

Minutes of the meeting of the full governing body held on Monday 4th December 2023 at 4.30pm.

Present:

Mrs N Galloway (Chair)
Mrs H Benwell
Mr I Lindsay
Mr C McConnachie
Mrs J Vila
Miss J Harvey
Mr T Rimmer
Mr C Feeney – Via Zoom
Mrs N Harwood
Mr A Walker
Mr I Siddall (Headteacher)

Also Present:

Mrs E Wallace (Clerk to Governors)
Miss F Bate (Observer – Deputy Headteacher)
Mr S Stott (Observer - Director of Resources)
Mr J Bellamy (Accountant)

Apologies:

Apologies received and accepted for Mrs Khan. Mrs Collins was absent from the meeting. The clerk to contact Mrs Collins.

Clerk

Please note the Department for Education ‘urges governing boards to be pragmatic in what they cover in meetings during this time, and to be proportionate in the decisions that they are planning to take’. They expect governors to focus on ‘urgent, time-bound decisions’ and understand boards will want to ‘defer non urgent decisions/agenda items until future meetings’.

In addition, the National Governance Association (NGA) has advised paperwork be scaled back and verbal updates be provided wherever possible during this time.

2a. Governors declaration of Interest

The declaration of interest forms were distributed prior to the meeting and completed by governors.

b. Membership of the governing body

A staff governor election has taken place with two interested parties. Miss Harvey tendered her resignation due to a conflict of interest. All staff governor places have been filled.

A Parent governor election has taken place with two interested parties. The members will hold a meeting to discuss the strong applications of the candidates and seek to appoint one candidate as a member appointed governor.

A meeting for the members will be organised in the coming week.

Clerk

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Governors approved the minutes with the following amendments:

- Mr McConnachie to be added to the present governors
- A sentence to be completed on point six.

Clerk

The confidential minutes having been circulated prior to the meeting be approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising

- Mr Stott to distribute declaration of interest forms – Complete
- A meeting to re-appoint Mrs Galloway as a member appointed governor – Complete
- A Parent and Staff governor election to be held – Complete
- Miss Bate to chase
- The KCSIE document issued to governors – Complete – Clerk to send an email for governors to respond to
- Names to be added to the Health & Safety policy – Mr Stott explained the advice received is to name names of staff but state roles.

5. Auditors Report re 2022/2023 audited accounts

The auditors reports and draft accounts were distributed to governors prior to the meeting.

Mr Bellamy discussed the 54 paged document particularly pages 30 and 31 containing the balance sheet figures for the year-end, with previous year's figures alongside for comparison. Mr Bellamy discussed the individual items on the balance sheet and explained the academy is solvent and financially stable.

A governor questioned how the reserve policy is calculated.

Mr Bellamy explained only a certain amount can be carried over.

A governor added the articles of association states we can hold 12%. County schools have a reserve policy of 5%.

Mr Stott explained the reserve currently is £193,000.

6. Headteacher's Report

The headteacher's report document was distributed to governors prior to the meeting.

Mr Siddall stated a correction to the time of the carol service held by the academy and welcomed governors to attend.

Mr Siddall explained there have been three permanent exclusions to date this year.

A governor queried the attendance of pupil premium students.

Mr Siddall explained Year 11 attendance is slightly concerning. The academy is continuing to work with all students and parents to improve attendance. The Academy have been looking at anxiety with students and pastoral support.

A governor questioned if there was a correlation in bus fare and attendance.

Mr Siddall explained he will bring the leaders of attendance to the next meeting to discuss strategies further.

Mr Siddall

A governor asked for persistent absentee figures.

Mr Siddall explained this will be added going forward.

Mr Siddall

A governor asked for the numbers of pupil premium students to be added also.

Miss Bate explained the persistent absentee figure for Hodgson is lower than the national average. Attendance has dropped since returning from Covid. Miss Bate added there are nationally 180,000 children being home educated.

A governor questioned whether there had been an increase of holidays being requested.

Miss Bate explained there had been a rise with parents adding a few days either side of a school holiday.

A governor questioned the 50% increase in exclusions of Year 11 students.

Mr Siddall explained there has been an increase nationally of internal truancy post covid. Some students have become aggressive and argumentative when asked to return to lessons, the academy takes a firm stance on internal truancy. There is a lot of work internally taking place, working with parents and students, external agencies, internal provisions pastorally and around SEND, however this sometimes ends with an exclusion.

A governor asked about the figures in brackets.

Mr Siddall explained this is the current figure.

A governor queried the nineteen exclusions since September compared to the previous year group that received forty exclusions over a year.

Mr Siddall explained this is correct and is higher with the academy is working hard to lower these figures.

A governor questioned the progress 8 figure in MFL for last year's year 11 cohort.

Mr Siddall explained it is unlikely all students will be asked to study a language at GCSE. Students have recently sat mock exams the results will be reported to Governors.

Mr Siddall explained the proposal that was sent to the regional advisory board in relation to Hodgson becoming a MAT was approved.

Mr Siddall added the preference data has been received in relation to admissions with two hundred and sixth four choosing Hodgson as a first choice, a breakdown has been requested in regards to whether students are based in Wyre or Blackpool.

A governor asked for the criteria in place acceptance.

Mr Siddall explained the criteria is Looked after children and children who have been previously looked after, followed by children for who the governors accept there are exceptional medical, social or welfare reasons, followed by children with siblings, followed by children whose parents are employed by the school, followed by children living within the geographical priority area, followed by children living outside the geographical area. The geographical priority area is Thornton-Cleveleys Parish, Poulton, Staining, Singleton, Eccleston with Larbreck, Great Eccleston, Elswick and Hambleton shared with Millfield and Fleetwood, the cut off point is Amounderness way from the Singleton Parish Boundary to the Border of Blackpool.

7. Educational Visits

The Educational visits document was distributed to Governors prior to the meeting.

The Ski trip to Austria, the visit to New York, the trip to Cologne and two separate London trips were approved by Governors

8. Governor Training and development

Mrs Vila asked governors for any courses they wish to attend and inform her of course attended.

Mrs Galloway explained she had attended a safety course.

9. Risk Register

Mr Stott explained the document is under internal scrutiny by the HR and pay company.

10. Confidentiality

There were no items deemed to be of a confidential nature.

11. Any Other Business

Mr McConnachie stated he attended presentation evening last week and was very impressed with the turn out. Mr McConnachie suggested an increase of donations.

Mr Walker and Mr Lindsay attended the Year 11 mock interviews and were extremely impressed by the students dedication to this.

A governor suggested more notice to parents regarding parents evening.

12. Date and time of the next meeting.

The next full governors meeting will be held on Monday 29th January 2023 at 16:30