



Headteacher
Mr N Sharp

**ARNSIDE NATIONAL
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL
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Minutes of Arnside National C of E School
Virtual Devolved Governing Board Meeting (VGB)
held on Thursday 12 November 2020 at 5.00pm

Key: highlighted areas in yellow = action point highlighted areas in blue = impact measure highlighted areas in green = question

*This is the information required by governors under the current COVID19 lockdown.
The government have stated that governors' statutory responsibilities are not altered or relaxed during the current situation. A duty to ensure that the strategic overview of school is managed lies with the governing board of Arnside National CE School.*

Present: Mr David Adair, Miss Clare Addison, Mrs Judith Bratt, Mrs Helen Chaffey, Mr Steven Henneberry, Mr Steven Kershaw Chair, Ms Jacki Piper, Mr Ian Service, Mr Nick Sharp Headteacher, Mrs Rachel Smith, Mr Ben Waterhouse.

In attendance: Mrs Sue Glendinning Clerk to the Governing Board

VGBM 76/20 Welcome

Mrs Glendinning welcomed the devolved governing board to the meeting, and asked Mr Kershaw to open in prayer.

VGBM 77/20 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Mrs Griffiths – work commitments

The Revd Andrew Norman – family bereavement

Mr Iori Hicks was absent

The meeting was declared quorate, with 11 governors' present.

VGBM 78/20 Declaration of conflict of interest in agenda items

Mr Sharp and Mr Adair declared an interest in relation to their wives being staff members.

Mr Henneberry declared an interest as he is in a relationship with a staff member.

Nil else declared.

VGBM 79/20 Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Governors for 2020-21

Due to the Covid 19 situation it was proposed that in order to retain continuity and efficiency the governing board retain the current chair and vice chairs for a further academic year.

Proposed by Mrs Chaffey seconded by Mrs Bratt. This was agreed upon by all governors present; therefore, Mr Steven Kershaw was re-elected as Chair of Governors for 2020-2021 with Mr Adair and Mrs Chaffey as joint Vice Chairs.

Mrs Glendinning congratulated Mr Kershaw and handed over the running of the remainder of the meeting to him.

VGBM 80/20 Governance

a) Declaration of business interest forms

The Clerk asked that these be completed and returned to her electronically.

b) Code of conduct and governors' roles and responsibilities

The Clerk went through the revised code of conduct document with governors and asked that they sign page 5 and return this electronically to her, so that a record is on file. Governors approved the revised version.

Authorised by Chair *Steven Kershaw*

Date 26 January 2021

c) Review terms of reference

Governors approved the terms of reference document and the following positions were allocated:

THE ACADEMY TRUSTEES			
The 5 Members of the Academy Trust are:-			
The Diocesan Bishop		Bishop James Newcome	
The Archdeacon of Westmorland & Furness		The Venerable Vernon Ross	
The Parish Incumbent		Reverend Andrew Norman	
Diocesan Board of Finance Representative		Mr Mark Chater	
The Chairman of Governors		Mr Steven Kershaw	
Full Governing Board		Position	Governor responsibilities
Mr Iori Hicks	Co-opted Governor		
Mr Ben Waterhouse	Parent Governor		
Mrs Rachel Smith	Parent Governor		Mental Health & Wellbeing
Mr David Adair	Foundation Governor		Health & Safety
Mrs Judith Bratt	Foundation Governor		SEND/ Children Looked After/ Pupil Premium
Mrs Helen Chaffey	Foundation Governor		English
Mrs Stephanie Griffith	Foundation Governor		EYFS
Mr Steven Kershaw	Foundation Governor		PE
Mr Steven Henneberry	Foundation Governor		Safeguarding Website monitoring/Responsible Officer
The Revd Andrew Norman	Ex officio		Pastoral Care
Mr Ian Service	Foundation Governor		Data Protection Officer (DPO), Maths
Vacancy	Authority Governor		
Mr Nick Sharp	Headteacher		Designated Safeguarding Lead
Miss Clare Addison	Staff Governor		
Ms Jacki Piper	Staff Governor		
Mrs Sue Glendinning	Clerk & Company Secretary	Clerk	

Due to the current restrictions, it was agreed that the committees and governing board will continue to meet in a virtual format until further notice.

d) Annual planner and meeting dates

The annual planner was shared with governors, and the remaining agenda for the forthcoming academic year will be guided by DfE directives with the workload prioritised.

Dates for future meetings will be arranged after each meeting until a clear picture of where we are headed due to Covid19 becomes more apparent.

e) Skills audit

Governors were asked to complete the skills audit as a matter of urgency as we have a vacancy for the position of Local Authority governor, and a skills gap analysis is required.

f) Governor vacancies

The board have received Rebecca Kennington's resignation, citing increased personal priorities for her own business, which precludes any free time for governance. This leaves a vacancy for the Local Authority category as well as the safeguarding governors' role. Once the skills analysis has been carried out, the Clerk will contact Governor Support Services with the appropriate form, so that a replacement can be found.

Mr Waterhouse's term of office expires on 10 December 2020 and Mr Waterhouse has stated that he does not wish to stand again. This leaves a parent governor vacancy, which will be addressed by an election letter going to parents in the new year.

Action point:

The clerk to send a parent governor election letter to Mr Sharp to be sent to parents in January 2021

g) Safeguarding governor appointment

In light of Mrs Kennington's resignation, the role of safeguarding governor is vacant; it was proposed that Mr Henneberry take on this role with immediate effect, which he has agreed to do. Proposed by Mr Sharp seconded by Mrs Smith and approved by all governors. Mr Henneberry was thanked by the Chair for taking on this role.

h) Headteacher & Deputy Headteachers appraisal review

Mr Sharp's appraisal date has been set for 27 November 2020.
Ms Piper's appraisal will be conducted in house.

i) To approve minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 October 2020 were agreed to be a true and accurate record, proposed by Mr Kershaw seconded by Mr Adair.

j) Action points arising

The split class process is to be reviewed following a complaint by a parent. A consultation process involving Governors, Staff and Parents will be held.
The current process is pupils are split purely by age, with the cut-off date changing each year. A child is only moved if they have an Education Health care Plan (ECHP).
Other school procedures have been investigated and age and ability are taken into consideration. Friendship groups are not the main dictator of the class split.

Q: Governors were asked if they wish to add additional criteria to allow more flexibility in the process.

A: The response was that we will not be able to please everyone all of the time and must do what is in the best interest of the children.

Q: How many complaints have we received over the years that this process has been carried out?

A: One.

Q: How is the child whose parents complained doing this year?

A: The child has settled extremely well. There have been no issues with their friendship groups as expressed as a concern by parents and vindicated for staff who informed the parents that there would be no issues.

Academically this is a difficult area to assess at such an early age, as the child has joined reception; therefore, ability would not be a beneficial criteria to include in the process.

Action point:

It was agreed that the school prospectus will be updated to reflect how the selection is made.

STRATEGIC ACCOUNTABILITY

VGBM 81/20 Headteachers report

a) Vision

• Risk assessment update

The RA is reviewed weekly and is on the SLT agenda for the weekly meetings.

Mr Kershaw as Chair is involved in the review.

The next update is due on 12 November 2020.

Parents are to be encouraged to socially distance more effectively and to disperse more quickly rather than linger to catch up and chat. A review of drop off times for pupils will be looked at to see if this will help the situation.

• Bubble management update

Governors were informed that the bubble management is working well, with limited movement throughout school for both staff and pupils, thereby reducing cross contamination risk.

Double bubble management is in place, with a staggered lunch break. The risk to the bubbles lies with the staff not the pupils.

Authorised by Chair *Steven Kershaw*

Date 26 January 2021

- **School development plan 2020-21**

The targets set for 2019-2020 are to be kept, including the Ofsted targets, to ensure that they are all completed.

A letter will be sent to all parents on 16 November 2020 informing them of the progress made to date on the Ofsted targets.

SIAMS inspection framework will be reviewed at the INSET day in January and will involve Mark Chater from the diocese and support from Father Andrew. The Deputy Director of Education will facilitate the training from the Diocese.

- **ASR report**

Peer 2 peer review was described in detail in the heads report, which was sent out to governors. This review highlighted the strengths and areas for improvement, so that support can be coordinated for schools.

The curriculum maps have been added to the school website, which was an Ofsted target.

Mr Henneberry has the role of website compliance reviewer and informs the headteacher and clerk where there are omissions or out of date documents which require updating.

b) Curriculum

- **Pupil assessment progress post lockdown**

The headteacher reported that there is a complete mixed picture on pupil assessment, as there is a mix of children having accessed home learning and some not having done so.

Normal half term assessments have been carried out with most teachers reporting that once children settled back into school it is not academic learning that has suffered, it is their social skills and their mental attitude and attitude to learning that has suffered.

- **Curriculum delivery progress**

Staff have amended the workload for pupils, as their stamina for as day at school needs to be built back up. Progress is now being made. Mr Henneberry stated that the same issues are being faced in secondary schools, with older students retaining more information, whereas students in the lower year groups have a lower reading ability, which is being managed. Arnside Staff are not worrying about pupil progress and are managing their classes accordingly.

The infant pupils took a little longer to settle back into a routine but are now settled and working well.

- **PSHE delivery**

Attitude to learning adjustments have been made and staff are adjusting the scheme that they are working with.

c) Behaviour and attitudes

- **Pupil attendance**

Attendance has seen no change from normal, with excellent attendance throughout all year groups. No pupils have had to self-isolate.

- **Pupil behaviour on return**

As predicted, it took pupils a little longer to settle back into a routine. The school's pastoral worker has reported that pupils are much more settled post half term and improvements are visible.

There are two vulnerable pupils who have both transitioned into school with very challenging behaviour, which has been time consuming to deal with.

One is a Looked After Child (LAC): school are working with the foster parents and the virtual school to bring the pupil back on track.

One is a child with an EHCP, and school are working with the inclusion team, behaviour team and the EHCP team in order to access a limited curriculum. Governors were informed that this is not a sustainable position for the child. If no improvements are made as soon as possible,

alternative provision will need to be sought. The TA dedicated to the child has access to such a small curriculum it has been questioned whether ANS is the correct school for the child. Exclusion has been raised, which has alerted other teams to the predicament school face.

- **Pupil wellbeing**

The comment was made that the headteacher and staff have done a fantastic job keeping things going at Arnside School compared to other schools within the area.

The risk assessments make school a safe place and parents have complete confidence in both school and Mr Sharp. The communications between school and parents are essential and are keeping the parents updated at every step.

Massive congratulations to the staff for all their hard work in getting everything in place and being so adaptable to ever changing situations.

Pupils' wellbeing has been central to all decisions taken so that there has been minimal disruption to their school life.

VGBM 82/20 Finance

a) Budget update

The accounts will be with the auditors next week. The predicted Covid drain on finances has not materialised and school are in a healthy financial position. Expenditure has been reduced as there have been no school outings.

The library and ICT improvements have gone ahead, and the invoices came into school in September, so do not show in the August – August financial period.

School has anticipated a reduction in pupil funding due to a drop in pupil numbers; however, in July school gained 11 new pupils, which has balanced out the budget.

Q: Why are so many pupils coming to ANS?

A: Another school did not handle lockdown in a manner parents approved of, so the disaffected ones moved schools.

Q: Will the accounts meeting be face to face with the accountant or held virtually?

A: Mr Sharp, Mrs Evans the school bursar and Mr Thompson the auditor will meet face to face, with the accounts shared with governors via a virtual meeting in early January 2021.

The ESFA sent out in March/April to all academies that they should go through a special resourced management audit (SRMA), which will look at school budgets and accounts. The representative from Barrow visited school and listed how school could be more efficient. Nothing was flagged up that school were not aware of and already doing.

Staff levels needed for bubble management and wrap around care need to be reviewed. Parents currently are not accessing the wrap around care provided by Arnies, and there are 2 staff running the provision. Currently there are 6-8 children in an evening where previously there were 13-15 prior to lockdown. A review of costs is needed, with the proposal to reduce staff costs with immediate effect by:

- closing on a Friday evening and
- reducing the finishing time during the week to 5.15pm

Mrs Evans will do a cost review analysis to determine how we go forward.

Action point:

Mr Adair will carry out a bank reconciliation exercise prior to the meeting with the auditor to demonstrate transparency. Evidence of both internal and external scrutiny is required.

**Mrs Evans and Mr Adair – internal
ESFA and Mr Thompson – external**

b) Approve scheme of financial delegation policy

Proposed by Mr Henneberry seconded by Mr Service approved by all governors.

VGBM 83/20 Staff matters

a) **Staff wellbeing**

Additional duties and isolation in school between bubbles is taking its toll on staff morale within the three weeks since return to school. Mr Sharp has tried to reduce unnecessary jobs and reduce the number of meetings staff need to attend. Longer lunchtime breaks have been initiated in order to allow staff to relax between teaching sessions.

Mrs Smith is in contact with staff in a pastoral role for mental health and wellbeing. The recent situation has stretched staff, but a regular review is maintained of their wellbeing.

One of the niggling issues is that of inadequate hot water provision for staff breaks, as the kettle is not big enough to cope with the rotational system in place to protect bubbles.

Mrs Smith will source the necessary funding for a school boiler to alleviate the situation.

Staff are missing contact with parents for the regular chat to catch up with pupils and support them with reading and any matters that may be concerning them.

A real Dunkirk spirit has been demonstrated during lockdown, with the sudden realisation in the autumn term that the Covid situation is for the long term. It has been a traumatic year for staff, with the very negative Ofsted experience in early March followed directly with lockdown1, then school re-opens, then lockdown 2, a really tumultuous year.

Staff have dealt with matters in a highly professional manner, but they are really tired.

Action point:

- **Staff mental health will be kept as an agenda item to keep on top of staff morale**
- **Mrs Smith to source funding for a school boiler for the staff room**

b) **Staff appraisal update**

Mr Sharp reported that under the staff appraisal process each member of staff has been given a mental health objective to aid progress. The PHA has suggested carrying out a staff mental health questionnaire as part of the appraisal process. No targets have been set for pupil progress this year. All staff appraisals have been completed.

VGBM 84/20 Safeguarding

- a) **KCSiE 2020** this document has been updated and governors need to read the entire document.

VGBM 85/20 Policy review

- a) **Teachers pay policy**
b) **Staff appraisal policy**
- } approval proposed by Mr Kershaw seconded by Mr Henneberry

VGBM 86/20 Items deemed confidential

No items were deemed confidential.

VGBM 87/20 Date of next meeting Tuesday 12 January 2021 at 4.30pm

The next meeting will be held with the auditor to review the accounts, prior to the AGM with trustees. This meeting will be deferred to January, to allow the auditor to finish the accounts, which were held up by the Covid lockdown.

Mr Waterhouse was thanked for his term as a parent governor, and Governors were thanked for their attendance and involvement in the meeting, which was declared closed at 6.56pm