

Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting

Moorside Primary School and Nursery
held on Tuesday 5th December 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); Peter Fleming (PF), Matthew Kettlewell (MK), Kimberley Mearns (KM), Jen Pallister (JP) and Kathy Hammersley (KH)

In attendance: Carol Harris (Clerk) (CH)
Jo Pawley (JP) School Business Manager

Core Functions of a Governing Board:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, Safeguarding and welfare of stakeholders 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 to the meeting held in School. There were no apologies as all Governors were present.	
2.	Pecuniary Interests The Chair reminded Governors to declare any pecuniary interests. No new interests were declared	
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. There may be an item discussed later in the meeting, the details of which are to remain confidential to this meeting.	
4.	To declare the notification of any other urgent business None declared.	

5.	<p>To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting 17th October 2023</p> <p>All governors agreed the minutes to be a true and accurate record of the meeting, held on the 17th October 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>It was noted that all actions identified at the last meeting had been completed and that there were no matters arising.</p> <p>The HT informed Governors that a potential Co-opted Governor had been approached but did not feel that they could offer the commitment necessary at this time. Governors were asked if they could think of suitable candidates to approach and let the Chair and/or the HT know.</p>	
8.	<p>Finance</p> <p>The meeting determined to discuss the matters of Finance at this point in the meeting to allow JP to leave the meeting following her report.</p> <p>The Revised Budget Statement and budget monitoring reports had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting and hard copies shared at the meeting. It was noted that these statements had been moderated by Caroline Davies, the Bursar.</p> <p>JP led Governors through the reports and highlighted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still a predicted in year deficit, however, this is less than projected figures. <p>GC.- How has this been achieved? R.- This is predominantly due to an increase in pupil numbers. Revenues were predicted with little movement with no increases in funding despite additional expenditure. These figures may yet be adjusted by County. We have been advised that there is no need to look too far forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff pay awards have been included in the revised budget variations. • Staffing costs are the school's biggest expenditure with staffing levels reviewed regularly. Some restructuring has taken place within support staff roles which again is reviewed regularly. CR went on to explain that experienced staff are more costly however, this benefits the quality of teaching and learning. There would be a need for more support staff should the teaching staff be less experienced. CR went on to explain 	

	<p>the current staffing structure in school and shared a hard copy of this structure in the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other costs including stationery, assessment materials, reading/phonics resources, swimming, trips, ICT licences etc. equate to around £10 per child per week. <p><i>GC.- Is this in line with other schools?</i> <i>R.- Some children may need additional materials to support need which may not be provided by funding for them. Benchmarking shows that this is in line with other similar schools.</i></p> <p>JP led Governors through the Benchmarking reports which had also been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting. Points to note included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy costs have come more into line with other similar schools. This may be due to the new buildings being more energy efficient. Support staff costs appear high however we have previously explained this due to the level of need throughout the school. <p><i>GC.-The recent benchmarking report highlights that the school is in the top 10% of similar schools within the sample for Education Support Staff Costs. Are you able to explain the rationale for this and what steps, if any, are being taken to reduce or manage these costs down?</i> <i>R.- Some support staff roles have been restructured however; this is not always possible. For example, in the nursery, more staff are required to maintain ratios. Some of our younger children also have a greater need and so we provide additional support. Some banding for support doesn't match the level of need and/or the funding doesn't arrive in time.</i></p> <p>CR continued to explain the model for support staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to note that there are currently 13 children in the EHCP process which is well above national levels. This and including the nursery ratios and our refugee children mean we have the need for additional support staff. CR reported that she had visited another local school facing similar challenges and that the SEND team along with the Finance team are visiting school to discuss; the financial position, the complexity of admissions and the required levels of support. The Chair went on to explain the staffing situation within the nursery as this is TA led rather than teacher led. <p><i>GC.- Regarding the funding for the EHCPs, once these are agreed when does the funding start?</i> <i>R.- When they are approved however, school is providing support until this decision is made and this can be a lengthy process.</i></p>	
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7.	<p>Monitoring the wellbeing and welfare of pupils, staff and stakeholders, including Safeguarding.</p> <p>Safeguarding – CR detailed an issue to Governors of which school has become aware. This has been followed up by school following all of the agreed protocols and adhering to school policy. It has been reported and referred accordingly. School will continue to monitor, further investigate and aim to resolve this complex situation. It was noted that outside agencies are supporting and are content with the way that school has approached this situation. It was not necessary for Governors to be informed regarding the detail of this but to be aware that this is an ongoing situation.</p> <p>There were no further wellbeing concerns to note; the children are all really tired and the usual winter bugs are doing the rounds.</p>	

9	<p>Head Teacher Interim Report</p> <p>The HT led Governors through the report which had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>A question was raised regarding the reporting of unauthorised absence in the report which the HT clarified and will amend in the report.</p> <p><i>GC.- Has the level of unauthorised absence improved?</i> <i>R.- We have noticed that some parents are being more honest with this however holidays are still causing an issue.</i> <i>The situation for service personnel is treated slightly differently with most absences approved. The children are all really proud of their attendance which in turn is rewarded.</i></p> <p>Other points to note included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veritau have carried out the Information Governance Compliance Review and any points raised have been addressed by school. (<i>This report had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting</i>). • Staff appraisals have all been completed apart from two that are still outstanding, CR is meeting with these staff to arrange. Some staff met with CR and PF in order to apply for UPS. CR then explained this process to Governors with PF clarifying how this works within the existing school pay policy. 	
10.	<p>School Strategy Plan - Update</p> <p>The HT led Governors through the updates to the plan and noted that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments are being carried out in reading, writing and maths which will lead into the SDP. School is trialing different tests to assess which most resembles the approach of the SATs tests. The HT explained this process in more detail. This will enable school and moderators to compare and study the information gained. These tools also feed into the SHINE intervention where Rising Stars give breakdowns directly relating to topics, in maths, to teach at a particular time in the school year. <p>SATS Club at an after school club will be offered to all Year 6 from January and will be a targeted approach for some children.</p> <p>A robust discussion followed around examples of good practice in other local schools and the potential for the progress of the children.</p>	

11.	<p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-opted Governors vacancy – As previously discussed under agenda item 6, the Chair referred this to all Governors to think about any suitable nominees and to let school know. <p><i>GC.- Are there any skills gaps that we should be aware of?</i> <i>R.- No, there appears to be a wide range of skills within the current Board.</i></p> <p>At this point in the meeting PF advised Governors of his resignation from the FGB with immediate effect. He explained his decision to Governors who expressed their enormous gratitude for all of his years of hard work and support for the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor monitoring/Link reports – It was noted that all reports had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting. <p>PF, referring to his report, reiterated just how well the HT manages the Staff, performance management targets and pay reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety - MK reported that he had met with the new H&S advisor and that there were no new concerns to note. It was identified that the HT needs to undertake Legionella training. <p>It was explained that all monitoring is up to date with the HT continuing to review.</p> <p>It was noted that, with PF stepping down, that there was now a vacancy for the Vice-Chair role on the Board. All Governors were asked to think about possibly standing for the role.</p>	
12.	<p>Policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Related Pay Policy <p>This and any other HR and NYCC policies were approved by all Governors.</p>	
13.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Clerk asked Governors if they felt it would be appropriate to add Safeguarding to the Core Functions at the top of the Agendas and Minutes going forward. It was felt that this is a significant area to be able to colour code in minutes for example. All Governors agreed that this was a good idea. Action – The Clerk to add in the Ensuring clarity of vision/ethos line to be recorded in red going forward. The HT informed Governors of an upcoming meeting with the SEND Inclusion Team scheduled for the 22nd January 2024 and invited link 	Clerk

	Governors to attend. It was noted that feedback from this meeting would need to be added to the agenda for the next FGB meeting as a separate agenda item. Action - Clerk	Clerk
14.	Key Dates for Governor attendance Dates of next FGB meetings previously agreed as follows (Tuesdays at 5pm) in school unless otherwise notified; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FGB Monday 29th January 2024 moved to Tuesday 6th February 2024 ➤ FGB 19th March 2024 ➤ Business/Strategy meeting TBC ➤ FGB 14th May 2024 moved to Tuesday 7th May 2024 ➤ FGB 9th July 2024 	

Item no.	Action	By
13.	To add Safeguarding to the core functions on agendas/Minutes	Clerk
13.	To add Feedback from the SEND team meeting to the agenda for the next FGB meeting.	Clerk

The meeting closed at 18.20 hours.

Signed: Dated: