



Park Lane Special School

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD IN SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2023

Governors present:	Tandy Palmes (TP)	Co-Chair
	Chris Milnes (CM)	Co-Chair
	Lorraine Warmer (LW)	Headteacher
	Richard Davies (RD)	
	Marcus Hayes (MH)	
	Charlotte Hughes (CH)	
	John McPherson (JM)	
	Emma Shaw (AS)	Deputy Headteacher/Associate Governor (arrived at item 6)
	Katy Wadsworth (KW)	
Also in attendance:	Diane Murdoch (Clerk)	Clerk to Governors

PART ONE MINUTES

The meeting opened at 3:35pm.

1. APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) ITEMS

- Apologies were received from Nick Banner (NB) and accepted by governors.
- There were no items of additional business.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- There were no conflicts of interest with the business of the meeting.
- The majority of governors had completed their annual declarations via GovernorHub.

ACTION: Clerk to send reminders to governors who had not yet completed annual declarations.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- There were no changes to the membership.
- Governors noted that there were two vacancies for Co-opted Governors.
ACTION: TP to advertise governor vacancies on Inspiring Governance.
- It was **confirmed** that GIAS (Get Information About Schools) was up to date with the exception of NB's term of office which required amending to reflect his reappointment.
ACTION: KW to update GIAS with NB's new term of office.
- Governors **appointed** Andree Barnard, Elaine Clarke, Vicky Lomas, Nichola Mott, Claire Noonan, Jo Shackley and Emma Shaw as Associate Members, all for a one-year term of office.

4. CHAIRS' ACTION

The Chairs had accepted the resignation of the Headteacher, and vacancy had been advertised.

5. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- The part one minutes of the previous FGB meeting held on 8th June 2023 were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair for retention by the school.

- b) The action log was reviewed:
Item 15 – Safeguarding Training: Governors were reminded to complete safeguarding training and update their training records on GovernorHub.

All other actions were **agreed** as completed or were on the agenda.

ES joined the meeting.

6. COMMITTEES AND NOMINATED GOVERNORS

- a) The membership and chairs of committees for the 2023/24 academic year was confirmed as:

Committee:	Members:
Leadership & Management:	Nick Banner, Elaine Clarke, Chris Milnes, Tandy Palmes (Chair), Emma Shaw, Lorraine Warmer.
Behaviour & Attitudes:	Charlotte Hughes, John McPherson, Claire Noonan, Jo Shackley, Tandy Palmes (Chair), Katy Wadsworth (Lead).
Personal Development:	Andree Barnard, Marcus Hughes, John McPherson (Chair), Tandy Palmes, Katy Wadsworth.
Quality of Education:	Andree Barnard, Richard Davies (Chair), Nichola Mott, Tandy Palmes, Emma Shaw, Lorraine Warmer.
Headteacher’s Performance Management:	Nick Banner, Chris Milnes, Tandy Palmes.

- b) The terms of reference for each of the standing committees were **approved** following their review by each committee.
c) Link governor roles were **confirmed** as:

Role	Link Governor	Class	Link Governor
Safeguarding:	Charlotte Hughes	Silk & Forest:	Tandy Palmes
Careers Education & Guidance:	John McPherson	Hovis & Mulberry:	Chris Milnes
Pupil Premium:	Richard Davies	Middlewood, Bollin & Arighi:	Nick Banner
Attendance:	Richard Davies	Treacle:	Richard Davies
Health & Safety:	Chris Milnes	Sixth Form 1 & 2L	John McPherson
Website:	Katy Wadsworth	Barnaby:	Charlotte Hughes
Training Liaison:	Tandy Palmes	Jodrell/Granelli:	Marcus Hayes

- d) The terms of reference for the ad hoc committees (Pay; Complaints; Exclusions; Staff Grievance; Appeals) were **approved**.

7. GOVERNORS CODE OF CONDUCT

Governors **adopted** and confirmed their agreement to the NGA Code of Conduct.

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

- a) The Chairs of the Committees provided verbal reports from the autumn term round of meetings:

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

A finance meeting had been held and the projected carry forward was positive. The budget would be set in April 2024 and the school were looking at a deficit for years 2 and 3 on the 3-year plan. School expansion was slowing, and budget increases were slowing accordingly. The Local Authority (LA) was currently not intending to increase the High Needs Funding which was £12,242 per pupil. The question of a SEND nursery had been raised at the recent LA Governor Conference.

Q: Would a nursery mean more income for the school, and would we still receive £12K if the pupil was

only attending for assessment?

A: Yes it would mean more income and the £12K may be received on a pro rata basis. Pupils would come to the nursery with EHCP funding in place.

Q: How many nursery places would we hope to offer?

A: This would depend upon the size of the building. The nursery would be located in a mobile classroom and the school owned some land near the college which could be used for this purpose.

Q: Are there utilities already in place on that land?

A: We would need to investigate. The school were trying to come up with positive solutions to present to the LA and reduce costs involved.

Q: Could we accommodate the nursery in the current buildings?

A: There is no surplus space available.

Q: What are the projections for the next 5 years for the budget deficit? Is it possible we could sell that piece of land to boost income?

A: The deficit is projected to increase by £100K annually. If the LA would consider supporting the purchase of specialist equipment that would be a big help with the budget. The plot of land in question is not situated in a desirable location to sell and also is technically owned by the LA.

Governor Comment: The school could consider exploring the Coates Foundation as a source of funding/grants.

Q: What would be the impact of the government not paying the pension uplifts?

A: That would have a large impact on budget. Last year we received £72K. The government have previously said that they will stop paying the pension grant. We also have a large number of teaching assistants (TAs), and their pay rises are not funded by the government.

Governors noted that there was an issue with equity in funding. A SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) school in Cheshire East was receiving £17K funding per pupil. The school were challenging the LA on this issue.

Q: How sure are we that the nursery will proceed and when would it be expected to open?

A: The LA are keen to establish the provision and are aiming for September 2024. A mobile classroom would cost in the region of £300K and could take up to 6 months to complete. It may be challenging to construct the facility and recruit staff in time.

ACTION: TP/LW to arrange a meeting with Clare Williamson (LA) to discuss the proposed nursery.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Pupil progress data showed a significant improvement on grades from last year. It was felt this was partly due to improved systems and standardisation. The level of challenge remained the same. The school had a new data analysis package, 'Insight', to be used for monitoring data. The ASDAN accreditation went well, and moderation was very positive.

BEHAVIOUR & ATTITUDES

Claire Noonan and Jo Shackley were the Behaviour Leads and they met regularly with staff to review behaviour support plans for each pupil. A Behaviour Rep system was now in place with every class having a Rep. These Reps met every half-term to review behaviour strategies and ensure continuity amongst staff. The committee had reviewed the IRIS incident reports which had been increasing, however the increase was due to a small number of new pupils who have now better settled into the school.

Two staff members were being ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) trained to support pupils. 'My Happy Mind' was in place from KS2 upwards and the school had achieved bronze accreditation and would now work towards the silver.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils were engaging with the wider community however this had been impacted by minibus access and staff sickness. The school would be represented at the LA Inclusion Conference. PE training was being delivered to staff, the 'So Safe' programme was continuing, and the 'Duke of Edinburgh' scheme had been introduced at the school.

JM had completed a careers monitoring visit today and looked at the Gatsby Benchmarks. A report on whether the school were meeting any of the 8 benchmarks was awaited.

ACTION: JM to upload a Careers Monitoring Report including information on Gatsby Benchmarks.

- b) CH had visited during the summer term to complete a Safeguarding Link visit. The focus had been on wellbeing and ELSA. KW was now an accredited Mental Health Lead. The S175 audit showed that the school were fully effective in everything except Prevent. The government were updating Prevent this autumn and new training should be available after Christmas 2023.

ACTION: Governors to update their Prevent training.

Governors noted the updated guidance in KCSIE 2023 regarding filtering and monitoring. Some pupils did access social media at home and the school did address issues around E-safety.

Q: How robust is the school system?

A: It is very robust. Most parents don't allow their children to bring in their own devices capable of internet access without use of the school wi-fi.

- c) **ACTION: Governors to contact staff to arrange link visits before the spring 2024 FGB meeting.**

9. FINANCIAL/COMPLIANCE MATTERS

- a) The annual accounts and audit certificate of the Unofficial School Fund was **received** by governors, and it was **confirmed** that Nick O'Brien had kindly agreed to be the auditor again for the forthcoming year.
- b) This was reviewed in item 8 above.
- c) This was reviewed in item 8 above.
- d) Some of the Sports Grant had been used towards an outdoor gym and some sensory equipment which was already in place and well used by pupils. The grant had also funded staff CPD, kitbags for classes and a PE programme for primary pupils. £3K of the grant had been spent on improving and renewing PA equipment.

Q: Does the Duke of Edinburgh scheme fit into the Sports Grant?

A: The grant is for primary pupils only; however the Duke of Edinburgh scheme do offer some funding for equipment and the school had received £10K.

Q: Will the Duke of Edinburgh be accessible to all?

A: It will be open to all pupils aged 14 and up. Pupils would go camping in school and have expeditions along the Middlewood Way as this is flat. The school would only offer the Bronze Award.

Pupil Premium funding had been spent on therapeutic support for pupils including Music Therapy, Animal Therapy, and additional one-to-one interventions such as ELSA.

- e) It was **confirmed** that the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement would be published on the website by 31st December 2023.
- f) Elaine Clarke would continue to support with the completion and submission of the SFVS. Governors were pleased to note that the school had received 'Good' assurance on the previous year's submission.
- g) The Manual of Internal Financial Procedures (MIFP), Business Continuity Plan, Asset Register and Scheme of Financial Delegation were deferred to the next FGB meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to place on agenda.

10. PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

The school had 129 pupils on roll. Seven pupils would be leaving as they were coming to the end of their academic careers at school. Some new staff had joined the school with an ECT (Early Career Teacher) in Jodrell and 4 new TAs. The school had some students attending as part of their TA and teacher training courses. Staff CPD included behaviour training (Claire Noonan), the safeguarding update, manual handling training, emergency medical training and communication training. A twilight session on poolside training had been held in September 2023 and two more twilight training sessions were scheduled.

Annual reviews were underway with parents. These took time to complete for all pupils and had been divided between LW and ES. The Parents Evening would take place in November and appointments had been offered in person or via Teams.

A range of clubs were on offer to pupils and the Student Council was in place and working well. The Preparation for Adulthood work placements were going well.

Schemes of work were being monitored to ensure that the curriculum was firmly embedded. The curriculum included engaging topics/activities and included extension activities. Assessments were used to show baseline scores and evidence pupil progress. British Values and Rights Respecting Schools were included in the scheme of work. All class teachers had their timetables on the server, and these had been monitored. It was found that not all classes were back at 1:15pm for afternoon lessons and approximately 1 hour of teaching time was being lost across the week. There had been a focus upon ensuring classes were back on time and ready to learn and the situation was much better. Planning had been improved so that if required a member of the SLT could pick up a class timetable and teach the class. Gareth Thomas, the Communication Lead, was supporting the Communication Reps.

Resources and the budget continued to be challenging.

The School Development Plan (SDP) 2022-23 had been evaluated and circulated via Governor Hub and the 2023-24 SDP was in draft form. The new SDP included four separate action plans aligned with Ofsted areas of scrutiny. The SEF was also available on Governor Hub.

Q: Why was Quality of Education rated as Good and not Outstanding?

A: If we put Outstanding there would be a need to be able to strongly evidence this rating. It was felt that Good was the rate judgement at the moment as the school was Good and on the way to Outstanding.

Attendance was currently 89.1% which was in line with expectations for special schools. Three pupils were on reduced timetables and were being supported by staff. Meetings were held with the Attendance and Out of School Team every term.

The LA Health and Safety audit was due to take place this term. There were no major works required and all health and safety matters were up to date.

11. SAFEGUARDING

- a) There were no safeguarding issues to report.
- b) Governors **confirmed** that they had all read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023.

12. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER (SIP)

The SIP was Gill Robinson who had visited on 3rd October 2023 and her report had been circulated via Governor Hub. The SIP had reviewed the Headteacher recruitment process. The vacancy had been advertised on TES, LinkedIn, via the LA and on social media. The next SIP visit would take place tomorrow with the SIP working with Subject Leads on Ofsted preparation.

13. GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The annual governance statement had been **approved** by governors and was published on the website.

14. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The autumn 2023 Director's Report had been circulated via Governor Hub and **received** by governors.

15. SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies had been circulated via Governor Hub for review prior to the meeting:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2023
- Attendance Policy
- School Emergency Action Plan
- Swimming Policy

All the above were **approved** by governors.

Q: On the swimming policy if a teacher is teaching instead of a lifeguard, do they have a lifeguard qualification?

A: No but they are CPR trained and have received training on what to do in case of an emergency. There is always someone on the side of the pool ready to act. We hire a lifeguard when we go to Macclesfield Leisure Centre.

Governors noted that a meeting would be held with the IT consultant to check that all the necessary safeguards regarding filtering and monitoring were in place to meet the requirements of KCSIE 2023.

The Pay Policy was awaited from the LA.

16. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

TP had attended the LA Governor Conference and CM, KW and NB had completed Ofsted Ready training.

17. PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS

There were no planned visits.

18. TERM DATES 2024/25

This was deferred to the next FGB meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to place on agenda.

19. NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday 29th February 2024 at 3:30pm at the school.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional items of business.

The meeting moved to Part 2 at 5:08pm.

