



Full Governing Body Meeting: Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 6.30pm in School

Present:	Rev Craig Bentley (Rev CB)	(Foundation Governor)
	Miss Katie Brown (KB)	(Staff Governor)
	Mr Chris Granger (CG)	(Parent Governor)
	Mrs Nicola Hills	(Co-opted Governor)
	Mr Brian Jones (BJ)	(Interim Executive Headteacher)
	Mrs Jules Natlacen (JN)	(Foundation Governor) CHAIR
	Mrs Hilary Wheatley	(LA Governor)
	Rev Angela Whittaker (Rev AW)	(Foundation Governor) Vice Chair
In attendance:	Ms Charlotte Harrison (DHT)	Deputy Headteacher
	Mrs Helen Loney (HL)	<i>arr 6.38pm</i>
	Mr Bernard Mitchell	Bursar
Clerk:	Sarah Williamson	(NYCC Clerking Service)

22/27 Welcome, Introductions and Chair's opening remarks

The chaired welcomed governors and Miss Harrison (Deputy Head) and Mr Bernard Mitchell (Bursar) who were in attendance.

a) Consideration of proposal to co-opt Mrs Helen Loney as a governor

Governors noted Mrs Loney's 4-year term of office as a parent governor expired on 16 October 2021. The Rev Whittaker proposed and Mrs Hills seconded the nomination of Mrs Loney as a Co-opted governor.

The Chair outlined Mrs Loney's previous experience as a school governor, including her appointment as Vice-Chair in September and noted her willingness to continue to serve. **Governors unanimously agreed** to appoint Mrs Loney as a co-opted governor.

b) Parent Governor vacancy

Governors noted the school will be required to run a parent governor election. **Governors agreed** this should take place in the Spring term when the substantive HT is in post. **ACTION: Clerk and School Administrator**

22/28 Apologies

None

22/29 Identification of Confidential Items

No confidential items were identified at this stage in the meeting.

22/30 Declarations of Interest

None

22/31 Finance update & report from Finance Committee meeting (held 20 Oct 2021)

a) Finance update

The Bursar presented a financial update to all governors. Governors noted:

- The school is in a good financial position, with immediate and longer-term benefit of funds generated by the NLE advisory work of the previous HT.
- The budget submitted in April 2021 was approved by the LA and therefore the LA does



not require an update in October.

- It remains good financial management policy for governors to review the budget at this stage of the financial year.
- There have been some significant changes

[At 6.38pm Mrs Loney joined the meeting]

A copy of the October monitoring report was circulated in advance. It is now possible to see the longer-term impact of staffing changes. Key external changes may have further impact: local government re-organisation and the government's academisation programme by 2025.

The Bursar summarised key changes:

- An additional £6k funding, largely associated with High Needs has been received since April. An increase from £44.5k to £52k; there may be further funds. This is a result of LA changes to High Needs funding arrangements.
- The school has not been as adversely affected by these changes as originally anticipated. Additional High Needs funding will gradually reduce over the next 3 years until it ceases; core High Needs funding will slightly increase over that time.
- At present there has been a saving of nearly £14k on support staff but a new pay scale has been published for teaching staff and teaching support staff unions are presenting a case for a significant increase. At present an increase of 2% is included in budget; staffing costs could therefore increase
- The Meal Grant was higher than anticipated and additional Covid recovery funding (£1k) has been received with a further £1k due in the summer term.

Governors noted the out-turn is now projected as £68-70k instead of £51k. In some years the LA would claw back anything above a surplus of 8%. This will be waived this year but is likely to return in 2022-23, of which governors must be mindful.

A governor noted an out-turn of £40k would be allowable and asked if the school has a defined list of spending priorities. The EHT responded this needs to be decided in discussion with the substantive HT who will have a vision for developing the school. The EHT will share ideas. The Staff governor added a significant IT lease runs out next year, at which point the school has the option to purchase the equipment.

The Bursar explained that Sports Premium (SP) funding will cease in August 2022 and any outstanding amount must be spent by March 2023. The school may wish to consider how it can sustain similar levels of activities once they are attributable to the main school budget. One change is that SP funding cannot be spent on capital projects.

b) Finance Committee Terms of Reference for FGB approval

Governors agreed the revised terms of reference were comprehensive and approved them.

c) (22/16) Update on auditing of the School Fund

The Bursar summarised the audit of the School Fund accounts for the last 3 years. The 3 accounts have been rationalised into a single account; this will ensure correct financial management going forward.

Projects need to be identified so surplus funds can be drawn into the school budget. The EHT reported an outdoor play equipment company was visiting on 25 November to finalise plans for the replacement equipment.

Governors thanked the Bursar for his presentation. [At 7.10pm Mr Mitchell left the meeting]



22/32 Any other urgent business

One additional item was notified 'Car parking' which will be discussed under item 16

22/33 Approval of Minutes of the FGB meeting held on 22 September 2021

The minutes were circulated in advance. Mrs Loney proposed, and Rev Bentley seconded they be accepted as an accurate record. **Governors unanimously agreed.**

A copy of the public minutes will be posted on the school's website. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher**

22/34 Matters arising

a) (22/24) Update on use of the Village Hall

The EHT reported that in discussion with the Village Hall Committee the school had offered to relinquish one morning and one afternoon booking to enable wider community use.

Governors agreed further discussion of this item should be recorded in a separate confidential minute.

22/35 Executive Headteacher's Report

The Executive Headteacher's report was circulated in advance. Additional papers were tabled at the meeting.

a) School Data

Data was circulated but governors noted an assessment point is scheduled for the following week, so up to date data will follow.

The Executive Headteacher (EHT) explained the way in which data has been presented previously which has focussed on attainment rather than progress.

Understanding progress is particularly important in the context of Covid. Schools need to consider:

- Where are the children in terms of academic ability?
- Should they be there or further ahead?
- What has the school added to ensure a child has made good progress?

Following analysis of the updated progress data further consideration will be given to using more TA hours to invest in children who are behind and whether additional funds can be used to increase the hours available for intervention.

b) School Development Plan: review of progress against 2021/22 priorities

Some amendments have been made to the SDP regarding internal monitoring. The EHT will RAG-rate actions at the end of term. The SDP remains a key strategic document for governors.

A copy of the action plan was circulated at the meeting. This draws together each subject leader's action plans and will form useful background information for and a basis of questions governors may ask on monitoring visits.

Governors noted staff have worked hard and made progress despite Covid disruption mid-term. Covid catch-up funding is specifically aimed at the small number of disadvantaged children and the school must be able to evidence the impact of intervention on them.



Intervention to date will be reviewed and increased in the Spring term.

There is one further governor monitoring visit scheduled for this term. The EHT circulated a Governor Journal to the Chair which incorporates two elements missing from the current Record of Visit form: the Ofsted framework focus of the visit and impact from the visit i.e. what is changing as a result of a governor visit.

Governors are mindful of Ofsted drivers and discussed amending the current form or adopting the new template. The Chair noted the revised format is very useful. Governors agreed the Clerk should circulate the form to all governors: **ACTION: Clerk**

c) School Self-evaluation Form

The school's existing SEF (March 2021) was heavily biased towards the SIAMS framework. The EHT advised two separate SEF. The LA Advisor recommended a concise summary report, which the EHT has drafted.

A copy of the draft SEF was presented at the meeting. The school's current judgement is 'good' in all aspects.

The EHT explained the LA Advisor has offered to write a letter to the school community from the LA explaining this change in grading in the context of the revised framework. Outstanding now means nationally exceptional. In the local context no outstanding school has yet retained that judgment.

What does nationally exceptional mean? Delivering and sharing best practice across schools, this could be something to which the school aspires. Governors noted SIAMS have also changed the grade descriptors.

Are there any areas where the EHT feels the school is outstanding? This is not a downgrading, there are some aspects where the school is strongly good. Ofsted may notice an outstanding aspect and can comment on it.

Is remote learning provision outstanding? It is one element of the quality of education but this would not sway the overall judgment. The Deputy HT commented that Ofsted will enquire at the initial telephone call where the school's strengths lie and computing could be referenced.

What is the benchmark for outstanding for personal development? Every group is excelling. Everything possible is in place to support them. The school's ethos is very strong and is likely to be recognised in a SIAMS inspection.

How can sharing best practice with other schools be established? The HT, with support of governors, identifies strengths and promotes them. For example: behaviour or wellbeing packages; or a particular curriculum area. A school needs to build on what it has established and start sharing this, developing the whole school so it is outward-looking, and everyone is contributing to sharing good practice. The school is well-placed to identify a USP; this is a strong SEF.

Governors discussed the SEF. **Will the amended SEF be shared with staff?** The EHT will make amendments and share. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher**

Will there be a separate SIAMS SEF? There is one. The substantive HT will review. A SIAMS inspection is likely to happen in the Spring or Summer terms.

d) Staffing update

A TA left at half-term. It has not been possible to make an appointment. A very experienced



former teacher is covering these hours.

There has been no significant sickness absence.

e) (22/18e) Update on School Website

The substantive HT signed off the new website last week; it incorporates compliance checking and alerts schools when updates are required. The company has stated work can be complete in 6-9 weeks and therefore should be ready for the March deadline.

Is there an additional cost for rebranding? Yes £6-700. This has wider implications but is something that could be revisited and may be something to consider once the new Headteacher is in post.

22/36 Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Premises updates

a) Issues or incidents

There were no H&S or Safeguarding incidents to report.

b) (22/17b) Update on installation of new outdoor equipment

A meeting is scheduled with Playdale for 25 November. Governors previously agreed a budget of £16 - 20k to replace the adventure playground equipment. It is anticipated this work could be completed at February half term or during the Easter holidays. There is an informal agreement with a local family to remove the existing equipment and dispose of it. This is in hand but was postponed due to bad weather.

c) (22/17b) Update on grant applications for further development of outdoor space

Governors noted there is no longer a need to consider external funding or grant applications.

22/37 Senior Leadership Team & staff wellbeing

The Chair of Governors announced receipt of the Executive Headteacher's resignation for personal reasons. The memorandum of understanding will cease in 2 weeks.

The Chair and all governors expressed thanks to the Executive Headteacher for the significant impact made during this interim period and wished him well. The EHT responded that as well as bringing things to the school he had learned things too and hoped that long lasting links would be sustained between the staff of both schools.

Governors agreed further discussion of this item should be recorded in a separate confidential minute.

22/38 Governor Monitoring Visits,

a) A copy of the monitoring report from the previous Priority 5 Delegated Leadership which took place in the Summer term (Mrs Loney) was circulated to governors before the meeting.

b) Priority 2: Maintain outstanding effectiveness as a Church School – understanding of diversity and spiritual development

Mrs Loney and Rev Bentley visited the school during a multi-faith day. The visit has been written up, will be transferred to the new format and circulated. **ACTION: Rev Bentley**

c) Priority 3: Well Being

This visit took place on 24 November. A report will be circulated. **CTION: Mrs Hills and Mr Granger**



d) Priority 4: High Achievement responding to gaps in learning due to the pandemic

A visit by Mrs Wheatley and Rev Whittaker is scheduled for 29 November

22/39 Policies to review

a) (22/22a) Update on Policy Review Schedule

The EHT provided a draft policy schedule circulated in advance. This identifies policies for review, many of which are in the Autumn term. **Governors agreed** to adopt this schedule.

b) (22/22b iv) Update on Fire Risk Assessment

The Cumbria Fire Service visit has been re-booked for January. The doors in this listed building will be raised as a specific issue.

c) Child Protection policy

Is there an associated Staff Behaviour of Code of Conduct for review? The EHT responded this could be woven into the Safeguarding policy or be a separate policy. The EHT will review this aspect following the staff Safeguarding meeting in Monday 29 November at 3.45pm, to which the Chair was invited. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher**

Governors noted key changes around sexual harassment and gender in the context of primary schools. Mrs Wheatley proposed and Rev Whittaker seconded this policy be approved; **governors ratified the updated policy.**

d) RE and Collective Worship policies

Governors agreed this will be carry-forwarded to the next FGB meeting.

22/40 Governor Training

a) Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)

All governors have now signed to confirm they have read and understood KCSIE (2021).

b) NGA Learning Link provided by Cumbria LA

Governors were reminded of access to e-learning modules **free of charge** until 18 Apr 2022.

c) Feedback on any governor training completed since the last meeting

5 governors attended Cluster training regarding the Ofsted framework. It was sensitively and clearly led. Slides and questions will be shared with all governors. **ACTION: Clerk**

The EHT is collating an Ofsted file to support governors. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher**

How many governors will be required to speak with inspectors? 3 or 4 governors will be required; this depends on availability given the short notice. The meeting is usually scheduled at lunchtime. All governors will be invited to feedback at the end of the day.

The LA offers preparatory advice sessions. The Chair will contact Marie Barnes to arrange a date. **ACTION: Chair**

22/41 Governance

a) Governor Skills Audit

A draft summary has been produced and provided to the Chair and EHT. A final summary will be reviewed at the next FGB meeting, alongside the training overview. **ACTION: Clerk**

Key areas for development so far are HT Performance Management training and training for Charing committees and to support succession planning for the role of Chair.



b) Governor vacancies

Governors noted vacancies for: 2 co-opted governors and 1 parent governor

The Clerk will send copies of the parent governor elections paperwork to the Head and School Administrator. ACTION: Clerk

c) (22/15a) Update on arrangements for a H&S Committee meeting, including clerking

Governors discussed the current schedule for Committee meetings and noted many schools operate two committees: a School Improvement Committee or Standards & Effectiveness Committee, and a Finance Committee, which incorporates Health & Safety.

Governors agreed it would be more streamlined to:

- Hold 3 Finance Committee meetings per annum (October, Feb/Mar and Apr/May – in advance of a June FGB meeting)
- Further develop the terms of reference for the Finance committee to incorporate Health & Safety matters **ACTION: Clerk**
- Continue with a governor termly H&S walk round. The EHT will provide an audit form. Mrs Loney agreed to undertake this role and will report and make recommendations to the spring Finance Committee meeting. **ACTION: Executive Headteacher and Mrs Loney**

22/42 Any Other Urgent Business

Car Parking

Car parking and traffic management particularly at drop off and pick up times continues to be a health & safety concern. It also has an impact on villagers. Current parking located next to the church cannot be extended as the surrounding area is consecrated ground.

Mr Granger circulated a proposal as a starting point for discussion to bring additional parking and a drop off point to the front of the school. This would require consultation with a wide range of stakeholders in addition to planning applications and considerations.

Governors discussed the proposal in detail and identified key stakeholders including: parents; the local community; the Parish Council; the Village Hall Committee; the Diocese (including the Diocesan Director of Education); Cumbria Highways; the local District Councillor; and the LA.

The proposal would result in a modest loss of 630m² of play space and provide parking for 12 cars in addition to a drive through drop off area. Governors discussed ways in which the impact of loss of playing area could potentially be alleviated.

How would such a scheme be funded? Funding is an important consideration. Mr Granger advised funding is likely to emerge as you go through the process.

Does this proposal impact decision-making regarding replacement of play equipment? No, such a process would take time.

Governors discussed periodic monitoring by school staff in Hi-Vis jackets at pick off and drop off times. This has short-term impact through pro-active conversations. It was suggested local PCSOs could also be involved.

Governors agreed the only way to make progress and address the ongoing health & safety concerns over parking and traffic is to be creative and seek a long-term solution.

Governors agreed to set up a working group to explore possibilities: Mr Granger (Chair); Mrs Hills; Mrs Loney, Rev Whittaker and Miss Harrison as a staff representative.



22/43 Correspondence

None

22/44 Consideration of the Impact of the meeting on the welfare and progress of pupils at the school

Governors:

- Agreed actions that will enhance provision for children's wellbeing such as the new playground equipment
- Considered spending priorities for surplus funding
- Understand the difference between attainment and progress and the importance of considering progress regarding interventions
- Considered how the school can aspire beyond good in terms of SEF
- Know subject action plans are in place making sure they are driving what everyone is hoping to achieve
- Are attending training to ensure they have the appropriate skills to support the school

22/45 Dates of future Governor Meetings:

- Wednesday 16 March 2022 was confirmed as the Spring FGB date

Governors agreed the following provisional dates will be confirmed with the substantive HT:

- Finance Committee meeting (Spring term) tbc
- Wednesday 27 April (Finance Committee)
- Wednesday 22 June FGB

Close The meeting closed at 9.09pm and the Chair thanked all governors for their contribution.

Signed

(Chair)

Date:

Clerk Sarah Williamson