



Headteacher
Mr N Sharp

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ARNSIDE NATIONAL SCHOOL IS AN ACADEMY

Minutes of Arnside National C of E School

Virtual Annual General Meeting (VAGM)

held on Tuesday 26 January 2021 at 5.30pm

Key: highlighted areas in green = question asked

Trust Members present:

Mr Mark Chater Representing the Diocesan Board of Finance
Mr Steven Kershaw Chair of Governors,
Revd Andrew Norman Parish Incumbent and Trustee, Foundation Governor
The Venerable Vernon Ross, Archdeacon of Westmorland and Furness
Mr Nick Sharp Headteacher

Proxys in attendance

Bishop James Bell: proxy for Bishop James Newcome

In attendance:

Mrs Sue Glendinning Company Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Governors

AGM 01/21 Welcome and prayers

The Chair Mr Steven Kershaw invited The Revd Norman to open the meeting in prayer.

AGM 02/21 Apologies for absence

Bishop James Newcome – prior engagement. Bishop James Bell was authorised to act as proxy.
Mr David Adair Vice Chair of Governors – work commitments
Mrs Helen Chaffey Vice Chair of Governors – work commitments
Mrs Charlotte Tudway – prior engagement

The apologies were accepted, and the meeting was deemed quorate with five trust members present.

AGM 03/21 To hear any declarations of interest

Revd Andrew Norman – governor at Penny Bridge School (Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust)
The Venerable Vernon Ross – Director at Penny Bridge School (Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust) & Cartmel Academy
Mr Mark Chater – Director of the Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust
Bishop James Bell – Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust
Mr Nick Sharp – related to staff member

AGM 04/21 To accept the minutes of the AGM held on 4 February 2020

The minutes were accepted as a true record, proposed by Mr Chater, seconded by Revd Norman, and signed by the chair.

Matters relating to the minutes that received further discussion were as follows:

- The Trust Members were informed that there have been no SATS results from 2020 due to the Covid19 pandemic. Governors have worked with school in relation to areas requiring help in mathematics, led by Mr Service governor lead for mathematics. The scheme of work has been overhauled and school have been in liaison with the North West Maths Hub and Yarlside Maths Hub.

Authorised by *Helen Chaffey*

Date 7 December 2021

Q: In relation to finances, it is noted that since the previous minutes, school have received an additional 10 pupils. What difference has this made to school?

A: The additional 10 pupils brought with them sufficient age weighted pupil unit (AWPU) funding to deal with schools reduced income.

- The lunch system employed by school now means that school run a cashless system. Parents pay via card through the system. It is now 16 years since school last had hot meals, and school are now providing 100 hot meals per day from a school number of 120 pupils.
- The last AGM took place just prior to Ofsted's visit to school in February 2020. Ofsted arrived just as the pandemic situation started in March and ruled that school were no longer deemed to be outstanding but graded as requires improvement. School stated that they were in fact good, and agreed that there were some areas that required attention, i.e. the curriculum mapping, as a new curriculum was introduced into school in September 2019 and required time to become embedded in school. The library improvements were on the school agenda and being addressed at the time of the inspection. School felt that the decision reached by the Ofsted inspector was an unjust one but have worked towards removing the issues raised by Ofsted in order to move forward.

AGM 05/21 To receive the Academy Trust's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020, subject to its approval by the governors

The governing board approved the Academy Trust's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 at its meeting held on 14 January 2021.

The Chair Mr Steven Kershaw spoke to the report and stated that school were more financially secure compared to other schools.

Most of the academy's income is obtained from the ESFA in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the ESFA during the year ended 31 August 2020 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The academy also receives grants for fixed assets from the ESFA. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP 2005), such grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the expected useful life of the assets concerned.

During the year ended 31 August 2020, the excess of income over expenditure on the restricted funds for the period was £14,631 (excluding the pension deficit transferred and the pension fund movement).

During the year ended 31 August 2020, the excess of income over expenditure on the un-restricted fund for the period was £1,689.

On 31 August 2020 the net book value of fixed assets was £2,074,432. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the academy.

Q: What are school doing about pension liabilities?

A: School readdressed the budget plan submission, which indicates that by Year 3 school will be in a positive financial position. The ESFA review has been completed and a staffing review carried out. Any staff reduction will be carried out via a redundancy process should the need arise. The ESFA were satisfied by the robust approach undertaken by school. The auditors are aware of the situation and appropriate action will be taken if required.



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Q: It would appear that no time has been allocated to Union activities?

A: Staff are affiliated to unions, but due to the pandemic no time has been spent on union activities.

Q: How are school covering staff /pupil mental wellbeing?

A: A Governor carries out virtual 1:1 meetings with staff to discuss their wellbeing. Staff get on extremely well as a team and support each other very well. Staff appraisals this year include health and wellbeing and are reviewing work – life balance. A shared mentor system is in operation throughout school.

Pupils' wellbeing and mental health was noted upon their return to school in September 2020. School initially thought that it would be pupils academic learning that had suffered, but it was their mental health that had been most affected, for some through their parents' losing employment for others through family bereavement.

Staff were on board and addressed the issues as they arose. School once again are in lockdown, so staff are checking in on those families who are known to be vulnerable. Additional pupil surveys have been put into place, and the school timetable altered to wellbeing time rather than circle time.

During lockdown, online registration, and additional questions about how the pupils are feeling and how they are coping are being asked. The class teacher can contact either a child or their parent if they observe a pattern emerging that causes concern.

Wellbeing resources are in use for staff and parents to reinforce the point that school is here to help support the community as best they can. Parental feedback is that parents appreciate what school is doing to help. Vulnerable pupils are looked after, especially when mental health issues are raised.

Q: Unrestricted reserve is £20k with restricted reserves at £23.4k. Are school happy with this?

A: These figures were put into place consciously by school when reduced pupil numbers were known. Now with the increase in pupil numbers the reserves are seeing school through the pandemic situation.

Q: Separation of external and internal audit?

A: Scrutiny both external and internal of school's finances during the pandemic has been difficult. Mr Adair the governor with financial oversight and responsible officer, carries out monthly bank reconciliation. Mrs Evans the school bursar is the second layer of scrutiny. The ESFA have checked school finances with robust scrutiny, and school are looking to add an additional external layer using a cluster academy.

There being no further comments about the accounts; they were duly accepted and approved by members, who voted to accept them; proposed by The Revd Norman, seconded by The Venerable Vernon Ross, and signed electronically by the Chair.

Authorised by *Helen Chaffey*

Date 7 December 2021

AGM 06/21 To receive the Headteachers review of the year

Mr Sharp informed members that this has been an absolute roller coaster of a year.

10-11 March 2020, Ofsted carried out their inspection and Mr Mark Chater was part of the feedback session. The Ofsted report was shared with Learning Support Services (LSS) and other headteachers in the cluster, who agreed that the report did not reflect the school that is Arnside.

The School Development Plan (SDP) clearly indicates that the three areas deemed to be Ofsted action points have already been identified by school and are already in the plan and in hand:

- Curriculum mapping – done
- Curriculum mapping on the school website – done
- Book provision in school and library facilities – done

The SDP for 2021-2023 shows that the recommendations have already been completed.

The impact of the inspection report on school parental wise, is that school have increased in pupil numbers and parental engagement with school has increased. Staff and governors have been very supportive throughout the process and diocesan support from Charlotte Tudway has been welcomed.

The headteachers appraisal and governor development is very positive and demonstrates the direction that school is moving in. It is hoped that the next Ofsted inspection will reflect this positivity and recognise the work that is going on in school.

Church School distinctiveness is linked to the SIAMS process and is currently under review. School are working with Revd. Norman, the governors and Charlotte Tudway on this review.

SEF highlight of the year is the Covid19 addendum at the end of the document, which shows how resilient school are and how talented staff are. Having observed how other schools have struggled with their staff, parents and pupils, Arnside School have managed very well and provided safe care for all pupils in school. Governors and staff have reflected on the community needs and have been very positive and have taken school from an Ofsted low to a community high!

Mr Kershaw commented upon the sheer dedication shown by Mr Sharp as headteacher during this unprecedented year in the life of school. His commitment has percolated downwards to the staff because they can see how committed he is to his school, staff, pupils, parents, governors, and the wider community. Mr Sharp took the Ofsted outcomes personally, but not one member of the governing board thought that the result with Ofsted was down to him; they are 100% supportive of him and all that he does and hold him in the highest esteem.

Bishop Bell stated that school have been very forward looking and congratulated the headteacher and the staff for all that they have achieved.

Mr Chater commented upon the resource school use for teaching RE in school, which takes school to a more theological level rather than just plain teaching. The results are startling as pupils use the correct terminology and understand the meaning. Christianity and its teaching in Arnside School is of a very high standard.

The Venerable Vernon Ross gave his thanks to Mr Sharp and the staff for their assistance and support, both post Ofsted and during the Covid19 pandemic.

AGM 07/21 To appoint the auditors for the coming year

Members agreed that Saint and Co had provided a diligent, robust service in managing the accounts and were happy with their service to school. They have been used for 3 years and school may need to consider a review of their service in another 2 years.

The ESFA commented upon how thorough the audit had been.

Members proposed to continue using Saint & Co for a further year, proposed by Mr Chater seconded by The Venerable Vernon Ross, and approved by the remaining members.



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AGM 08/21 To receive questions from the Members of the Academy Trust

Q: Looking at the SDP, what impact has Covid19 had on the process?

A: School have been conscious of interim Ofsted visits targeting schools that require improvement and the question they ask about how school is maintaining progress. The SEF clearly demonstrates what school has done. There is a new library in school, a new maths system is in place, curriculum mapping is being embedded. The INSET training was to have been the evaluation of SIAMS linked to church distinctiveness; however, both C Tudway and Revd Norman were unable to attend.

Governors have been proactive and moved forward. School have been very proactive throughout the pandemic and Arnside School remained open the entire time and dealt with the Ofsted result, and managed the pandemic challenge, which is testament to their total commitment.

Mr Chater raised the question of the Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust (GSMAT) and suggested that the school might wish to explore the option of joining the GSMAT. He outlined some of the benefits for members and suggested that Governors might wish to consider this.

The Venerable Vernon Ross stated that as a director of GSMAT on the DBE he has a conflict of interest as does Mr Chater who is also a director.

He stated that schools with falling pupil rolls and staffing issues would be considered for recruiting to the GSMAT; however, as Arnside School does not fit into this category (as the school roll is over 100 pupils), now is not the time to discuss the matter.

He said that the best way to move forward is to work with C Tudway, who does not have a conflict of interest, and for school to decide when the time is right to consider the proposal.

Mr Sharp commented that he receives support from the SLRP and tight cluster heads group, as well as from the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC). The GSMAT has been talked about with C Tudway, but timing is key, and that priorities must be dealt with first by school.

Mr Kershaw added that this proposal can be considered in the future, but timing is of paramount importance. Now is not the time, as we are dealing with the pandemic situation and school needs to normalise before this matter can be considered. Mr Sharp is dealing with a massive surge in his workload as headteacher; he has risk assessments, headteacher management issues, his teaching commitment; therefore, now is not the time to bring this to the table. The matter will be placed before governors when the time is right and not before.

The Venerable Vernon Ross commented upon the links from the RE syllabus to the work with Revd Norman and church school and commended school upon its close links with the community. He said that sowing the seeds will bear fruit later down the line. He encouraged school to continue with this important work to ensure we continue to thrive as a Church School and continue to go forward.

There were no further questions from members.

Authorised by *Helen Chaffey*

Date 7 December 2021

AGM 09/21 To agree the date for the Annual General Meeting 2021

The members agreed that the next annual general meeting be held on **Tuesday 7 December 2021 at 5.30pm.**

Mr Sharp expressed his thanks to an integral member of the governing board and the trust, Mrs Sue Glendinning, who has been a tremendous support to school and governors during the past challenging year. She is currently in the recovery phase of Covid, so grateful thanks were given for her attendance at the meeting.

Members were thanked for their attendance and the meeting was declared closed at 6.40pm