

MINUTES OF MEETING



School: Ash Lea School
Meeting title: Summer term meeting of the governing body
Date and time: Monday 24th July 2023 at 5.30 pm
Location: At the School

Membership
'A' denotes absence

	Chris Hankinson (Chair)
	Kate Davies (Headteacher)
	Dave Dennington
	Hannah Griffiths
A	Helene Maillet-Vioud
	Gordon Monaghan
	Luke Skillington
A	Jane Wood

In attendance Stuart Northedge (clerk to the governors)

GB/19/23 **Apologies for absence** **Action**

Apologies for absence were received from Jane Wood and Helene Maillet-Vioud.

It was

resolved

that the governing body consent to these absences.

GB/20/23 **Declaration of interest**

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

GB/21/23 **Review of membership and terms of office ending in the next 12 months**

The clerk highlighted the following vacancies on the governing body:

Charlotte Martin has resigned her position as co-opted governor with affect from 12/07/23.

This leaves the following vacancies:-

2 x co-opted governors.

1 x parent governor.

The Headteacher gave details of two parents who have come forward as potential governors.

Governors agreed to appoint Hilary Dalton as a co-opted governor from 01/09/23.

Governors agreed to appoint Alan Gupwell as a parent governor with affect from 01/09/23.

The Headteacher also confirmed that the governor induction paperwork had been updated and this will now be used in the Autumn Term with these new governors.

The school will continue to advertise the one remaining vacancy for a co-opted governor.

The clerk brought to the attention of governors the following end of term of office:

Helene Maillet-Vioud (Parent Governor) 12/03/24

GB/22/23

Approval of minutes of spring term meeting and any special governing body meetings

The minutes of the spring term meeting held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 having been previously circulated were confirmed and will be signed by the chair.

Matters arising/review of actions

GB/57/22 – KD to contact the Esteem Trust.

Action completed. The school has been in touch with the Esteem Trust and the White Hills Trust. The White Hills Trust have been recently joined by Foxwood Special School.

GB/66/22 – Governors to agreed to allocate the equalities and complaints governor roles following further discussions.

Due to the resignation of a governor, this will be considered again in the Autumn Term

KD

GB/07/23 – KD/LS to meet with Behaviour Watch, to ensure leaders were making best use of the system.

The issue with the Behaviour Watch system has been addressed internally. Action completed.

GB/07/23 – Headteacher add previous years comparative data for IEPs to her report.

Action completed.

GB/07/23 – Dave Dennington to be inducted as new health and safety governor by the Headteacher.

Action ongoing.

KD/DD

GB/15/23 – Chris Hankinson to write a piece for school newsletter introducing himself as Chair of Governors.

Action completed.

GB/05/23 - Governors agreed to the Headteacher and Helene Maillet-Vioud continuing to explore this shared use agreement under the terms that had currently been set out by Candleby Lane.

There had been no correspondence from Candleby Lane until this week, but confirmation has now been received that the school governing body are happy with an informal shared use agreement.

Governors discussed this and felt that the way forward from this point is still unclear, as the initiative for drawing up the agreement needs to come from Candleby Lane. The Headteacher will now contact the Headteacher at Candleby Lane to clarify the next steps and who was going to action these. A governor highlighted a need to know a minimum term for the agreement and what was going to happen to the land in question at the end of this period.

KD

GB/23/23 Receipt of minutes and approval of policies from committees and working parties

Matters arising/review of actions

Finance and Personnel Committee

Gordon Monaghan gave details of the latest Finance Committee Meeting and a Special Meeting that was held on the 23rd May 2023, to look at staff restructuring. This meeting had discussed a significant shortfall in the budget that had been caused by both the unfunded teachers and support staff pay increases for 2022-23. Governors particularly highlighted the additional impact of the support staff pay awards on Special Schools. The Special Meeting had agreed a restructuring process that included staff redeployment and not replacing some staff that were due to leave the school. The restructuring process is now well underway.

The Finance Committee meeting had agreed the budget for 2023-24 which although it still has an in-year deficit, this can be supported in the short term by the carry forward from previous years.

Gordon Monaghan also highlighted that the Finance and Personnel meeting had agreed that due to the large amount of money currently held in the School Fund (approximately £67,000), this will be considered as a standing item on the agenda of the committee moving forward.

A proposal was made that any expenditure from the School Fund up to £500 can be agreed by one member of the Finance and Personnel Committee, up to £1000 needs to be agreed by two members of the committee, up to £5000 needs to be agreed by the full F and P Committee and over £5000 needs to be agreed by the Full Governing Body.

Governors agreed and approved these levels of delegation for the School Fund.

Governors also discussed a request from a member of staff for the school to pay for a pair of glasses broken on a residential trip by a pupil. Following this, governors agreed that any payment of this nature should be discretionary and would be discussed and agreed by two governors if a repeat of this situation was to arise. The default amount that would be paid if backed by evidence will be £150 with the discretion to increase this if necessary.

Governors then returned to the School Fund and held a discussion around suitable areas of expenditure for this to be spent on.

Strategic Committee

This meeting covered a detailed review of SEF and SIP for 2022-23 and the planned priorities for the next academic year.

The Headteacher explained that in 2023-24, governors will again need to be aligned to school improvement priorities for monitoring purposes. This will be considered as a part of a review of roles and responsibilities of the governing body, once new governors are in post at the start of the Autumn Term.

CH

Question – a governor asked for an overview of how this would work?

The Chair and Headteacher gave details of the layout of the School Improvement Plan and how a governor would be allocated to monitor each of the priority points that have been agreed. These would where possible also match with the other responsibilities, such as health and safety that governors had.

Question – a governor asked if there was a governor monitoring visit form?

Governors confirmed that there was, and that it could be found on GovernorHub. Once completed, these forms should then be uploaded to GovernorHub as a log of the visit and the agreed development points.

GB/24/23 Financial reporting

Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) 2022-2023 (deadline 31.03.23)

The SFVS had been agreed at the Spring Term Full Governing Body Meeting.

Approval of school budget (if not already agreed in actions from committees)

The school budget for 2023-24 had been agreed and approved by the Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting.

Governors consistent financial reporting out-turn statement including the intended use of balances (BO2) return.

Governors approved and agreed the consistent financial out-turn statement and intended use of balances (BO2) return at the Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting.

Approval of services for schools/review of contracts (if not already approved in spring term)

The approval of services for schools and review of contracts had already been agreed as part of the budget setting process.

GB/25/23 Summary of headteacher's report and governors' questions and challenge

The Headteacher had shared an extremely detailed and comprehensive report ahead of the meeting and governors were asked for any questions they had on this.

Question – a governor asked about the number of accidents recorded as other?

The Headteacher explained that this was because some incidents had been recorded as accidents, so many of the accidents listed under the others heading, should only have been recorded on the behaviour log and not as accidents. The Headteacher explained that this process was all about identifying any patterns in both the accident and incident log and addressing these.

Question – a governor asked if a lot of the incidents were linked to the same children?

Luke Skillington explained that this was the case and gave details of the impact of this on the figures.

Question – a governor asked about the staff view on the restructuring process and the impact on staff wellbeing?

The Headteacher explained that although the staff wellbeing survey was slightly less positive than previously that she didn't feel this was linked. The uncertainty of the redeployment of Midday Supervisors was highlighted and there was a feeling that once this had been confirmed and staff knew how the PCA roles would work this would improve.

Question – a governor asked when this was all going to be confirmed?

The Headteacher explained that this should be agreed in September ready for the start of the new year but several staff leaving had also impacted on the planning for this. The planning process is about matching available staff to pupil and class needs. Details were also given about the support staff pay increase and the fact that the impact of this will disproportionately affect Special Schools.

Question – a governor asked about the high number of safeguarding incidents?

The Headteacher explained that this was high but that there nothing particularly sitting behind this. Two ELSAs will also be trained as DSLs to help support them with disclosures.

Question – a governor asked for an update on the meetings with MATs?

The Headteacher confirmed that further meetings had taken place and that the school has now met with Esteem, CIT, White Hills Trust and Archway. Into the next academic year Esteem, CIT and the White Hills Trust will be investigated further through more school visits and meetings with staff and leaders.

Question – a governor asked if a form setting out the details of each trust with advantages and disadvantages could be drawn up to support governors?

The Headteacher and Chair agreed this could be drawn up ready for the Autumn Term FGB Meeting.

KD/CH

The Headteacher then explained that all 3 trusts being considered offered similar things and all had a really good level of support. A governor explained that with the lack of support from the LA in recent times, it was imperative that the school moved towards joining a MAT where the support and scrutiny would be much improved.

Governors also discussed the fact that it would take at least 12 months to convert and join a MAT once the final decision has been taken.

In concluding this agenda item, a governor then highlighted the strong attainment across the school set out in the report and thanks were offered to staff for all their hard work in achieving this.

GB/26/23 Update on appraisal process and wellbeing for headteacher and staff

This had all been detailed in the Headteacher's Report. The Headteacher will meet with appraisal governors in September.

The school will be working towards the Mental Health Award which will help to further support staff wellbeing in the next academic year.

GB/27/23 Information from the Corporate Director for consideration and action

Briefing on the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan

On 2 March 2023, the Government published the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan Right Support, Right Place, Right Time in response to the SEND Green paper that was published in March 2022.

Summary

The Improvement Plan sets out a threefold mission:

- **fulfilling children's potential** and improving outcomes with an emphasis on preparing for adulthood, particularly in relation to employment;
- **rebuilding parental trust** in the system;
- **providing financial sustainability**.

The Improvement Plan sets out a single system underpinned by national standards detailing the various elements of support available to meet need, along with the partners that should provide and fund these.

A system of funding bands and tariffs will be explored along with a new approach to funding for Alternative Provision (AP). This will be delivered by local inclusion partnerships which will produce inclusion plans based on an assessment of need.

The future role of AP is focused on early intervention and how the expertise in this sector can be used as an intervention rather than destination.

There is focus on the workforce and leadership, including early years, SENCos and educational psychologists.

There has been some capital investment to deliver 33 new free special schools across the country, along with £70m to deliver a change programme to test and refine proposals through 9 expert partnerships.

There is a commitment to join up the plans across Whitehall to come together into a single forum to discuss shared agendas.

Once implemented the Improvement Plan will deliver a sustainable system with the following characteristics:

- The **new national SEND and alternative provision system will be well established** which will bring national consistency to the identification of need and provision of support as set out in the evidence-based National Standards.
- The system will be **financially sustainable** for local authorities with needs routinely being met effectively where they arise.
- **Parents have confidence** that high-quality teaching and targeted evidence-based support will be available as a matter of course in mainstream settings when a need is identified, to avoid needs escalating.

- **Children and young people can access additional support through a fair and consistent process** where children, young people, families, and professionals work together to put in place the right value-for-money support to meet their needs.

Action for governors

Governors will have key role in supporting the implementation of the SEND and alternative provision implementation plan. To do this please ensure that:

- The school's SEND Policy is consistent with the vision of the Improvement Plan in offering every child and young person the support that they need to participate fully, thrive, and fulfil their potential.
- The school is inclusive and uses the graduated response (for further information please follow this link) for children and young people with SEND. The Improvement Plan highlights the importance of early identification of need and intervention.
- Children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers are fully engaged in the decisions made about them wherever possible. This is known to increase the trust of parents and carers one of the key aims of the Implementation Plan.

GB/28/23 General Data Protection Regulations – report from the DPO/Information Governance Link Governor

Gordon Monaghan confirmed that there weren't any breaches and that a detailed report had been discussed and presented in the Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting.

GB/29/23 Receive report from the Designated CLA (Children who are Looked After) teacher (presented at least once per year)

Luke Skillington explained that this had been detailed in the Headteacher's Report and explained how the school currently had 3 LAC pupils and 4 post LAC children. Their progress is in line with the rest of the school and their attendance is slightly better than the pupil group overall.

GB/30/23 Communication

From Chair

There was no further correspondence from the Chair.

From Headteacher

There was no further correspondence from the Headteacher.

From Clerk - Governor Newsletter

The clerk introduced the two Summer Term governor newsletters and in particular highlighted the following areas:-

- **Education Investment Areas Update.** Nottinghamshire is one of the new 55 EIAs. The article gives further information about the DfE priorities in the EIAs to support their aims.

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead Focus Group Meeting** Thursday 6th July 2023
- **A new LADO Online Referral Form** is being introduced Monday 3 April 2023 on the NSCP website – Reminder that Chairs of Governing Bodies are responsible for dealing with allegations made about a headteacher.
- **Governor Conference 2023 – Overcoming Barriers** Governors from maintained schools and academies came together for the 2023 Governance Conference on Saturday 4th March 2023. This was a very successful day with really positive feedback.
- **Message from the NEW Chair of the Nottinghamshire Association of Governors (NAGS)** – Sue Beasley including how NAGS can support Governance in Nottinghamshire.
- **Governor Learning and Development Package 2023/24** - Governor Learning and Development is now managed by the East Midlands Education Support Service (EMES). The article has information regarding the content of the training package that schools can purchase and how to access this.
- **The Strategic Role of Governors** – a guide for governing bodies into their role and the avoidance of discussion of operational matters.
- **School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions** – new guidance comes into force from 1st September 2023.

GB/31/23 Approval of in-service training days (5) 2023-2024

The Headteacher proposed the following dates, including a request for an additional day for staff training on complex medical needs and procedures:-

Monday 4th September 2023,
 Tuesday 5th September 2023,
 Monday 6th November 2023,
 Thursday 4th January 2024,
 Friday 5th January 2024
 Wednesday 5th June 2024

The Headteacher shared details around the need for the additional day and explained why one of the days was going to be a Wednesday to cover IEP reviews.

Governors then discussed the advantages and disadvantages of holding an INSET Day on a Wednesday but felt the school should try trial this and see how it went. The Headteacher also shared additional details of staff twilight training and the crucial training that all staff needed to undertake to help support pupils' medical needs.

Governors agreed the proposed dates for INSET Days, including an additional day for staff training on health and safety grounds.

GB/32/23 Review of planning document: delegation and organisation of committees:

Agree committee structure and membership of committees

To be agreed in the Autumn Term, once new governors are in post.

CH

Approval of scheme of delegation 2023-2024

Governors agreed and approved the scheme of delegation for 2023-24.

Note annual planner 2023-2024 to support agenda setting

Governors noted the annual planner for 2023-24.

Policy checklist 2023-2024 – statutory policies for schools

Governors noted the policy checklist for 2023-24.

Review of and appointment to link governor roles

To be agreed in the Autumn Term 2023.

GB/33/23 Report from training co-ordinator of impact of training undertaken and review of governor training requirements (including safeguarding)

Governors will complete a digital skills audit in the Autumn Term and then a training plan for governors will be produced from this.

The importance of statutory training on KCSiE 2023 and safeguarding was also highlighted to governors.

GB/34/23 Review of governor monitoring visit reports – key actions for governing body

Chris Hankinson confirmed he had safeguarding visits to write up and Gordon Monaghan had carried out a visit on GDPR and data protection.

GB/35/23 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

Challenge, discussion and questioning around Headteacher's Report.

Discussion and challenge around MATs.

Challenge and discussion around School Fund expenditure.

Update and challenge around staff restructuring process.

Questioning around school budget.

Challenge around recording of accidents and incidents.

Discussion around recent Ofsted visit.

GB/36/23 Confirmation of dates for 2023-2024 to be agreed at the meeting in conjunction with the clerk

The governing body

agreed

Autumn term 2023 – Thursday 19th October 2023
Spring term 2024 – Tuesday 26th March 2024
Summer term 2024 – Thursday 11th July 2024

GB/37/23 Determination of confidentiality of business

It was

resolved

that part of item GB/25/23 would be remain confidential.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.



Signed (chair) Date19.10.23.....

School Display