

THE GOVERNING BODY OF MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at 5:00 pm at the school on Thursday, 9 November 2023.

PRESENT

Mrs L Kilroy (Chair), Miss C Barlow (Headteacher), Mrs G Goalby, Mrs A Iltaf, Ms C Prendergast, Mrs R Raja, Mrs H Rawat.

In Attendance

Mrs Z Poulter (Meeting Clerk)
Mrs A Wilby (Deputy Headteacher)
Ms K Wilkinson (National Leader of Governance, Forrest Governance Consultant)
Ms C Winnett (Observer)

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies had been received from Mr P Jones (consent).

No apologies had been received from Mrs N Mirza, governors believed she had not attended several meetings.

ACTION: Clerk to send Mrs N Mirza's attendance record to the Chair.

The Chair welcomed Ms Winnett to the meeting.

23. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE RAISED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following item was notified to be raised under any other business:

- Website update - Mrs Iltaf.

24. REPRESENTATION

The Governing Board noted the following matters of representation:

(a) Governing Board Vacancies**(i) 1 x LA Governor Seat**

Ms Winnett joined the meeting having expressed interest in the vacancy. She had provided a pen portrait which had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. Governors discussed the need to appoint committed and interested candidates who were willing and able to develop links and learn more about the school. The board were pleased to welcome Ms Winnett as an observer and had been encouraged by her pen portrait and experience.

RESOLVED: That governors welcome Ms Winnett to apply for the LA vacancy and approve her appointment to the board should her application be successful.

(ii) 2 x Parent Governor Seats

Governors discussed the parent vacancies.

25. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023 be approved by the Chair as a correct record.

26. MATTERS ARISING(a) Preliminary discussions (AGM Minutes 14.09.2023 refer)

The Clerk confirmed governor email addresses had been forwarded to Ms Wilkinson of Forrest Governance.

(b) Election of Vice-Chair (Minute 5 refers)

The Clerk confirmed that the request for support with board recruitment had been referred to the Governor Clerking Service (GCS).

(c) Review of Committees (Minute 6.3 refers)

The Clerk had omitted to attach the TOR to the previous minutes. The TOR had been circulated to governors following the meeting.

GCS NOTE: Please find the TOR also attached at the end of this document for ease of reference.

(d) Review of Committees (Minute 6.3 refers)

The Clerk confirmed that the blurb about the school had been received and had been referred to the GCS for use in governor recruitment support.

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

(i) The Clerk confirmed that the attendance document supplied included governors' term details.

(ii) The GCS had forwarded a completed copy of the Register of Business Interest log to the school.

All other actions had been completed.

27. POLICIES FOR REVIEW BY THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD

The Headteacher outlined that the Behaviour Policy and Behaviour Principles were different documents. There were no significant changes highlighted in any of the policies circulated to the governors prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the governing board approve and adopt the following policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy

- Children with Health needs who cannot attend school
- Equality & Accessibility Policy
- First Aid Policy
- First Day Calling
- KAL School Swim Procedures
- Behaviour Principles
- Online Safety
- Parent Code of Conduct
- SEN Policy
- Suspension & Permanent Exclusion Policy
- West Yorkshire Police Truant Policy

The agenda was taken out of order at this point as Ms Wilkinson had not yet joined the meeting to provide her Governance Review.

28. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT/DATA REPORT AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher had circulated a report prior to the meeting.

(a) Admissions

There were 167 pupils on roll which had increased slightly since the Headteacher's original report. New children had joined the school and there may be further in year admissions with a possible total of 9 pupils. The Headteacher and governors were glad to welcome the additional pupils to school. It was raised that the pupil numbers census date had passed, and the school would not receive any additional funding for the new children. Governors commented on the financial implication this may have for the school and the need to be mindful of this.

(b) Attendance

Attendance had been consistently above national averages apart from 1 week this year so far. Governors shared the Headteacher's happiness in the improvement compared to this time last year. It was noted that persistent absentees' attendance could dip rapidly and continued to be monitored closely. Attendance stood at 95.56% with PA set to fall to 14%. FFT data had been attached the report. Punctuality had also improved.

(c) Safeguarding

Online links for Safeguarding training had been circulated. All staff were trained in Safeguarding and Prevent training was scheduled to take place in January 2024. Governors were reminded that essential Safeguarding training was available to them via Kirklees Business Solutions (KBS).

There were no serious Safeguarding matters to be reported.

(d) Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Looked After Children (LAC)

The Headteacher confirmed that the Learning Den was now well established and fully operational. Pupils accessing the unit were making exceptional progress. Governors would be provided with a guided tour by Mrs Wilby in January 2024 with a focus on planning, monitoring and provision.

The Headteacher updated the meeting on discussions held at the S&E committee

including that the perceived success of the Learning Den would be reviewed by governors through data scrutiny. Governors wished to also consider the impact of the Learning Den not only on pupils accessing the provision but more widely across school. The Headteacher remarked on the additional advantage of minimising disruption for children in classrooms that the Learning Den provided.

ACTION: Governors to formally review assessment data and a cost benefit analysis in the context of the impact of the Learning Den on pupils accessing its provision in addition to the wider impact on children across school.

29. SCR FEEDBACK REPORT BY SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR (Minute 19 (b) refers)

The Chair highlighted that where the responsibility of auditing the SCR ultimately laid had been subject to recent debate. The SBM and BSO had attended external SCR training at which it was highlighted that non-staff members including governors should not be allowed to view the SCR. Harry Scarsgill had not heard of this ruling. Governors appreciated the potential GDPR implications of them having access to such sensitive individual records.

Governors agreed that the SLT should be asked to confirm that the SCR had been checked and provide an audit report or statement to that effect.

RESOLVED: That the SLT will conduct a dip sample of the most recent SCR entries across different areas and provide an audit report to Governors.

30. PREVENT

Remote Prevent training had been scheduled for the whole staff; governors were welcome to attend.

The agenda was taken out of order at this point as Ms Wilkinson joined the meeting at 5:26 pm.

31. EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE REPORT AND ACTION PLAN – KATHRYN WILKINSON

Ms Wilkinson thanked those governors that had been able to speak with her following the last full governors meeting. Ms Wilkinson felt she had spoken with enough members of the board to form a picture and provide her report.

Ms Wilkinson commended Mill Lane on their positive RWM attainment results. She felt the School, pupils and staff were stable and happy.

With regards to governance Ms Wilkinson felt there was a lack of capacity which she believed the governing board were acutely aware of. She also highlighted that the board membership was staff and parent heavy. She referred governors to Inspiring Governance which the Chair had previously accessed. The Chair added that information had been provided to the Governor Clerking Service (GCS) to assist in governor recruitment. Ms Wilkinson stated that governor recruitment could be a long-term process and that all members of the board should be involved in recruitment. She noted that free local magazines could be consulted, and that approaching local businesses may help.

Ms Wilkinson's report would be provided to the Headteacher and Chair upon completion and then circulated to the governing board.

Ms Wilkinson focussed firstly on the three core functions of governance as set out in the

Governance handbook. She also referred to the Governor Competency Framework which would be a useful resource of ideas on effective governance and what this may look like for Mill Lane.

Ms Wilkinson had initially been unable to ascertain what the school's vision was from the website, however, everyone she had spoken with had been clear on what the vision was. It was discovered that the vision was set out on the school website, and this was shown to Ms Wilkinson. The vision was defined as what the school wanted for their pupils and what this would look like in practice. The SDP was the supporting document in this respect.

ACTION: Clerk to discuss Governor Recruitment again with the GCS.

The SDP was highlighted as the key driver of the governing body and that there should be linked strategic objectives for the board. Ms Wilkinson emphasised it was key for governors to consider how progress against the objectives would be measured, for example through performance data and governor monitoring. Crucially governors needed to be able to make the link between monitoring and the school's vision. Meetings and agendas should focus on achieving the school vision and it was noted that Ofsted viewed the curriculum as the main driver of achieving the vision.

Ms Wilkinson defined 3 parts of achieving the school vision as follows:

- Strategic objectives
- Monitoring
- Progress

Ms Wilkinson stated that she had not found much evidence of holding leaders to account in the past minutes. She mentioned that it was a fine balance between being a critical friend to the school, challenging leaders and providing support.

Ms Wilkinson highlighted the previous minutes of the AGM meeting held on 15 September 2023 as an example. There had been much information on attendance provided, however, she felt governors could have asked more questions related to the impact on the school, pupils, and the vision.

Again, giving the previous minutes as an example Ms Wilkinson highlighted RWM attainment. She felt governors could have reviewed and interrogated the data in more detail. She suggested considering the impact in more detail and asking for more information on the top 20% of children as an example.

The key to providing challenge and support was understanding what evidence the governors wanted to be provided with and for them to then ask the right questions. Ms Wilkinson introduced the concept of triangulation and how governors should use this approach to ensure the validity of the information presented to them by the Headteacher and leaders.

Ms Wilkinson highlighted that actions were mostly operational and that again a lack of governors on the board was prohibitive in assigning actions. Ms Wilkinson suggested that the action grid could be used to further evaluate the effectiveness of meetings and the impact of the governing body.

On speaking with individual members of the board governors themselves highlighted the importance of being held to account for their responsibilities. It was appreciated that governors were volunteers, however, they had responsibilities to the school community to fulfil.

The Chair confirmed that she had significant professional finance expertise in answer to Ms Wilkinson's query about governors with finance backgrounds being a requirement of the competency framework.

Historically the board had completed NGA skills audits. Ms Wilkinson would send an alternative format to be considered.

The length of committee meetings was raised. The Headteacher confirmed that budget reports were now being routinely circulated to governors in advance of meetings thanks to the SBM. Governors agreed with the Headteacher that finances were well managed and there was adequate time in committee meetings to review information and figures. Ms Wilkinson felt that statutory requirements were being met, however, lack of governor capacity meant that there could be no in-depth focusses. She also highlighted it was best practice to hold committee meetings 2 weeks prior to the next governing body meeting.

Governors agreed it would be valuable and enlightening to relate budgetary discussions back to the school vision and the impact financial matters had on the priorities.

Q: Has governor attendance improved?

A: No, there are 2 governors absent tonight. We will be reviewing the attendance record of one of our governors and decide if they are to be expelled from the board for poor attendance. We will be monitoring attendance closely and setting much higher expectations for this amongst governors.

The 2 x parent vacancies were discussed, Ms Wilkinson confirmed that in running a parent election the candidate that receives the most votes in the ballot must be appointed.

Ms Wilkinson raised that there were 60 policies on the school website, many of which she believed were not statutory. The Head and Deputy Headteacher felt having the policies available on the website meant there was transparency and clarity and that when Ofsted visited it was simple to locate policies.

ACTION: Headteacher/ GCS to investigate statutory policies guidance.

Ms Wilkinson would provide an example of a Governor Visits agreement.

32. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

Period 4, 5 and 6 figures had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The figures had been reviewed by the Resources Committee. The most recent budget position was £2.5k underspent.

The financial impact of additional children joining the school past the census date was remarked upon.

The SBM would bring the financial statement shared with the LA to governors at the next meeting.

Governors planned to discuss the school's financial position in detail including the impact of the Learning Den and the stretching of Resources across school.

33. STORAGE OF LARGE EQUIPMENT

The Headteacher highlighted that storage of large equipment in the hall posed risk. To

combat this the Headteacher proposed that the school purchase a 20ft container at a cost of £1.5k in which to store the equipment. She noted that the container would be unsightly, however, the equipment could be stored safely and away from children, staff and visitors. The container would not be visible on entering the school grounds and any gaps between it and the surrounding walls would be blocked.

RESOLVED: That the governing board approve the purchase and installation of the container.

34. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Headteacher explained that following discussion with Monika Debb, KLP, the SDP had been subject to a slight change in wording. The Headteacher had also extracted the rationale and incorporated this into a SEF.

35. SCHOOL SUPPORT PLAN – LA

A roundtable meeting was scheduled to take place next week.

The external review of governance had been completed and Ms Wilkinson's report was expected.

36. SELF-EVALUATION RECORD

This item had been discussed under School Development Plan (Minute 34 refers).

37. TEACHERS PAY AND CONDITIONS PROPOSALS – SEPT 2023-24

The current policy had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the governing body accept the Teachers Pay Conditions and Proposals for 2023-24.

38. CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025-26

The governing board had no comments on admission arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the governing body accept the Admission Arrangements for 2025-26 with no changes to the PAN.

39. REVIEW OF THE INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT

This item had been discussed under External Review of Governance (Minute 28 refers). Governors decided that no changes to the instrument were required at this time. The board vacancies had been discussed.

40. GOVERNOR ALLOWANCES POLICY/ GUIDANCE

RESOLVED: That the governing board approve the Governor Allowances Policy.

41. GOVERNING BODY DEVELOPMENT: ACTION AND PRIORITIES 2023-24 INCLUDING:

This item had been discussed under External Review of Governance (Minute 28 refers).

ACTION: Headteacher to provide and circulate to governors a model for splitting the

School Vision into its component parts with suggestions for monitoring and tracking.

42. Chair and Vice Chair role discussions

The Chair reiterated her wish to step down from the board by the start of the next academic year. This meant succession planning was a key focus for the board and Mr Jones' role as Vice-Chair and Chair of the joint committee would be key to this.

The Headteacher and Chair were appreciative of the governors' efforts and volunteering of their time.

Ms Prendergast suggested that the training led by Craig Batley that she had attended could be forwarded to all governors.

43. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

RESOLVED: That Mrs R Raja be the link governor for SEND.

Governors were asked to arrange at least one school visit before the end of the term.

44. BATLEY AND BIRSTALL HUB

There were no updates at this time.

45. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Website Compliance

Mrs Iltaf shared a spreadsheet she had created to track website compliance and monitoring. She had begun to audit the school website using the headings within the spreadsheet and referring to what schools must publish online. The document was organised using a RAG rating system. Mrs Iltaf would work through the document and create a gap analysis report.

ACTION: Mrs Iltaf to circulate the initial audit spreadsheet to governors for a first review.

46. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED: That future meetings of the full Governing Body starting at 5:00 pm, preceded by the Combined Resources and S&E Committee starting at 4:00 pm, be held at the school be as follows:

- Thursday, 18 January 2024
- Thursday, 7 March 2024
- Thursday, 25 April 2024
- Thursday, 13 June 2024

The Chair had previously advised that she would be unable to attend the meeting on 13 June 2024.

ACTION: GCS to add Monitoring Visits and The Governance Core Functions and Strategic Action Plan to the next agenda.

47. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

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

The meeting closed at 6:40 pm.

ACTION LOG:

Minute	Action	By Whom
22	To send Mrs N Mirza's attendance to the Chair.	Clerk
28 (d)	Governors to formally review assessment data and a cost benefit analysis in the context of the impact of the Learning Den on pupils accessing its provision in addition to the wider impact on children across school.	Governors
31	Clerk to discuss Governor Recruitment again with Amerjit Sahota.	Clerk
31	Headteacher/ GCS to investigate statutory policies guidance.	HT/ Clerk
41	Headteacher to provide and circulate to governors a model for splitting the School Vision into its component parts with suggestions for monitoring and tracking.	HT
45	Mrs Iltaf to circulate the initial audit spreadsheet to governors for a first review.	Mrs Iltaf
46	To add Monitoring visits and The Governance Core Functions and Strategic Action Plan to the next agenda.	GCS

ATTENDANCE AT FULL GOVERNORS' MEETINGS: September 2023 – July 2024							
Governing Body Meetings	14.09.2023	09/11/2023	18/01/2024	07/03/2024	25/04/2024	13/06/2024	Total
Christine Barlow	✓	✓					/6
Gayna Goalby	✓	✓					/6
Anisa Iltaf	✓	✓					/6
Paul Jones	✓	X (consent)					/6
Linda Kilroy	✓	✓					/6
Nasrin Mirza	X	X					/6
Claire Prendergast	✓	✓					/6
Rehana Raja	X	✓					/6
Hawa Rawat	✓	✓					/6
LA – Vacancy	N/A	N/A					/6
Parent - Vacancy	N/A	N/A					/6
Parent - Vacancy	N/A	N/A					/6
ATTENDANCE AT COMBINED COMMITTEE MEETINGS: September 2023 – July 2024							
Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Combined Committee Meetings	09/11/2023	18/01/2024	07/03/2024	25/04/2024	13/06/2024	Total	
Christine Barlow	✓					/5	
Gayna Goalby	✓					/5	
Paul Jones (Chair)	X (consent)					/5	
Linda Kilroy	✓					/5	
Claire Prendergast	✓					/5	
Hawa Rawat	X (consent)					/5	

DfE: 2065

THE GOVERNING BODY OF MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES 2023-24

6. REVIEW OF COMMITTEES

6.1 Membership of Committees

Governors considered and discussed the previous committee structure and membership.

RESOLVED: That governors agree to temporarily combine the Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Committees.

6.2 Membership of Ad hoc Panels

Staff Discipline, Appeals, Complaints and Pupil Discipline Panels would be selected from the governors in office at the time on an ad hoc basis, as appropriate based on eligibility, impartiality, and availability.

6.3 Terms of Reference of Committees

The Chair reminded governors that they need to be aware of possible conflicts of interest if they sit on panels outside of the governing board.

All governors confirmed they had read the Terms of Reference of Committees (TOR).

The Chair recognised that her chairing the board and both committees was not good practice and stated the need to review this. Governors also acknowledged that a perceived lack of transparency could result from the number of staff on the Resources Committee in reference to financial decisions made where non-staff governors were absent from meetings.

Q: Do you feel that we have enough governors to successfully operate two Sub-committees?

A: If the two governors that are absent were in attendance I would say yes confidently, however, without them it is difficult.

Governors discussed the benefits and disadvantages of the circle model of governance. They agreed that they would prefer to keep a sub-committee structure. Governors decided to combine the Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Committees into one combined sub-committee. This would be a temporary measure and reviewed once additional governor recruitment had taken place or in February 2023.

RESOLVED: (i) That governors elected Mr Jones Chair of the combined committee and that meetings would start at 4:00 pm.

(ii) That the membership of the combined committee be as follows:

Mr P Jones (Chair)
Mrs G Goalby

Mrs H Rawat
 Mrs L Kilroy
 Ms C Prendergast
 Miss C Barlow

RESOLVED: That governors agree to accept the Kirklees Model Terms of Reference for Resources Committees and Standards & Effectiveness Committees that together will form the terms of reference for the combined Resources and Standards & Effectiveness Committee.

The permissible number of missed meetings by governors was raised. Registers of attendance would continue to be populated by the GCS and governors were reminded that disqualifications could result from lack of attendance. The Chair referenced the minutes of the previous meeting in which she had asked governors to consider their personal commitment to the board and the school. No governors had contacted the Chair during the summer break to discuss this.

Governors considered the addition of an attendance addendum to the NGA Governors' Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED: That the board agrees that any governor who misses 4 full governors' meetings without consent will be disqualified from the board.

Ms Wilkinson had referred the Chair and Headteacher to Inspiring Governance and Governors for Schools. The Clerk would investigate the support that could be provided by the GCS in finding suitable governors.

6.4 Head Teacher Appraisal Panel

RESOLVED: That the membership of the Head Teacher Appraisal Panel be as follows:

Mr P Jones
 Mrs A Iltaf
 Mrs L Kilroy (if available)

Mrs Monika Debb, Senior KLP, had offered to complete the Head Teacher's appraisal, governors were pleased with this arrangement and agreed that Mrs Debb provided excellent guidance. The Head Teacher informed governors that the LA cost of the appraisal had increased since last year.

Mrs Rawat offered to sit on the panel, if necessary, should Mrs Kilroy be unable to attend.

RESOLVED: That the governing body agree to adapt and adopt the Kirklees Model Teacher Appraisal Policy.

7. TO APPOINT GOVERNORS WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Given the challenge faced by the school in relation to pupil attendance, governors decided to appoint to the optional role of Attendance Governor. Attendance had not been an area of concern previously and the school were keen to see figures align with national averages again. Additionally, a governor would also be appointed to the option role of Website

Compliance to ensure the school continue to be fully compliant with the requirements of online publishing.

RESOLVED: That the following specific responsibilities be agreed:

- SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability) Governor – Ms C Prendergast.
- Governor Training Contact – Mrs G Goalby.
- Governor for Children Looked After – Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- Child Protection Governor - Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)- Mrs A Iltaf.
- Safeguarding Governor - Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- Wellbeing Governor - Mrs L Kilroy and Mr P Jones.
- Attendance Governor – Mrs H Rawat.
- Website Compliance Governor – Mrs A Iltaf.

Ms Wilkinson would share a role descriptor of Attendance Governor and Mrs Rawat explained that she had experience of school attendance in a professional capacity.

8. DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS TO THE HEAD TEACHER.

Governors confirmed that they had read the delegation of financial powers documentation prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Governing Body delegates to the Head Teacher the power to carry out on its behalf the following delegated duties:

- (i) Planning and conducting the affairs of the school to remain solvent.
- (ii) Establishing proper financial management arrangements and accounting procedures, which comply with the Local Authority's financial regulations and standing orders and maintaining a sound system of internal controls.
- (iii) Ensuring that funding from the LA and any other sources is used only in accordance with the conditions attached to that funding.
- (iv) Providing such information as the LA may reasonably require to satisfy the LA that the financial management and organisation of the Governing Body are such as to enable it to fulfil the obligations specified for it.
- (v) Following LA advice, the HT's authorisation expenditure limit for day-to-day financial management of the school be as set in the terms of reference for the resources committee and be agreed at **£5,000K agreed.**
- (vi) The virement between budget headings be agreed at **£10,000K agreed.** Practice and transparency Christine brings these to the meeting.