



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON MONDAY, 20TH MARCH 2023 AT 18:00 IN SCHOOL

Matt Boxall (Chair)
David Hardcastle
Kara Byworth
Natalie Wong
Luke Zwalf

Ros Roberts
Claire Scott-South (Deputy Headteacher)
Ben Sutton (Headteacher)
Mark Newman
Mike Hay

In Attendance: Lesley Irving (Clerk, Governor Services)

1.	<p><u>Welcome, apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the new parent governor Mark Newman. There were brief round the table introductions.</p> <p>Apologies were received with consent from Claire Neal and Anna Riach. Michael Noakes was absent.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest pertaining to the meeting.</p>										
2.	<p><u>Governor appointments</u> The Headteacher advised that he had met both Vincent Lyles, a potential Local Authority governor and Tom Pexton, who was interested in becoming a co-opted governor, and gave a brief overview of the applicants.</p> <p>Governors unanimously approved the appointment of Vincent Lyles as a Local Authority governor and Tom Pexton as a co-opted governor for a term of four years, ending on 19th March 2027.</p> <p>The Clerk explained that Michael Noakes' term of office had expired and as such he was no longer a governor. As Michael had not attended the meeting, his potential re-appointment was not discussed. The Chair advised he would contact Michael to ascertain whether he was still interested in a governor role and would confirm to the Clerk when he had received a reply.</p> <p>Action: Chair to contact Michael Noakes to ascertain if he wished to re-appoint for a further term and confirm the outcome to the Clerk.</p>	MB									
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting held on 25th January 2023</u> – previously distributed</p> <p>The Minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>										
	<p><u>Action points and matters arising</u> Action Plan</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Action</th><th>Status</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td><td>Governors to notify the Chair of any contacts that could be potential governors, particularly people who were not parents of children at the school.</td><td>Completed.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2.</td><td>The Headteacher to arrange a further parent election in the Spring Term 2023.</td><td>Completed.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Action	Status	1.	Governors to notify the Chair of any contacts that could be potential governors, particularly people who were not parents of children at the school.	Completed.	2.	The Headteacher to arrange a further parent election in the Spring Term 2023.	Completed.	
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	3. Clerk to review policy tracker	Ongoing. See matters arising.	Clerk / HT / SBM
	4. Clerk/Chair/Headteacher to review an annual plan	Ongoing. Headteacher, Clerk and School Business Manager to review the proposed annual plan.	
	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The Headteacher explained that the Clerk had reviewed the Policy Tracker and drafted a proposed work plan and an example five year Policy review plan. He would meet with the Clerk and School Business Manager after the next Resources Committee to review the tracker and assign responsibilities to individuals, Committees and the FGB. He explained that he would also look to identify which Policies should tie in with link governor visits and that they would add Policies to the FGB's approval list if they felt this was appropriate.</p> <p><i>A governor raised concerns that the documentation in place, particularly those which the Headteacher was responsible for, needed to be reviewed in detail, at an appropriate level. A conversation followed during which governors discussed the potential implications of documents not being kept fully up to date, with referral to an incident which had resulted in the suicide of a Headteacher. Balanced against the need to keep workload manageable for Governors, some policies run to hundreds of pages, and Governors were not necessarily the experts in the field.</i></p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that all statutory Policies would be reviewed either by an individual (usually the School Business Manager or Headteacher), the FGB or a Committee as required.</p> <p>In response to a question from a governor, the Headteacher confirmed that the School Business Manager tracked all changes made to Policy wording.</p> <p><i>A governor commented that the tracker should come to the FGB for governor approval and so that governors could be confident that documents were being reviewed at an appropriate level. The Headteacher and Clerk were in agreement.</i></p>		Agenda
4.	<p>Headteacher's Report – previously distributed</p> <p>Referring to the previously distributed report, the Headteacher highlighted the following:</p> <p>School numbers</p> <p>There had been a strong number of first choices (46) and second choices (32) received for the school during the application process for Reception for the next academic year. The Headteacher noted that this was becoming less the norm across the city, with some schools closing classes for next year. The Headteacher pondered how Dringhouses were staying as strong as they were and questioned whether they needed to be preparing for the numbers to fall, given that the birth rate in York was flattening. He stated that they may start to see an increase in applications from other parts of the community and explained that they were marketing the school as best they could – for example the new website and introduction of 'permanent' open days.</p> <p><i>A governor asked how many of the first choice applicants were within the catchment area. A staff governor responded that there were very few outside catchment, adding that they always visited pre school providers.</i></p> <p>Responding to a question from a governor, the Headteacher confirmed that the closest schools they were competing with were Woodthorpe, Scarcroft Road and Knavesmire School.</p> <p><i>A governor queried whether the school had details of the birth rate by catchment area. The Headteacher replied that he didn't have this information however it would be useful to see. He did have a detailed breakdown of school numbers for the South Bank cluster and stated that low</i></p>		

numbers were noticeable in many schools.

A governor commented that as 46 children had opted for Dringhouses as their first choice, and 32 as their second choice, it looked like they were doing things right. The Headteacher agreed but said it was important not to be complacent.

The number of children on the school's roll was discussed, during which the Headteacher confirmed the total number of children currently at the school was 311 and that the school's capacity was 315.

Quality of education implementation

The Headteacher explained that a Key Stage 2 survey, which 11 schools in York in participated in, had been referenced in his report. The Autumn 2022 figures were the average scores based on every pupil which had participated – 180 in total. He had felt that some of the scores, for example those around attitudes had not been reflective so had removed Year 6 data from the 'Spring 1' results.

A governor questioned whether issues experienced in Year 6 were reflected across the city or nationally. The Headteacher responded that he did not think this was a general issue and that this cohort had experienced more of tumultuous journey through school than any other. Part of the problem had been the way classes were split previously – they had moved to class splits based around social choices and also based on behaviour, academic skill and broader needs. The Headteacher explained that he felt they were managing the children better now. A governor expanded on this, stating that there had been staffing issues, followed by the pandemic and that they had not had as much time as they would have liked to make improvements.

In response to a question from a governor about how the results compared across the city, the Headteacher advised that there was not much variation; around 0.5 difference generally.

A governor asked if any of the differences in data from the Autumn 2022 versus the Spring 1 were significant. The Headteacher responded that his analysis had shown low scores were relative to their data set and he didn't feel a cause for concern.

Staffing

Referring to general staffing costs, the Headteacher advised that two members of staff were due to go on maternity leave this year and that they would also need to consider flexible working requests which may come in during the 2024/25 academic year. He confirmed these would be factored in to financial discussions; they would consider the use of ECT teachers and wanted to continue to offer flexible working at the school. He noted that Year 2 and Year 3 finances would not look as healthy however they were still in a positive position compared to other schools in York.

Strike action

A governor questioned why the school had needed to close, particularly as other schools seemed to find a way to stay open for pupils.

The Headteacher explained that he had found the situation difficult to navigate. Of the 16 members of staff at the school, 13 were NEU members. Some teachers had not been willing to engage in conversations about their intentions to strike but were perfectly within their rights in doing so.

Due to concerns about the number of supervising staff in school and the fact that Teaching Assistants (Tas) were not crossing picket lines, the Headteacher had thought the best solution would be to close the school, so that parents had some certainty about the situation.

A governor stated that, from a parent's point of view, they had appreciated the advance notice. The Headteacher advised that he had not had any communication from any parents other than one parent who had been angry that a decision may not be made to close the school until the morning of the strike.

A governor asked how many teachers had gone on strike. The Headteacher confirmed eight had

been on strike on the first day, five on the second, three on the third day and six on the last day of strikes. The average was around 50% of the staff.

A governor asked whether the PGL residential trip had been fully staffed. The Headteacher confirmed that it had; staff had been told they were not allowed to strike due to the residential trip due to Safeguarding issues.

A discussion followed about the impact of the strike action on the morale of staff.

The Chair stated that governors acknowledged that the Headteacher had been in a difficult position and that they appreciated that the Headteacher had provided the maximum amount of notice possible.

Pay spend

A governor noted that the amount spent on pay looked to be above the national average and asked whether any increases (if the strike action was successful) would be paid from the school's budget. The Headteacher confirmed that it was currently paid from the budget, adding that the Teaching Assistant pay increases of £1900 per TA, pro rata, had resulted in a £25k impact on the budget's reserves. He advised that the budget was in a healthy position and should still be in two to three years, but he would be reviewing the budget forensically; looking at incremental gains/reductions to see where costs could be cut.

A governor asked what the options would be to cut costs. The Headteacher responded that this would likely involve re-focussing what teaching in the upper school looked like. They had already been reviewing the next academic year; the cohort coming into Early Years looked to be the most needs heavy. It was unlikely additional Special Educational Needs (SEN) funding would be received therefore TAs currently providing general classroom support would likely shift to one-to-one support in the new academic year.

The Headteacher stated that the school had a high leadership cost currently however this work was invaluable, they would want to retain the SLT and their highly trained teachers. The Bursar had advised that they would need to calculate a shoestring budget.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A governor questioned how SEN funding worked at the school. The Headteacher replied that the first 15 hours of SEN need was allocated from the school's budget. If a child had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) the school would receive some funding however this would only cover an element of the additional support needed. He went on to describe additional SEN provision currently being developed in York.

Suspensions and exclusions

A governor asked for details about the suspension and exclusion rate, querying whether this had been in relation to one or more children. The Headteacher explained that one child had been suspended on multiple occasions, with one incident overseen by York's Virtual School. A brief discussion followed, during which the Headteacher confirmed that the focus was to provide support and keep children and staff safe in school.

Responding to a question from a governor, the Headteacher advised that Suspension and Exclusion Policies were in place and the procedures followed and explained that the severity of an incident would denote the number of days of suspension.

Brag Ladders - previously distributed.

Noting that the Standards and Effectiveness Committee had reviewed a more comprehensive data picture, the Headteacher explained that the Brag Ladder reports showed where children were, in terms of whether they were working at the expected or a greater level depth of understanding. The data snapshot was taken from Key Stage 1 assessment and Key Stage 2 Standard Assessment Tests

	<p>(SATs) results and colour coded as follows: Amber 1 – light touch intervention Amber 2 – greater level of intervention Amber 3 – considerable intervention in place Red – unlikely to meet the expected standard, even with a great level of intervention.</p> <p>The report showed a picture of the movement and progress of children, whether they were receiving more, or less, intervention and what they were doing to help children progress. It enabled staff to have discussions as a team, and to check whether they were on an upwards trajectory - whether children were really improving.</p> <p>Financial comparison data <i>A governor noted that there had been a reduction in the school income per pupil from £5,160 to £4,175 and questioned the reason for this. A brief discussion followed and governors came to the conclusion that this was due to the removal of the covid catch up premium.</i></p>	
5.	<p><u>Committee updates</u> <u>Resources Committee 18th January 2023</u> – previously distributed Governors acknowledged the Resources Committee minutes.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Governing body development</u> <u>6.1 Link governor visits to be arranged</u> The Headteacher advised that he had been reviewing the monitoring schedule for the Summer term and would like link governor visits to take place covering the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health and Safety ○ Early Years and Key Stage 1 (including quality of education) ○ Behaviour and attitudes (as part of pupil voice) ○ Key Stage 2 (including a pupil premium review) <p>He confirmed that the Safeguarding review was scheduled for Summer and that the Safeguarding link governor had arranged this visit.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher to share link governor monitoring schedule with governors</p> <p>Action: Link governors to arrange link governor visits for the Summer term (starting 17th April), with the Headteacher.</p> <p><u>6.2 Training updates</u> – training tracker previously distributed. The Headteacher advised that the School Business Manager (SBM) also had a training tracker. The Clerk advised she would contact the SBM to ensure all training was captured on one document.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to obtain a copy of the training tracker held by the SBM to ensure all training is captured on one document.</p> <p><u>6.3 Committee membership</u> – previously distributed The Chair advised that Committee Membership needed to be reviewed, with the new governors assigned to Committees.</p> <p>Governors agreed that Kara Byworth would join the Resources, Headteacher's Performance and Pay Appeals Committees and Mark Newman would join the Standards and Effectiveness and Pay Committees.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether the new co-opted and Local Authority governors (ratified during the meeting) should be assigned to Committees. The Clerk suggested they wait until the governors have forwarded their skills audits, to identify which Committees would be the best fit.</p>	<p>HT</p> <p>All</p> <p>Clerk</p>

	<p>The Chair of the Headteacher's Performance Management Committee commented that an interim review should take place in May and that it would be useful to see documentation in advance of this meeting.</p> <p>Action: Chair of Headteacher's Performance Management Committee to arrange a date for the Headteacher's interim review.</p>	HT / MH
7.	<p><u>Any other business – Policies for approval</u> Relationships and Health Education Policy <i>A governor commented that some wording within the Policy did not tally up with wording on the HTE website.</i></p> <p><i>Another governor stated that parents had been given the opportunity to comment and that it would be useful to note any comments which had been received and how these had been addressed.</i> The Headteacher responded that some parents had wanted their child to be withdrawn from certain aspects and that it should be clear to all parents that they had the opportunity to do this.</p> <p>Play policy Other than a small spelling mistake, there were no comments regarding the Play Policy.</p> <p>Governors approved the Relationships and Health Education Policy (subject to the above amendment) and the Play Policy.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Determination of confidential items</u> The Clerk highlighted some areas of discussion which should be treated as confidential and advised that she would ensure conversations were captured sensitively within the minutes.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Dates and times of next meetings</u> – previously distributed. The change of date for the FGB in May was noted. The next meeting dates were confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources Committee 26th April 2023 at 9am Standards and Effectiveness 10th May 2023 at 6pm FGB 24th May 2023 at 6pm 	

The meeting closed at 7.56pm.

These minutes were approved at the FGB on 24th May 2023.

DRINGHOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL
ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON
MONDAY 20TH MARCH 2023

Action (Carried Forward)		Item	Person(s) Responsible	Timescale
1.	Contact Michael Noakes to ascertain if he wished to re-appoint for a further term and confirm the outcome to the Clerk.	2	Chair	27 th March 2023
2.	Review the Policy Tracker, assigning responsibility for approval to individuals, FGB or Committees as appropriate, tie Policy approvals with link governor visits where possible – for approval in next FGB	3.3	Clerk / HT / SBM	26 th April 2023
3.	Review the governing body work plan, for approval in next FGB	3.4	Clerk / HT / SBM	26 th April 2023
4.	Headteacher to share link governor monitoring schedule with governors	6.1	Headteacher	24 th March 2023

5.	Link governors to arrange link governor visits for the Summer term (starting 17 th April), with the Headteacher.	6.1	Link governors	31 st March 2023
6.	Clerk to obtain a copy of the training tracker held by the SBM to ensure all training is captured on one document.	6.2	Clerk	24 th March 2023
7.	Chair of Headteacher's Performance Management Committee to arrange a date for the Headteacher's interim review.	6.3	Mike Hay / Headteacher	May 2023

Items for the next FGB

Approval of work plan and Policy Tracker.

Items for Committees

None raised.

Approved