



**Approved minutes of the Governing Body (GB) meeting  
of Archbishop Runcie First School**

**Held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023, at 5.30 pm in the school.**

**Present:**

Greg Farrell, Sarah Hawkins, Katie Hogg, Diana Lavin, Sarah MacRae, Kate Massey (Headteacher), Cecilia Pacitti, Sarah Pickett (Chair), Lonie Sebagh, Andrew Shipton, Ted Thomas.

**The meeting was quorate.**

**In Attendance:**

Rae Lowe – Business Manager  
Bob Wilson – Governor Services

**1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence.**

- The Chair invited Rev Andrew Shipton to open the meeting with a prayer.
- Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Rev Paul Baker and Andy McCabe.
- Diana Lavin was welcomed to the school as a newly appointed Foundation Governor (also see item 4 below).

**2. Declaration of interests.**

- There were no declarations of interest in relation to the business of the meeting.

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

- Feedback from the SIAMS conference would be provided later in the meeting under item 8.

**4. GB appointments / membership update.**

- The Chair advised that Andy McCabe would be stepping down from his position as a Foundation Governor at the end of the summer term.
- Rev Shipton advised that Diana Lavin had recently been appointed as a 'Board of Education' Foundation Governor – but that following the departure of Andy McCabe, it was the intention that she move to the 'All Saints' vacancy and for the 'Board of Education' vacancy to then be filled by Sarah MacRae – whose term of office as Parent Governor

would expire in December 2023. This would result in a vacancy for a Parent Governor.

- The Headteacher advised that the vacancy for a Staff Governor would likely be taken up in the autumn term by Rae Lowe (school business manager).
- The Chair advised that any Governor who identified a training need should get in touch with her or the vice-chair in order to discuss this.

**Action: 1) Chair / Headteacher – address the need for a Parent Governor with effect of the spring term 2024. 2) All Governors – to discuss their training needs with the Chair / Vice-Chair. 3) Chair to carry out staff governor election.**

**5. Consideration of new DfE guidance on collecting and publishing Governor Diversity Data.**

This guidance together with the attached Diversity Indicators Form was discussed at some length by Governors. It was agreed that diversity was a major issue for consideration and the Chair advised that this topic should be included on the agenda on a regular basis. Governors agreed that the Diversity Indicators Form should be completed – with the completed forms being handed to the Chair to be collated. The forms are anonymous and Governors could choose not to complete a form. Governors **agreed** to discuss at a later date if the results should be published on the school website.

**Action: Governors to discuss if results from Diversity Indicators survey should be published on school website.**

**6. Preparation for autumn term governance items.**

- **Election of Chair and Vice- Chair for the forthcoming year.**  
The current Chair and Vice-Chair self – nominated to continue for the forthcoming year in these positions. These nominations were seconded and then unanimously approved by Governors.
- **Review of the Delegations Planner.** The model NGA Governing Body delegation planner was reviewed by Governors. The Chair had analysed each section and suggested a number of revisions to the planner to make it more appropriate to the school. Governors endorsed the changes as suggested.

**Action: Clerk to the meeting to advise Governor Services of the agreed revisions to the Delegation Planner.**

**7. Draft minutes of the previous GB meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023.**

The draft minutes of the Governing Body that had been held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 had been circulated to Governors. These minutes were considered and **agreed** as a true record of the meeting.

**The following Actions as identified in the minutes remained outstanding:**

Item 5: A Governor had met with Ruth Corless from Governor Services re: developing the Governing Body Handbook. **A few items were to be changed and the Handbook would be issued to Governors by September 2023.**

Item 6a: Chair to re-send skills audit message to Governors. **This item remained outstanding.**

Item 6b: Governor to continue to investigate the possibility of the Fire Brigade carrying out a safety audit re: parking on Christon Road. **This item was still in the process of being chased up.**

Item 7a: Governors to comment on the format of the Headteacher's report. The suggestion from the Chair was for a comprehensive report to be produced in the autumn term and then for shortened reports to be produced for subsequent meetings. **This item remained open pending further consideration by the Governors.**

Item 7b: Headteacher to investigate the low level of 1<sup>st</sup> Preference Applications for Autumn 2023. **The Headteacher reported that she had some data on this and would make this available to Governors. More info would be obtained via Parent Voice in September.**

Item 7c: Governors to email the Headteacher with queries and availability in connection with the Worship Council vacancy. **This item remained outstanding.**

**Action: Resolve the outstanding actions as indicated above.**

## **8. Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's report had been circulated to Governors.

The last page of this document contained a section on the 2023 new SIAMS framework. The **Vice-Chair** had recently attended a SIAMS conference at which the new framework had been discussed and she advised Governors of the following points:

- The new framework moved away from schools being judged by a single word. The principle behind the new framework was to form a judgement on the question of the how well the school was living up to the vision and if this was not the case then the question would be around how well the school was working towards the vision.
- What would be judged is 'How effective is the school's distinctive Christian values, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish'.
- Seven questions are to be asked (as shown in the report) on which a judgement would be formed – either J1 – Through its vision and practice, the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish or J2 – The school's vision and practice are not enabling it to fully live up to its foundation as a Church school. This is for the following reasons - (The inspector will select all those that apply):
  - a) School and Trust leaders have not ensured that there is a theologically rooted Christian vision for the school that is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
  - b) School and Trust leaders have not ensured that the curriculum reflects the school's Christian vision.
  - c) School and Trust leaders have not ensured that collective worship is enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.
  - d) School and Trust leaders have not ensured pupils and adults are treated well.

- e) School and Trust leaders have not ensured that the school's Christian vision creates an active culture of justice and responsibility.
- f) School and Trust leaders have not ensured that the provision, profile and priority of religious education result in an effective curriculum.
- g) In a voluntary aided or former voluntary aided school, or in a former voluntary controlled school in which denominational religious education is taught, School and Trust leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching is good and that pupils make at least expected progress.

The Chair asked what Governors could do to support the new framework. The Headteacher advised that the first step would be to become familiar with the framework. From a practical point of view, the questions could be included on the Governor visit form and a number of the questions could be included, on a rolling basis, on the agenda of each committee meeting.

**Action: Headteacher to arrange for the new framework questions to be included on the Governor Visit form on a rolling basis and as an item on the agenda of each of the Committees.**

The second part of the presentation had highlighted 'courageous advocacy' and what this meant in action. There is a need for schools to have an awareness of privilege and to have critical thinking about the way in which fundraising is dealt with and exactly why various charities needed funds.

The Vice-Chair then updated Governors on outcome of the Gosforth Schools' Trust meeting that had been held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023. She highlighted the following points:

- The Chair of the Finance Committee at Grange First School agreed to arrange a meeting of the Chairs of Governing Bodies and Finance Committees from across the Trust to discuss budgets and ways of saving money.
- A number of Headteachers and Governing Bodies from around the Trust had expressed concern about the way in which Gosforth Academy was dealing with transition – with only two days being made available (reduced to one day due to strike action). Representation had been made to Ian Dawson at the LA and he agreed to contact the DfE in a bid to arrange a mutually agreed transition period for next year, in line with the rest of the City.

The Vice-Chair left the meeting at this point.

The Headteacher then delivered her report. She highlighted the following points:

- A new Deputy Head had been appointed – Mrs Vicky Ravel. She would be taking up post with effect of September 2023.

- A number of Teaching Assistant posts remained vacant – with cover being provided through supply. This was a very expensive way of providing cover and efforts would be made to make appointments to the vacancies as soon as possible.
- Next year there would be four Early Career Teachers (ECT) in post. This category of teacher has replaced the previous category of Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) and would cover an induction period of two years rather than the one year for NQTs. This would have an impact on leadership roles as ECTs were still considered as being in training for the extra year.
- Nursery numbers were shown as being low for September (15 children). This could possibly be explained by the fact that South Gosforth First School had recently opened a nursery within the same catchment area.

**A Governor asked if the Nursery was still viable given the low numbers. The Headteacher advised that it was.**

- The data was strong but the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children remained wide and measures would be put in place to narrow this gap.
- The extra-curricular opportunities provided were shown in the report and were very much enjoyed by the children. **The Chair asked if there were any barriers to children taking part in these activities. The Headteacher gave an assurance that there were no barriers. e.g. no cost, attendance was during the school day to encourage uptake.**
- Attendance for the year was below the school's target but was still above the national average. Measures had been taken to improve attendance – with parent contracts issued plus a range of other actions leading up to legal monitoring and sanctions via the LA should this prove to be necessary. In addition, there was now available from the LA a new parent contract and suite of attendance resources which the school would be tapping into going forward.
- Staff CPD is as listed in the report and included the Headteacher having completed units of learning around CPD, School Culture and Teaching as part of her NPQH.

This concluded the Headteacher's Report. There were no further questions from Governors at this point.

**Action: The Chair to meet with the Headteacher to explore ways of cutting down on the length of her report.**

#### **9. Policy Review.**

- Governors considered adopting the Local Authority Attendance Policy template – copies of which had been circulated. The Headteacher stated that it would be beneficial to dovetail the LA policy with the school policy to arrive at a compressive attendance policy that fits with the needs of the school. She agreed to arrange for this to be done and for the policy then be taken to the TLA Committee for consideration and approval.

**Action: Headteacher to arrange for the LA Attendance policy and the current School Attendance policy to be amalgamated where appropriate and taken to the TLA Committee for consideration and approval.**

#### **10. Financial Items.**

The School Business Manager spoke about a number of financial items as follows:

- The school was in a strong financial position and this was better than had been originally been predicted due to additional LA funding coming into the budget.
- As was mentioned earlier in the minutes – under item 8, there remained a big concern around supply staff costs.
- The Annex D form, which shows the budget position, was approved by Governors for submission to the LA.
- Governors should be aware that SEN funding amounted to around £60k whereas the staff costs devoted to SEN children amounted to approximately £160k. The shortfall being made good from elsewhere in the budget.
- In connection with premises – new electric gates would be getting fitted over the summer break together with some decorating being carried out around the school.

**11. Trust Update.** See Item 8 above.

#### **12. Newcastle Promise Board Update**

The various Promise Board documents, as included in the meeting papers, were accepted for information.

#### **13. Schools' Forum Update**

The Schools' Forum update was included in the meeting papers and was accepted for information.

#### **14. Reports from Governing Body Committees**

- TLA Committee: The summer term meeting was delayed due to staff recruitment and so minutes were not yet available. These will be distributed to Governors and considered by the FGB in September.
- FSP Committee: The minutes of the summer term meeting had been circulated to Governors and were accepted for information.
- Admissions Committee. The Headteacher advised that that the School was not over- subscribed for Reception 2023 although places had been awarded following the admissions policy.

**Action: TLA Summer Term Meeting minutes to be circulated to Governors.**

#### **15. Governor Monitoring**

The Chair advised that this item would be deferred until September.

## **16. Governor Training**

Governors were made aware that the SLA allowed for of an 'in house' training session to be delivered by Governor Services. The Chair advised that it would be beneficial to wait until the School Development Plan had been completed for 2023/24 and then for training opportunities to be explored with Jane Edminson – Head of Governor Services. In addition, Governors were encouraged to look at GoverNews, which listed training opportunities, and for any training requests to be discussed with the Chair / Vice-Chair (also see item 4 above).

## **17. Agree staff training dates 2023/24 and term dates 2023/24**

The term and holiday dates were **approved** as shown by the Local Authority calendar which had been circulated to Governors.

Staff training dates were **agreed** as follows: 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024.

## **18. Governance Items**

The following documents had been circulated to Governors:

- Governance Guidance Report, summer 2023.
- GoverNews, summer term 2023.
- Slides from Ian Dawson's priorities session (3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023).

These documents were considered and accepted for information.

## **19. Governor Impact.**

A number of items were identified as evidence of the Governing Body making an impact on the school as follows:

- It was felt that the strong financial position of the school was due, at least in part, to the challenge of Governors in working with the Headteacher on, for example, the staffing structure.
- This also applied to Governor Input to recruitment and how making the correct appointments directly impacted on the outcomes for the children.
- The strong relationship between Governors and the School Achievement Partner was seen as being of considerable benefit.
- The new SIAMS framework, together with Governor challenge, was felt to be a much more effective and appropriate way of forming a judgement of the school.

## **20. Confirmation of future meeting dates:**

Future Governing Body and Committee meeting dates were confirmed as follows:

### **Governing Body: (All to start at 5.30pm in the school)**

13<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 (Including KCSIE refresher)

29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023

27<sup>th</sup> March 2024

26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**TLA: (All to start at 1.00pm in the school)**

20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023

17<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024

24<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**FSP: (All to start at 4.00pm in the school)**

4<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023

31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2024

8<sup>th</sup> May 2024

The meeting ended at this point (7.20 pm). The Chair thanked Governors for their attendance and for their input to the meeting.

Item	Action
4	1) <b>Chair / Headteacher</b> – address the need for a Parent Governor with effect of the spring term 2024. 2) <b>All Governors</b> – to discuss their training needs with the Chair / Vice-Chair. 3) <b>Chair</b> to carry out staff governor election.
5	<b>Governors</b> to discuss if results from Diversity Indicators survey should be published on the school website.
6	<b>Clerk</b> to the meeting to advise Governor Services of the agreed revisions to the Delegation Planner.
7	<b>Actions outstanding for the Governing Body meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023:</b> Item 5: <b>A Governor</b> had met with Ruth Corless from Governor Services re: developing the Governing Body Handbook. <b>A few items were to be changed and the Handbook would be issued to Governors by September 2023.</b> Item 6a): <b>Chair</b> to resend skills audit message to Governors. <b>This item remained outstanding.</b> Item 6b): <b>Governor</b> to continue to investigate the possibility of the Fire Brigade carrying out a safety audit re: parking on Christon Road. <b>This item was still in the process of being chased up.</b> Item 7a): <b>Governors</b> to comment on the format of the Headteacher's report. The suggestion from the Chair was for a comprehensive report to be produced in the autumn term and then for shortened reports to be produced for subsequent meetings. <b>This item remained open pending further consideration by Governors. (see also item 8b below).</b> Item 7b): <b>Headteacher</b> to investigate the low level of 1 <sup>st</sup> Preference Applications for Autumn 2023. <b>The Headteacher reported that she had some data on this and would make this available to Governors. More info would be obtained via Parent Voice in September.</b> Item 7c): <b>Governors</b> to email the Headteacher with queries and availability in connection with the Worship Council vacancy. <b>This</b>



	<b>item remained outstanding.</b>
8a)	<b>Headteacher</b> to arrange of the new SIAMS framework questions to be included on the Governor visit form on a rolling basis and as an item on the agenda of each of the Committees.
8b)	<b>The Chair</b> to meet with the Headteacher to explore ways of cutting down on the length of her report.
9	<b>Headteacher</b> to arrange for the LA Attendance policy and the current School Attendance policy to be amalgamated where appropriate and taken to the TLA Committee for consideration and approval.
14	<b>TLA</b> Summer Term Meeting minutes to be circulated to Governors.

Signed  Date 13/09/23  
Chair of Governors

