

THE GOVERNING BODY OF ROBERTTOWN CE (VC) JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body held at school at 6.30pm on Thursday, 30 November 2023.

PRESENT

Mrs M Hoole (Chair), Ms L Bolt, Mrs C Cockerill, Mrs S Goodall, Mr J Pickles, Mrs L Wood.

In Attendance

Mr P Keeley (Minute Clerk)

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs V Farrell, Ms K Hydes, Mrs S Laycock-Smith (Head Teacher), Reverend S Wallace-Jones and Mrs H Wells. It was confirmed that with six governors present out of a total of 12, the meeting was quorate.

There were no declarations of interest.

ACTION: Chair to contact Ms Hydes to discuss attendance at Governors' meetings.

25. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other issues to be raised under Any Other Business.

26. REPRESENTATION

The following matter of representation was noted:

| <u>Re-appointment</u> | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Name</u> | <u>Co-opted</u> | <u>With effect from</u> |
| Elizabeth Bolt | Co-opted | 17.10.2023 |

27. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

28. MATTERS ARISING**(a) Membership of Committees (Minute 6 refers)**

RESOLVED: That Mrs Goodall be added to the list of Governors on the Resources Committee.

(b) To Appoint Governors with Specific Responsibilities (Minute 7 refers)

It was confirmed that the recording of Mrs M Hoole as the Governor lead on safeguarding was correct.

RESOLVED: That Mr J Pickles act as Governor Lead on safeguarding matters.

ACTION: The Chair to contact Ms K Hydes to discuss her role as Sports Premium Governor Lead, given the latter's attendance rate at meetings.

(c) Head Teacher's Performance Management (Minute 6 refers)

The Head Teacher's Appraisal had been confirmed to take place on 15 December 2023.

The action log items were discussed and updated accordingly.

29. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

The minutes from both Committee meetings had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

(a) Resources Committee: 14 November 2023

The meeting included a budget update; the budget was reported as currently healthy but with significant pressures to come, including backdated Teacher pay rises.

A number of policies which had been presented to the Committee had been approved.

It was confirmed that a letter concerning the transfer of the bungalow to the school had been sent to the Diocese and a response was awaited. It was hoped that this could be resolved before the school was subject to an Ofsted inspection.

An offer had been made to a candidate for the post of Caretaker, the person involved would job share with another school.

(b) Standards and Effectiveness Committee: 9 October 2023

It was confirmed that the school had appointed a new Assistant Head Teacher and SENCO Lead, Ms Mulvaney, who had attended the Committee meeting.

Reception class baseline was discussed, and current challenges around self-care within the cohort.

The School Development Plan and data headlines had been discussed by the Committee.

The Committee Terms of Reference had also been approved.

Q: What do you mean by self-care?

A: Teachers or ETAs need to help with toileting. This does seem to be an improving picture though.

30. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT, INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING

The Head Teacher's report and safeguarding report, along with the School Development Plan, had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

The Head Teacher highlighted the following issues from the report:

A significant number of parents for prospective new pupils had been to the school to look around.

The school had appointed an experienced ETA for Key Stage 2 who would start on 18 December 2023.

The safeguarding report highlighted the following:

- Overall attendance for 2022/23 at 95.6% was higher than for 2021/22 (95.1%)
- Persistent absence at 16 children was lower than the previous year (25 children)
- Governor training would need to be updated shortly
- Some policies were due or slightly overdue for review

The Head Teacher invited further questions from Governors.

Q: Do we have attendance issues with a certain group?

A: We are in a good place overall and are actively pursuing cases where persistent absence is an issue.

Q: The persistent absence is not a high percentage but how many are a concern and what constitutes persistent absence?

A: Persistent absence is classed as less than 90% attendance. We currently have sixteen children classed as persistently absent, plus a handful who are classed as persistently late. This is likely to improve as we move through the school year.

Q: Why was there a dip in attendance in week 14 of last years' data?

A: There was a sickness bug doing the rounds that week, we took external advice and a deep clean was carried out.

The Head Teacher referred to the data report that had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

Target setting for the autumn term would be linked to appraisals, each teacher had targets related to data for their class.

The school had not yet received any data for Year 2 from FFT so were using the Year 1 data instead. Year 3 writing was an area being closely monitored as this group had been identified as weaker in phonics.

Year 1 children were being pushed for GDS, especially in writing.

Year 5 was a focus area based on the relatively high level of need within the class. This class had the highest level of all year groups in Pupil Premium, SEND and those classed as vulnerable.

The school had set a target to get 3 in Year 6 for GDS in writing. Six out of 9 applicants had been offered places at Heckmondwike Grammar School, this year was a strong cohort. Staff were targeting a high good level of development in this cohort.

Q: Are any students covered in more than one of these classifications?

A: One student is both SEN and Pupil Premium but generally not.

Q: When are pupils classed as vulnerable?

A: If they have particular external barriers to their learning.

Q: So is the data useful?

A: FFT updated the data in the summer for Years 1 and 3 but not for Year 2. As mentioned earlier, we do not receive combined data so we have to do it ourselves.

31. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

The financial report dated 7 November had been circulated prior to the meeting. The main headlines were as follows:

To the end of period 7 the school had an underspend of circa £55k, however a number of significant spend items such as back-dated pay increases and winter energy bills were yet to impact the accounts.

For the seven months reported, 55% of the budget had been spent.

A total of £10,529 had been received for Sports Premium.

Inflation was budgeted for at 10% but the actual rate was 6.7% and this may have a positive impact overall by the year end.

The school fund account to the year ending 31 August 2023, had funds of £21,000.68.

The most significant current issues related to the bungalow and the caretaker position.

Questions invited from Governors at this point.

Q: Will we have to allow any extra to cover the salary increases?

A: No this will not be required.

Q: From the budget full year forecast recently sent to Kirklees Council, do we have any concerns?

A: At the moment it looks like we will balance to plan, but I do not have an up to date forecast to share.

ACTION: Head Teacher to obtain forecast from the Business Manager and share with Governors.

32. GOVERNING BODY DEVELOPMENT: ACTIONS AND PRIORITIES 2023-24

As this item was felt closely linked to agenda item 18, the item was brought forward and the agenda was taken out of order at this point.

33. ACADEMISATION/MULTI-ACADEMY TRUSTS

Governors discussed a number of issues relating to the potential academisation of the school. The general background context was of a worrying reduction in resource and support from the Council, arising in part from their worsening financial situation. It was confirmed that dialogue on a number of issues including this one was part of discussions taking place with staff.

RESOLVED: That a meeting take place with all staff on the afternoon of 6 December at which Governors will brief staff on the school's current position.

ACTION: Head Teacher to arrange the staff meeting and send out confirmation to Governors, should they wish to attend.

The agenda reverted to the set order at this point.

34. SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION UPDATE

The School Self-Evaluation Form for 2023/24 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was confirmed that the CARE group needs to change to read 'collective worship'.

Concern was raised about the self-rating of 'good' not outstanding, the advice the school had had received was to make their own judgement in their own words, not necessarily in line with the Ofsted categorisations.

It was commented that the actions detailed in the document were clear.

It was noted that during the Ofsted parent review only one parent indicated they would not recommend the school; it was confirmed that the child of the parent concerned was still in the school in spite of the unwillingness to recommend.

Q: Are the Head Teachers happy with the feedback?

A: Yes, there is only a low percentage who are unhappy, with only minor issues. When you consider the children's responses they give an overwhelmingly positive response to reviewers.

Q: Do we have any views from visitors to include?

A: We do sometimes get comments, often they can be really good comments. For example, we got one which stated "being in the school was a delight, the children were happy and responsive".

Q: It is a shame that 8% of respondents had no clue about what constituted bullying?

A: People have differing interpretations.

35. EQUALITY ANNUAL UPDATE

It was confirmed that the Equality and Accessibility Impact Statement was on the school website. This was due for review in late 2024.

The document contained issues relating to curriculum, information, and premises.

The school was working towards reinstatement of extra-curricular activities towards the levels in place prior to Covid. Rockstars on Mondays, martial arts on Wednesdays, and coding on Tuesdays had been re-established.

The school intended to restart choir practice and dance in January.

It was confirmed that the Equality Policy had been updated, whilst based on the model policy two key objectives had been highlighted to improve the environment, these being improved signage to include more use of pictures, and to widen the understanding of diversity, not to just include the standard perceptions.

Q: Do we have a specific equalities Governor?

A: This comes under inclusion, which is Mrs Wells' area.

36. PUPIL PREMIUM REPORT

The Pupil Premium Strategy Statement had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. It was confirmed that two documents were to be uploaded to the school website.

37. TEACHERS' PAY AND CONDITIONS PROPOSALS - SEPTEMBER 2023

There was nothing to report as this item had now been resolved. Teacher pay awards effective from 1 September 2023 would be included in January salaries; non-teacher awards to apply from 1 April 2023, should be included in December salaries. Payment of back-pay would be included on those dates.

38. CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025-26

It was confirmed that the consultation was now open and would run until 31 January 2024.

It was confirmed that the consultation document was available and there were no comments raised by Governors.

The Governing Body confirmed there were no plans to amend the school PAN from its current figure.

39. POLICIES FOR REVIEW BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

There were no policies to review at present.

40. EDUCATIONAL VISITS

It was confirmed that there had been 34 expressions of interest in relation to the Year 6 Edinburgh trip.

Summer 2024 trips that were currently under consideration included a Year 5 trip to the Bronte Parsonage and a Reception trip to Nell Bank.

It was confirmed a payment plan was in place including for those parents who might need longer to pay.

41. SPENBOROUGH CO-OPERATIVE TRUST

It was confirmed that no update had been received at the moment. However, network events were planned for January.

The Head Teacher had made a visit to the Spenborough Hub today.

42. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

Mrs Farrell would be producing a health and safety report following her visit.

Ms Bolt had recently completed an Early Years visit. Some improvement had been noted since the previous visit but it was thought additional support was still needed.

She had attended a Three Reads session and had been very interested in the Little Wandle catch-ups.

The Start programme was shared and was felt to be valuable information for parents. This would be added to the existing family packs.

Mr Pickles would complete a safeguarding report once the second part of his visit had been carried out.

ACTION: Mr J Pickles to forward a safeguarding link to the Chair.

Q: Regarding the issue of self-care, children should be able to do this so does this go back to parents?

A: It's actually not that they cannot, they are toilet trained. It is other factors, they might be engrossed in the lesson, leave it too late or have a medical issue. It still increases pressure on staff though.

43. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss.

44. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

Meetings of the full Governing Body would be held at the school at 6.30pm on the following dates:

Tuesday 30 January 2024

Thursday 14 March 2024

Wednesday 22 May 2024

Monday 1 July 2024

Committee meetings would be held at the school at 6.00pm on the following dates:

Thursday 18 January 2024 (Standards and Effectiveness)

Thursday 7 March 2024 (Resources)

Thursday 18 April 2024 (Standards and Effectiveness)

Wednesday 26 June 2024 (Standards and Effectiveness)

Wednesday 26 June 2024 (Resources) to follow Standards and Effectiveness

45. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of the agenda, minutes or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

The meeting was closed at 8.40 pm.

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Action Log:

| | Item | Action by | Status |
|---|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | To action the reappointment of Mrs E Bolt as Co-opted Governor | Governor Clerking Service | Resolved Item closed |
| 2 | Arrange Head Teacher Appraisal before 31 December 2023 | Chair | Active Arranged for 15 December |

| | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------|---|
| 3 | To action the changes to the inspection copy of the minutes from the meeting of 5 July 2023 | Governor Clerking Service | Resolved Item closed |
| 4 | The Safeguarding Link Governor to arrange visit to school | Mr J Pickles | Active Part done, follow up visit to be arranged |
| 5 | To explore Safeguarding Training for Governors | Head Teacher | Active |
| 6 | The Staff Wellbeing Governor to arrange visit to school | Rev Wallace-Jones | Active |
| 7 | To formulate Staff Wellbeing Survey | Head Teacher | Active |
| 8 | To explore educational trip options and report back to the Full Governing Body | Head Teacher | Active |
| 9 | Change the date of Resources Committee to 14 November 2023 | Governor Clerking Service | Resolved Item closed |
| 10 | Contact Mrs. K Hydes to discuss her role as Sports Premium Governor Lead, given the latter's attendance rate at meetings | Chair | New |
| 11 | Obtain full year budget forecast from the Business Manager and share with Governors. | Head Teacher | New |
| 12 | Arrange the staff meeting for 6 December 2023, and send out confirmation to Governors should they wish to attend | Head Teacher | New |
| 13 | To forward a safeguarding link to the Chair | Mr J Pickles | New |