



Minutes of the Governing Body (GB) meeting of Archbishop Runcie C of E First School held in school on Wednesday 13 July 2022

Present:

Sarah Hawkins (Chair)

Jonathan Booth, Marian Coulson-Cave, Craig Dallison, Sarah MacRae, Kate Massey (Headteacher), Andrew McCabe, Sarah Pickett, Andrew Shipton, Ted Thomas.

The meeting was quorate

In attendance

Ruth Corless - Governor Services

Annual report to governors from School Improvement Partner / Achievement Partner

No update from the School Improvement Partner (SIP) took place this meeting. The SIP had visited earlier in the day and would submit a report for review in the autumn term.

Pre-meeting governors discussed the Admissions Policy and informed new governors about the decisions and background that had applied when this policy had been considered earlier in the year.

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

The meeting opened at 17:45. Apologies were presented and **accepted** from Cecilia Pacitti. Andy McCabe had informed the Chair that he would be late.

Andy McCabe arrived at 17:52

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Governors discussed the Admissions Policy and the definition of the term “exceptional medical or social needs”. The Headteacher advised that including criteria relating to medical and social needs could suggest that the school had the facilities to cater for such needs. As a mainstream school, this was not the case and governors agreed this would not form part of the listed criteria as agreed in our consultation in December. The Admissions Policy had included the changes to the faith criteria and some slight wording amendments from the consultation which closed in February 2022.

The Headteacher left the meeting to copy the agreed Admission Policy for governors. Pending any comments by Friday 22nd July governors **approved** the Admissions Policy.

2. Declaration of interests

The Chair invited governors to present any declarations of interest. There were no declarations presented.

3. Identify any additional / urgent items not on the agenda

The Chair invited governors to present any additional items not on the agenda. No additional items were presented.

4. GB appointments / membership update

A governor advised the board that a new appointment for the vicar at St Nicholas's church had been made. Paul Baker would begin in the parish in October. Attendance at the full governing body (FGB) meetings would take place after this time. Andrew Shipton agreed to provide the clerk with Paul's contact details for reference and meeting notifications.

Governors discussed the current vacancies on the governing body which were recorded as one Foundation and one Co-opted role. Governors agreed the need to identify a candidate with financial skills. Diversity and representation of the community on the board was also discussed.

The Chair agreed to review the skills audit and advertise suitable vacancies.

Action: Chair

Governors agreed to promoting the governor vacancies in the school newsletter next academic year which the Headteacher agreed to do.

Action: Headteacher

Ted Thomas reported that the Induction Training had been very helpful. Greg Farrell had been invited to meet and discuss his role with fellow governors between FGB meetings. This action was ongoing.

The Chair advised governors to update the clerk with any change of contact details.

Governor elections were confirmed as due to take place in the autumn term. The clerk advised that nominations be invited three weeks prior to the meeting and added to the agenda. The Chair asked governors to consider the role of Chair and Vice-Chair. Governing body succession planning was briefly discussed.

Sarah Pickett advised that she wished to step back as Chair of the TLA committee and invited governors to consider stepping forward to take up this role. Governors agreed that the rolling chairing of meetings would continue. Sarah MacRae agreed to take on the role of Chair of TLA committee and agreed to discuss this with Sarah Pickett post meeting.

Action: Sarah MacRae

5. Draft minutes of previous GB meeting 30 March 2022

The circulated draft minutes were reviewed. The Headteacher advised that the circulated version did not include the amendments by herself and the Chair. The Headteacher left the meeting to print copies of these amended minutes for governors.

Governors discussed the proposed version of the minutes for some time before the clerk advised approving both sets of minutes in the autumn due to the nature and number of amendments. The FGB **agreed** to consider the amended March minutes in the autumn term.

Action: Clerk / agenda

Governors discussed the length of the governing body meetings following the Deputy Headteacher informing governors that the School Improvement Partner had advised that governor meetings needed to happen during the day. Two governors said that they could not attend during the day due to work commitments and offered their resignations if meetings had to be moved to day time.

The Chair of TLA Committee confirmed that this committee was always held during the day and Finance Committee met at 4pm.

6. Headteacher's report / school improvement

The Headteacher's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Headteacher invited questions or comments from governors. **A governor acknowledged the detailed and full report from the Headteacher and thanked the Headteacher for her time and effort in preparing this.**

A governor asked for details on the current waiting lists for each year group. The Headteacher advised that there were 13 children currently on the waiting list. This number returned to zero at the beginning of each term and families had to reapply for places.

A governor noted some places available now which was close to the end of the year and asked whether places would be allocated at this stage? The Headteacher advised that places would not be offered at this point in the year as some children would be staying on roll despite absences.

The Chair of Finance confirmed that despite school being one below pupil admission number (PAN) for September, the budget was balanced. The Headteacher informed governors that an additional place had been offered in Reception following an appeal for September, taking the number in the class to 31.

The Headteacher advised that the data for Year 1 that had been submitted was awaiting moderation and therefore was provisional.

Governors discussed the implementation of the exclusions policy with respect to the ethos of the school. Attendance was reported as 96%. There had been zero exclusions, despite some testing behaviour during the term

The Headteacher reported a high number of teaching assistants currently in Year 1 to support some challenging behavior.

A governor asked what had been the impact on the academic attainment of children in Year 1? The Deputy Headteacher advised that attainment at the higher end of the scale had not been impacted, but lower to middle attainment had been. However, this could not only be attributed to the recent disruption that had occurred, but could also be explained by the on-going impact of covid, which had disproportionately affected this year group

A governor credited the senior leadership team with the hard work that had been undertaken in managing the situation. The Headteacher said it had been emotionally and physically challenging.

A governor asked what the priorities in Reception and Year 1 would now be? The Headteacher confirmed the priority would be to focus on high achievers. This would require concentration on 90% of Year 1 moving into Year 2. Keeping children working at greater depth on track and supporting Year 1 would be the focus.

The Headteacher confirmed that recruitment to provide consistent staffing for Year 1 vacancies had been challenging. Difficulties in employing staff had also been seen by other schools.

The Headteacher highlighted the plans for curriculum development. Confirmation of the school development priorities would be shared ahead of the autumn term FGB.

The Headteacher informed governors of an e-safety incident that had occurred earlier in the term. Governors were made aware a child accessing another child's online account which, on further investigation, had been part of an isolated cyber- bullying incident. Governors were advised that the child had apologised, the parents had been involved and the outcome would be monitored. No further action was required.

A second incident on e-safety was reported to governors. This had been raised through an informal email from parents and involved a child searching for a particular phrase that had caused concern. The LA had been contacted and the firewall security was assured by IT Services. Technicians had advised not to restrict access via the firewall any further, but rather to focus on the education of children to work safely with the technology available to them. Some consideration was being made as to whether an alternative firewall would be appropriate. The Headteacher would report the outcome of this review to governors.

A governor asked if pupils covered e-safety as part of the curriculum. This is covered in both PHSE and in Computing lessons.

A governor asked if the alleged bullying claim from the Parents Survey had been considered? The Headteacher advised that conversations had been arranged with the four parents who had fed back their concerns. The class teacher had also spoken to the parents and were happy with the way it had been dealt with.

A governor asked if the Year 4 multiplication outcomes were as expected? The results were lower than expected. Results across the city had been mixed. This was the first-time school had undertaken these tests. The middle school had requested results to prepare interventions. The Headteacher advised that plans to improve outcomes next year were already in place.

A governor asked if the self-evaluation form (SEF) was undervaluing schools' achievements? The Headteacher advised the process under which a school would assess itself as outstanding. The evaluation had been made based on conversations with the School Improvement Partner. The SEF would be updated and shared in September.

A governor noted there were a number of staff changes and had any analysis of staff members reasons for leaving been considered? The Chair and Chair of Finance had undertaken exit interviews with individuals who were leaving. Staff wellbeing was being checked by the School Improvement Partner (SIP) and resolutions would be put in place if necessary. The SIP would report to governors in autumn term following the summer visit.

A governor asked how this had been undertaken? The Deputy Headteacher confirmed that a swot analysis had been completed, a whole staff meeting had taken place and issues to be addressed would be considered in September. Staff meetings and Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time would be reviewed. Class newsletters would no longer be produced each half term, which would reduce a demand on staff time. The half termly communications to parents which mapped out curriculum and possible home support that could be put in place would continue.

Governors discussed the clubs offer in school and the feedback from parents given as part of the survey. The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) developments had been discussed in finance committee.

A governor asked whether the Deputy Headteacher would be in class next academic year? There was space and capacity to allow the current setup to continue and therefore he would remain outside of the class. This setup provided much benefit to school and had allowed support for all teaching staff.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher for her report and feedback.

7. The following policies have been approved at committee level:

- Uniform policy from TLA committee
- Children who cannot attend school
- LAC
- RE
- Educational Visits Policy
- School Security
- ECT Policy
- Parking & Road Safety/Traffic Management

The above policies had been presented at committees. Governors **ratified** the policies approved in committees.

In addition, the following were **approved**:

- Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Medicine Policy

The Parking and Road Safety Policy would be reviewed following the health and safety visit and re-presented at the Finance Committee.

Action: FSP Cttee

8. Financial items

The Chair of Finance committee summarised the meeting and confirmed that the school's finance was in a healthy position, with a large contingency in place. The contingency fell within the threshold expected.

The Chair of Finance reported staffing costs having had the greatest stress on budget however the need for staff would be reviewed on a term-by-term basis and members had agreed that ensuring a full complement of quality staff was essential. A reduction in staff was not needed at this time.

The school had been assigned a new local authority (LA) business partner, John Fogarty, who would fix reporting periods. Governors were pleased to confirm that:

- PE funding would continue for one more year, with approximately £10k being allocated to school.
- A surplus of £19k from wraparound existed. This would be allocated to the School Fund and spent at school's discretion.

The amount of surplus had been highlighted and part of it would be allocated towards free spend. The Chair of Finance advised this would result in a drop in reported contingency but was for accounting purposes only.

A governor asked about the planned tree work in school. The tree report received had been conflicting in its recommendations as to the work needed. An additional report was expected to clarify the position going forward.

The Chair of Finance assured governors that the 8% surplus threshold was in place. The school now sat in the 'Under Review' category which was the highest LA rating that could be applied. The budget was under control with all checks and measures in place. The Chair of Finance explained that an excess surplus could suggest underspending on resources, but this was not the case. The school had a relatively young work force and would see an increase in salary costs over the longer term. Backfilling with more senior staff had been previously discussed and would be considered in the new academic year.

Governors thanked the Chair of Finance for all his hard work in securing the strong financial position in school.

9. Multi Academy Trust update

The multi academy trust (MAT) information had been shared pre meeting with governors.

Governors were advised that the Headteachers from Gosforth Schools Trust had met with Ian Dawson, Head of School Effectiveness, to consider options in light of the recent white paper announcement on MATs. Gosforth schools would be interested in being part of the trial LA MAT, however Archbishop Runcie could not be part of that as mixed MATS were not supported. Archbishop Runcie would have the option to join a diocesan MAT if this was setup, to ensure the ethos of the school was preserved.

Governors discussed the timing of the white paper and the deadline of 2030 for any forced movement to MATs. This was known to be open to change as it was based on the current government's plan. As a short-term resolution, Paul Rickeard from the diocese had been invited to share with governors on the options available.

A governor asked whether the funding model would change before 2030? It was confirmed that funding change would happen after 2030, with a potential 50% reduction in grants.

The Chair expressed concern that forming a MAT might incur a wide geographical area between linked schools and would have practical implications for school.

A governor asked if another advisor could be sought to speak to the governing body regarding moving to a MAT? The clerk agreed to look into this and feedback to governors.

Action: Clerk

The follow up meeting with Paul Rickeard was confirmed as 23 November 2022 at 4:00pm.

10. Trust update

The Gosforth Schools Trust minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. Sarah Hawkins resigned her position as Director from Archbishop Runcie for the Gosforth Schools Trust. The clerk agreed to inform the Chair of the Board and present Sarah MacRae as the proposed director for Archbishop Runcie.

Action: Clerk

11. Promise Board update

A Promise Board update had been provided as part of the Headteacher's report to governors. Further details were given at this point, with David Baldwin being named as the Chair of the Promise Board. Support from the board during covid had been very helpful. A relaunch was now due and would happen in the next academic year. Work in

the subgroups of the Promise Board had supported areas across the city, including transition and SEND.

12. Reports from GB committees

The TLA committee minutes had been circulated to all prior to the meeting. The Chair highlighted the following:

- Persistent Absence (PA) was being effectively dealt with in school.
- Covid related absence was reported as having reduced.
- A tendering process with uniform providers is due to take place. The PTFA would manage a uniform library and allow pre-loved uniforms to be shared in school. Governors agreed this would be very useful for families in need and fed into the green policy of reuse and recycle.

13. Governor monitoring

The Headteacher agreed to set visits in line with School Development Plan priorities. These would be agreed in the autumn term and as previously agreed, visits would be set through the separate committees. SIAMS visits would also take place. Governors had been assigned to specific areas of SIAMS.

Governors were informed that SIP visits and governor visits would be aligned, and the approach taken with the deep dive in science earlier in the year would be used as the model for visits in the 2022-2023. The Headteacher agreed to confirm the details of visit plans with governors.

The development and training of Middle Leaders was discussed, and this priority would be supported through posed questioning during governor visits to school.

Governors discussed RAG rating the School Development Plan which would determine the visits needed. The Headteacher advised that the worship, SIAMS and RE visits could take place at other points in the academic year. The Headteacher agreed to set the visit dates and circulate these to governors once the School Development Plan was confirmed.

Action: Headteacher

14. Governor training

Ted Thomas reported attending Safeguarding training and Governor Induction, noting that challenge was emphasised strongly throughout induction training. Governors **agreed** that support and challenge needed to be in balance.

Governors discussed the need for a bank of training modules for governors. The clerk recommended the National Governance Association training which had received positive feedback from governors in other schools. Governors agreed to purchase this for the benefit of the governing body.

Action: Chair

A governor asked whether an expectation for training should be agreed? This would be considered in autumn.

The clerk agreed to circulate details of the e-learning modules post meeting. A governor recommended Schools Week for up-to-date information on issues supporting governance in schools.

15. Governance guidance report – summer term 2022, GoverNews summer 2022

The clerk highlighted the guidance sheets to support link governor visits which had been well received. The Chair asked for these to be circulated to all governors.

Action: Clerk

16. Impact

Governors discussed the way in which their work had positively impacted outcomes for children. These included:

- Validating the decision for the Deputy Headteacher being non class based, supported staff and had improved the quality of teaching and learning in school as well as the interventions taking place.
- The TLA committee had presented challenge to school leadership around diversity, citing the example of choice of illustrations used when studying certain countries and avoiding stereotypes. The Headteacher confirmed the ideas presented had been absorbed into the curriculum.
- The Deputy Headteacher's training and development in SEND had increased the general offer for children with SEND in school.
- A review of working with children in care had determined strategic decisions for school and SEND support. This had resulted in all staff being involved in writing the SEND document. The impact of this had been significant.
- The ethos of the school was set, monitored, and supported at Governing Body level. This impacted staff and pupils in the long term, beyond their time at Archbishop Runcie.
- The Finance committee's work had developed and confirmed the school's strong financial position school. This in turn formed the basis of leadership decisions. Careful monitoring of systems in place assured integrity and successful application for effective administration in school.

17. Confirmation of meeting dates next year

Meeting dates for the next academic year were discussed.

The following Full Governing Body meetings dates were agreed:

- Wednesday 5 October at 5:30pm in school
- Wednesday 30 November at 4:30pm in school
- Thursday 23 March 2023 5:30 pm in school
- Wednesday 12 July 2023 at 4:30 pm in school

The budget approval meeting was set as 24 May 2023

TLA Committee dates would be confirmed post meeting.

Action: TLA Chair

Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee meetings were confirmed as:
19 October 2022, 15 February 2023, 17 May 2023

Admissions Committee meetings were confirmed as:
9 November 2022, 14 February 2023, 22 March 2023

SIAMS 2023 National Update
3rd November 2022 18:00 - 19:30

The Headteacher proposed a strategy day/ evening be considered.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:20pm.

Item	Action	Assigned	Status
4	The Chair agreed to review the skills audit and advertise suitable vacancies.	Chair	
4	Governors agreed the promotion of governor vacancies in the school newsletter which the Headteacher agreed to do.	Headteacher	
4	Sarah Macrae agreed to take on the role of Chair of TLA committee and agreed to discuss this with Sarah Pickett post meeting.	Sarah MacRae	
5	The FGB agreed to approve March minutes in the autumn term.	Clerk / agenda	Added to agenda
7	The Parking and Road Safety Policy would be reviewed following the health and safety visit and re-presented at the Finance Committee.	Finance agenda	
9	The clerk agreed to investigate a suitable advisor for MAT discussions.	Clerk	Discussed with J Edminson.
10	The clerk agreed to inform the Chair of the Gosforth Schools Trust Board of Sarah Hawkins resignation and present Sarah MacRae as the proposed director	Clerk	Completed by SH – Headteacher proposed as Director
13	The Headteacher agreed to set the visit dates and circulate these to governors once the School Development Plan was confirmed.	Headteacher	
14	The clerk recommended the National Governance Association training which had received positive feedback from governors in other schools. Governors agreed to purchase this for the benefit of the governing body.	Chair	
15	The clerk agreed to circulate the guidance sheets to support link governor visits.	Clerk	Completed
17	TLA Committee dates would be confirmed post meeting.	TLA Chair	