

THE GOVERNING BODY OF MILL LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at the school, starting at 3:40 pm on Thursday, 14 March 2024.

PRESENT

Mrs H Rawat (Chair), Miss C Barlow (Head Teacher), Mrs G Goalby (part only), Mrs A Iltaf, Ms C Prendergast (part only), Mrs R Raja, Miss C Winnett.

In Attendance

Mr P Keeley (Minute Clerk)
Mrs B Ottewell (School Business Manager)
Ms K Waugh (Observer)

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT & DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no apologies or declarations of interest.

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

There were no items notified to be brought up under any other business.

68. REPRESENTATION(a) Appointment

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Cecilia Winnett	LA Governor	07/02/2024

The Chair welcomed Ms Winnett to the Governing Body.

(b) Resignations

It was confirmed that this would be discussed later in the meeting.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>With Effect From</u>
Paul Jones	Co-opted Governor	19.01.2024

(c) Vacancies

The Chair confirmed the Governing Body currently had vacancies for three Co-opted Governors and two Parent Governors.

The Head Teacher confirmed that Ms Waugh had offered to join the Governing Body to help steer the group through the period covering the Ofsted inspection, and any necessary organisational change due to restricted budgets.

Ms Waugh left the room at 3:45 pm

A short discussion took place regarding Ms Waugh joining the Governing Body as a Co-opted Governor. There were no objections raised.

Ms Waugh returned to the room at 3:50 pm

RESOLVED: That Ms K Waugh join the Governing Body as a Co-opted Governor for one year with effect from 14 March 2024.

The Head Teacher confirmed that advertisements would be placed on Government sites to try to recruit to the remaining Governor positions. Parents would also be approached to find interested people.

Q: Are Co-opted Governors able to take up Parent Governor seats?

A: Parent Governors always need to serve in the interests of the school, not to further their own self-interests. It is always sound for the Governing Body not to become too parent-heavy. Ideally Co-opted Governors should be to some extent independent of the day-to-day operation of the school.

The Governing Body meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm

The Governing Body meeting was reconvened at 4:55 pm

69. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2024

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

70. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Breakdown of Benchmarking (Minute 23 refers)

It was confirmed that this had been presented in the Committee meeting held earlier today, and therefore, this item could be closed.

(b) Defer Pupil Performance to the next meeting (Minute 20 refers)

It was confirmed that this agenda item would be discussed later in the meeting and therefore, this item could be closed.

71. POLICIES FOR REVIEW

There were no policies for review. As per the agreed schedule policies would be brought to governors for consideration in September/ November each academic year.

ACTION: GCS to add Policies for Review to the agenda in September/ November or as and when requested.

72. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Nominations for the position of Vice-Chair were invited, Ms Waugh was nominated for the position by the Head Teacher. No other nominations were received including from those governors not present.

Ms Waugh left the meeting at this point.

A short discussion took place among Governors. No areas of concern were raised in Ms Waugh's absence.

Ms Waugh rejoined the meeting at this point.

RESOLVED: That Ms Waugh be unanimously elected as Committee Vice-Chair, for a period of one year.

73. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

It was confirmed that the Committee meeting had taken place earlier and all governors present had heard the Reports.

A short discussion took place regarding the potential to amalgamate the Committee meeting and the Governing Body meeting, given that the same Governors attended both.

RESOLVED: That the Governing Body approve the Circle Model of Governance and that with immediate effect. Resources and Standards and Effectiveness items to be discussed after 'matters arising' on future agendas.

74. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT/DATA REPORT AND GOVERNOR QUESTIONS

The Head Teacher's Report had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

The Head Teacher confirmed that the number of pupils on roll for 2024-25 academic year would be the lowest she had experienced as a Head Teacher at this school, a period which had covered several ~~years~~.

The Head Teacher invited questions from Governors.

Q: What is behind the low numbers?

- A:** The birth rate has dropped; we experienced a peak about five years ago. There have been slight increases recently but not enough to make a significant difference. There are also other factors that might be involved, the last Ofsted report stating the school required improvement, will have an impact on first and second choices parents make. In addition, the school has more than its fair share of challenging behaviour causing an impact – in one class we have six children who have either already left or are leaving soon.
- Q:** **How many new children are confirmed to join next year?**
- A:** It is too soon to be firm on numbers. However, I can look at local data and let you know when I can.
- Q:** **Will the building of new houses locally, impact us in a positive way?**
- A:** I do not know because you cannot predict who moves in and whether they have children of the right age group.
- Q:** **Do other local schools have lower PAN than ours?**
- A:** Some have lower PAN and some have applied to reduce theirs.
- Q:** **What is our current PAN?**
- A:** It is currently 25 although we can sometimes get additions from specific groups we are obliged to accept, such as travellers or looked-after children.
- Q:** **Why did we have to recently exclude a child?**
- A:** On reflection, we were probably not the right provision for this child given the level of SEMH needs that the child had. We are still working with the family and Kirklees to find something more suitable for them.
- Q:** **What is the parent's position on this?**
- A:** They are being quite supportive. They accept that the level of disruption to the class was not fair for the other children.
- Q:** **Would it make any difference if you added another person to support the class?**
- A:** We added an un-funded one to one person last year and it made no difference. On the contrary, since the removal of four children in that classroom, the class have increased their rate of progress.
- Q:** **Where have those children gone?**
- A:** Three are now in the learning den and the other has gone to Year 1.
- Q:** **Staff-wise, who is based in the learning den?**
- A:** Mrs Goalby is based in the learning den along with another ETA. This gives The Deputy Head Teacher the chance to focus upon planning.
- Q:** **Can you provide an overview of attendance?**
- A:** We have maintained over 95% throughout the year. We are seeing some problems related to slap cheek, measles and tonsillitis. A group who are persistently absent runs at 12.5%, three of these have left this will soon

increase to four. A handful are on extended leave for more unusual reasons, such as family bereavements.

Q: Do we carry out home visits and how does the process work?

A: We do, but we have only carried out two this year. Basically, we try to train the parents, so they know what we are going to do in cases like these. Registration is at 9:00 am and if the child is not in school we follow we follow our First Day Calling Procedures.

Q: Is the school nurse involved in the process?

A: Some of the parents of children who have many absences due to supposed ill-health are in fact medical professionals so would most likely decline their involvement. We are in a much better position overall than we were last year, when the persistent absence rate was up at 55%.

Q: Do we have major safeguarding issues in school?

A: Nothing big. We have one child who is missing in education but their whereabouts are known. In addition, we have two others on early help assessments. All the issues have been recorded on CPOMS.

ACTION: Head Teacher to send the safeguarding link to new Governors.

75. SWIMMING 2024-25

The Head Teacher confirmed that swimming currently provided under Local Authority (LA) contract cost the school £5,500. In common with some other LA schools, an external company who based their service on sending a portable swimming pool to the school for a two-week period had approached the school.

The Head Teacher was aware that this kind of provision had been in place elsewhere, however, she was unaware of it being provided in Kirklees by this company. This type of provision did resolve one of the negatives from the LA provision, which was the amount of time wasted whilst the pupils were in transit to and from the off-site pool.

RESOLVED: That the governing body and Head Teacher agree to sign up to the LA swimming provision for a further year to observe how the alternative service worked with others and with the potential to sign up in a year's time.

There were no questions from Governors.

76. PUPIL PERFORMANCE AND ASSOCIATED DATA (MINUTE 20, COMBINED COMMITTEE 18.1.24 REFERS)

It was agreed that this item would be discussed under Governor Visits later in the meeting.

77. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

It was agreed that this item had been discussed at length in the preceding Committee meeting, and further discussion was not required.

78. WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Governors raised concerns about staff well-being given the deteriorating financial position of the school. Governors asked staff to support each other through a difficult period for the school.

Q: Do you (Head Teacher) feel supported?

A: I am very appreciative of the support I have had from the Senior Leadership Team and the Business Manager; the recent period has been difficult and challenging.

79. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (MINUTE 58 REFERS)

The Head Teacher confirmed that the School Improvement Plan had been reviewed during the Spring term, and the updated plan had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting.

The Head Teacher summarised the key issues as follows:

- Year 6 outcomes were on track to achieve the targets set out in the plan.
- The school continued to try and ensure that all pupils leaving at the end of Year 6 had the fundamental skills they would need at the next stage of their education.
- Action was being taken to improve writing outcomes, as this was a known weakness at present.
- An external review of governance by Forrest, had taken place in November 2023.

Questions were invited from Governors.

Q: What are the main areas of concern?

A: Governance itself, where the Governors will need to develop an action plan from the report findings, and oracy, where improvement has stalled.

Q: Are we concerned that we have children who cannot speak properly, and therefore they cannot write properly either?

A: Yes, we are. In this school, language is the biggest barrier to overcome.

80. SCHOOL SUPPORT PLAN

The Head Teacher confirmed that the LA Support Plan version 14 was the current version.

ACTION: Head Teacher to circulate to Governors.

81. GOVERNING BODY DEVELOPMENT

Governors had met to share their experience and skill set; some details had been circulated.

ACTION: Head Teacher to circulate all documents to Governors.

It was understood that a New Governor checklist was available, especially identifying any action required and training required.

ACTION: GCS to send the document to the school.

Governors were alerted about a free on-line course on the KBS website, covering Governor Essentials.

Governors were also reminded that at least one Governor had to complete the Safer Recruitment training module. Any Governor interested was to advise the Head Teacher in the first instance.

82. GOVERNOR TRAINING AND GOVERNOR VISITS

A Governor visit had taken place to consider the School Development Plan, with areas reviewed including oracy, learning, curriculum, and attendance. Children from Years 2, 4 and 5 were involved and had done very well and were to be complimented as they were very confident about their place and roles in school.

A separate visit had taken place in which pupil progress was discussed, including reviews of actual and emerging data. The review had been carried out based on entire cohorts, and not individuals, looking at trends and asking questions based on those trends.

The school was complimented on how learning was made available and could be accessed by every child.

The Head Teacher commented that outcomes could be skewed by just one child in a small cohort. Other factors affecting outcomes included the influence of mobility, and the tendency in some cultures to regard boys as 'babies' until they were aged 5-6. However, the Head Teacher also reported that in the school, disadvantaged children showed no signs of under-performing.

The school was complimented on the good standard of data management that was in evidence.

Another Governor visit had focused on the difference between children who were placed in the Learning Den and those who were not. Studies of tracking data had been carried out, and the process of choosing children for the Learning Den including factoring in their respective complex needs, had been reviewed.

It was confirmed that all SEN children could access out of school activities in the same way as non-SEN children – including out of school clubs, and school trips.

It was confirmed that the Learning Den had a significant cost attached to it, however, the evidence showed that it had a positive impact on the learning and progress of both those within the Learning Den, and those outside of it.

A further Governor visit had focused on science teaching. The visit included observation in a class, and it was confirmed the teaching matched that required in the National Curriculum. Other elements observed included the books and experiments used.

It was confirmed that a schedule of visits had been published.

RESOLVED: (i) That all Governors shall undertake visits covering different subjects in future.
(ii) That future Governor visits shall have specific identifiable links back to the school vision.

ACTION: Ms Waugh to undertake a Governor visit during the Summer term.

No questions were raised by Governors.

83. EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE AND SUBSEQUENT ACTION PLAN

The Head Teacher confirmed that version 2 of the draft report was now available and unless any parts of the document were challenged with a strong case, this would become the final version.

ACTION: (i) Chair to urgently set up a working party to consider the report and respond to the report's findings.
(ii) Head Teacher to forward the report to Ms Waugh, and add her to Governor emails group.

84. CIRCLE MODEL OF GOVERNANCE DISCUSSION

A short discussion took place on the Circle Model of Governance.

RESOLVED: That the Circle Model was to be adopted for future Governing Body meetings, and from the next meeting, no Joint Committee meeting would be required.

85. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that agreement had been reached in the earlier Committee meeting to ratify the B3 budget document.

There was no other business.

86. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS FOR 2023/24 ACADEMIC YEAR

RESOLVED: That the next Full Governing Body meetings, including items brought forward from the Joint Committee meeting, will be held at the school,

as follows:

- Thursday 25 April at 4:00 pm
- Thursday 13 June 2024 at 4:00 pm

Apologies were noted for the Chair from the April 25 meeting only.

87. 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 6:15 pm.

Action Table

Minute no.	Action	Action by	Status
74	Circulate the safeguarding link to Governors	Head Teacher	New item
80	Circulate version 14 of the School Support Plan to Governors	Head Teacher	New item
81	Circulate all Governors' experience to all Governors	Head Teacher	New item
81	Provide New Governor Checklist to the school for Ms Waugh	GCS	New item
82	Undertake a Governor visit on a specific subject during the Summer term, discuss the area to be covered with the Head Teacher	Ms Waugh	New item
83	Set up working party to respond to the Forrest report on Governance	Chair	New item
83	Forward copy of the report to Ms Waugh and add her to the Governor emails group	Head Teacher	New item