

St Anne's Fulshaw CE Primary School

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF ST ANNE'S FULSHAW CE PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD AT THE SCHOOL MONDAY 18TH MARCH 2024



Governors Present:	Maxine Drabble	Chair (MD)
	Clare Daniel	Headteacher (CD)
	Wendy Clark	(WC)
	Claire Carter	(CC)
	Angela Fitton	(AF)
	Natalie Lloyd	(NL)
	Matt Williamson	(MW)
	Sally Petrie	(SP)
	Eddie Roberts	(ER)

Also in attendance: Laura Furness Clerk to the governors

PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

The meeting commenced at 6:02pm.

The meeting opened with a presentation by the headteacher on the impact of poverty on learning. The HT noted that, Mark Whitehall; the School Improvement Partner, has restarted a number of diocesan groups to include:

- The Diocesan SEND cluster. This is a cluster comprising of approximately 25 schools.
- A Diversity Group. Chris Penn funded HT attendance at the black diversity conference.
- A Disadvantaged Group. This group was held in March 2024, with approximately 16 participants.

The HT is hopeful that uptake will increase for these diocesan groups. The groups were useful, informative and worthwhile.

The presentation was shared on Share Point prior to the meeting. CD made the following comments:

Poverty continues to be a huge issue in schools. The proportion of children that claim school meals goes up year on year. Parents can in some circumstances have trouble accessing universal credit due to fluctuating wages.

The HT shared statistics from a recent report 'State of Health in the City' by Matt Ashton. Two out of three residents in Liverpool are categorised as the 20 percent most deprived in the UK. These individuals live, on average, 15 years less and 18 years longer with poor health. This shows the impact of living in poverty. The HT shared this information with the board to highlight how important it is to be mindful and aware of the impact of poverty as there are families in this area affected by poverty. The HT noted that before children reach school age, those in poverty will have had biological changes to their brain development.

'Research continues to indicate that disadvantage is growing. The most disadvantaged are hit hardest by the on-going Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on learning' – Access to free resources and services is compromised for those living in poverty. Children are not having the opportunity to read or exposure to books.

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'In recent years, growing numbers of researchers have sought to understand the ways in which poverty has an impact on the cognitive and neurological functions of children'. – It is important to support each child on a case-by-case basis. Every child's circumstances are uniquely different. The HT noted that there is a need for us to identify which children need to be championed in our classrooms and given richer exposure to opportunities and items than their more affluent peers. Some possible approaches might include ensuring that every low-income child is:

- Given priority access to books of their choice in the school library.
- Given additional opportunities to build in time for reading for pleasure.
- Regularly prioritised on your "call home" list. Pass on praise and acclaim for something that they have achieved in the classroom, no matter how small it seems.
- Given priority access and financial support to get involved in extra-curricular opportunities within or outside of the school day.
- Given homework opportunities and out-of-learning tasks that do not rely heavily on additional screen-time or digital access.

It is important that governors recognise that there are children at the school in receipt of pupil premium funding, but this doesn't exactly correlate with all the disadvantaged children at school.

Governors discussed the notion of poverty alongside trauma, this is something that can often be more prevalent in the local area. There is great affluence and deprivation. The disparity between the two can increase trauma.

Q. Are children sensitive to this disparity?

A. *In some instances, such as birthday parties, yes. There can be a sense of shame and embarrassment.*

The current economic crisis has driven some families into poverty and whilst sometimes, it is hidden, it is a very real situation. Debt is becoming a growing problem; zero hours contracts makes claiming benefits a challenge. Many parents will try to 'keep up appearances' in social situations. The staff at St Anne's Fulshaw will provide and donate what they are able to support those in need.

1. APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS

There were no apologies to receive.

There were no additional AOB items.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest to be declared.

3. SEND REPORT

The SEND report was shared on SharePoint prior to the meeting. The HT guided governors through the report as school SENDCo. The HT noted that another child had been added to the SEND support register, with SEMH needs, bringing the total to 27. There were more children on roll last year, but the proportions of pupils on the register this year are similar to 2022/2023.

The HT shared Diversity and SEND specific need statistics, with some children having had multiple needs identified. The diversity profile at St Anne's Fulshaw is different to that of Wilmslow West and Chorley. Diversity is the school is an attractive feature for many families.

The HT shared some school SEND updates and noted that one pupil with and EHCP will be transferring into specialist provision imminently . The Aurora school in Wilmslow is a potential option for this pupil.

Q. Are there enough specialist schools?

A. No. There are not enough at all. When the council split to Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester, the majority of specialist provision was in the other half of the county.

Q. Is Springfield School a suitable setting?

A. This is a setting for children and young people with profound learning disabilities.

Governors discussed school participation in the SaLT Pilot Cluster groups. School have had consultation meetings with SaLT. These meetings have proved very useful. The HT noted that additional transition time has been set aside on 16/04/24 for six year six pupils.

The IQT are looking to restart the SEND audit process and the LT has put forward the school as one of the first to take part.

Q. Is the SEND audit assessment the same for each school and each teacher?

A. Yes, there it is benchmarked and there is a toolkit to support teachers with concerns. The move towards SEN register is for children that require support that is additional to (or different from)the support generally given to other children of the same age.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- a) There have been no changes to the membership of the board of governors. Parent governor elections have been held and there were no nominees. Another election will take place after Easter.

CC is to resign as LA governor at the end of July 2024. CC checked if there is anything she is expected to do as an outgoing LA governor.

ACTION: To confirm arrangements for outgoing LA governor- Clerk

- b) There were vacancies for two Parent Governors. ER is to contact a prospective parent governor.

ACTION: To contact potential parent governor- ER

- c) There are no terms of office that are due to expire before the next meeting.
- d) There were no associate members to appoint.

5. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- a) The minutes of the previous meeting on 27th November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair for retention by the school.
- b) The action log was reviewed and updated.

Item Number:

11. To add strategies for marketing the school to the agenda for the Resources Committee.

Governors considered approaching the church to ask for funding towards a promotional video for the school. The school have received a quote of £1000 for a two-minute video with drone footage.

ACTION: To put together a proposal for diocese funding towards filming a promotional video- CD/SP/ER

It is important to use the 'Vision Mission Statement' from the SIAMS documentation when marketing the school and evidencing that St Anne's Fulshaw is a church school. ER is to complete SIAMS training in June 2024 and will continue to support the school with this marketing drive.

15c. To ensure all governors have completed prevent training and this is confirmed on Governor Hub. ER noted Governor Hub access issues.

ACTION: To reset Governor Hub access for ER- Clerk

ACTION: To send reminders to Governors re: Governor Hub compliance- Clerk

The board discussed the merits of an IT induction session with another governor for those new to the role.

ACTION: To arrange a Governor ICT induction session for ER

c) **11.0 To add strategies for marketing the school to the Resources committee agenda-** Governors decided that Marketing should be agenda item at the next Resources Meeting.

ACTION: To add Marketing to the next Resources Meeting agenda- CLERK

6. CHAIR'S ACTION

There had been no actions taken under the Chair's Power to Act.

7. PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

a) All committee minutes had been made available via SharePoint prior to the meeting. There were no questions from the governing board.

AA Committee: 26.02.24

Resources Committee: 01.03.24

PPP Committee: 15.01.24

Budget Officer Meeting

b) Monitoring visits had been undertaken by the following link governors:

- Mental Health (MW)- The Link visit report is to be circulated via SharePoint.

ACTION: To share Mental Health Link visit feedback with Governors via SharePoint- MW

MW commented that the approach to mental health is weaved into all aspects of school life. MW was very impressed with the approach. It was interesting to see the Venn-diagram, which outlined nuances and differences in ways to approach different children.

8. FINANCIAL/ COMPLIANCE MATTERS

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a) The governing board **noted** the draft annual budget for 2024/25. Governors cannot approve a deficit budget. The deficit becomes significantly bigger over the next three years. This is in part due to low birth rate and lower pupil numbers . Alternative scenario budgets have been uploaded to SharePoint prior to the meeting for governor consideration.

It is not unusual to be in this deficit position. Governors noted that Cheshire East Council is also on the verge of bankruptcy. The HT has received an email from the Chair of the Primary Headteachers group to inform schools that the local authority Safety Valve plan was not approved by the DFE.

Q. Is school deficit a Cheshire East only problem?

A. *It is a country wise problem.*

Schools in Cheshire East can only retain 8 percent in reserves. Additional to this can be to cover staffing costs for future intake.

The cost of all utilities has escalated. There have been escalated costs in statutory services without accounting for SEND services.

Q. Why have three alternative scenarios been generated?

A. *The scenarios have been generated to try and ensure that the deficit does not continue to grow. These scenarios were formulated in the Budget Officer meeting, in conjunction with the Local Authority budget officer.*

b) The Budget vs Actuals for the current year 2023/24 and progress against the 3-year budget plan was reviewed by the board and discussed in conjunction with the draft annual budget for 2024/25. The Budget vs Actuals report was circulated via SharePoint prior to the meeting.

c) Completion of the SFVS is in process. The full governing board are happy for the resources committee to review and approve this document ahead of the deadline on 31.03.24

ACTION: To add the review and approval of the SFVS to be submitted 31/03/24 to the Resources Agenda- MD

d) *Discussion and evaluation of the cost of the Staffing structure for 2024/25 was moved to Part two.*

e) Governors reviewed the Manual of Internal Financial Procedures. It was noted that when the school moved to Best for business, the MIFP model was never updated and the links do not work.

ACTION: To look at the MIFP model at other schools. To check that the links work correctly- Clerk

ACTION: To add review and approval of MIFP to the Resources agenda- MD

9. PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated to governors for review prior to the meeting via SharePoint.

Quality of Education- Language Rich Environments

The HT referenced a new report from Speech and Language UK and shared some key findings with the governing board; "The number of children estimated to be behind with talking and understanding words has increased from 1.7 million last year to at least 1.9 million this year". This is one of the reasons that the East Cheshire SALT pilot has been extended into its second year. Referrals are string and robust from the East Cheshire Cluster. The HT noted that fewer referrals are rejected.

Q. Is this the last year of Covid Catchup funding?

A. Yes, this is the school's understanding.

Training and Development.

The HT report detailed events in which pupils have participated over the last half term, including the Love Music Trust singing competition.

Q. Did all local schools partake in the Love Music Trust singing competition?

A. No, not all schools. The St Anne's Fulshaw singers were pupils in the school choir and ranged from year two to year six.

Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare.

The HT noted that there has been a new referral system to CAMHS, and school has spent time monitoring the impact of this. The initial one-page information gathering portal is very simple to use. However in order to progress with an application and to submit, more detailed information is required.

The school made a referral in November 2023 and in March 2024 have had notification that this referral is now at the top of the list to be triaged. The waiting lists or initial assessment remains around 14 months from referral and an additional 12 months for pupils with ADHD if parents choose to explore medication.

The HT noted that the school continue to work with Jo Fletcher, Early Help and Wellbeing lead at Wilmslow Youth, to plan how the year 6 pupils will receive additional support with their transition in the coming year.

Attendance

It was noted that there are two pupils with very poor attendance, and this was not recorded in the whole school attendance. The first pupil is to move to a specialist provision and the poor attendance for the other pupil is attributed by the parent to mental health difficulties, something that the school have not evidenced . The HT continues to hold regular attendance meetings.

ER left at 19:28pm

SSDP

The SSDP priorities update was shared with governors via SharePoint prior to the meeting. The HT noted that updates to the priorities document were highlighted in red. There were questions from the board.

NL is taking part in Geography and History subject leader network events each half term and has been since summer term 2023, This has had a positive impact on curriculum planning and developing subject links across themes as well as signposting resources and other training for staff. The new curriculum is to include key questions in each theme. The development of the new curriculum is ongoing. It was acknowledged by the board that this is a time-consuming process for NL, particularly with teaching year six.

Pupil performance Data

The pupil performance data was reviewed in the autumn term.

Well-being across the school community

A recent D&V bug has affected a number of staff and pupils this half term. The school were also impacted by a phase of COVID prior to the end of the autumn term. There were a number of days prior to the Christmas holidays in which it was difficult to cope with the level of staff absence. Staff feel tired as the Easter holidays approach but as ever continue with a positive outlook and attitude.

10. STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE- ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND CLERKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2024/25

Governors **agreed** to continue to buy-back the CE Clerking service for 2023-24.

11. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The spring term 2024 Director's Report had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The clerk highlighted a number of items from the Director's spring term 2024 report. Governors discussed item 1.5 "Reducing workload for teachers and leaders" and item 1.4 "Draft Guidance on Gender Questioning Children". There has been a family at the school who would like to know when school are going to address this issue with the children.

The governing board noted that on 07/03/24, the Department for Education announced that the following non-statutory guidance documents have been withdrawn:

- Governance Handbook
- Clerking Competency Framework

These documents have been replaced with Maintained schools Governance Guide and an Academy Trust Governance Guide.

12. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

- a) There was no report from the Training Link Governor at the meeting.
- b) It was confirmed that governors have completed Prevent Training and those that are yet to do so have been signposted to the course.

ACTION: To circulate a link to the prevent training for all governors to complete and confirm on Governor Hub- MD

- c) MD encouraged governors to attend a training course at least once per year and to feedback to the governing board. It was agreed that in some instances online courses are not the preferred method of delivery.
- d) The analysis of the skills audit will be shared at the summer FGB meeting.

ACTION: CC to handover skills audit/self-review information- CC/MD

ACTION: To update and refresh the skills audit/self-review- MD

ACTION: To add 'To receive an analysis of the skills audit' to the Governor Training and Development item on the summer FGB agenda- Clerk

13. SCHOOL POLICIES

There were no school policies requiring FGB approval. All policies have been approved at committee level.

14. MEETINGS

The next FGB meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 19th June 2024 at 6:00pm.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to consider.

16. IMPACT STATEMENT

Governors considered how poverty can impact upon learning, and how it is important to be mindful and aware of poverty within the school community. Governors received the annual SEND report and discussed the East Cheshire SALT pilot scheme. Governors considered the draft annual budget 2024/25 and noted three different budget scenarios. The SSDP update was shared with governors and consideration was made to the development of a new History curriculum. Governors received an attendance update and considered well-being across the school community.

The meeting moved to Part Two at 7:47pm.

..... Chair

.....Dated