

SPRING TERM 1 2025

MINUTES of the meeting of the Governors of **Newtown School** held at the school and remotely on **Tuesday 25th February 2025** at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Anthony Fortgand (AF) – **Chair**
Andrew Dunn (AD) – **Vice Chair** Sarah Scofield (SS)
Hayley England (HE) – **Head** Alice Lees-Millias (ALM)
Matthew Writtle (MW)
IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Treadwell (PT)
Daniel Rose (DR) – **DHT**

ABSENT: Gemma Watherston (GW)

NB. Governors' questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes.

	ACTION
1 WELCOME AND GOVERNOR ROLES	
AF in the Chair.	
All were welcomed to the Spring Term 1 FGB meeting.	
Apologies received and approved for GW.	
The meeting was deemed to be quorate.	
1.1 ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
The following items were tabled for discussion under Any Other Business:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SONAR tracking: the Governing Board noted that the School is now using SONAR. <i>It is good for data analysis and can produce Reports on various cohorts. It allows us to break that data down. We will present this data using SONAR to the Governing Board at our next FGB meeting.</i>	Head
2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
There were no declarations of interest in items covered at this meeting.	

		ACTION
3	MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held in 17 December 2024 , having been circulated, were confirmed and would be signed by the Chair as a correct record on Governor Hub.	Chair (AF)
3.2	MATTERS ARISING	
	<u>SFVS</u> The SFVS is due in February 2025 and AF/MW volunteered to assist with the process. <u>Action completed.</u>	
	<u>SEND</u> It was confirmed that the SEND Local Offer is on the website and a SEND Governor Visit will be completed in January 2025 . <i>AF to check with GW to see if the SEND Governor visit has been completed.</i>	
	<u>GSA</u> The Governor Skills Audit will be re circulated to all governors for completion . <u>Action completed.</u>	
	There were no other matters arising from the minutes.	
4	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	
4.1	REPORT FROM THE HEADTEACHER AND GOVERNORS' QUESTIONS	
	The Report of the Headteacher (Spring Term 2025) was received by governors prior to this meeting.	
	There were no questions received prior to the FGB meeting.	
	The following matters arose from a discussion:	
	<i>It has been a busy half term.</i>	
	<i>We have had a lot of visits from external agencies such as School Improvement and the English Hub providers. Those Reports (from the visits) have been positive.</i>	

NOR

It is positive. We are full in some cohorts such as Year 1 and Year 2 with a waiting list.

For Reception though we have received 49 first requests (PAN is 60) and 14 second requests. This is due in part to the localised low birth rate but this is still good compared to other local schools. Our Office Team are being proactive here. There is a lot of work happening with parental visits.

There are financial implications for the school for the lower numbers in Reception with lower funding to be received (circa £30K loss of income).

SEN

*We have **high levels of SEN** (19% compared to 13.8% nationally) and some of these children have complex needs. It is still challenging. Most schools in Chesham have children with complex numbers. The EHCP process continues to be lengthy (it should be 20 weeks but it is taking a year).*

There are delays at County. Governors noted at our previous meeting that the High Needs Block Funding from the LA has also stopped.

Staffing

We have one member of staff returning from maternity leave to a part time position.

Behaviour

We are working on this. We are seeing better behaviour at the school. It is much improved in lessons and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere. We still though have children who are challenging. We have worked with children over lunchtimes and that It is better.

Catering/Food

We continue to provide the school food based on the restrictions (logistical and financial) that we face as a school. We are looking

at what we can provide and we may have found alternative providers.

H & S Audit

*We have a **Bucks H & S Audit due on the 28th February** and we are hopeful that the big items to be checked are all compliant.*

Attendance

Q: Could you please update us on the latest pupil Attendance data?

*A: The Attendance Governor has completed a Governor Visit. Our attendance data is in line with the National Average at **93.9%**.*

*We have robust attendance practices in place and it is pleasing to see that our **numbers of PA children have decreased from 37 to 28.***

The Head and DR were thanked for the HT Report and the governors for their thorough questions.

4.2 SELF-EVALUATION FORM (SEF)

This working document is on Governor Zone for governors to review. The details on the areas that we discussed above (behaviour management) are also included and will be updated later this Term.

4.3 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP)

The Headteacher reported on the new **SDP 2024-25**.

A lot has happened. It feels that the school is moving in the right direction. Subject Leaders are working well within their roles and the school is in a good place. The next step in the SDP process is to assess the foundation subjects.

4.4 BUDGET MONITORING/FINANCIAL PLANNING/BENCHMARKING

Governors noted that the **Provisional Financial Return** is due for submission on the **5th March**.

*Q: What are the **financial highlights** to note?*

A: We initially projected a £70K in year deficit for 2024-25. We are

*now projecting a lower **deficit of £45K** for this year. There has been additional funding from lettings and EYFS and ECT mentoring. We also moved savings on some expenditure items such as energy (£5K saving).*

The financial picture for 2025/26 is not as healthy and we need to have a robust review of the 3 Year projections in our May FGB meeting and we may need to make tough financial decisions.

Governors noted that the **SFVS Return** is due for submission on **28th February 2025**.

*We have also completed the **Benchmarking** against other local schools. It is important to note that there are specific variances between the schools in pupil numbers and specific challenges (SEN and pupil need). We note that our support staff costs are high because of the local pupil needs identified.*

5 REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

None held/to report.

6 DELEGATED REPORTS

6.1 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

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

6.2 REPORT OF THE SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR

AF will be the Interim Safeguarding Governor.

AF

It was confirmed that the **Single Central Record** was up to date for last term and a further SCR check will be completed later this Term.

6.3 REPORT OF THE SEND GOVERNOR

It was confirmed that the SEND Local Offer is on the website.

6.4 REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNOR

No Report to note.

	ACTION
<p>6.5 GOVERNOR VISITS AND REPORTS</p> <p><i>Actions noted previously regarding linked governor roles (to the SIP) and governor visits. A number of Governor Visits have been completed including from the English and Attendance Governors.</i></p>	
<p>7 RECURRING ITEMS</p>	
<p>7.1 NEW BUSINESS</p> <p>Governors noted the information and guidance on the following:</p> <p>Ofsted Developments including Trials SEND Reform EYFS PPG Funding STRB Considerations Children Missing From Education.</p>	
<p>8 POLICIES TO APPROVE</p> <p>All the following policies were approved (with no changes noted):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback • Food in School 	
<p>9 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>The following dates and times of future meetings had previously been agreed and are on Governor Hub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next FGB meeting is scheduled for the <u>13th May 2025</u> at 7.30pm at the school. 	<p>All governors</p>
<p>10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. 	
<p>11 CONDUCT OF MEETING</p> <p>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 (with the exception of any Restricted Confidential Minutes).</p>	

12 SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

ACTION

SONAR tracking: the Governing Board noted that the School is now using SONAR. *It is good for data analysis and can produce Reports on various cohorts. It allows us to break that data down. We will present this data using SONAR to the Governing Board at our next FGB meeting.*

Head

SEND

It was confirmed that the SEND Local Offer is on the website and a **SEND Governor Visit will be completed in January 2025. AF to check with GW to see if the SEND Governor visit has been completed.**

AF

The meeting closed at 9pm

Signed Date

CHAIR

PART II – CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES: NONE.

CIRCULATION LIST: ALL GOVERNORS

CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES of the meeting of the Governors of < > School / Academy
held at the School / Academy / <Via Named Platform> on < > 2024 at < > am/pm

ACTION

Signed Date
CHAIR

