutes of the meeting on 23rd November 2023 were confirmed as a true and accurate record. The Chair would sign a copy of the minutes when next in school.  b) The action log was reviewed, and it was confirmed that all had been met and closed as appropriate. | PR |
|  | **CHAIR’S ACTION AND CORRESPONDENCE**  The Chair had responded to a letter received from the teachers during the Strike Action. This item was discussed under part 2 of the agenda and recorded in the part 2 minutes. |  |
|  | **PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**   1. The minutes of the Finance Committee on 2nd February, Teaching and Learning Committee meeting on 28th February 2023 and Buildings Committee meeting of 6th March 2023 were noted.   The following reports from Committee Chairs were received:  Finance:  The report would be received under item 7 of the agenda.  Teaching and Learning:  There were no items to bring to the Board’s attention from the minutes.  Buildings and Premises:  **All governors confirmed** **that they had no conflict of interest** regarding the 2 upcoming tenders, one for the upgrading of lights to LEDs and the other for secure fencing at the entrance to the school.  The committee reviewed the 3-year plan and governors noted the 5 items of work which would hopefully take place before the end of the academic year as outlined in the minutes of the meeting.  The Board noted the fire policy and fire-related procedures were reviewed and approved and that both Tree risk assessment and the Legionella assessments were due. The annual full Health and Safety review would be conducted by CEC before the end of the summer term.   1. There were no recommendations that required the approval of the board of governors. 2. There were no governor monitoring reports to receive. There was no report from the Safeguarding governor as Mrs Lewis was unable to attend the meeting. |  |
|  | **FINANCIAL MATTERS**  The Board received an update from the Chair of the Finance committee.   1. After receiving the report from the Chair of Finance Committee, Governors **approved** the draft annual budget for 2023/24. Governors were aware they were approving a deficit budget.   ***Governor question: What happens if we must submit a deficit budget to the Local Authority?***  *Response: We haven’t been in the situation before, so I don’t exactly know, but the FMSO had informed us that this is a countywide problem. We do have concerns and will continue to look at costs and make savings where we can. However, we do compare favourably when benchmarking against other comparator schools.*  Governors noted the number of pupils who needed additional support had increased and this meant that there was a need for more staff. The cost of the additional staff was not covered by the additional funding received. The school did have several extremely experienced teachers and therefore the staffing costs were high compared to some schools. Usually, ambitious staff would look to move on to further their careers, but the current cost of living crises meant that nationally, a lot of staff were not looking to make a move. The jobs available were not offering attractive enough salaries due to most schools having budget issues to encourage staff to risk a change in employment. The incentive to move wasn’t there.   1. The Finance Committee had reviewed the school budget line by line identifying savings where possible. However, this still resulted in a deficit of -£53,500. This would be an actual deficit of -£26,500 adjusting for the SEN funding error which had been reported previously. The deficit was mainly due to the actual pay rises, increases in national insurance and pension contributions for staff and the increase energy costs. 2. Governors received an in-depth detailed review of the SFVS from the Chair of Finance and **approved** the SFVS to be submitted 31st March 2023. The SFVS had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting for all governors to view. 3. The cost of the staffing structure for 2023/24 had been reviewed in the Finance Committee. 4. The Board reviewed and **approved** the Manual of Internal Financial Procedures (MIFP), **including approval of**:  * Business Continuity Plan * Asset Register * Scheme of Financial Delegation  1. Governors noted and **authorised** approval of the budget to the Finance Committee if summer FGB was after the budget submission date. Governors agreed the budget would still need to be ratified by the FGB. 2. The Pupil Premium report would be presented to the Autumn term FGB in line with the current cycle. The School Development Plan contained costings relating to pupil premium funding and the school-led tutoring grant, and this plan was a live document which was updated by the Headteacher frequently. 3. The school did not have an Unofficial School Fund. |  |
|  | **PART ONE HEADTEACHER’S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING**  The report had been circulated via Governor Hub prior to the meeting and the Headteacher drew the Board’s attention to the following items:  The Board noted the extracurricular, CPD and visitors to the school which were outlined at the beginning of the report.  A governor commented they had attended school for the Science Day.  *It was great to be in the school and see the pupils and the science workshops. It was a pleasure to see the children all excited and eager to learn. The knowledge they all displayed was amazing and I got a lot out of the visit. It helped me with my science link role, and I would strongly recommend other governors to speak to their link teacher to see if there is anything similar planned for their subject.*  DM would present a full report to the next Teaching and Learning committee.  The Subject Leader lesson swaps were working well and enhancing teachers’ knowledge and understanding of their subject responsibilities across the primary age-range.  Staff absence has significantly increased in the last 7 days due to an outbreak of Covid.  Pupil numbers remained stable with a full intake forecast for reception.  ***Governor question: What intake have we budgeted for?***  *Response: We have 27 first choices. We will lose 23 pupils from Year 6 and gain 27 in reception.*  Attendance remained good at 95.81% against a target of 97%. The national average was 93.9%. The Headteacher stated the school would be seeking advice from the LA’s Attendance and children out of school service regarding a small minority of families who continued to keep their child(ren) at home without sufficient reason. An analysis of persistent absence was contained within the school evaluation form.  The SSDP was linked in the report and was last updated on 24th March 2023.  Governors noted the data contained within the report and accompanying narrative. Speech and language continued to be an issue nationally and a lot of this was felt to be because of the amount of screen time children were indulging in. A governor stated that having Rosa, a trainee speech and language therapist within the school had been invaluable. It is increasingly difficult to source a speech and language therapist through the NHS due to them being so badly resourced.  2 children would not achieve a pass in the phonics test. Both had EHCPs.  KS1 data from March predictions:  Reading 70%  Writing 63%  Maths 81%  Year 6 data from March predictions:  Reading 74%  Writing 65%  Maths 74%  1 child had been disapplied already and there were 4 EHCPs within the cohort of 23 pupils.  Governors thanked the Headteacher for a most informative report.  **Safeguarding update: N Daley**  The Board were informed there was 1 child protection case open.  2 children were Looked After Children and these children were those involved in the child protection case. This one case took a large amount of ND’s time.  2 cases were open to CAFCAS due to toxic divorce proceedings. These also took a lot of the non-contact Designated Safeguarding Lead time as they are all quite involved and complex cases.  All safeguarding issues, including low-level, were noted on CPOMS. Staff were trained and required to note incidents, and ensure any actions were followed up appropriately.  Wellbeing was overseen by Mrs Eddie who was the senior mental health lead. Mrs Eddie would be presenting her work on the wellbeing offer to the next Teaching and Learning Committee.  **Death of Ruth Perry** – the recent nationally publicised suicide of a Headteacher following an Ofsted Inspection had brought into focus the pressure and worry associated with the safeguarding aspects of Ofsted Inspections. The Headteacher, SBM and DSL had all met to review the Single Central Record and no anomalies had been found.  The Headteacher and DSL were trying to ensure they had supervision time once a week to support each other and talk through cases.  The Governor Safeguarding role would remain with Kathy Lewis but Paula Riordan would shadow Kathy at the next meeting and take the role temporarily until the Autumn term 2023.  **SEND update: N Daley**  Anonymised data had been uploaded to Governor Hub for all governors to view prior to the meeting.  Governors noted the school had double the number of EHCP pupils compared to other schools although the school was lower than national on the number of pupils on SEN support. The Board was reminded that children must have complex needs to get an EHCP.  Many pupils fell into several categories and the Board was shown the percentages of children who fell into these different areas. The school was above or around national for most of the categories except for ASC.. The school had 27.8% of children whereas the national figure was 9.8%.  ***Governor question: It feels like our Year 6 cohort has a large number of SEN pupils, is this right?***  *Response: Yes, the cohort has a high amount of EHCP children which is getting near to 20% of the cohort. We have a lot of children with autism within the cohort and have 2 teaching assistants in the classroom.*  The Board received an example of the work undertaken with a non-verbal SEN child.  Governors noted the LA was moving away from allocating a certain number of hours per pupil into being allocated a “band”. Parents frequently did not understand the hours and felt that the hours their child received should equate to all these hours being with a 1-2-1. This was not practical and was not healthy for the child as they could come to rely too much on their 1-2-1. Quality first teaching, 1-2-1 support, small group work and individual work was all combined to help these children.  3 Year 6 EHCP children would be transitioning to Tytherington High School Links Group which was for those working below the key stage level. This was an enhanced provision within a mainstream school.  The Governor SEND role would remain with Kathy Lewis but Peter Grogan would shadow Kathy at the next meeting and take the role temporarily until the Autumn term 2023.  Governors thanked the Headteacher and Mrs Daley for their informative reports.  The Board noted the pressure Mrs Daley was experiencing and that it had increased exponentially over the past few years as the number of children with special needs, and safeguarding issues rose within the school. Governors encouraged the Headteacher and ND to ensure the designated supervision time once a week continued. | DM  CLERK |
|  | **SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  Governors noted that the most recent version of the plan had been uploaded to Governor Hub and discussed at the Teaching and Learning Committee. |  |
|  | **SCHOOL EXTERNAL ADVISOR**  The SiP visit had been discussed at the Teaching and Learning Committee. The Headteacher would be asking Mr Marsh to do a shallow dive into two subjects in the summer term to ensure objectivity. |  |
|  | **STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE – ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CLERKING 2023/24**  Governors **agreed** to remain with the Local Authority clerking service for the 2023/24 academic year for clerking to the Teaching and Learning Committee and Full Governing Board meetings |  |
|  | **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**  The report had been reviewed by each Committee who had addressed relevant items. |  |
|  | **GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**   1. The Board noted the following training which had been undertaken:   **Dean Grice:**  Knowing Your School through Governor Visits 14 Mar 2023  The Governors' Role in Monitoring, Supporting and Challenging 13 Feb 2023  The Strategic Role of the Governing Board 6 Feb 2023  Safeguarding Children Level 1 5 Feb 2023  Cyber Security Training for School Staff 5 Feb 2023 |  |
|  | **SCHOOL POLICIES**  Governors **approved** the following policies which had been circulated in advance of the meeting via Governor Hub:   * Child protection policy and procedures * Critical incidents policy * Equality policy and action plan * Mobile phone policy * Capability policy for teachers * Capability policy for support staff   ***Governor question: Have we ever had a capability issue at the school?***  *Response: No, not since I have been Headteacher.*  Mr Rye and Mr Whitehurst informed the Board that both had been involved with sitting on capability proceedings in their professional careers and therefore would be available to sit on an appeals panel if required. |  |
|  | **PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS**  Governors noted the risk assessments for the Year 3 and Year 4 one night residential to the Kingswood Centre, Colomendy, Wales (20th and 21st April 2023) had been submitted and approved by Cheshire East. The visit had already been discussed and approved at the Autumn term FGB meeting.  Governors **approved** the Year 2 one night residential to the Catalyst Discovery Centre, Widnes. (21st June 2023) subject to the risk assessments being uploaded and approved by Cheshire East. |  |
|  | **MEETINGS**  Governors confirmed the FGB meeting for the summer term would be held in school at 6.00pm on Wednesday 5th July 2023. |  |
|  | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  **Staff Survey:**  A governor suggested the school may wish to use Teacher Tap to conduct the next staff survey. This was an anonymous service which would benchmark the results against other similar schools. This was a paid service and the Headteacher would investigate. | HT |
|  | **IMPACT STATEMENT**  Governors helped move the school forward by:   * Having a clear focus on the financial challenges and what the school needed to do to overcome and address these issues. * Receiving and considering a report from the buildings committee regarding the future premises. * Receiving and considering in-depth information received regarding the challenges facing the SEND provision within the school and how teachers remain focused on the children. * Receiving and considering an excellent Headteacher’s report explaining how the school was achieving the targets set. * Receiving and considering a rigorous SFVS insight presented to the Board. * Hearing about the recent governor visit to the science workshop which allowed the Board to hear about the inclusivity and engagement of the children and staff. |  |

The meeting moved to the Part 2 agenda at 20:11

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