

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting

Moorside Primary School and Nursery
held on 27th February 2023 at 5.00p.m in School.

Nurturing Children to Succeed and Achieve

Present: Chris Lea (CL)(Chair), Claire Rowett (CR)(Headteacher), Maureen Binks (MB); Jen Pallister (JP), Peter Fleming (PF), Matthew Kettlewell (MK), Michelle Gee (MG), Kimberley Mearns (KM)

In attendance: Carol Harris (Clerk) (CH)
Jacqui Palmer Observer

Core Functions of a Governing Board:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

1. Welcome to Governors and apologies

The Chair welcomed all Governors and Mrs Palmer, the Head Teacher from Sharow/Newby Skelton Federation, to the meeting held in School.

All Governors introduced themselves to Mrs Palmer who had been invited to attend the meeting to observe.

Apologies were received and accepted from Kathy Hammersley.

2. Pecuniary Interests

The Chair reminded Governors to declare any pecuniary interests.

No new interests were declared

The Chair also asked for confirmation that all forms relating to Business Interests and Gifts and Hospitality had been updated. It was confirmed that these were all updated and stored in the Governor file in the HT's office.

3. Confidentiality

The Chair reminded Governors of the need for confidentiality and the meeting determined that no part of the minutes needed to be recorded as a confidential item.

	Any discussion around individual children would remain confidential to this meeting.	
4.	<p>To declare the notification of any other urgent business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors were informed that all school staff had been notified of the Staff Governor vacancy, there being no other nominations, MB was re-elected by the staff. Governors were asked to ratify this nomination. All Governors present approved the nomination. It was noted that the Safeguarding Audit would be discussed under agenda item 7. 	
5.	<p>To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting 9th January 2023</p> <p>It was noted that the time that MK would need to leave the meeting indicated in the minutes on page one was incorrect.</p> <p>The Clerk amended the minutes accordingly and all governors agreed the minutes to be a true and accurate record (with this amendment) of the meeting, held on the 9th January 2023 and were signed by the Chair to be returned to the Governor file in School.</p>	
6.	<p>To discuss matters arising and address Governor actions</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> <p>It was noted that all actions identified at the last meeting had been completed.</p>	
7.	<p>Testing the robustness of the Headteacher's risk assessment of opening the school in line with government guidance.</p> <p>Monitoring Staff/Pupil/Stakeholder wellbeing and welfare – including Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding Audit – CR led Governors through the recent Safeguarding Audit which was shared with all Governors prior to the meeting. She explained the process and detailed how the report was compiled. Governor questions had been invited prior to the meeting and are as follows with the responses; <p><i>GC.-Does the grading need to be consistent across all Sections where, the response to a particular question is NA. For example, in Sections 1 and 2A, where there are questions to which the response is "NA", they have been</i></p>	

<p><i>graded as "1". However, on Sections 6 and 7, the NA responses have been graded as "5".</i></p> <p><i>R.-Areas graded as a 1 are not applicable to our setting and so the guidance says to put it as a 1</i> <i>Areas that we have graded as 5 but not currently applicable mean that we have evidence where we have previously had this in place as a procedure or policy but it does not currently apply to a child or group of pupils on roll.</i></p> <p><i>GC- Does an Action Owner need to be identified for:</i> <i>Section 2A-Q61? R- I have added CR and P Dunn to action this</i> <i>Section 2B-Q2? R.- It is unclear as to what is needed here. Action- CR to clarify with JP</i> <i>Section 4-Q3? R.- Again this needs to be clarified.</i></p> <p><i>GC.-Section 2A-Q4 is there evidence that the policies and procedures are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, pupils, parent and carers. Can I query how the feedback from parents/carers/pupils is sought please?</i></p> <p><i>R.-Parents and Carers: Policies read by parent governors, shared with parents through newsletters - I copy the link to website place if they would like to read where relevant, attached to individual letters and referred to as appropriate relating to specific cases/individual incidents/individual circumstances (eg SEND policy), and simplified through Home School Charter - behaviour, safety, teaching and learning and attendance and this is signed at the beginning of each school year by all families and this is sent out in the admission packs for new starters to sign.</i></p> <p><i>Acceptable Use and Behaviour on site policy are read through in meetings as required with parents and also shared in Newsletters.</i></p> <p><i>Relevant policies are translated and shared through the MEA team for EAL parents.</i></p> <p><i>Children - School Council meetings and pupil voice. Eg Behaviour Policy and Anti Bullying Policy - KS2 input - quoted within the policy. Children are all aware of Attendance which is shared in an age-appropriate way.</i> <i>Safety - Internet Safety policy (procedures shared) through internet safety lessons.</i></p> <p><i>GC.-A minor one, but is there a slight error with tab 3? The section header for tab 3 states Section 2B - Actions take where there are concerns about a child, which is duplication of the previous Section. Should this section be "Inclusion"</i></p> <p><i>R.-We can't change this as it is locked but will let NYCC know.</i></p>	<p>CR</p>
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	<p>Looking at the procedure for 'Lockdown' practices, it was reported that, following a recent incident where the lockdown was implemented successfully, another practice would take place in accordance with policy. Fire drills have also been practiced with excellent results and children evacuated from school quickly and safely and well within the time parameters.</p> <p>The Parent Charter (home school agreement) is signed by all parents of children starting at the school. This is translated by the EAL team for those families who need this. The EAL team have been extremely helpful along with pupils and families themselves supporting one another. Previously, a child with an EHCP was experiencing language difficulties, it was unclear as to whether or not this was a language barrier or a special educational need until the child's understanding developed further.</p> <p>It was reported that the NSPCC 'PANTS' programme is being used to support the delivery of the PSHE curriculum.</p> <p>All Governors present approved the Safeguarding Audit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare and wellbeing – Update CR reported that a pupil has had to be excluded as their significant needs cannot be met within school and this child cannot remain with their cohort. The Chair and HT to keep Governors informed. <p>It was noted that the Chair and HT are to meet with County regarding the complaint made about a previous failure by NYCC in the handling of a welfare matter of a child with SEND. The lengthy timescales for the allocation of EHCPs and subsequent funding will also be discussed.</p> <p>Action – The Chair to circulate the outcome of this meeting to all Governors.</p> <p>Concern was expressed by Governors for the Staff and Parents caught up in these lengthy processes and continued support was offered to the HT and staff.</p> <p>It was also noted that the lengthy timescales and lack of communication between County and outside agencies can be a cause of difficulties with school and parents.</p>	Chair
8.	<p>Head Teacher Report</p> <p>This report had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting. CR led Governors through the report highlighting key points which included;</p>	

- Looking at Area 1 Early Years, it was reported that a member of staff had recently returned from maternity leave and had requested a reduced hours contract. This would entail further training in the new phonics scheme therefore, following monitoring in this area, the decision was made to move this aspect from green to yellow. New staff are released for monitoring and training and so this area will now show as an aspect for development. Processes are in place with additional support being provided to address the impact of this.

PF reported that, following a recent monitoring visit, he had observed excellent practice with children in EYFS, with all children actively engaged in their learning. One point to note was the communication and language links in the outdoor area was stronger than the maths in the outdoors. The HT had pointed this out as an area under scrutiny and development plans are in place with funding support from the Friends of School. PF's full report was shared with all Governors prior to the meeting.

- The report from the SEA's recent visit had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting. It was important to note that this report commended the HT for her excellent resilience, high expectations and her determined drive for continual school improvement.
- CR informed Governors of an additional child with EAL, from Ukraine, attending nursery which has increased the need for additional support and particular high need of this cohort.

Governor challenge was received prior to the meeting as follows;

GC.-Looking at page 2, Breakdown of persistent absence for all groups, presuming that Terms 1-6 are just half-terms? Might just be personal preference, but it could be helpful if these were labelled Autumn 1, Autumn 2 etc. for ease of reference, and to be consistent with other tables such as Current cases open to agencies for support (coordinated by the PSA and inclusion team) / Behaviour overview etc.

R.-This is how we refer to this in school in inclusion meetings as this is how it comes from Scholar pack but I can change on the Governors report for ease - this is how it is reported to me. This is an improving picture due to the increased number of sessions and the positive impact of the action plan. Taking one child from the EHCP data also has a huge impact. Sally Price continually updates the figures.

	<p><i>GC.-Red Flag Behaviours for Spring 1 and 2 seems to be quite an improvement on the Autumn Term, and in comparison with this time last year. Are there any identified reasons for this?</i></p> <p><i>R.- Structured play - as discussed during previous meetings and play leaders directed from Y5 to Ks1. This has impacted TA support time but has had a positive impact on behaviour. It was noticed that transitions were causing problems so the 20,20,20 system was introduced which, again, has had a positive impact.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at Aspire Data - The Chair commented that the sheer amount of data could be challenging for Governors to process particularly the Aspire data, however, scrutiny of this shows excellent progress. The HT reported that anomalies occur particularly if a child, previously measured from KS1 has been shown as achieving higher than was actually the case. To ensure fidelity all children are compared with other local schools for moderation purposes, Baseline Assessments for example, are compared with results from Holy Trinity School. <p>Consistency across all areas of teaching and learning of phonics has been improved. The HT explained to Governors that the 2019 cohort was the first group to be assessed in this way and were shown as having a 17% gap between school's results and National figures. 2022 data is now showing this gap to be 5% despite interruptions due to Covid and any additional anomalies can be explained.</p> <p>Data is improving across the school due to improved consistency and the projections going forward are positive for Year 6 and all Year groups.</p> <p><i>GC.- Are we able to share these data headlines?</i></p> <p><i>R.- These are not likely to be published this year. There are always stories behind any data and is not always a true reflection of what is actually happening in school and so can have a negative effect.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report from the SEA has indicated that the quality of teaching and learning is more consistent and is good across school. 	
9.	<p>Finance</p> <p>CL led Governors through the Finance report which had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting and noted that;</p>	

- It was reported that CR and CL had met with the FMS officer to set a licensed deficit budget application. It appears that school will still be expected to repay the deficit despite this being caused by factors beyond school's control for example the increased energy and staffing costs.
- Numbers on roll would ideally need to be between 200 to 210 to break even so the strategy would be to grow numbers as reducing costs further isn't viable.
- The numbers of high need pupils is growing more rapidly than funding is allocated for them, adding further pressure to the budget.
- CR and Mrs Pawley are continually looking at ways to minimise costs. Teaching assistant hours look high but many pupils need a high level of support. Of the 320 TA hours, 270 of those are for directly supporting high need children. These hours are also used to support the numerous interventions provided for our children.

GC.- Does school need to find the money to continue to provide this level of support?

R.- Yes, school needs to pay for the gap in funding until or if this comes through. It takes, on average, 44 weeks from the initial EHCP application to the funding coming in to school.

- CR notified Governors that she had written to the Prime Minister outlining the problems faced by Moorside School in the current climate and the consequences faced by the school. A copy of this letter was handed to Governors at the meeting for information.

GC.- Looking at the budget in comparison with other North Yorkshire schools, are others not in the same position?

R.- Some schools may not see the effects of the rise in costs until next year and will be hit just as hard. Sparsity funding has also had a positive impact on some rural school's budgets.

GC.- Are contracts reviewed regularly?

R.- Yes, there is a process for this, we have just replaced the phone system with a cheaper alternative to try and cut costs for example.

- The HT reported that the capacity of the school had been recorded incorrectly at County which may have impacted admissions. School is now addressing this and assessing the potential impact on numbers. CL is currently investigating the situation.
- It was noted that strategies are in place to cut costs further but this may limit growth so would need to be carefully assessed.

	<p><i>GC.- Are there any other income generators we could look at?</i></p> <p><i>R.- We did look at hiring out the hall however, with caretaking costs etc it wasn't viable. School meals generate a small income but it wouldn't be cost effective to increase the cost of these for parents. We are currently looking again at Marrick Priory as a residential for our children as they have said that they don't know what the cost of the trip is likely to be for next year. School simply cannot afford to fund the gap for parents. FOMS and their fundraising are proving a huge benefit, thanks were expressed to all involved.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CL reported that he had visited the kitchen to talk to staff about the implications for them regarding welfare of staff, limitations on supply and increased cost of ingredients. They fed back that all was good, they were still sourcing quality foodstuff and were able to continue to deliver quality meals at the same cost to school. They have planned future activities to include more family events. <p>The Chair explained about the FMS system to Governors and asked whether or not Governors felt that this was still a wise spend.</p> <p>All Governors agreed to continue buying into the FMS service.</p> <p><i>GC.-Looking at the Budget Management policy, what Is Contracts Finder and the figure of £20,834 seems quite specific; is this correct?</i></p> <p><i>R.- These are policies that are provided by County that we can personalise and adapt for our school. Yes, that figure is correct.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SFVS – This document had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting. The Chair explained the SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standard) and what it entails. It was proposed to agree the SFVS to be submitted according to the required timescales. <p>All Governors approved the SFVS.</p>	
10.	<p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Governor Update – It was noted that this had been discussed under agenda item 4. • Link Governor Monitoring reports –(These reports had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting) It was noted that PF's report had been discussed under agenda item 8. 	

	<p>Health and Safety Report – MK had visited school for monitoring purposes and found that ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minor injuries were as we would expect with the usual minor bumps however, one incident had been referred to NYCC. ▪ On the Fire Risk assessment, fire doors have been identified and just need labelling as such. ▪ Chloe Rhodes, the school's H&S advisor is leaving her post and so the next planned inspection may not take place. <p>The Chair reported that he had met with Michelle Ryder (SENCo) regarding the SEND provision in school. The Chair had shared his questions for Michelle with all Governors prior to tonight's meeting. It was noted that in responding to these questions, Michelle had a good understanding of both her role and the SEND processes in school. The Chair is to prepare a full report and circulate to all Governors following this meeting. Action – Chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor CPD- JP reported that she had completed the Introduction to Governance training which, she felt, had been very useful. • SDP- The HT reported that this was now available for all Governors on the one drive. Some Governors asked how to access this as it was proving difficult. Action- CR to ensure that all Governors and the Clerk have access to this drive. <p>PF noted that the documents shared with Governors are all useful in building a picture of the workings of the school and ensure fidelity in the use of correct language and knowledge of the processes. Action – CR to update and recirculate the guidance sheets for Governors.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>CR</p> <p>CR</p>
12.	<p>Policies – These policies had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pay Policy - This policy had been approved at the last meeting but it was felt that there were important updates to bring back to Governors. It was noted that; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 6 in the policy will need to be updated regarding the pay progression for teachers based on performance. • The Staffing Structure will be attached to this policy as stated within the policy. (A copy of this document was circulated at the meeting for Governor information) <p><i>GC.- As staff move up through the pay scales are targets set reflecting this? R.- Yes, overviews are shared and discussed. Staff inform the HT of their intent during appraisals and recommendations are made in accordance with this and school policy. Some staff prefer to remain on the MPS rather than apply for a move to the UPS.</i></p>	<p>CR</p>

	<p><i>GC-. Can we confirm that we do not have any Leading Practitioners?</i> <i>R.- That is correct, we do not have any Leading Practitioners.</i></p> <p>Governors approved all policies presented with the discussed amendments.</p>	
13.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CR reported that Heather Russell and Louise Wilson would be visiting school on the 28th of March to look at attendance. 	
14.	<p>Key Dates for Governor attendance</p> <p>Dates of next FGB meetings previously agreed as follows (Mondays at 5pm) in school unless otherwise notified;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business/Strategy Meeting TBC ➤ FGB Tuesday 9th May (Date changed due to extra bank holiday) ➤ FGB 10th July 	

Item no.	Action	By
7.	To clarify question with JP	CR
7.	To circulate the outcome of the meeting with NYCC to all Governors.	Chair
10.	To prepare and circulate SEND monitoring report	Chair
10.	To ensure that all Governors and Clerk can access the one drive.	CR
!0.	To update and recirculate the guidance sheets for Governors.	CR

The meeting closed at 18.45 hours.

Signed: Dated: