

### **AUTUMN TERM 2023**

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Governors of Newtown School held at the School on Thursday 2 November 2023 at 7.30 p.m.

<u>Please note that minutes are not a verbatim record but an objective record of what was discussed and the agreed decisions and actions</u>

PRESENT: Mr A Fortgang Chair

Mr S Barker Mr A Dunn Mrs H England Mr T Hooper

Mr I Hooper Ms H King Mr M Writtle

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs A Johnson Governance Advisor

Mr D Rose Deputy Headteacher

ABSENT: Mrs S Riley-Haque Apologies received and accepted

Ms G Watherston Apologies received and accepted

Headteacher

**ACTION** 

# 1 GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS

Governors agreed that the process for electing the Chair would remain as contained within their Standing Orders.

### 1.1 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR

In line with the procedures agreed by the Governing Board, Mr A Fortgang had been elected as Chair at the Extra-Ordinary FGB, for a period of office of one year ending, at the latest, on the last day of the Autumn term 2024. The appointment was confirmed.

# Mr A Fortgang in the Chair

# 1.2 ELECTION OF VICE- CHAIR

In line with the procedures agreed by the Governing Board, Mr A Dunn had been elected as Chair at the Extra-Ordinary FGB, for a period of office of one year ending, at the latest, on the last day of the Autumn term 2024.

### 1.3 OTHER APPOINTMENTS

**Appointment of Associate Member:** Mr S Barker was appointed

**ACTION** 

Associate Member of the Governing Board, with voting rights, (and would sit on the BH&S, T&L, Strategic Committees), until the Extra-Ordinary FGB Meeting which would be arranged by HE with consultation with AJ/AF. AJ would circulate the Extra-Ordinary FGB agenda to all governors in due course.

HE/AF AJ

It was agreed that Governors would be appointed to the following statutory roles for the forthcoming year:

Safeguarding Governor	Hannah King
SEND Governor	Salma Riley-Haque
Development Governor	Gemma Watherston
Inclusion Governor	Salma Riley-Haque
<b>Equalities Governor</b>	Anthony Fortgang
PE & Sports Premium	Tony Hooper
Early Years Governor	Gemma Watherston
Data Protection/Cyber	Matt Writtle
Health and Safety	Simon Barker
Maths Governor	Tony Hooper
Wellbeing Governor	Hannah King

# 2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that the following items would be discussed under Any Other Business

- Presentation of School Voluntary Funds tabled by AJ
- Communications tabled by the Chair

# PRESENTATION OF SCHOOL VOLUNTARY FUND (end 31 August 2023)

HE confirmed that the School Voluntary Fund had been sent to an independent examiner, John Phillips, for auditing. The School Voluntary Fund would be circulated to governors via 0365 in due course. The School Voluntary Fund would be presented at the FGB meeting.

Resources Agenda/ FGB Agenda

### 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

### Declarations of interest in items on this agenda

There were no declarations of interest in items covered at this meeting.

# Business and Pecuniary Interest Form (Uploaded onto 0365 by AJ)

Governors completed and signed the Business and Pecuniary Interest declaration form and passed it to the Headteacher for retention in the School Office.

Governors who had been unable to attend the meeting (SRH and GW) would be reminded of the need to update details of their interests on and complete the Pecuniary Interest form.

Governors noted the requirement for this information to be published on the school website.

SRH GW

Headteacher

4.1	MATTERS ARISING	ACTION
	GOVERNOR SUCCESSION:	
	LA Governor vacancy: It was agreed that SRH would complete the LA	
	Governor Proforma to be confirmed at the next BC Governance Group	SRH
	meeting. SRH would then be appointed at the next FGB/Extra-Ordinary FGB.	FGB Agenda
	2 Parent Governor vacancies: HE would initiate parent governor	HE
	nominations/elections. MW would nominate himself for this role.  HK to confirm governor induction training and PREVENT training	MW
	completed: HK would be completing Induction training and PREVENT	
	training and would report back at the next FGB meeting in the Spring	нк
	Term.	
	Performance Management Governors: AF, GW and SB (pending	
	appointment as Co-Opted Governor at the Extra-Ordinary FGB) were appointed PM governors. GW and SB to complete PM training. PM	GW/SB
	Governors will be in place <b>and trained</b> in time for the Headteachers PM	GW/3B
	review in the Autumn Term. <i>The Governing Board will need to appoint</i>	
	2 or 3 governors dependent on the school's appraisal policy.	
	Performance Management External Advisor: Governors agreed that	
	the external advisor would be Ros Birch.	
5	ANNUAL REVIEWS	
5.1	STANDING ORDERS	
	Governors reviewed and adopted their Standing Orders. AJ would	AJ
	upload onto 0365. GOVERNORS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME	
	Governors reviewed their Allowances Scheme and agreed them. AJ	
	would upload onto 0365.	
	DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS TO THE HEADTEACHER AND CHAIR	
	Governors reviewed the functions to be delegated to the Headteacher	
	and Chair, and these were agreed as outlined in the Standing Orders.	
5.2	COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE	
	Governors reviewed and adopted Terms of Reference for their	
	Committees the following committees:-	
	Resources – approved – TOR on 0365     Repositors USS – approved – TOR on 0365	
	<ul> <li>Behaviour, H&amp;S – approved – TOR on 0365</li> <li>Teaching &amp; Learning – agreed in principle – TOR to be uploaded</li> </ul>	SRH
	onto 0365 by SRH	
	• Strategic – agreed in principle – TOR to be uploaded by Chair	AF
	AJ would upload all personalise standard TORS and upload into	AJ
	"PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS" on 0365.	
5.3	MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES	
3.3	Governors reviewed and agreed the membership of their Committees.	
	The Committee structure would be available on 0365. AJ would update	AJ

the Committee Grid accordingly and email the updated grid to

governors to check before uploading onto 0365.

It was agreed to give Associate Members voting rights as outlined below:

Name of Associate Member	Details of Voting Rights
Simon Barker	Yes

This information would form part of the statutory information to be included on school websites.

ΗE

# 5.4 GOVERNING BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT

Governors noted that the NGA had a model Code of Conduct for Governors.

The Governing Board agreed:-

- to adopt the NGA Code of Conduct,
- all governors would sign and date the agreed Code of Conduct thereby gaining explicit agreement that all governors would abide by the Code and to pass signed copies to the Headteacher for retention in school.

**All Governors** 

The Code of Conduct of would be reviewed annually.

### 5.5 REVIEW OF COLLABORATION ARRANGEMENTS

Governors noted that it was recommended that reciprocal collaborative arrangements should be set up with other schools, to share best practice, expertise, resources and whole Governing Board Training amongst other things. Collaboration is also useful in providing a greater pool of governors on which to draw should the Employee Grievance, Staff Dismissal or Staff Dismissal Appeals Panels be required to meet.

Governors agreed that AJ should approach the Chair of Governors of and Headteacher of St George's CE Infant School, Amersham, to enquire whether the Governing Board would be interested in entering such a collaborative arrangement.

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# 5.6 SCHOOL VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

It was confirmed that the school had reviewed the school vision, values and aims and considered how to ensure these are included in school documentation. The vision, values and aims had been changed in September and were being embedded. Ros Birch (BC School Improvement Partner) had said the School Vision, Values and Ethos were excellent and would be using them as an example to other schools. Governors are expected to articulate the vision, values and ethos of the school consistently.

**All Governors** 

# 6 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

# 6.1 REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS

The Report of the Headteacher, having been circulated, was received by governors. The report was accompanied by the accompanying documents:-

- Headteachers Report (new format)
- School Improvement Plan
- SEF (Self Evaluation Form)

Governors noted that the school was virtually full. KS1 was full and there were 3 spaced in Reception.

### **GOVERNOR QUESTIONS**

**FSM:** 33 – Do we need to publish this? We regularly publish to ensure all children who qualify for FSM get them.

**How can we be sure all eligible pupils come forward?** We do chase up parents. There is a lot of deprivation in the local area but some families are just below the threshold to be eligible.

**Maths:** Are we addressing this? Yes, but this is only one child – which was covered in Resources meeting. This is not significant but investigating ways to improve.

**Bike/scooter park:** how will this this funded? There are a number of avenues. The lighting has been paid for by the LA, so this money can go elsewhere. The PTA -2 branches (Activities and Grants for outdoor things). The PTA have spent a lot on playground equipment. We also have a surplus.

**Little Wandle:** Any plans to invite adults to help? We already have 10 volunteers to read with the children. Pre-school parents are also invited into the school. A mystery reader will be invited into the school, MW registered his interest in being a mystery reader.

HE MW

HE informed governors that the HT Report would require committees to drill down on the information but the Report covers highlights and there is a narrative.

What is meant by the term "joint attention"? DR (DHT) stated that was shared attention. Autistic children do not develop this naturally so we try to build up those skills.

The changes to the curriculum – figures for Early Years (EY) behind – the question is what is Plan B and do we have to wait until that point? No, we do not have to wait and have already assessed phonics and a huge number of pupils are working where they should be. Year 1 are where they should be. By the next T&L committee meeting we will have the data. We have regular Pupil Progress meetings and there is a rigorous process in place. Hopefully, by the end of the year we will be able to see progress. We collect data three time per year.

Responsibility of Staff: Sarah seems to have lots of areas of responsibility – do staff volunteer for responsibility or how are responsibilities allocated? Sarah, Nada and Liz have the majority of responsibilities and Danial and Alice have numerous subjects. We have two ECT's and they do not lead subjects. We have lots of subjects and not a lot of staff. Ofsted expect a broad and wide curriculum.

Governors thanked HE for her report and congratulated her on the new format.

# 6.2 SELF-EVALUATION FORM (SEF)

The had been completed. Ofsted would want to look at the SEF. HE informed governors that there was an Appendix so she knew exactly where the school was — this is not yet complete. HE considered the school to be "good" and at the start of a journey. We have done a lot of work on the curriculum and phonics — but may not be embedded enough for Ofsted.

# 6.3 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP)

The Headteacher reported on the progress that was being made towards achieving the objectives contained within the School Improvement Plan which was subsequently uploaded onto 0365. The SIP was constantly updated.

### 6.4 FEEDBACK FROM EXTERNAL PARTNER

The School Improvement Partner had not visited this term, but Ros Birch (BC) would be coming into the school. The EY Advisor had visited but the EY Report had not yet been received.

# 6.5 GOVERNING BOARD SELF-EVALUATION FORM (GBSEF)

This was on-going. The Skills Audit had been completed and AF would follow up the GBSEF up with GW.

AF/GW

### 7 COMMITTEE MINUTES

# 7.1 RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 19 October 2023, were currently in draft form and would be circulated in due course.

**Budget Monitoring:** Governors received the budget monitoring report. AF informed governors that nothing had changed since the committee meeting but there had been slight reduction to the in-year deficit from £24k to £20k. The in-year deficit was easily covered by our brought forward surplus of £148k.

Early Years funding increased by £30k to £190k. Funding rates had increased and we are trialling an additional morning "Firecrests" class (2 year olds) from January for 2 terms. HE commented that this meant a new member of staff would be required from January. There had been a positive response from parents. If governors had any questions let AF or PA know.

**All Governors** 

Following the recommendations from the Resources Committee the Budget was **approved.** 

HE informed governors that all teaching staff appraisals had been completed.

**SFVS:** PA to arrange completion by the SFVS deadline.

# 7.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the T&L Committee meeting held on 6 October 2023, having been circulated were noted. There were no questions.

### 7.3 BEHAVIOUR, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the B,H&S Committee meeting held on 7 September 2023, having been circulated were noted. There were no questions.

**Safer Recruitment Training:** SB commented that more governors were required to do Safer Recruitment training. PA and AF were to complete Safer Recruitment training. AD had completed this training.

AF/PA

**KCSiE:** Governors noted that Keeping Children Safe in Education had been revised and went live on 1 September 2023. Governors noted changes to the guidance. HE had circulated KCSiE to all governors.

It was confirmed that all staff had read Part 1 of KCSIE 2023 (as a minimum) and the Senior Leadership team and Governing Board had read the whole document. Governors would confirm that they had read the document.

**All Governors** 

### 7.4 STRATEGIC COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Strategic Committee meeting held on 21 September 2023, were with AF in draft form and would be uploaded onto 0365 in due course.

ΑF

**Governor Visits:** AD would email all governors to plan a rota of visits to the school.

AD All Governors

# 7.5 HR RELATED PANELS, COMPLAINTS PANELS, PUPIL DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES

These Committees had not needed to meet.

### 8 REPORTS

# 8.1 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Chair had not taken any action under emergency or delegated powers.

# 8.2 REPORT OF THE SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR

The Safeguarding Governor confirmed that the Annual Safeguarding Report to Governors had been completed and published on GovernorHub.

It was confirmed that the report had been forwarded to ESAS by the prescribed deadline of 22 September 2023.

**Single Central Record:** AF confirmed that the Single Central Record was up to date.

**ACTION** 

Policies: The SEND Policy had been updated and the SEND Information Report done.

Action: After discussion it was agreed that Safer Recruitment and SCR training were required.

Safeguarding Gov/Governors

#### 8.3 REPORT OF THE INCLUSION (SEND & PUPIL PREMIUM) GOVERNOR

The Inclusion (SEND/PP) governor was absent from the meeting.

Governors noted that all mainstream schools have a duty to produce a SEND Annual Information Report: a retrospective account of the SEND provision that has been delivered over the last academic year.

It was confirmed that the school's SEND Annual Information Report had been produced and published on the school's website as required. The SEND Policy had been updated. Both were tabled for approval – Item 11.3 - Review and Ratification of Policies.

#### 8.4 REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNOR

The Development Governor, GW, was absent from the meeting.

Individual Training: Governors noted training available:-

NGA Membership and the "Learning Link" (on-line training)

Governors were encouraged to complete the training in order to improve the skills of the GB and fill in any gaps in their knowledge.

**All Governors** 

Whole Governing Board Training (WGBT): WGBT has been held on 11 October 2023 on "The Role of the GB". Governors stated that the training had been excellent.

**Training Records:** All governors to update their training record on 0365.

**All Governors** 

Governor Induction Pack: This had been covered earlier in the meeting. It was further agreed that Induction Pack tasks would be delegated to individual governors so all could contribute.

**Action:** AF/GW to delegate tasks.

AF/GW

AJ subsequently forwarded information on the Development Governor role to AF (this information had previously been sent to GW).

AJ subsequently forward Induction Pack information to all governors.

A Work in-progress/actions tracker to be devised by AD and uploaded onto 0365.

AD

#### 8.5 **HEALTH & SAFETY GOVERNOR (SB)**

Termly H&S Walk: SB confirmed that the H&S Walk would be taking place on the 8 November. The Report would be uploaded onto 0365 in | Agenda

due course.

# 8.6 EQUALITIES GOVERNOR (AF)

The Equalities Policy and the Equality Objectives had been reviewed. The Equalities Policy was tabled for ratification later in the meeting - Item 11.3 – Review and Ratification of Policies.

# 8.7 DATA PROTECTION & CYBER SECURITY GOVERNOR (MW)

MW had been in touch with Pete Neal regarding revised DfE guidance. Pete was very thorough. MW would be meeting with Pete later this week when modernisation of Wi-Fi would be discussed.

MW

### **GOVERNOR QUESTION:**

How vulnerable are we if the routers die and the wi-fi needing replacina? I will ask Pete.

 ${\sf MW}$ 

**Is the Wi-Fi something that should or MUST be replaced or would an upgrade be considered?** I will ask Pete this and how much an upgrade would cost.

MW

The Governance Advisor, AJ, subsequently clarified if a governor could be Data Protection Officer as she did not think they could:-

It is best practice that the Data Protection Officer (DPO) is not a governor. A governor could be a DPO but they would need to be a GDPR expert and would have to lead training etc, which might conflict with the governors role which is why is not recommended as best practice.

<u>Data protection in schools - Role of data protection officers - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u>

<u>UK GDPR: questions to ask your DPO | GovernorHub Knowledge</u> (thekeysupport.com)

The DPO really shouldn't be a governor. There are sometimes Business Managers who are happy to be trained and take on this role (sometimes for other schools too). The advice on Schoolsweb is really not good practice.

This is an operational role. The DPO should be an independent and a specialist who can provide this service. They should liaise with the DPL (Data Protection Lead) in school.

The Governing Board may choose to appoint a Data Protection Governor (or include this within the remit of the IT Governor in some cases) to monitor whether the school are fulfilling their responsibilities in this area and they will wish to receive reports from the DPO/DPL.

The role of DPO has many responsibilities and would be an onerous one if a SAR (Subject Access Request) was received.

### 8.8 GOVERNOR VISITS

**ACTION** 

All governors had met with staff at the beginning of the term. This was well received by staff.

### MATHS GOVERNOR REPORT (TH)

The Maths Governor, TH, had circulated his report. He had met with Nada, Maths subject leader using the Governor Visits template. TH talked governors through his report. Generally TH and Nada had discussed the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

HE thanked TH for his brilliant report which showed triangulation and was clear.

# WELL-BEING GOVERNOR (HK)

HK had been appointed to this role earlier in the meeting and would present her Well-Being Report at the Spring Term FGB meeting. *AJ subsequently forwarded HK information on this role.* 

НК

### **GOVERNOR VISITS**

All governor visits to be included on FGB agendas going forwards. Governor Visits template to be completed and uploaded onto 0365 prior to the FGB meeting.

All Governors

### 9 OTHER MATTERS

### 9.1 NEW BUSINESS

# 9.1.1 APPENDIX 1 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS – SEPTEMBER 2025

Governors noted the need to consider how the admission schemes have operated to date and whether they wished the LA to vary any part of them in its new arrangements for 2024. Governors were reminded that all requests needed to be compliant with the revised Admissions Code and received by the Admissions Team by **Monday 2 October 2023** (deadline passed).

Governors noted the need to review the LA's current admission arrangements in relation to their school and advise the LA if they wished to comment on the current rules and/or request a change to the admission numbers for the school before the deadline for notifying the Admissions and Transport Team of **Monday 2 October 2023** (deadline passed).

# 9.1.2 KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2023

This item had been covered earlier in the meeting. All governors to read KCSiE and sign as read.

**All Governors** 

# 9.1.3 REINFORCED AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE (RAAC)

Governors noted the guidance issued to schools which had been discussed by the BH&S committee – see BH&S minutes.

# 10 ITEMS TO NOTE

### 10.1 SCHOOL INSPECTION HANDBOOK

Governors noted that School Inspection Handbooks had been updated.

### 10.2 NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA AND HIGH NEEDS FUNDING 2024/25

Governors noted that the national funding formula tables for schools and high needs funding allocations for 2024/25 and the impact this would have on their school budget – see Resource Minutes.

### 10.3 BEP CHAIRS STRATEGIC BRIEFING FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2023

It was agreed that governors did not wish to attend and did not subscribe to BEP.

### 11 RECURRING ITEMS

# 11.1 TERM DATES AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING DATES

Governors noted in-service training dates suggested for Maintained Schools by the LA for 2024/2025 as follows:

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Plus 4 school specific dates:-

- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024
- Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October
- Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November and
- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

Governors reviewed proposed in-service training dates for 2024/2025 and these were approved.

# 11.2 STATUTORY INFORMATION ON SCHOOL WEBSITES

MW confirmed the website had been audited and that most statutory information was available and up-to-date on the School's website. Two issues had been raised as outstanding in the Governor Section – governor information and governor attendance needed to be updated.

**Action: MW** 

Governor photographs had been updated and uploaded. MW would circulate his report in due course.

### 11.3 REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF POLICIES

As part of the School's annual schedule, the following policies were presented and ratified by the Governing Board:

# Approved by T&L:-

- Accessibility Plan
- Equalities Policy

### Approved by Resources:-

Charging & Remissions

# Approved by FGB:

- Child Protection Policy
- Health & Safety
- SEND Information Report
- SEND Policy
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Plan
- Complaints

MW

MW

		ACTION	
	Anti-Bullying	ACTION	
	Approval of the BC Pay Policy 2023-2024 was deferred.	Resources & FGB	
12	<b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT FGB MEETING</b> The meeting time was discussed and governors agreed it should remain at 7.30 p.m.	Agenda	
	Governors confirmed that the next FGB meeting would be held on:- Thursday 14 March 2024 at 7.30 p.m.	All Governors	
13	ANY OTHER BUSINESS		
13.1	Presentation of Voluntary School Funds 2023		
	Discussed at the beginning of the meeting. Deferred.	Resources & FGB Agenda	
13.2	Communication – tabled by AF  Telephone Numbers: All governors to sent AF their telephone/mobile numbers.  Governor Presence in the School: All governors were thanked for		
	coming into the school to meet staff. Governors were encouraged to keep this going.	All Governors	
	<b>Training Development:</b> AF encouraged new governors to ensure induction training had been completed and all governors to ensure	New Governors	
	relevant training (for Governor roles etc) had been completed and refreshed when needed.	All Governors	
14	CONDUCT OF MEETING  Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Board would have access to these minutes.		
The mee	eting closed at 9.50 pm.		
Signed	Date		

CHAIR